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## INTRODUCTION

According to Wikipedia, strategic planning is organizational process of defining its strategy or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy. It may also extend to control mechanisms for guiding the implementation of the strategy.

It is an organized way of making decisions to allocate resources to pursue a decision or strategy of an organization.

The strategic planning is a process of setting organization's long-term objectives and creating a plan to achieve them. It is an essential part of running a successful organization because it ensures that all staff understand the organization's vision and goals and how their work contributes to achieving those goals. Strategic planning is an ongoing process involving analysing current state of the organization, setting goals/objectives and creating an action plan to achieve the set goals, and also monitor and evaluate progress. A successful strategic plan should be comprehensive, dynamic and directed to specific needs of the organization.

There is a business proverb that says: "a person or an organization that do not plan is planning to fail" I perfectly agree with this common proverb. Most organizations in the world today especially those in Africa are either stagnating in growth or collapsing due to the failure to strategically plan. The vision of an organization will be a mirage and far from realization when the organization do not take the right steps to strategically plan how to develop objectives that can lead them to achieve the organizational vision.

In sub-Saharan Africa, stagnating business organizations are common and their under development is compounded by high poverty levels and lack of purchasing power of the

populace. The reasons for failure in most organizations in sub-Saharan Africa are attributed to the following:

1. Most leaders lack the skill for preparing an all-inclusive strategic plan for the organization. Lack of involvement of junior ranging staff who actually implement the plan may be a contributing factor for failure.
2. In most organizations a good strategic plan is prepared but leaders lack the skill of taking the right steps to implement and monitor progress effectively.
3. Poor communication skills of leaders may result in poor preparation and implementation of the strategic plan.
4. The process of preparation and implementation need dedication and commitment from leaders and team members or implementers. Most employees especially in the public sector lack commitment and focus towards work.
5. The process of preparing and execution of a strategic plan is considered capital intensive especially for small skill industries with limited resources. Most small skill industries that pull together resources to form a strategic alliance turn to overcome these challenges and thus are doing better in terms of making profit and economic growth.
6. Most organizations fail to align job performance with organizational goals, hence resulting in staff not attaching importance to working hard to achieve organizational goals.

The benefits of a successful strategic plan cannot be over emphasized. These benefits include an improved alignment of organization's goals and its day-to-day operations. This is a shared responsibility and understanding of organizational direction and increase clarity and focus on the most important objectives. Organizations can gain competitive advantage by having

effective strategic plan with a clear vision on the direction of the organization, with effective objective that eventually will take the organization to where it desires.

This essay will provide you with an overview of strategic planning and the steps taken to prepare an effective strategic plan. This essay also covers: preliminary preparation, formulation of vision and mission statements, situational analysis for both internal and external environments, and the various methods used for the analysis, setting of goals/objectives, implementation of the plan, and monitoring and evaluation. Some challenges and benefits of strategic planning were also explored. Sometimes I also use questions to better explain my presentation of particular ideas and topics.

#### WHAT IS STRATEGIC PLANNING?

According to Wikipedia, strategic planning is organizational process of defining its strategy or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy. It may also extend to control mechanisms for guiding the implementation of the strategy.

It is an organized way of making decisions to allocate resources to pursue a decision or strategy of an organization.

#### WHY IS STRATEGIC PLANNING NECESSARY?

- To focus on specific initiative
- To be allocate resources
- To create better focus in your in the organization
- To create better alignment within the organization.
- To change the direction of your organization
- To deal with competitors

- Merging companies together.

## PRELIMINARY PLANNING PHASE

This phase set timeline and also determines whether the company is planning a strategy for long term or short-term strategy. Stakeholders are chosen, sometime the organization would have to hire consultants and advisors with much experience. If the organization if financially constrained then the of organization team would have to work together and form a strong committee. Organization needs to be clear on why they need a strategic. There must be a focus and clear business log for this purpose. Is the organization introducing new products? Or to improve upon old products? Is the organization rebranding its products or loss of costumer patronage etc. this business opportunity was be clearly studied and understood because developing a strategic. This planning is to enable the organization to produce a blue print of the organizations culture and business advantage which will help the organization to achieve its success (KLASS, 2023).

