



Developing Goals, Focus and Leaders

# Winning Ways

A publication of

## Winning Ways

Developing Goals, Focus and Leaders

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This copy of Winning Ways is a gift for you from Winning Ways, Inc. Our strategic planning resources are designed to help you attain and sustain the processes that will bring you the results you need to grow your business.

Call Joan Fletcher 703 273 9299 today. We are committed to help you achieve your goals.

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## Why Strategic Planning?

### You need to know where your company is going

Did you know that the majority of people spend 50 weeks a year planning a two week vacation, but they don't put aside a single week for planning the remaining 50?

Did you know that many businesses don't have a current business plan, let alone a strategic one, committed to writing? People will tell you that the plan is "in my desk here somewhere" or "right up here in my head!"

So what's the big deal anyway?

There is an old Japanese proverb that says, "Vision without action is a day dream. Action without vision is a nightmare." If you have invested your time and hard work into moving your company forward, but haven't defined where you want to be and how you are going to get there, you may be experiencing that nightmare. To get where you want to be, you need a strategic plan.

### It's All in the Plan

Strategic planning can be described as "the process that determines the future direction of an organization, practice, or business."

As an organization, you need to first define what you want, where you want to be, what you are to become. Thus, your vision: "To offer the best XYZ on the market with the best customer service approach." According to Linda L. Martin and David G. Mutchler

in *Fail Safe Leadership*, a "compelling vision is a powerful force that creates energy and focus on the direction and future of the organization." Yet, to achieve the vision, you need to take strategic actions. You need a plan — a strategic plan of specific steps and actions all focused on the outcome you desire. Ultimately, all of your marketing, sales strategies, budgeting, employee reviews, and other processes and policies must be geared to help you realize your vision. Everything your company does should be done for that purpose.

*continued on page 3*

## Take a Look at Stew Leonard's

This legendary grocery store in Connecticut began as a dairy farm in the early 1920s. But Stew Leonard envisioned a retail store where parents could buy fresh, quality products and the children could watch fresh milk being processed. Opened in the late 1960s, the then 17,000 square-foot Stew Leonard's carried just eight items. After 30 additions, the store carries 2,000 specifically selected products (a typical grocery offers 30,000) and has a "passionate approach" to customer service that Stew Leonard himself defined: "Rule #1 — The customer is always right. Rule #2 — If the customer is wrong, reread Rule #1."

By taking strategic steps to work toward the vision, Stew Leonard's has 250,000 shoppers a week — some traveling as much as 50 miles — in three stores. ([www.stewleonards.com](http://www.stewleonards.com))



## What Can Strategic Planning Do For Your Organization? Check It Out!

Strategic planning begins with a strategic thinking and business planning process and concludes with a logical and timely plan that, when implemented, can provide the following benefits:

- A definition of “success” in terms of what you want to accomplish for your organization
- A road map of how to achieve your success
- A vision, or destination, for the entire organization
- It creates a “team” by defining the game plan and identifying the competition
- A framework to better allocate financial and human resources
- Guidelines for the delegation of decision making
- A business model by which decision making is quicker and more efficient
- It creates an environment for everyone to become committed to accomplish specific objectives
- It promotes “pro active” management vs. constant fire fighting and high tension
- It acts as a scorecard, which allows for a sense of accomplishment
- A process for creating your own future
- It identifies trends or technologies that are either opportunities or threats to your existence
- A framework for the development of strategies and proper organizational structure
- It creates a sense of purpose
- It is the base and logic for all planning
- The power is in the process of developing a strategic plan.
- The plan forces one to address vital and fundamental issues
- The process of developing a strategic plan is a team building exercise of supreme value by forcing the examination of basic values
- In today's 24/7 global economy, the plan reduces and eliminates many of the “OOP ” in business that the bottom line cannot afford in terms of people, time and dollars.

If your business plan is gathering dust on a shelf or frequently changing shape in your mind because of outside influences, the key is action. Success requires continued learning and improvement. **For more information on the strategic thinking and business planning process, contact Joan Fletcher at (703) 273-9299 today.**

## Strategic Planning Gives You the Competitive Edge

*“What business strategy is all about, what distinguishes it from all other kinds of business planning is, in a word, competitive advantage. Without competitors there would be no need for strategy, for the purpose of strategic planning is to enable a company to gain, as effectively as possible, a sustainable edge over its competitors,”*

*Keniche Ohmae,*

*“Mr. Strategy,” Japanese management guru*

When you define the vision for your organization, you are defining what will make your business different from your competitors. After all, you are not trying to make a widget just like everyone else. Rather, you want to make a better widget and provide better customer service. What you may not realize is that defining your vision, developing a strategic plan to get you there, then carry

ing it out through goals and action steps gives you the competitive edge. According to Graham Kenny, a strategic plan specialist, research shows that while many organizations “start with good intentions to implement their strategic plans, but . . . on average, only half of the strategic management contracted to implement were carried out.” He also notes that organizations without effective strategic planning are not only “open to attack” by competitors, but are also destined to fail. *“Strategic Liability,” courtesy of Yellow Brix, Inc., [www.smartbiz.com](http://www.smartbiz.com).*

Can your organization afford to lose the competitive edge? Not many businesses can. Its time to get your strategic house in order and carry it through. That way, you’ll be moving in the direction you want to go, not stalling out.

