

Implementation of Strategic Planning in Organizations

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to review the implementation of strategic planning and the need to plan, develop, implement and evaluate the organization placed on the research. Moreover, it tries to investigate how managers in organizations need to be equipped with strategic planning. They also need to know how to develop and schedule the strategic planning to run properly. Having a type of so-called strategic thinking which consists of deep thinking beyond the macro, the macro, and the micro is a necessary requirement for strategic planning. This way of thinking is a dynamic, changing and changeable in planning and implementation. As a result, in the present paper, we have tried to take into consideration the effective factors which influence the implementation of strategic planning. More importantly, we will highlight the point that effective implementation of strategic planning is not feasible unless the managers follow a regular and a planned schedule.

Keywords: strategic management, strategic approach, the process of strategic implementation, strategic assessment

1. Introduction

Strategic management which is based on dynamic thought, futurist, and comprehensive can be one of the most important solutions for many of the organizations. Strategic management is essential because it can turn possible threats and fears into potential opportunities by utilizing necessary requirements. Based on this type of strategic thinking, the managers should always evaluate their work and try to utilize what they find out to develop an effective plan for enhancing the stability of the organizations. In the same line, developing an effective plan requires having a professional strategic plan.

In view of the above, the present century is called information age because of the fact that life and science have been integrated with one another. Accordingly, the illiterates of the 21 century are not those who cannot read or write. In fact, the illiterates of the 21 century are those who cannot learn and teach. Accordingly, the role of human being is significant the success or the failure of any organization. Since the early 20th century onward, based on organizational control and assessment, the overall strategy of the organizations was directed towards the assumption that the future is something similar to the past. However, after the Second World War, the long term planning was considered more than before and became the basis for making management decisions.

Today, thanks to the new technological and scientific developments, many organizations have undertaken basic changes. The managers of huge companies have realized the fact that, unlike the past, political, economical, and social environments have changed a lot. The insatiability caused is also ever-increasing.

2. Strategic management and planning

Strategic management and planning is defined as directing individual and group activities toward group objectives. In the same line, Sedaqatgoyan (2005) describes strategic management as any integrated activities and decisions that aim to develop effective strategy to implement and control the results. Moreover, strategic management covers issues about activities related to investigation, assessment, and the selection of strategies which leads to making any internal or external decisions for the organization. Accordingly, strategic management is a process based on which one can make sure that the organization will achieve the pre-determined objectives based on utilizing suitable strategy.

Strategic management is the process of making proper decisions which lead to arriving at a suitable strategy to achieve the overall objectives of an organization. Kafen and Herman (2006) underscored the point that strategic management is the process of monitoring and controlling the actions, tactics, and the functional planning of a given strategic planning. More importantly, a good strategic management can undergo any necessary amendments of the first taken decisions while being implemented. In other words, the art of making, implementing, and evaluating decisions is a responsibility which enables the organizations to achieve its long-term objectives.

Strategic management has long been recognized as a necessity for utilizing the potential sources and information technologies of the organizations. The results of many studies are also indicative of the facts that there are so many obstacles which may hinder the proper implementation of strategic management. According to what Sdaqatgoyan (2005) put forth, organizations usually have two types of programs: 1) strategic planning which is done by top managers based on which the overall objectives of the organization are determined and 2) operational planning which shows how the strategic plan show be implemented.

3. Strategic management process

Fardar (2005) divides strategic management process into three stages: compiling the strategy, implementing the strategy, and assessment the strategy.

- *Compiling the strategy:* compiling the strategy refers to determining the possible threats as well as the opportunities which an organization may encounter outside the organization. It also includes determining the internal pros and cons and setting the long-term objectives along with considering various strategies to select an appropriate strategy to continue any pre-determined plan.
- *Implementing the strategy:* it is necessary of any organization to consider annual objectives and set policies based on those objectives in order to implement the determined strategy. Implementing any determined strategy also requires cultural development. In short, implementing any determined strategy means that all the personnel of the organization work together to bring the determined strategy into practice.
- *Evaluating the strategy:* it is the last but not the least important stage of strategic management which helps the managers to find out whether the strategy which they have utilized has been effective. Accordingly, managers may apply the necessary amendments to nay selected strategy to enhance it efficiency as much as possible.

Likewise, Sedaqatgoyan (2005) has considered strategic management as consisting of four stages: analyzing the situation, compiling the strategy, implementing the strategy, and evaluating the strategy.

- *Analyzing the situation:* analyzing the situation refers to considering the overall objectives of the organization, the mission of the organization, the future perspective of the organization, and the internal and the external potentials of the organization.
- *Compiling the strategy:* in determining any strategy to be used, the first step to take is to make a list of the useful strategies to find out which one can be utilized. Then, the best strategy should be selected based on analyzing any strategy by using existing strategic models. All the managers should take part in this stage to enhance motivation among them.
- *Implementing the strategy:* implementing any selected strategy requires having a suitable organizational structure to best match the selected strategy.
- *Evaluating the strategy:* it is necessary to monitor and control any selected strategy to achieve the determined objectives.

4. Information management system

Having a sort of integrated information management system based on which the managers can have access to the necessary information for making proper decisions is very important. In this regards, two types of information can be considered: 1) the type of information which reflects the amount of satisfaction that the personnel of an organization have of their working environment 2) the type of information that reflects the thoughts of the personnel of an organization.

