

# Strategy Review

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# Introduction

## –Is the strategy what it should be?

### Introduction

This tool-kit is about “where the ship is sailing, and how the cruise is taking place”. The tool-kit will help you to identify the strategic aspects of what your enterprise does from day to day. It will help you piece them together, and to check if something should be changed. You can do it alone, but the effect will be better, if you involve other key people.

- This tool-kit allows you to explore if in reality the strategy is as you believe
- You will see if the strategy is fitting the actual situation
- Finally you will be able involve key staff members and associates in an interactive and productive environment that will get the results you need for your company.

The prescribed process includes work on the materials provided by this tool-kit, three sessions using [henrikwbendix.dk](http://henrikwbendix.dk) Test Machine, two advisory sessions and a local strategy seminar.

### Article

#### Recommended reading:

Kathleen Eisenhardt is internationally respected for her insight and overview of strategic management. Here she and a colleague boil down some very important ways of making strategy during turbulent times (Eisenhardt, K.M. and Sull, D.M.: Strategy as Simple Rules, Harvard Business Review, Vol.79 No. 1 (January 2001)).

### Author

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If you need advice in this field do not hesitate to contact [hwb@henrikwbendix.dk](mailto:hwb@henrikwbendix.dk)  
Otherwise the following Toolkits might inspire you:

#### **Vision Management – Do we really share our visions and goals?**

This Tool-kit should be used when the company needs a shared mindset/identity or when management needs a tool to communicate with all employees and possibly with customers as well. Or it can be used when management wants to improve the general level of enthusiasm and motivation throughout the company.

Find it at [www.henrikwbendix.dk](http://www.henrikwbendix.dk) Check “Resources”.

#### **SWOT Analysis - Do we know the situation of the company sufficiently well?**

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) – analysis is a very useful tool in determining the situation of a company. Both in a strategic analysis and in a more practical situation the SWOT-analysis is a good way to put some questions, which are important for the company.

Find it at [www.henrikwbendix.dk](http://www.henrikwbendix.dk) Check “Resources”

# User Guide: Strategy Review

Sometimes it is very natural to work with the strategy of the enterprise (organization). It may be a “must”. For instance when a new operation is started, or if you are fundamentally restructuring a business. However, from time to time you may also sense the need to do a “strategy check” even if, there are no special occasion.

If the general business is not running smoothly - if you see a new type of competitor turn up on the scene - if conflicts between sales, product development, and production occur more frequently - if you receive some alarming customer complaints - if key people leave or express deep frustration with fundamental aspects of the enterprise. These are some of the situations, where the source of the problem may be some strategy conflict that you need to focus on.

Such work may appear frustrating, time consuming, and you may sense that it does not immediately do anything good to your business. We think, though, that it is important because it generally strengthens your ability to spot strategy issues and quickly address them, and it may be a good occasion to find out, whether the key people really work together and in the same (right) direction.

Maybe, at the start it makes you feel uncomfortable, but doing the strategy review will in the end make you more comfortable.

## Purpose

- To identify the main orientation of the enterprise/organization
- To check if the activities fit together
- To compare how different people see the strategy.

## Outcome

- You will be more aware about the factors that influence enterprise strategy
- You find out, whether some aspects of the strategy should be changed
- Materials about enterprise strategy you can use in planning activities.

## Requirements

- General overview of the situation of the enterprise/organization
- A realistic and frank attitude
- 2 hours at the PC including time to think about inputs and outcomes
- One or two days for carrying out the strategy seminar including preparation time

## Note

- Your benefits from the analysis will be greater, if you consistently think about your business under a certain set of conditions like “today” or “for the home market”.

- Choose the specific purpose of the analysis: do you want to analyze the past, the current situation, or some scenarios? A scenario is a future you imagine, where specific trends you believe in or want to check out are typical.
- When you want to determine the strategy of an enterprise, you need overview and qualitative input and not very detailed documentation or quantitative input.
- This is a process that works, but you may develop endless variations of it or simply other processes that work better for you. It is just a way to start thinking about it in a practical manner.

## **The Process**

Below you will find references to phases, related to the enterprise or to the people, you want to involve. You will also find references to things you must do related to henrikwbendix.dk in order to get the feed back, you expect.