**Why Strategic Planning?** *continued from page 1*

**Vision, Mission, Action**

Martin and Mutchler outline a multi step process to get results. First, establish a vision. As already stated, this vision is what your organization wants to be. Our example company wants to create the “best possible XYZ with the best customer service.” Next, you need to develop a mission statement, which will define how you will get there over a given period of time, usually in the next year. “In other words, without being too specific, what will your company do in the *first* year to get a healthy start on achieving the vision in *three* years,” they state. Let’s say our one year mission is to “refine our production processes in a manner that reduces our error rate while we expand out customer support center.”

To support the mission, you need to formulate critical success factors. Martin and Mutchler note that these are “things that are both necessary and sufficient to achieve the mission.” For our XYZ company, our critical success factors may be to first incorporate quality control best practices while improving our employee retention rates in the customer service area.

Now you need to get down to the nitty gritty: goals and action steps. Goals are designed to support the critical success factors. Goals should be measurable and accountable. For our example, how are we going to improve our customer service employee retention rates? Our goals may be to a incorporate a quarterly training update, b institute a “flex scheduling” option that gives employees choices and c establish an incentive program that will increase retention rates from X to Y .

Finally, you need to develop “action steps” to achieve those goals. Action steps are specific statements of “who does what by when.”

Once the strategic plan is in place, it must be communicated clearly and concisely to all levels of the organization, as the Ritz Carlton does through its Gold Standards. Everyone in the organization must know and understand where the company is going and what they must do to get there. It is much like a branding campaign – everything and every action is related to one central idea, the vision.

The Ritz Carlton Company’s vision is communicated from top to bottom through its Gold Standards. “Our Gold Standards are the foundation of The Ritz Carlton Company, L.L.C. They encompass the values and philosophy by which we operate and include The Credo, The Motto, The Three Steps of Service, The Basics, and “The Employee Promise.”  
*Taken from www.ritzcarlton.com*

You can be sure every Ritz Carlton employee knows and lives by these standards. In fact, each employee is empowered to carry out the vision. Maids, for example, are authorized to spend up to 2,000 without prior approval to fix any guest’s problem. *The Tom Peters Seminars. Vintage Books, 1994, pg. 77*

Pete Johnson said “Strategy is a style of thinking, a conscious and deliberate process, an intensive implementation system, the science of ensuring future success.” By incorporating each part of this strategic planning process into your corporate culture, you will ensure that everyone within your organization is striving to achieve the same vision.



**Who Said It? Complete this quiz and mail it in – if you are right, you can be a winner!**

**Match the quote with the speaker:**

- A. “Strategy is a style of thinking, a conscious and deliberate process, an intensive implementation system, the science of ensuring future success.”
- B. “What business strategy is all about, what distinguishes it from all other kinds of business planning is, in a word, competitive advantage.”
- C. “Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare.”

Fill in the letter of the quote that matches:  
 \_\_\_ Pete Johnson      \_\_\_ Japanese Proverb  
 \_\_\_ Kenichi Ohmae

*Three correct entries drawn from all correct entries will win a copy of Fail-Safe Leadership by Linda L. Martin and Dr. David G. Mutchler.*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Company:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**City, State, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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 3312 Saddlestone Court, Oakton, VA 22124**

## Strategic Alignment a Key to Achieving Your Vision

You've defined your organization's vision. You've written the mission statement. You've identified the critical success factors, developed goals, and outlined an action plan. Now you've got to make it work. You make it by getting everyone's buy in. That is, every person in your organization must function in a manner that is consistent with your strategic plan.

Linda L. Martin and David G. Mutchler say that you need to align all of your organization's operating systems to the strategic vision.

"It just makes sense that when the goals of all individuals in an organization are aligned with the overall vision of the company, positive results are more likely to occur," they write in *Fail Safe Leadership*. "If the alignment process is to be effective, it must involve everyone in the organization, from the boardroom to the boiler room, to ensure that they are all pulling in the same direction."

It is important to involve everyone to get the critical buy in. You can communicate your vision and mission by putting it up on posters in the hallways, or as computer screen savers for

every unit in your organization. But what effect will that have on the employees? It is critical, say Martin and Mutchler, to "break it down into smaller and smaller pieces until every one . . . has clear, specific action steps that lead directly to desired outcomes." Essentially, each employee must understand his or her role in making the vision happen. And importantly, each and every employee must be given the support and resources necessary to complete their action steps.

To sum up, expert planning and implementation is important, but if you don't have a trusted advisor to assist you with the critical thought processes and accountability associated with carrying it through, your efforts will be for naught.

You should review your vision and mission statements annually, and make necessary adjustments down to the action steps employees need to carry out. You should also consider talking to a professional who can guide you through the processes. "By making alignment an ongoing process," say Martin and Mutchler, "your company moves methodically forward and ever closer to achieving its vision.



### Who We Are and What We Do

Joan Fletcher launched Winning Ways in 2001 to work with businesses and individuals focusing on effective management, leadership, and sales through implementing personal and professional business and life plans.

Joan serves as a facilitator to help managers organize their thoughts, respond creatively and think it through to implementing the best leadership, processes and results that develop goals, focus and leaders.

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#### Developing Goals, Focus and Leaders

*"Leadership should be born out of the understanding of the needs of those who would be affected by it."*

— Marian Anderson



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