

Improving Strategic Focus

Thursday, January 15, 2009

Topic: Strategy Execution

Reference: Donlon, Barnaby S. "Five Major Domains Critical to Any Organization"; DM Review Magazine, February 2007. [Http://www.dmreview.com/issues/20070201/1075123-1.html](http://www.dmreview.com/issues/20070201/1075123-1.html).

An essential part of management is to develop the right strategic focus, develop an implementation strategy, and then make adjustments to keep all of the resources, people, and finances in harmony to achieve optimal execution results. Despite the best laid plans, critical inputs are often out of step and out of line with the core strategy. This happens because of market challenges, timing, and the inconsistencies of the talent deployed to achieve specific ends.

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An essential part of management is to develop the right strategic focus, develop an implementation strategy, and then make adjustments to keep all of the resources, people, and finances in harmony to achieve optimal execution results. Despite the best laid plans, critical inputs are often out of step and out of line with the core strategy. This happens because of market challenges, timing, and the inconsistencies of the talent deployed to achieve specific ends. This realization has made the dynamic of "process" a critical dimension in implementing strategy and disciplining execution back to acceptable levels of certainty. In the referenced article the commentator explores the subject of strategic execution and ultimately concludes that effective strategy execution must touch and concern at least 5 dimensions. Specifically he indicates that:

Focus (alignment and measurement);

Resources (assigned to specific portfolio projects to ensure goal achievement);

Operations (linking operational processes to strategy and outcomes);

People (commitment to change); and

Information (developing a technology platform that supports the operations and needs of the enterprise)

are key variables to manage and manipulate in refining strategic execution. "Organizations can unleash the power of collective judgment by consulting broad groups of employees in the planning process; this approach has the added benefit of creating support for change, which is required for successful execution." The information domain often lags behind the others in timing and planning, but not in impact. Failure to consider and acquire the right information can really impede quality decision making. I have a project currently that is designed to address this very domain using Business Intelligence. If you are not using all of these domains in your consideration of strategic execution currently, I

urge you to add more dimensions to your planning and analysis. Let me know your thoughts on methods that you are using to improve strategic execution.