### **Phase 1: Describe the General Background:**

Use the enclosed form and answer the questions about the organization and about yourself. This way the adviser can better imagine your situation.

### **Phase 2: Describe the Current Situation:**

By answering the questions in Form 1 you make a short description of the situation that made you think about the strategy and what you want to do about it.

### **Phase 3: Describe the Strategy As It Is Now:**

Use the “Test Machine” input format to describe the way the enterprise/organization is operating now. This way, you will indirectly create a foundation for the actual strategy you pursue, even if it deviates from what you intended (if it does, you are not alone!).

Please note that the definition of strategy ehind OrgCon is this: Whatever a formal strategy statement in a report says, is far less relevant than the strategy formed by the actual day-to-day activities of the firm.

### **Phase 4: Conduct the Dialogue with the Adviser:**

Within a full day you will receive a response. Maybe you are done now. Then you can go on to Phase 5.

Maybe you would like to respond to the adviser (we think you should). This must be done within a full week from the moment you received the adviser’s feed back. So, you can think about it or check some information. Again, no later than a full day after you sent your response, the adviser will get back to you with a final response in this session.

### **Phase 5: Involve Key People in the Process:**

By involving other relevant people, you will get important information about the situation as they perceive it, and they get a chance to influence the strategy revision. The results on paper may not differ from what you could do yourself, but you will have the support of your co-workers who are going to help making the strategy succeed.

One way of doing this is to invite them to a Strategy Seminar. It would be better, if you could arrange it for a full day, maybe on the weekend and outside the office. This way you will all be better able to concentrate and to generate some original output, and that usually requires both a

certain amount of time (to re-focus on something special like strategy), and it requires that you are not disturbed.

“**Invitation**” is a suggested invitation also indicating an agenda and the way you can go about conducting the seminar.

The Strategy Seminar Checklist helps you prepare and conduct the seminar.

### **Phase 6: Formulate the Outcome of the Strategy Seminar:**

It is equally important after spending time on a Strategy Seminar to analyze the results from it. Everyone may think they remember, but important details easily are lost. Putting down the words and the diagrams is also a check how you understand your own conclusions, and whether you agree with them.

Thus, if some of you have taken notes, it is ok to let some time pass (1-2 weeks or at least a few days). Then the “automatic quality improvement process” sets in: you will mainly remember the important and understandable parts, and you will see your own thoughts in a clearer light. Maybe this reminds you of the important details you all ignored or forgot during the seminar.

Form B suggests a way to put together your conclusions. You can do it yourself, or you can ask a few of the other participants to do it. That would give you an extra opportunity to review the operation with fresh eyes from the outside. The people putting the conclusions together would have a challenge making them grow and take responsibility.

It is on purpose that the form is only one page. Most strategies should be described very briefly. Otherwise, they would be too complicated to remember and thus to communicate to others. This is the primary value of such a document.

## **Summing up the results**

The following instructions for summing up the results of a strategy seminar we tried to keep similarly simple:

### **Situation**

In this frame you should write the most important observations about what is going on around the organization and the challenges that the enterprise must take up in order to improve in the future.

Examples: the market will be privatized within the next 5 years, our two worst competitors merged, there will be a new technology available soon, or the shareholders demand substantially improved results.

### **Vision**

This is the artistic element of strategy work. You must do your utmost to identify an ambitious image of the future you want to create. Visions must be like a guiding star in the sky: attractive to look at and to follow – although impossible to reach.

For those who are usually occupied with operations, this is hard, because it seems like daydreaming, which is almost irresponsible. However, we do know that dreams are the stuff that

moves people. Like the dream of the American society in the 1960's to put a man on the Moon, or the dream of curing an seemingly incurable disease such as cancer.

### **Targets**

Within this frame you should determine which goals are most important to the company and focus on them. Even a large organization with abundant resources cannot focus on more than a few important targets at the same time.

So, if your organization is smaller or has fewer resources, select 1-3 targets, focus on them for a while, and select new ones only when the first choices become irrelevant.

Also, make the targets operational. The vision should be an abstract, desirable image, while the target is something specific that can be identified by everybody and reached.