After selection of the committee and parameters, the next step in this stage is to gather operational data about the consumer dynamics, product behaviour verses consumer demands and other market surveillance

## SETTING OF VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

The most important component of strategic planning is the vision, mission statements and core values.

In developing a vision and mission statements, the following questions must be answered to form the assessment activity for the development of the above.

- What is the desired state of the organization?

- Determine where the organization is going?
- What would be a good vision statement for the organization

VISION: This outlines what the organization wants to be viewed by stakeholders and the world at large. It is a long-term view of the future. It is a statement of inspiration to the organization, staff and customers. It concentrates on the future (KLASS, 2023) (Consultant, 2014). Example: Health facility treating sick people may have a vision statement as **“improve the health conditions of the populace.”**

MISSION: It defines the fundamental purpose of the organization and explains why it exists and what it does to achieve the vision, and what it does to achieve the set vision (KLASS, 2023). An example could be **“to provide desired quality health service through a highly motivated staff”**

VALUES: these are beliefs shared among staff and stakeholders of the organization. Values share the culture, priorities of the organization, determination and how to uphold and protect the corporate image of the organization (KLASS, 2023; Consultant, 2014).

STRATEGY: This is sometimes called the roadmap. Strategy mainly is a combination of the goals of the organization and the policies put in place to help the organization to progress to where it wishes to be. It's the path chosen to enable push the organization towards the end vision. It determines during the implementation stage, whether the organization is moving towards the right direction (KLASS, 2023).

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT



Strategic alignment basically is turning your vision into reality and meeting the objectives defined in the plan. This part of the strategic planning is crucial and most important where all stakeholders and team members are aligned to the vision of the organization. Every member must understand clearly what the organization objectives and targets are. This step enables team members to focus on implementation and to have a great feel and appreciation of the direction towards success can be predicted or attained (KLASS, 2023).

#### INPUTS/TOOLS FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The following tools can be used for needs assessment. During identification step needs assessment will help the organization identify the needs necessary to carry the organization to the level that is desired for. The following tools could be deployed for an organizational needs assessment (KLASS, 2023) (Consultant, 2014).

1. the most widely used tool for organizational needs assessment is the SWOT Analysis, which stands for (Strengths, Weaknesses, opportunities, and Threats) SWOT analysis considers both internal and external factors. The internal factors are made of the organizational strengths which could be, good human resource, financially sound or strategically placed to attract customers or dependability on known to provide quality products or services and good corporate image. The weaknesses are also an internal organizational deficiency which be a lack of or inadequate human and financial resources, poor corporate image, substandard products or services etc (KLASS, 2023) (Wow Academics, 2021).

The external factors of the SWOT analysis include the opportunities and threats not the sometimes the threats could also be coming within the organization. Opportunities could be

any factors that will promote the growth and success of the organizations vision. Threats generally are inhibitory factors or an insufficiency or a lack in some critical factors needed to propel the organization to its desired vision.

2. PEST analysis. This is another type of needs assessment. This stands for (Political, Economic, Social, and Technological). It provides a view on macroeconomic factors which could affect the organization. The idea is that by knowing what is changing in the corporate world around you by help to take a strategic decision which will be beneficial to the organization. Sometimes this tool is also known as PESTEL. PEST with Environmental and Legal factors inclusive. In Pestel analysis there are three levels of environment (KLASS, 2023) (Expect Program Management (EPM), 2019).

- The internal environment: -this level of environment includes employees, assets and technology
- Micro-Environment: - this level forms the second level and contains new entrants, suppliers, competitors, buyers and substitutes.
- The third level is known as the Macro-Environment. This level of the organization contains: - political, economic, social and political factors

In PEST analysis: -

- Political:-the action of government can either create an enabling environment for business to flourish or collapse. Formulation of business policies with high taxation as well as electricity will lead to unfavourable environment for businesses to grown. Example has one of the best and fast-growing economy because government policies on businesses is very favourable and creates an enabling environment to attract investors.

