

Making Your Dream a Reality:

Strategic Planning & Business Planning – The Missing Links

Have you figured out where you want your company to be in 5 years, 10 years, 15 years? Are you still leading it, benefiting from the sale of it or just stressed out? Are you visualizing the blue ocean waves, a green fairway or a crazy person clutching at their frazzled gray hair in frustration?

So maybe you have an idea of where you want to go, but do you know where you are starting from?



Most of us have downloaded driving directions from an internet mapping service. No matter what service you use, Mapquest, Google, Yahoo, etc., they all ask the same two questions... where are you starting from and where do you want to end up. They have to ask you this otherwise they have no idea how to fill in the turn-by-turn directions in the middle.

The four actions of the Strategic Planning Process are:

- 1. Figure out where you want to go**
- 2. Figure out where you are**
- 3. Perform a Gap Analysis based on items 1 & 2**
- 4. Develop tactics for closing the Gap**

Only you can answer item number one. It has to be your passion and dream as the leader of the company. Items 2, 3 and 4 can be turned over to a team after item 1 is clearly defined.



Many business owners think of Strategic Planning as an activity that they cannot afford or do not have the time to perform. Yes, it is true. Business owners are busy and resource limited. But, are you busy doing the right things? Are you spending precious dollars in the places that you need to? How do you know the answer if you do not know where you are or where you are trying to go? Strategic Planning helps you to prioritize your efforts. Is searching the internet for two hours to save \$250 on a piece of equipment as beneficial as spending two hours reading an article discussing how to position your business for a potential acquisition? You can only answer that question if you know which is more important to your company at the relative time. If your focus is on maximizing profit margins, than the \$250 is very important; if you are planning on selling your business within the next five years, then you are better served to read the educational article.

Other business owners believe that they have a plan in place because they have predicted the sales for the following year on a spreadsheet. Spreadsheets are wonderful tools, but they do not constitute a plan. In addition, a 12-month plan is not a strategy. A 12-month plan is a business plan. The business plan is a tool that you utilize to measure your how well the business is currently performing. Are you hitting estimates, are the monthly targets being met or exceeded? Those estimates and targets are developed based upon your Strategic Plan.

Benchmarking: *This is the process of determining how well your company is performing in comparison to other companies in your niche. Selecting the companies to benchmark against is paramount to the success of your measurement activities. If you select companies outside of your niche you will not get an accurate depiction of how well you are performing in contrast to your real competition.*

Tip – *Do you find yourself constantly bidding against the same competitor over and over again? Do your prospects always mention the same companies when trying to understand the service you provide? These competitors are a good place to start your benchmarking effort.*

The Strategic Plan is the story that you tell for the business that allows everyone to understand the ultimate goal. There is a beginning and an end, an alpha and an omega.

www.BreitIdeas.Biz
321-806-8664 / info@breitideas.biz

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT CONSULTING



However, these beginnings and endings are allowed to change. *A Strategic Plan is like a “choose your own adventure” story for your business.* The criticality in the Strategic Plan is not the beginning or the end, rather what tactics you will employ in how you plan to get where you are going.

Once you have defined where you would like to go, research must be done in order to make it crystal clear as to where you are starting from. Your financial data, human resource information, quality reports, customer satisfaction, etc. all contain the information that shows where you are today.



The meat of your Strategic Plan are the tactics or “turn-by-turn directions” for how you get from where you are today to where you would like to be. These tactics will include short-term, mid-term and long-term activities that need to be accomplished. The short-term activities will feed into your Business Plan as your decision making tool for the next 12 months. The mid-term and long-term goals will help guide you on making daily decisions that can potentially have a positive impact on the future.

Strategic Planning is not a luxury, it is a necessity. It is the navigation tool that helps guide your hand on the tiller as you steer through the trials and tribulations of true business success.

Do you know where you want to go? Would you like help minimizing the stress of getting to your destination? Give us a call and schedule a FREE 30-minute consultation to discuss how you can reduce your stress and achieve your dream as quickly as possible.

www.BreitIdeas.Biz
321-806-8664 / info@breitideas.biz

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT CONSULTING