



Leading On Purpose - The Strategic Management Process **By Leigh A. McGee**

With global competition and the fast pace of information, business leaders are challenged more than ever. Chief executives are expected to find and retain exceptional talent, deliver long term growth with innovative concepts, and consistently deliver an increased bottom line. Meeting these challenges requires strong leadership and utilizing the appropriate management tools. There is no time for new leadership fads or management tool flops. To that end, one lasting business process fits the bill: Strategic Management. With tools that are tried, true, and adaptable to any size of business, Strategic Management can improve performance by connecting the corporate vision to the daily tactics of staff. Strategic Management is the only way to truly lead with purpose “on purpose.” The following paragraphs discuss the three management tools utilized in the Strategic Management Process. Diagram 1, on the following page, visualizes the process.

Vision & Mission - Setting the Direction for Designed Purpose

A clear direction for the organization gives it purpose and helps its members to move in the same direction at the same time. This work is done at the highest level of the organization. It is the responsibility of the chief leader in coordination with the board of directors. There are three basic steps:

- 1) Vision - A corporate vision lays the foundation for the direction of the company and answers the question of “What is our preferred future?” It is a guiding concept for what the organization is trying to do and become. It begins with sight of the past and guides the company to a successful and culturally compatible future.
- 2) Guiding Principles - The guiding principles are values that direct and support the decisions which drive the behaviors necessary to achieve the organization’s goals successfully. Unified principles lead to confident decisions.
- 3) Mission - A mission defines the current business activities by conveying - who we are, what we do, and where we are now in relation to the market. It is company specific; thereby, a mission gives the company its own identity and focus.

Strategic Planning – Creating a Road Map

Everyone needs a map to get where they’re going. Strategic Planning is the “how” of pursuing an organization’s mission. The Strategic Plan is a 3-5 year plan that takes into consideration the internal and external environments. It defines long-term performance goals, strategic objectives, and measurable targets. According to a global survey of 960 international executives by Bain & Company, *Management Tools 2005*, Strategic Planning has topped the list of management tools since 1996. In fact, the study reflects that Strategic Planning is not only #1 in management tool usage but also #1 in management tool satisfaction. Furthermore, the survey found that “89% of large companies use this tool.”

Communication Planning – Creating a Unified Commitment in Purpose

The corporate direction should be communicated widely throughout the organization giving management and staff confidence, consistency, increased morale, and improved performance. It is the responsibility of key leadership to repeatedly articulate consistent directional messages. This requires development of a methodical plan, executing the plan diligently, and accessing progress. Diagram 2, on the next page, shows how communication is continuous and an integral part of leading the Strategic Management Process. According to Emmett C. Murphy in his book, *The Genius of Sitting Bull* (1993), “People become anxious about the future in the absence of role models or leaders. Without the right model it is hard for people to understand how to succeed.” Murphy goes on to provide many ideas for business leaders to include:

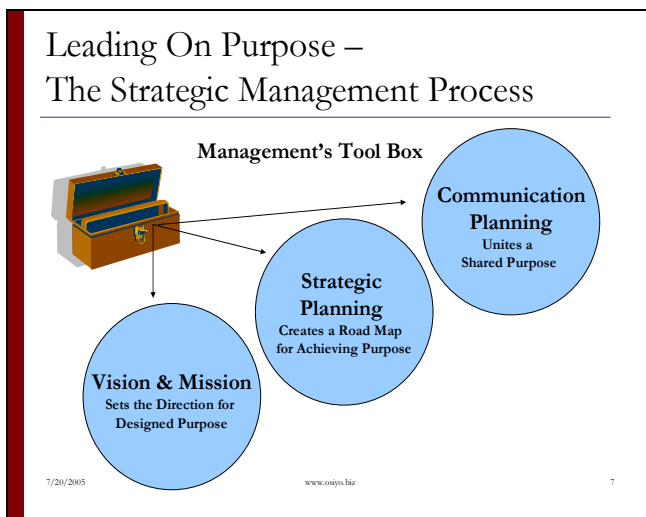
- 1) Create Commitment - An organization cannot be a powerful force without commitment to a common purpose.
- 2) Build Trust - Trust is the glue to commitment and the consistency for shared purpose.
- 3) Communicate Often At Many Levels - Deliver messages that motivate, energize, and move people where you need them to go.

Conclusion

As the leader of your organization, it is your challenge (and ultimately your reward) to identify what your business does well, and do it with purpose. Make the decision to change from a business of random decisions and internal chaos to a business of sustainable operations and strategically planned growth. Implement a Strategic Management Process in your business. Make the decision to lead your business with purpose, “on purpose!”

Diagram #1

Diagram #2



About Osियो Communications LLC

Osiyo is an American Indian owned management consulting company. Recently named by Diversity Business as one of the “Top 500 Diversity Owned Businesses in the United States,” Osiyo was founded with a single purpose – to help make Native businesses more self-reliant, sustainable, and valuable. The firm’s work philosophy is driven by the concept of “Appreciative Inquiry.” We seek first to understand the organization and identify core competencies. Osiyo helps clients improve organizational performance by developing clear direction, utilizing strategic thinking, and building sustainable operations with strong capabilities. Frequent presenters for business and knowledge sharing institutes, we provide practical business solutions within the business practices of Organizational Assessment, Strategic Management, and Executive Training & Development. Osiyo was founded by Leigh A. McGee and Ronetta K. Briggs.

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