- Economic factors: - the economy of the country is having an impact on businesses and investors. The high the economic opportunities of a country the high the possible of attracting investors as well as an increase in the purchase power of customers. Fiscal policies, market demands, interest rates and inflation rate have a huge impact on business and investment potential. Example the economy of China has grown massively because of increase GDP combined with huge internal market demand over a billion people create an enabling environment for business to grow.
- Social factors: - this includes educational levels coupled with cultural factors and traditional beliefs create a huge impact on businesses. Entrepreneurial spirit, career development and skill/expert worker also determine whether to invest in such an environment. In certain countries the willingness to work and become more productive for the business environment is low. Someone countries people have the perception that they are working for someone or the government and do not see the reason for hard work.
- Technological factors: - since the industrial revolution, there has been a big technological shift. Improved technology has changed many businesses and increase productivity and also improve advertising and delivery of good and services. This technological shift has improved the economy drastically. Example the presence of cell phone has improve a lot of businesses as well as an increase in customer demand and consumption. Rapid technological shift is the driving force for our globalization (Expect Program Management (EPM), 2019) (KLASS, 2023).

## HOW TO CONDUCT PEST ANALYSIS

Step 1: Determine the most important PEST factors to collect. There is an infinite factor to collect however, the most important factors that will help achieve success in the organization are determine and for collection to safe time.

Step2: collection of information: -the PEST factors of interest that was determined above are collected. Identifying a skilful staff interested or experienced in collecting information is made responsible for collecting the data of interest (Expect Program Management (EPM), 2019).

Step 3: analysing the data. In this section data is analysed and there is also brainstorming to identify the OPPORTUNITIES necessary to align to the organizations vision and mission statements. This will help the organization to achieves its goals and targets. Threats are also identified. The trends that will jeopardize the organization or business and how to avoid them are all determined (KLASS, 2023).

Step3: Take Action. Decision which factors identify should be implemented and take step to act on them with the appropriate resources in place.

#### PITFALLS TO AVOID DURING PEST ANALYSIS

1. Making assumption instead of collecting fact. This is very important during PEST analysis because some people will make many assumptions instead of gathering facts that will help the organization to succeed (Expect Program Management (EPM), 2019).
2. Collecting too much data. There is an attempt to collect too much data which may not be beneficial to the organization. It may be expensive and time wasting.

3. PEST analysis is not only about conducting your analysis and forgetting about it. The most important is to put it into effective use or implementation.
4. Thinking that PEST analysis is the only think you need. PEST analysis is just a tool needed to understand the micro and macro environment of the organization. There quiet very important other decisions that are very key to strategic planning. Example.

3. ASSIMPLER Blueprint:- the business blueprint of the organization is based on this framework. This framework was developed by Mandar Vanarse. ASSIMPLER stands for (Availability, Scalability, Security, Interoperability, maintainability, performance, low cost of ownership, Extendibility and Reliability). This tool is mostly applied to business services and processes (KLASS, 2023).

4. STEER analysis: - stands for (socio-cultural, technology, economic, ecological and regulatory factors) (KLASS, 2023).

5. ATM Approach (Antecedent Condition, Target Strategies, Measure Progress and Impact). This tool becomes more effective if the desired end state is defined. The ATM approach uses the root cause analysis (RCA) to understand the bottle necks, threats, and challengers to achieving results or endstate defined by the organization. Not all antecedent factors identified by RCA are within the purview of the organization to change. Based on the organization's resources (both human and financial), the organization need to prioritize which antecedent challengers needs urgent attention and which to defer or do nothing about it. Strategies are then formulated to target the prioritized antecedent conditions. Once prioritized antecedent conditions are targeted and sought, strategies are put in place and performance measures and indicators are developed geared towards endstate results (KLASS, 2023).

6. EPISTEL analysis: this another tool used in developing a strategic plan. EPISTEL stands for (Environment, Political, Informatics, Social, Technological, Economical and Legal)

7. BALANCED SCORECARD. This is a tool used by managers to develop strategic plan and also to monitor performance (Expert Program Management , 2022).

Importance of the Balanced Scorecard.

- It's used to monitor and communicate progress in the organization.
- It links every staff's day to day work to the strategy
- It helps to prioritize organization's resources and needs
- It increases customer satisfaction, financial credibility, efficiency, knowledge and innovations.

