Seeing the Vision and Making It Real

How to Think Strategically and Deliver Results
Lisa DiTullio

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• International speaker in project management and impactful storyteller
• Over 25 years’ experience in establishing PMO and portfolio management models
• Author and regular contributor to industry blogs and various podcasts
• PMI® PMTraining™ instructor
Today’s Focus

At the end of the session, you will be able to:

- Define strategic thinking
- Think strategically
- Differentiate between strategic thinking, strategy development, strategy management
- Transform strategy into meaningful results
Keep It Simple to Be Successful
What Is Strategic Thinking?

Are you strategic?
Strategic Thinking

Having the capacity and ability to understand a situation and act reasonably.

*How to Think Strategically*, Greg Githens
What are characteristics of successful strategic thinkers?

Can you identify successful strategic thinkers?
3 + 7 = Successful Practices

- Individual Capacity
- Understanding the Situation
- Acting Reasonably

- Be deliberate
- Consider all facts and circumstances
- Identify advantages/disadvantages
- Explain rationale
- Avoid ego
- Manage biases
- Be proactive
What is one characteristic of strategy that is essential to understand, yet is mostly overlooked, even by expert strategists?
“Ambiguity is the source of opportunity and competitive advantage”
Organizational culture refers to the **beliefs** and **behaviors** that determine how a company's employees and management interact and handle **outside** business transactions.

Often, corporate culture is **implied**, not expressly defined, and develops **organically** over time from the cumulative traits of the people the company hires.
Based on the Kantor System Typology and Communicational Domains™ - used by permission

Larry L. Constantine, Family Paradigms: The Practice of Theory in Family Therapy
Empty the Mind of Preconceptions

01 Let go of rigid distinctions of what is right and wrong
02 Eliminate expectations of what will happen
03 Fill yourself with curiosity to understand more deeply
04 Ask simple questions
05 Open yourself to new possibilities
Common Causes of Cognitive Bias

- Limits on the mind’s attention
- Individual motivations
- Mental shortcuts called “heuristics”
- Social pressure
- Emotions

verywell
What is strategy?
Strategy is a specialized tool used to advance the interests of the organizations by managing issues that have a broad and long-term impact.

How to Think Strategically, Greg Githens
Jeanne M. Liedtka: Linking Strategic Thinking with Strategic Planning
Good Strategy, Bad Strategy

- Diagnosis of the situation
- Set of essential choices
- Coherent action

vs.

- All about desired outcomes
- A list of wishes to happen
- A budget
It’s All About the Questions

“A better strategy can be generated if answers are found to quality questions, rather than quality solutions found for poorly posed questions.”

Steven French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor Questions</th>
<th>Good questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“What do I want to do?”</td>
<td>“What questions are we trying to answer?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“What is the best practice?”</td>
<td>“Are we asking the right questions?”</td>
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</table>
# The Betterment Technique

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 0</td>
<td>Ask no questions. Instead, substitute your questions with assumptions about situation and aspirations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Ask a mediocre question. These are mundane and asked ritualistically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levels 2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>Ask better and better questions. You can improve any question. Ask questions that prompt thought.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Better Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the vision?</td>
<td>What might the organization become?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are our strengths?</td>
<td>Are our strategic resources organized appropriately?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where might we find new strategic resources that will give us capability and power that we do not have?</td>
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## Operational vs. Strategic Thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operational Thinking</th>
<th>Strategic Thinking</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative, Short-term point of view</td>
<td>Qualitative, Long-term point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrow framing</td>
<td>Broad framing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decentralized, expediting</td>
<td>Centralized, Major systems change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony, execution, continuous improvement</td>
<td>Transformation, Success in Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run the business</td>
<td>Change the business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financially driven business case</td>
<td>Opportunity-driven business cases</td>
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Strategic Thinking

The purpose of strategic thinking is to discover novel, imaginative strategies which can rewrite the rules of the competitive game; and to envision potential futures, significantly different from the present.

Strategic Management

The purpose of strategic planning is operationalizing the strategies developed through strategic thinking and to support the strategic thinking process.

Strategic Planning

Thought Process
- Synthetic
- Divergent
- Creative

Thought Process
- Analytical
- Convergent
- Conventional

Loizos Heracleous: Strategic Thinking or Strategic Planning
Vision

Environmental Assessment
Periodic process for collecting and analyzing marketplace and competitive information necessary to develop or refresh strategic direction, goals, and strategies

Corporate Goals
Three year corporate goals provide targets that directly link to achieving the strategic direction

Corporate Strategies
Multi-year corporate strategies for key areas including marketing, product, pricing, and sales are derived from the corporate goals

Operating Plans and Budgets
Using the multi-year corporate goals and strategies, local business leaders develop one-year operating plans and budgets

Implementation and Evaluation
Implementation and evaluation of the corporate operating plan and budgets are ongoing processes

Strategic Direction
The strategic direction describes where company is going and what it wants to be

Mission
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A TRADITIONAL MODEL
We Believe

We Choose

We Do
Leading Change

- Change causes disruption
- There is an emotional journey through change for anyone asked to implement it or live with it
- People don’t resist change
- The path of change is unknown and unpredictable
Involve the organization and its people in a new, different, future state.
An Exciting Story

Relationships – Alignment

Business Opportunity

Project Goal

Major Project Deliverables

Mandates Action

Specifies Output

Deliverables produce the outcome

Supports correction of the problem or takes advantage of the opportunity

Expected Business Outcomes

Expected Business Outcomes
The Change Story

- Repeatable process to manage work
- Uses set of methods and tools
- Answers these questions…

When and How Long?
How Much?
Who?
What?
Why?
How?
Best Practice: Create the Plan
Best Practice: Get What You Need
Best Practice: Simple Toolbox
Best Practice: Keep the Story Alive
Best Practice
Be Transparent
What Questions Do You Have?