



Business Strategies

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Strategy is about discovery of opportunity and competing. It is about weighing the alternatives, marshalling the resources, and attacking the issue in a manner that is uniquely good for you, your project, organization, or company. Strategy is about driving fulfillment of a defined future, achieving the aspired outcome.

The Heart of Strategy

At the center of strategy is tradeoff. Making determined choices as to what will and won't be done. It is about creating focus on those things that will lead to desired result and a proactive elimination of effort toward those things that won't achieve the goals.

Unfortunately, many companies forget about strategy in the rush to deliver products, take care of customers, or simply undertake the day-to-day needs of the business. In this, companies lack the discipline to limit themselves to competing in segments where they have the highest probability of winning and avoiding those segments where there is no advantage. Companies become 'tyranized by the urgent' - reacting to customer or internal input.

Everyday you, your employees, customers, and partners are making choices. Choices on where to spend time, where to invest dollars, what to say, and whom to call on. These choices are either going to push a particular strategy forward or will expend energy without coordinated results. It is essential that all are making their choices consistent and in alignment with your strategy - a strategy regularly reinforced through clear, communication.

In the end, sustainable differentiation comes from being different. Basically, "How can we, by making proactive choice, limit ourselves, our marketplace, our product, and geography in such a manner as to be 100% focused on our goals and unique core competencies?" Choosing to identify and capitalize on core competencies is the single most important strategic decision one can make. Once decided, you and the executive team must be resolute in enforcing those strategic limits.

Strategic mindsets understand trade-off. The mindset is willing to sacrifice customers, certain products, markets, and even "good investments" to remain focused on achievement of a defined strategy. The mindset knows that focus and execution excellence will deliver the needed differentiation and advantage to accelerate and sustain growth.

Strategy is about choosing where to focus and eliminating distraction from achieving the goal.

Strategy drives action. Strategy drives result. Strategy drives leadership and dominance in the selected marketplace.

Leadership Series.

The Afterburner Group recognizes the need for quick, actionable information regarding leadership in marketing, sales, customers, and products. As such, we have put together a series of papers for use within your project, organization, or company.

Lead like never before.™



Business Strategies (con't)

The Strategy Decision

Strategy means making a decision and being willing to say "NO."

In all organizations, there are many, many opportunities competing for resources and fulfillment. There is constant pressure from all corners of the marketplace, customers, employees, partners, products, and technologies that blur, homogenize, and blind under the guise of 'opportunity.'

So, while you are developing and reinforcing your strategy - communicating your core competencies, differentiation, and what you're willing to give up in the achievement of your business goals, leaders must have the self discipline and courage to not become distracted and enforce the limits. Differentiation comes through setting limits and executing to core strengths, not from trying to be all things to all people or randomly attempting to conduct business. Without being unique, there is little hope for competitive advantage.

The strategy decision is the decision to make the hard call and those crucial tradeoffs. The leader has to have the willpower to turn away 'opportunity' where it is not consistent with the defined business strategy. The leader has to be willing to be unpopular while remaining resolute in achieving the goal.

Business owners and managers don't like to hear this. Why? Because in making the hard choices short-term growth may be restricted. Those leaders, however, that have the determination to focus on what they do best create and sustain competitive advantage that brings a harvest of mid- and long-term growth, higher customer satisfaction, profitability, and a healthier company.

Every business that desires to be a leader must establish a strategy, align internal and external resources to the strategy, eliminate distractions, execute with a bias for action, regularly communicate the strategy (internally and externally) - all to drive differentiation and value in the mind of the customer and marketplace.

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