Balanced scorecard focuses on the following. The vision and Strategy of the organization which forms the pivot of the balanced scorecard. Four main areas are critically focused on: -

- Financial performance of the business. This area of the scorecard focuses on revenue, operational cost of the organization and expenditures, and net profit made by the organization.
- Customer satisfaction. This part of the tool focus on customer satisfaction which (Expert Program Management , 2022) includes levels of returns of goods which are shipped to customers. Lifetime value of products to customers, quality of products and feedback from customers determines customer satisfaction.
- Internal environment: this focus on efficiency of the business. How much resources are ned to run the business. Inventor levels, machine downtime unit cost of supplies and product.

- Learning and Growth: - this area focuses on internal knowledge and innovations.

Employee motivation and satisfaction is key to the growth of the organization.

Employee retention. When employers are satisfied with conditions of work and emoluments employee attrition rate reduces. Employee experience increases productivity and quality of products. The level of new product ideas is also very important to grow the organization. Largely employee satisfaction is ultimate to increasing profit and hence growth of the organization (KLASS, 2023).

8. SCENARIO PLANNING: - Scenario Planning is a process of visualizing and making assumptions about the future market positions. This is a form of brainstorming process to identify what future conditions or events are probable. Scenario planning also determines what consequences may result from the future probable events., and how to respond to it or benefit from it. This scenario planning is used mostly by the military for their strategic planning (Wow Academics, 2021).

### **Advantages of scenario planning**

Scenario planning is quiet difference from other strategic planning tools in the sense that, scenario planning takes into accounts future uncertainties. Scenario planning focus on one future uncertainty. It is a comparatively a cheap tool to use and straight forward. (Wow Academics, 2021)

## SITUATIONAL ANAYSIS

Situational analysis, analyses both internal and external environments to explore the threats and opportunities of the external environment and also to determine the weaknesses and strengths within the organization (KLASS, 2023).

External environment usually analyses customer satisfaction, competitive environment and market price dynamics. Other factors to assess in the external situational analysis includes: -

- Market (customer)
- Competition
- Technology
- Supplier markets
- Labour markets
- The economy
- And the Regulatory environment (KLASS, 2023).

#### TIPS FOR CREATING AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC PLAN

- **Set clear objective:** it is important to ensure that the company's goals are clear and specific. This will help to ensure that everyone understands what they need to do to achieve those goals.
- **Keep it simple:** a strategic plan should be easy to understand and should not be overly complicated. This will help to ensure that all staff understand and are comfortable with it.
- **Involve all staff from bottom to top and from top to bottom:** all-inclusive involvement of the planning process is crucial. This will ensure that everyone contributes to making the plan and also understands exactly how to achieve it. This ensures maximum commitment and cooperation amongst implementers (staff) (Consultant, 2014). (TechTarget, 2022)



- **Monitor progress:** monitoring of the progress of the plan in a regular time interval and making adjustments when needed as well as celebrating the success of plan is crucial. This will help the organization to determine whether they are on track to achieving success or not (Consultant, 2014).

## SETTING GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

Strategic planning is used in both public and private organizations, strategic planning and decision process should end with objectives and roadmap.

A good strategic plan is one with goals that can easily be translated to objectives for day-to-day task assignment. A goal or objective which are used interchangeably uses the concept of / or the following characteristics: -

- Specific
- Time bound statement of intended future results
- General and continuous statements of intended future results

The Top-Ranking Order (TRO): This is one of famous technic used in setting goals. This technic arranges the goals in order of importance. The most important first and lest important at the bottom (Brandy, 2020) (KLASS, 2023).

## LOCKE'S GOAL SETTING THEORY

Locke's goal setting theory developed an idea of setting goals that will motivate teams for easy implementation and achievement of targets and to help increase productivity. This goal setting theory is based on research. It is use to develop a goal for yourself, the team and or the organization. Research shows that the right goals can increase motivation and therefore productivity. When challenging goals are set and you receive regular feedback on your progress, it will always increase motivation and productivity. This theory is applied to run

both small scale and large-scale business and organizations. It could also be applied to low and high complexity jobs as well. This theory also shows that vague goals decrease and demotivates team members and eventually lead to low productivity (Expert Program Management, 2018).

