

Strategy, Structure and Behaviour PDF转换可能丢失图片或格式 ,
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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/500/2021_2022_Strategy_S_c85_500431.htm One of the most important aspects in the conduct of war is the relationship between strategy, structure and behaviour. In fact, the following phrases by Sun Tzu are very illuminating: "To manage a large force in combat is similar to that of a small force. It is a matter of organisation." "To control a large force in combat is similar to that of a small force. It is a matter of formations and signals." Implicit in these two quotations is that size is not a factor in management and control of an army. What is more important is the way the army is organised and structured. This is the same with business organisations. I have often heard businessmen making remarks such as they wish their companies are small. This is because if the company is small, as a boss, he knows everything. There are no labour problems, and hence no labour pains! On the other hand, I have also heard businessmen wishing that they hope their companies are large. This is because if the company is big, he (as the boss) can afford to hire graduates and professionals to work for him. He can then have more time to play golf and pursue other interests and hobbies. Interestingly, the issue is not of size. Rather, the effectiveness and efficiency of any company or institution depend largely on how it is organised and structured. This is supported by the following saying by Sun Tzu : "Order and disorder depends on organisation." Thus, the way a military general organises his army would affect the behaviour of the troops in battle. In the same way, the way a

company is organised and structured will also determine the behaviour of the employees. For example, if a company wants to become international, it must be structured in such a way so as to reward those employees with international experience. In other words, those with overseas experience must enjoy a premium when it comes to promotion and rewards. Otherwise, no one would want to work overseas. Some years ago, a senior bank executive in charge of public relations (PR) asked me for advice on how to justify the activities of his PR department. I told him bluntly that the survival of his PR department depends largely on the magnanimity of his chief executive officer (CEO). I further told him that for his PR department to do well, he must report directly to the CEO as opposed to the senior officer in charge of marketing. This is because in the PR area, a lot of spending has no immediate nor direct returns. In fact, it is very difficult to determine the relationship between any increase in sales to that of PR activities. PR activities are definitely different from those in marketing whereby its expenses on advertising and promotion are all sales-related. Thus, if the PR person were to report to the marketing manager, the outcome is not difficult to predict -- PR activities will end up with step-child treatment. Yet in today's highly competitive environment, the need for effective PR programmes cannot be overlooked. What, then, determines structure? In war, it is always strategy. In other words, the strategy must be the genesis of any organisational design and structure. Undeniably, no organisation starts off with no structure. The point is, when it comes to any new initiatives or programmes, the strategy must be designed first. The

appropriate support structure and systems can then be put in place. It is just like in military campaigns. No army in the world is organised without a structure. If anything, the army is probably one of the most structured organisations around. However, when it comes to planning for war, the starting point for the whole exercise begins with defining and outlining the strategy (or battle plan and goals). For example, in the 1991 war against Iraq, the United States-led forces decided on the strategy first before embarking on how to organise for combat. Otherwise, the United States would have to ship its entire army to the Gulf, including then President George Bush! After all, as the President, he was the commander-in-chief. Of course, in reality, we all know that this was not the case. In fact, in the 1991 Gulf War, the United States experimented with many ways of organising and structuring their troops for war, depending on the strategies concerned. Even General Norman Schwarzkopf was himself a product of overall strategy. There are many reasons why structure and organisation must follow the crystallisation of the strategy in war. Firstly, there is a need for flexibility. This is because battle conditions are quite fluid, and the general on the ground must be given the maximum flexibility to organise and restructure his troops and formations depending on the battle situations. At the same time, battle conditions are filled with uncertainty. Despite the best military intelligence and analyses, the war environment is dynamic and there is an urgent need and requirement to tailor the strategy according to the situation of the battlefield. Thus, the general must be given the maximum leeway to reorganise and restructure his troops. Secondly,

as battle conditions change, the general must change his strategy accordingly. In other words, he has to constantly reorganise according to his strategy. Although he begins with a battle plan, that plan can never be cast in stone. He must constantly reorganise his troops for battles as he changes his plan (strategy) to meet the dynamic conditions of war. These changes are also necessitated as a result of casualties when the war progresses. In sum, he has to be very proactive and seize on any available opportunity to win. At the same time, he will be able to tackle the risks and dangers more effectively. This philosophy of shaping according to the changes on the battleground was true of ancient wars, and is still applicable today. In sum, the relationships between strategy, structure and behaviour can be illustrated by the following diagram: | STRATEGY(Goals, objectives and plans) | | STRUCTURE(Organisation) | | BEHAVIOUR(Results, Outcome)

Interestingly, when it comes to business organisations, we tend to forget about these relationships. We often let the structure dictate the strategy regardless of the changes in the business environment. Unfortunately, an organisation structure can get fossilised over time and develop into a highly bureaucratic institution. As a result, instead of moving forward, it retards progress and cease to be a learning organisation. It avoids risks and seek to take decisions only in areas in which it is comfortable with. Such an approach is perhaps understandable if the business environment is very stable with few changes. However, this is far from the truth today. With the economic and financial turmoils that are affecting the region, I would seriously urge companies to

re-examine their strategies to ensure that they are able to withstand the challenges ahead. If new strategies are required, companies must be bold enough to adopt them and change their organisations accordingly. In other words, an existing organisation or structure should not be viewed as constraints to change if the strategy dictates that the change is necessary. In this aspect, it is very heartening to note that the government has started a comprehensive review of our banking system in order to ensure its competitiveness in the global economy. In the process, some "sacred cows" may have to be done with, and there may be significant changes to the banking industry. For example, mergers as a strategy may be the way to go to ensure that our banks can grow bigger and stronger so as to counter stiff international competition. This would mean substantial changes to the ways banks and other financial institutions are organised and structured in Singapore. The banking industry is only one such example of how changes in strategies may dictate the need to reorganise and restructure. Many other industries in Singapore face the same challenge. While changes are often resisted (more so when the stakeholders concerned are comfortable with existing structures), they are nonetheless necessary for any individual, organisation and society to improve and progress. The current economic crisis perhaps provides the impetus for this to take place. After all, any shrewd strategist would always focus on the opportunities that provide the breakthroughs in a crisis rather than be threatened by the danger.

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