5. Management strategies

Management strategies consist of the number of policies and solutions that their utilization guarantees fundamental changes in relation to environmental changes which cause optimal educational objectives of the country to be fulfilled. Generally, management strategies are divided into two categories as major and minor strategies. Among them, the major strategies which are essential monitor all the systems. These types of strategies are mostly used to change individual or group behaviors (Khodaie, 2007).

6. Compiling the strategies of educational programs

Compiling the strategies of educational programs is closely related to the characteristics of the strategies of educational programs. Accordingly, the following features should be considered:

1. The main objectives based on which an organization has been established.

2. The expectations of the service and market
3. The social and economical factors of the environment
4. Considering the past and the present operation of the organization
5. Utilizing the scientific index of the country
6. Considering the main objectives and strategies of the developmental programs of the country along with the financial facilities which the organizations have
7. Considering the executive policies of the organization
8. Compiling executive programs
9. Reconsidering the situation in order to recognize the pros and cons of the program to find out to what extent the objectives have been achieved (Hedavand, 2005)

7. Strategic management execution platforms

The strategic management execution platforms which the managers establish should be conducted regularly to be effective. Considering the following four essential skills is the requirement for a successful execution of any strategies:

1. Dealing skill: it refers to the ability to control other people while executing any strategy. This can be achieved through dialogue to find the way to implement the strategy.
2. Allocation skill: it refers to the ability to provide organizational services necessary for the implementation of any strategy.
3. Monitoring skill: it is the ability to utilize the existing information to find out whether any obstacles have been emerged while executing the strategy. Successful managers are those who always utilize the information from the implementation of the strategies to find out whether the implementation has been successful or not.
4. Organizing skill: it refers to the ability to organize a network consisting of the personnel in the organization who are able to offer help in case of any problems happen. Successful manager are those who employ people who can easily tackle any problem.

8. The process of strategic management implementation

Following is a list of some of the most important processes underlying strategic management implementation:

1. Making decision about some of the missions that the organization should undertake.
2. Making it clear that why an organization is established.
3. Clarifying the overall policies of the organization.
4. Clarifying the objectives to be achieved in a proper time.
5. Defining strategic plan to achieve the pre-determined objectives.
6. Setting the overall structure of the organization to help the personnel cooperate with each other.
7. Providing the necessary human force.
8. Setting the executive methods.
9. Providing the necessary facilities including the financial needs for conducting the work.
10. Providing the necessary capital.
11. Setting the standards to achieve long-term objectives.
12. Providing executive and managerial programs.
13. Collecting the necessary information for monitoring and controlling the organization. This helps the people in the organization to follow the strategy, planning, and the policies of the organization.
14. Motivating the personnel of the organization.

9. Controlling the strategy

Hadadial (2006) defined controlling as adapting or matching the achieved objectives with the pre-determined objectives. Managers of the organizations should always consider the achieved objectives and compare them with the pre-determined ones. Accordingly, if any of the achieved objectives are not in line with the expectations, they should alert the other members. This helps the managers to take the necessary actions and make proper decisions. As a result, the pre-determined or the primary objectives may be changed accordingly.

10. Assessment and evaluation

Assessment refers to the process of evaluating somebody's performance in accordance to fulfilling a particular work in a given time based on some standards (Saadat, 2007). According to Saadat, the personnel affairs department should carry out the assessment process. However, this should be conducted in the presence and cooperation of those who are in charge of executive operations. In the same line, assessment can be done by:

1. The person who is in charge of a department. In other words, the supervisor of any department can carry out the assessment process because he is in direct contact with his personnel.

2. Colleagues can evaluate each others' work. However, this type of assessment is useful when; the colleagues work together for a long period of time, the responsibilities are dependent to each other, and the colleagues do not compete with each other. The point should be mentioned that this type of assessment is not very much common.
3. A team of evaluators including many experts can evaluate the personnel.
4. The personnel himself can do the assessment. This is because everybody knows him/herself better than anybody else.
5. Another type of assessment is that which is done by the personnel to evaluate the head or the boss of the organization. The main purpose of this assessment is that it helps the bosses to know about their performance from the personnel's' viewpoint (Saadat, 2007).

Evaluation is a comprehensive process for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting information. Evaluation is mainly conducted to find out to what extent the objectives have been achieved. Generally, evaluations are of two types: summative and formative. Summative evaluation is that which is currently used at the end of an academic year at schools. This type of evaluation is not capable of finding the necessary changes to be done during the academic year because it is conducted at the end of the program. Formative evaluation, on the other hand, is an on-going evaluation process which is done while the program is being run (Rastegar, 2008).

In the same line, Rastegar (2008) considered evaluation as having four types: context evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation, and product evaluation. The context evaluation is conducted to set the objectives based on the environment. It is based on considering the possible problems in real context. The input evaluation refers to evaluation the available facilities to be utilized to achieve the objectives. Process evaluation is concerned with the possible problems that may emerge while a program is on-going. The product evaluation is concerned with evaluating the objectives (Rastegar, 2008).

11. Conclusion

Strategic management is one of the essential tools that organizations can utilize in order to achieve various objectives. Strategic management allows the organizations to employ creative ways to build the future. In the same line, one of the most effect ways of utilizing strategic management is to pass the responsibilities to the managers from the very beginning of gathering the necessary information to implementing the strategy. As a matter of fact, when it comes to making critical decisions while implementing a strategy, all the managers should participate and share their knowledge to make a wise and proper decision.

In a nutshell, the point should be highlighted that any new selected strategy becomes old after a while. As a result, organizations are cautioned not to rely merely on one strategy for a long period of time.

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