#### REASONS WHY GOAL SETTING INCREASES PRODUCTIVITY.

- Goals keep you focused on what is important. When you get disrupted, you quickly realised that you are not on track.
- Goals make you persistent to your perforations. Some days come with super-motivation, whiles other days come with little or no motivation at all. Smart Goals that you are committed to, it will be a constant motivation and therefore a more persistent performance.
- Goals helps the employee to rise to the challenge. If you are committed to your goals, it will stretch you to achieve even more than expected (Expert Program Management, 2018).

#### PRINCIPLES OF GOAL SETTING.

Goals that are motivating and known to also increase productivity have the following characteristics

- Clarity
- Challenge
- Commitment
- Feedback
- Task complexity

Clarity

To be motivating the goal need to be clear. When a goal is clear, it points exactly to what you need to achieve. If a goal is vague and imprecise it demotivates and therefore becomes unachievable

Example: a clear goal can go like- *increase customer satisfaction by 10%. NOT try and increase customer satisfaction by 10%.*

How to set clear goals includes:

- Use SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound)
- Understand how you will know you have hit your target.
- Ensure you have a metric to track your progress towards your goal (TechTarget, 2022) (Expert Program Management, 2018).

## Challenge

To be motivating goals need to be challenging, but not too challenging. An easy goal will not motivate you and therefore will not help you up you game to achieve the goal. Too challenging goals also will demotivate your because it will appear unimaginable and too theoretical to achieve. To motivating you a goal must balance between challenging you and over challenging. It should not be easy and not too challenging as well. I.e., it must hit the sweet-pot of challenge and over challenge (Speculand, 2020).

Example:

- Too easy: *increase customer satisfaction from present benchmark*
- Too challenging: *increase customer satisfaction by 600%*
- ***Just right:*** *increase customer satisfaction by 10%*

**How to set the right challenging goals.**

- Be honest with yourself and your goal. Be honest of over challenging and too easy goals
- Use scenario planning. Identify obstacle that could lower performance and productivity. Involve, if possible, all team members when crafting your goal. The contribution of all members should be examined critically and considered when relevant. Develop scenario plan to mitigate activities that will slow down performance and productivity (Expert Program Management, 2018) (Consultant, 2014).

### **Commitment**

For a goal to be challenging you must be committed to it. In setting goals for subordinates, you must make sure is not routine. Goals that do not emphasize commitment bound to fail.

Example:

- No commitment: *you dedicate targets to your team.*
- Commitment: *you work together with your team to determine the targets.*

### **How to gain commitment:**

- Ensure agreed targets are realistic and sensible. Make sure each member buys to each goal
- Ensure that if rewards are associated to achievement, they are rewards that are desirable and wanted. Ensure transparency when it comes to rewards.
- Visualization of goals. Imagine how great it will be when you achieve desirable targets or goals for your organization. It may gain you a promotion, increase in salary or bonuses etc (Expert Program Management, 2018) (Consultant, 2014).

### **Feedback**

Feedback is so important to tell you about your progress towards achieving your targets. For a goal to motivate, feedback is very important. For feedback to be effective:

- There must be a goal
- It must be received or given regularly
- Both positive and negative feedback should be welcome (Expert Program Management, 2018) (TechTarget, 2022).

Example:

Good feedback: *Set team members goals and check in or demand feedback weekly.*

Bad feedback: *set team members goal and review at annual performance review.*

#### **How to give and receive feedback:**

- Weekly check-in can be used to track feedback
- Apps and spreadsheet can be used to track progress in the form of feedbacks

#### **Task complexity**

A motivating task or goal must not be too complex. Highly complicated goals can be overwhelming and demotivating. Example:

- Good target setting: *breaks down complex tasks into sub-targets*
- Bad target setting: *set a complicated target and expect team members to deliver on it* (Consultant, 2014).

#### **How to handle complex goals**

- Break complicated tasks into sub-targets
- If you feel overwhelmed by a target it may be too complex

- If you notice complexity in a target call for a review instead of waiting until the end of the set target.

Goal setting, when done well can be a powerful tool for boosting motivation and productivity (Expert Program Management, 2018).

### **CREATION OF ACTION PLAN.**

This stage of the strategic planning is creation of action plan with responsibilities and associated accountability with clear timelines. The action must cover the basis of

WHO- Needs to do what and to what extend and how the person should be responsible and accountable.

