

Strategic planning

Have you ever sat down and wondered what the words 'strategic planning' means and what they actually are?

If I was to poll 10 people, I am certain I will get 10 different opinions as to what they considered 'strategic planning' to be.

Let me start to explore this word by firstly [defining](#) the word, then research the internet to find sites offering their author's [understanding of the word](#) and finally draw my own [conclusions](#).

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In order to define the words strategic planning, one need to firstly define the words separately and then combine the definitions. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines 'strategic' as:

1. Of or serving the ends of strategy; useful or important with regard to strategy (strategic considerations; strategic move)
2. (of materials) essential in fighting a war
3. (of bombing or weapons) done or for use against an enemy's home territory as a longer-term military objective

Not a pleasant set of definitions, how about the word 'strategy':

1. The art of war
2. a) the management of an army or armies in a campaign; b) the art of moving troops, ships, aircraft, etc. into favourable positions (cf. tactics 1); c) an instance of this or a plan formed according to it
3. A plan of action or policy in business or politics etc. (economic strategy)

Well at least the third definition is a little more palatable.

How about the word 'planning'. Planning is defined as:

1. transitive. (often followed by that + clause or to + infinitive) arrange (a procedure etc.) beforehand; form a plan (planned to catch the evening ferry).
2. transitive. a design (a building, new town, etc.). b make a plan of (an existing building, an area, etc.).
3. transitive. (as planned adj.) in accordance with a plan (his planned arrival; planned parenthood).
4. intransitive. make plans.

Planning is a derivative of the word 'plan'. The definition of the word 'plan' is:

1. a) a formulated and especially detailed method by which a thing is to be done - a design or scheme; b) an intention or proposed proceeding (my plan was to distract them; plan of campaign)
2. A drawing or diagram made by projection on a horizontal plane, esp. showing a building or one floor of a building (cf. elevation 2a)
3. A fairly large-scale map of a town or district
4. a) a table etc. indicating times, places, etc. of intended proceedings; b) a diagram of an arrangement (prepared the seating plan)
5. An imaginary plane perpendicular to the line of vision and containing the objects shown in a picture

Putting the two words together we could define 'strategic planning' as

- A formulated and especially detailed method by which a thing is to be done in order to bring about a favourable position for the organism

Even so, they do not really seem to help. To me they only offer a guide as to what we should be looking for.

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So what exactly is strategic planning and how should one go about it?

You can use the internet to search for articles containing the word 'strategic planning' and will probably discover over 42 million references to the word. - [Reference](#).

Even if one was able to spend 10 minutes researching each one it would take over 7,000,000 hours or over 2,300 years for one person, researching 8 hours a day non stop to try to uncover all possible meanings - and then that is only web pages available in English.

So why bother? Well if one does not bother, how in the world can any one person, or group of people or spiritual leaders or political leaders hope to overcome the animosity, hatred, distrust and all other gaps keeping harmony only ever the 'light at the end of the tunnel'?

Well I for one have thought about this conundrum and have after researching several web sites, discovered an amazing set of words that could just help me solve this conundrum. These include:

- [Sun Tzu](#)
- [Peter Drucker](#)
- [Michael Porter](#)

Sun Tzu - [Back](#)

Sun Tzu was a Chinese philosopher c 231 BCE. A good source of reference is <http://cazmedia.com/suntzu> or http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun_Tzu.

What interested me was Sun Tzu's 6 principles - namely

1. Capture your market without destroying it
2. Avoid competitor's strength, attack weakness
3. Use foreknowledge and deception
4. Use speed and preparation
5. Use alliances and strategic control points
6. Develop your character

Peter Drucker - [Back](#)

Peter Drucker is regarded as the 'Father' of business planning. <http://www.peter-drucker.com/>

One could learn a great deal about strategic planning from his books.

I have made a study of the courses offered by Peter Drucker and have summarised their content in a white paper called [PeterDruckerWhitePaper](#) - written on 11 July 2001

Michael Porter - [Back](#)

Michael Porter is regarded as 'one of the 50 business intellectuals of our time' (<http://www.manyworlds.com/index2.aspx?from=/authorCOs.aspx&coid=CO101021658721>).

An article that I found especially interesting was published in Fast Company magazine - March 2001, Professor Porter has re-entered (a resurrection) the strategic planning arena. In this article it is claimed, "strategy has lost its intellectual currency. It was losing adherents" - see <http://www.fastcompany.com/online/44/porter.html>.

After studying this article I wrote a paper called [Does chaos reign](#). Please peruse it at your leisure.

My conclusion - [Back](#)

Every author seems to be saying the same thing and has a piece of the puzzle. They all seem right, but then again could be wrong.

It could take a lifetime of study to find the best approach. Applying the techniques is another story.

If you are interested in a simpler approach to strategic planning, please see the pdf file called [StrategicPlanningPresentation](#). Please peruse it at your leisure.