

Grand Strategy System for Goal Accomplishment

When we want to complete this journey. Is there a reward for early arrival? Do we need to learn special skills? Is this a team effort or do I have to go it alone? Will I have the resources I need to complete the task in one step or do I need to plan on stops for resources. Are there faster ways and what are the trade-offs?

When we sit down to begin planning a trip we don't usually ask ourselves all these questions. Certain assumptions automatically provide some of the answers. But those assumptions are often based on assumed knowledge that answers these very questions. If a question remains unanswered or a contingency not planned for what is the possibility the journey will go as planned?

Business goals are similar to journeys. But, it is surprising how little thought and planning goes into creating the paths to achieve the goals and the contingencies to overcome the hurdles. Just as we consider the roadblocks to a journey we must also consider things which may impact the achievement of our goals in the business environment. The Grand Strategy System (GSS) was designed to help us examine possible actions that would help advance a goal. These actions are focused on the larger picture of the total environment of the organization, other competing, or supporting, organizations. Since accomplishing goals are tied to resource availability, the planning team uses the lists to map strategies, actions, and tasks which are feasible given resource constraints.

With a goal identified the primary question we consider with the system is:

What can be done in [a specific area] to ensure the success of this goal?

Before using this system the major action steps should be identified with possible roadblocks identified. There are nine specific areas we

examine. In addition to focusing on a specific area we also examine it against the other eight areas. We suggest brainstorming two to three items per area. Each of the areas are defined below;

Planning: This is the lead area. It is less defined but more concerned with are we doing it. It focuses on answering several key questions such as, Who should be involved in planning this goal? What processes are involved? What is the potential impact? How will these plans be deployed vertically and horizontally? How are plans linked to action and evaluation? The two primary questions that are asked are:

“What can be done in planning to ensure the success of this goal?” and

“In the area of [Infrastructure] what Planning activities can be done to ensure the success of this goal?”

Infrastructure: The management of formal and informal organizational structures including individual roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. This would include parallel organizations, collateral duties and adhocracies, structures designed for specific purposes without regard to the larger organization, for the three things that organizations do: doing the job, improving performance, and catering to crises. The two primary questions that are asked are:

“What can be done in the area of infrastructure to ensure the success of this goal?” and “In the area of [Culture] what changes in infrastructure can be made to ensure the success of this goal?”

Culture: An independent variable which refers to the groups identity relating to the groups values and beliefs. It is often referred to as an outcome resulting from activities in other areas because values and beliefs are realized through actions. Our concern with this area is with the actions that can be taken in other specific areas that will advance our values and create the beliefs that we

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want the organization to espouse. These outcomes can, and should, be managed. The two primary questions that are asked are:

"What can be done in culture area to ensure the success of this goal?" and "In the area of [Measurement] what activities relating to Culture (Values & Beliefs) can be done to ensure the success of this goal?"

Measurement: The extent that an organization's measurement systems support problem solving, decision-making, and provides emphasis for the goal accomplishment. The two primary questions that are asked are:

"What measurements will help ensure the success of this goal?" and "In the area of [Education, Training & Development] what measurements will help ensure the success of this goal?"

Education, Training & Development: Initiatives that are focused on acquiring knowledge and skills that would help employees prepare for, and advance, goals. This area feeds the development of an organization-wide training & development program with new initiatives to increase employee general education and job related capacities to meet emerging challenges generated by the initiatives. This area has the potential for becoming a plan of its own. We should consider that major goals could have a "start-up effect" requiring more training hours per year. The two primary questions that are asked are:

"What can be done in Education, Training & Development to ensure the success of this goal? and "In the area of [Motivation/Rewards & Recognition] what education, training & development activities can be done to ensure the success of this goal?"

Motivation/Rewards & Recognition: Recognition of staff's commitment. This includes pay and other systems for recognizing and thanking, workers for their level of support
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for the organization's mission. This area includes both formal and informal, simple and complex systems. The two primary questions that are asked are:

"What motivation/rewards & recognition systems will help ensure the success of this goal?" and "In the area of [environment] what motivation/rewards & recognition activities can be done to ensure the success of this goal?"

Environment: The physical work area; location, size, lighting, office arrangement, proximity to customers, or other stakeholders. The two primary questions that are asked are:

"What can be done in the environment to ensure the success of this goal?" and "In the area of [politics] what can be done in the environment to ensure the success of this goal?"

Political: This area refers to the satisfaction of critics and other stakeholders, both internal and external to the organization. This is the most difficult area to manage. It requires unique strategies, tactics and skills. The two primary questions that are asked are:

"What can be done in the political area to ensure the success of this goal?" and

"In the area of [Technology] what political activities can be done to ensure the success of this goal?"

Technology: It refers to the technological changes that can do things or help advance areas that have not previously been possible. The two primary questions that are asked are:

"What can be done in technology to ensure the success of this goal?" and "In the area of [planning] what technology applications can be done to ensure the success of this goal?"