WHAT- Goals needs to be prioritise because financial constraints may not allow for all objectives to be implemented. Fewer (about 5 to 10 or high-level goals) goals may yield better results than many objects that cannot be handle due to limited resources.

WHEN- To start should be determine after adequate mobilization of resources (human and financial resources). All staff should be involved in developing the objective and carried on as a team to stage of implementation (Consultant, 2014).

The process of creating an action plan starts with the following: -

1. Write down exactly what you want.
2. Write your goal/goals on paper
3. Set timeline to achieve those goals. Note that this is a target time, however you may achieve the goals way before or after deadlines.
4. Identify the people who are well motivated to help implement the goals. Good leadership skills are needed to keep the level of motivation and sense of responsibility in team members.

5. Review regularly the target goals and its progress, if it is necessary to make changes on a particular goal don't hesitate to do so. Share progress report with all team members.

Arrange your goals by priority as this will help to give more focus and attention to

## STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

This concept of strategic planning is an agreement between two or more parties or organizations to pursue an agreed set of objectives. Partners may provide strategic alliance resources such as, project funding, manufacturing capability, distribution channels, expertise, knowledge, capital equipment, products etc.

Alliance creates the opportunity for partners to collaborate and cooperate to synergize each other for a greater profit or benefit than pursuing objective individually. Alliance all pull together expertise and best practice to achieve greater benefit. Alliance also involves sharing of expertise in the area of technology and knowledge transfer. Risk sharing, economic specialization, shared expenses all benefits that strategic alliance can bring to bear to partners and organizations

There are various forms of strategic alliance or partnering examples includes, international coalitions, strategic networks and strategic alliance. In all the afore mention forms of strategic alliance the main principle or aim is to "join forces and resources pursue a common goal over a period of time to achieve greater benefit.

Strategic alliance can be conceptualized as, horizontal, vertical or inter-sectorial.

1. Horizontal strategic alliance: - this type of strategic alliance if characterized by collaboration of two or more organizations in the same industry e.g., alliance between Sina Corp and Yahoo to offer online auction services in China.

2. Vertical strategic alliance: collaboration between two or more organizations or firms along the vertical chain. Robotic firm providing service for a car manufacturing company such as Land Rover.
3. Intersectoral strategic alliances: this concept is characterized by collaboration between two or more firm or organizations in different industries and also not related along the vertical chain.

Another concept distinguishes between four forms of Strategic Alliances:

1. Joint ventures: - this is a collaboration between two or more legally independent organizations or companies to share some resources and capabilities or competitive advantage.
2. Equity strategic alliance: it's a type of alliance where two or more firms own different percentages of the company formed by combining different proportions of resources and capabilities to create competitive advantage
3. Non- equity strategic alliance: -it is the type of alliance where two or more firms develop a contractual-relationship to share some of their resources, knowledge or capabilities for competitive advantage.
4. Global strategic alliance: - this a working relationship developed by two or more organizations across national boundaries, sometimes between companies and foreign governments (KLASS, 2023).

## CONTINGENCY PLANNING

This is a very important step of the strategic planning. The business environment is unstable and can be affected by economic factors such a drift in demand and supply, competition, inflation and political influence. Contingency planning helps organizations to continue



running in the presences of unforeseen changes. This makes sure that an organizational strategic plan does not become obsolete when the changes or challenges occur. Efficient and effective adjustment of the organization goals occurs when there is a contingency plan in place (Consultant, 2014).

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN/EXECUTION

This stage of the strategic planning is to make sure the high-level goals are executed on the day-to-day basis. The goals are mostly incorporated into the performance appraisal goals of the staff and monitored carefully on daily basis; reviews must be carried out on regular periods e.g., quarterly. Short falls must be given serious attention to correct it. Successes along the way both small and big should be celebrated and not to wait until the end of the period. This will serve as a motivation for staff to continue given out their best (Consultant, 2014).

Implementation of the strategic plan starts after the development of a clear vision and where you want to take the organization to and make it clear the duration i.e., short term usually two or three years and long term which is usually five years or more.

- Both leadership and staff must be clear about vision and goals they are going to pursue.
- The program portfolio is critically examined and analysed with focus on organizational stability.

