

WHY YOU NEED THIS BOOK

In the introduction, I told you of some examples of where this strategic planning model has worked. But why do *you* need it? Your organization is cruising along nicely right? Maybe not as much as you think. I've been amazed at how many leaders, even those high in the organization, don't have a firm grasp of essential pieces of information that are in a good strategic plan.

If you find that hard to believe, try this: first, write down your organization's mission statement, then write the list of values that guide your organization's actions. Next, write down a couple of goals your organization is working toward. If you can do that, great! You're ready for the second step. Go out to your organization and ask those same questions. Ask people why they work there. You'll most likely get the answer about their pay and/or family. Dig a little deeper. Ask them where they fit in the organization's mission or what they do to help reach the goals.

How did that go? Now you see why you need to have a basic strategic plan. It spells out the framework of the organization and provides a road map for everyone. By creating a basic strategic plan and keeping it up to date, the senior leader provides one of the most important tools possible for their subordinate leaders—a clear road map of the way ahead.

A good strategic plan goes beyond that though because it isn't just the organization's leaders who need that clear roadmap. Each and every person in the organization should know where the organization is heading. It should come as no surprise that in organizations where everyone knows the plan, there is higher productivity and better relations, especially between employees and leaders. Nobody has to guess and everyone understands what the organization is doing. Even Customers who enter the premises can pick up on the energy that is flowing in the organization, and there could be signs on the walls as well

which will give them the assurance that they are dealing with a professional organization!

I have been involved in planning succession within large companies and developing leaders for many years and I've seen all the leadership models, techniques, and lists of do's and don'ts. I believe that there are people who are natural born leaders and those who work hard to develop leadership skills. But the one commonality that has been most noticeable through the years is that a good leader's effectiveness is greatly diminished when he or she doesn't have a clear road map of where they are supposed to be going.

The leader who doesn't have clear direction and focus will be less likely to gain the true loyalty of his or her subordinates. Or worse yet, they *will* gain that loyalty and take their section of the organization off in a direction that senior leadership never intended.

There are numerous management styles and models for success in various industries. This book does not imply that any of those are good or bad. However, I have found that leadership and management theories, including strategic planning, can become more complicated as each expert tries to outdo the last by adding some new piece to the equation. My experience has proven that a basic plan that lets everyone know what the organization does and how it intends to do it is essential, but it **DOESN'T HAVE TO BE COMPLICATED.**

Many organizations have attempted to adopt the latest methods only to fail because they did not first determine what they were trying to accomplish.

There are two ways to plan. You can plan to maintain the status quo or you can plan to become much more than you are now. This book is intended for the later. It is for the leader who wants to be better than the rest!

