

Strategic Thinking is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide **what an organization is** (*The Why*) and **what it does**, (*The How*) with a focus on a predetermined future.

Strategic Thinking process focuses on determining and envisioning the future to which you aspire and the growth you will have to realize to achieve your aspirations. It is comprised of management tools which will help an organization do a better job of focusing the energy of its employees to ensure that they are all working toward the same goals. It is also a tool to assess and clarify the organization's direction and response to changing environments.

As an entrepreneur, you will need to concern yourself with visionary activities and planning as well as leading people. As the leader for your business, people will look to you for:

- Direction
- Coaching
- Leadership
- Guidance
- Support
- Decisions
- Leadership stability

You now must decide what needs to be done to succeed, and then you must do it, and you must do it the right way.

Succeeding in business requires a vision combined with the passion and commitment to pursue that vision. It also requires a willingness to change, to learn, to become, and to take calculated risks ... it requires entrepreneurial leadership.

Business owners and leaders today have found that developing a strategy and an implementation plan is far more effective than leaving the future to chance. Furthermore, developing a strategy, a vision, a mission, and a specific plan of action contributes to long-term, sustainable success. If implemented correctly, it will create higher levels of motivation and commitment, and fuel continuously higher levels of achievement from everyone within the organization.

## Steps for Planning an Effective Process

- Establish Basic Planning Foundation
- Identify Vision and Values
- Document Values and Principles
- Conduct External Assessment
- Conduct Internal Appraisal

- Create Mission Statement
- Create Critical Goal Categories
- Develop Market and Sales Plan
- Develop and Monitor Implementation Results

## The Results Are Measurable

- Increased Revenue
- Strengthened Focus on Attracting, Servicing, and Retaining Customers
- Greater Employee Contributions to Results Realized
- Defined Strategic Direction
- Developed and Sustained Values
- Motivated Employees
- Measurable Growth
- Sustainable Results

## Developing the Plan

The Strategic Planning process provides a format for developing specific strategies, converting those strategies into a business planning process, and establishing measurable and attainable organizational goals. It is a process that involves not only **determining where an organization wants and needs to go**, but also, **how it is going to get there**. Determining where you want to take your organization is key. This process also includes personal leadership components all entrepreneurs need to take that key and unlock the door to personal and organizational success!

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