- Take a simplified approach to execute set goals which are clear and devoid of ambiguity and doubt. A simplified approach will reduce resources needed to execute your strategic plan.
- Establishment of a strategic direction through multi- year planning is key to the success of your implementation. Quarterly, bi-annually or yearly process assessment to make sure the organization is on track with pursuing the vision is important.
- Determine how you can reorganize resource especially when there are changes in the macro and micro-business environment.
- Constantly assess the environment in order to adjust quickly to avoid the company derailing from its progress path.
- Carry out research programs to analyse the services, team members with regards to focus on implementation of goals and research also will give information on how your competitors are doing.
- Be flexible and ready to adopt to changes
- Actively engage your staff, which should be persistent in order to keep the reminder on purpose and vision of organization. Job performance should be tied to organizational goals.
- Decision making should rely on collection of accurate data from progress report. This helps to make an objective decision.
- Go beyond KPI's to avoid analysis paralysis.
- Encourage team work and motivate each team member to move along. Work across teams more effective and ensure you share successes with start at any point and as well as discussing failures more passionately with team members. Be an effective listener to team members. Their views and contribution must not be taken for granted.

- Learn from failure and be willing to share lessons learned from failures with others especially team members. These lessons learned is incorporated in the next level of your plan. Create the space and time to teach and direct others so that same mistakes will not recure. (McKinley Advisors, 2020) (Brandy, 2020)

### **Why does implementation of strategic plan fail?**

There good strategic planners across the globe, however very little strategic planners specialize in strategic plan implementation. A gap in the skill to effectively implement a strategic plan is created and therefore accounting for the high failure rate of strategic plan of most organizations.

Other factors accounting for failure also includes the following:

- Leaders habitually repeat past mistakes. Adoption of the same methodology as past failure will like result in another failure.  
*As stated by EINSTEIN “insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result”.*
- Failures are often over looked by leaders. It should be should as a learning experience and mechanism taken in the next implementation to take care of the factors that lead to the failure in the previous program.
- Most organizations lack the requisite discipline needed for implementation. Changing the way employers work, the determination, focus and motivation amongst team members is key to achieving organizational success
- Team members should be reinforced with message of new strategy daily followed by encouragement and support on a daily basis.
- Most leaders make good strategy i.e., choices but fail to take the right actions. It takes discipline and dedication to take the right actions.

- All staff of the organization must know the organizations vision and strategy, otherwise the right actions will not be taken. (Speculand, 2020)

## IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning can help an organization to:

- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Set goals and objectives
- Analyse the external environment
- Develop strategies and plans
- Allocate resources effectively
- Monitor and evaluate progress
- Improve communication and coordination
- Enhance decision-making
- Increase motivation and morale

- Foster a culture of innovation
  
- Improve organizational performance (McKinley Advisors, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, strategic planning is an important tool for organizations to use in order to gain a competitive advantage and to ensure long-term success. It is a process of looking into the future and identifying strategies to achieve desired goals and objectives. The process involves a number of steps, including an analysis of the organization's current state and its external environment, the development of a vision and mission statement, the identification of goals and objectives, the development of strategies and tactics to achieve those goals, and the development of an action plan. Strategic planning can help an organization to identify strengths and weaknesses, set goals and objectives, analyse the external environment, develop strategies and plans, allocate resources effectively, monitor and evaluate progress, improve communication and coordination, enhance decision-making, increase motivation and morale, foster a culture of innovation, and improve organizational performance.

Most top organizations in the world today attained the highest peak amongst their peers not because their staff are more intelligent but because they have a clear vision and effective all-inclusive strategic plan in place, and well-motivated simplified objectives that is tied to their job performance. furthermore, staff are determined and focused to achieving set objectives and for that matter the overall goal or vision of the organization (Brandy, 2020).

Strategic plan is not meant for only big organizations; however, it is also very important for small skill industries or organizations. It can also be a very important tool for both public and private entities as well as profit and non-profit organizations.

In sub-Saharan Africa and Ghana for that matter, there is a huge gap in expertise required to perform and direct effective implementation of a strategic plan. This eventually results in failure and collapse of many organizations in this region. This knowledge learned from my course with AIU has already put me in a position to create a lucrative job for me after completion of my doctorate degree. With this new knowledge and skills acquired I can impact positively on many organization especially in the health sector.

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