Examples: Launch a new product series by a certain date, obtain certain new core customers, take a certain position in the markets, become the most attractive employer etc.

### **Methods**

This is about how you want to reach the target. What you intend to make the organization do differently from, what it does today. Methods often make the real difference between what succeeds and what not, between what is popular or painful. So, people differ over methods like political parties differ over policies.

Usually people have preferred methods that they tend to apply to most situations. It is difficult not to, but it is also advisable to ask yourself the question: What is the optimal or preferable method under the current circumstances? So, choice of methods requires some analysis of side effects and required resources.

An elementary example: the boss wants people to work harder. What does she do? One way is to control the effort more closely and crack down on low performance. Another way may be to put a premium on extra efforts and leave people room to reorganize work as they find practical? Which is the better?

Obviously, it depends on the culture in this particular organization, on personal ethics, on time and management resources available, on the nature of the work to be done, available technology etc. The point is that all these elements should be taken into account, not only the habits or personal preferences of the people involved.

### **Actions**

In this box you must put the first and most important activities that will make the strategy work. Often, a few early (easy) and visible results are important to encourage the organization to strengthen the efforts and the focus. Then follow the heavier milestones making the real differences.

Plans turn from fantasies into things to be done when you attach dead lines, personal responsibility, and resources to each individual action. So, why not do that?

Good luck!

# Form 1: Situation Description

Question		Your Answer
1	What raised this issue in your mind?	
2	Why is it important to deal with it now?	
3	What do you expect to gain by working on this strategy issue?	
4	How is the strategy of the enterprise described – and where?	
5	What were the major events in the market within the last 12 months?	
6	What will be the major (strategic) events in the market during the coming 12 months?	
7	Mention some important internal factors, which relate to the market. Were there any recent changes in these factors, will there be any in the near future?	
8	Which internal persons or functions do you consider essential for making the strategy successful and how are they involved in the process?	
9	What are your specific questions to the adviser?	

# Form 2: Invitation to strategy seminar

## To (PARTICIPANTS)

The situation calls for focus on our strategy. When we think about the long-term direction of daily operations and compare it to the intended strategy, it gives reason to be concerned.

To make sure we work with this in a productive way, we must give the issue the right attention. Instead of trying to deal with it piece by piece during ordinary meetings, where we have to focus on daily operations, we should conduct a Strategy Seminar.

**The Strategy Seminar will be held at (PLACE) on (DAY, MONTH) from (STARTING TIME) to (ENDING TIME).**

By doing it this way, it will be easier to concentrate on the “big picture”. At the same time it will give us better time to think and to listen to each other about the future, about the things we must change, and how we can do it.

### The Purpose of the seminar

To gather the people, who know the situation and who are responsible for carrying out the strategy. You are the ones who should know “where we are sailing to”, and the ones who should make sure “we sail in the right direction and do it the right way”.

### The Agenda is this:

1. Introduction:
  - The background for focusing on the strategy
  - The purpose of the strategy seminar
  - How will the seminar be facilitated (roles)
  - How to take notes from the discussions
2. The Strategic challenges: How do we see them?
3. Current Strategy: How do we respond today?
4. Different scenarios: What may happen in the future?
5. Strategy revision: Do we need to focus differently?
6. Action planning: Where do we go next?
7. Evaluation:
  - Are the results ok?
  - How did we work?
  - What should we do differently next time?



(PERSONS NAME) will facilitate the meeting in an effort to make sure that we utilize the resources optimally.

Everybody should make the preparations for the meeting that are natural: updating yourself on relevant key information (market information, product features, financial key figures etc.) and reflecting upon the themes indicated in the agenda. Finally, make sure you come with an open mind

I look forward to an important and inspiring effort for all of us.

(SIGNED)  
The Management

# Form 3: This is the Strategy

Situation

Vision

Targets

Methods

Actions

# Checklist: Strategy seminar

This checklist reminds you of some of the more practical things to be dealt with during a simple strategy process, which you run yourself.

## 1. Prepare yourself mentally

Especially if you are involved in daily operations or maybe just parts of them, you need to do something special to be in the right mental mode to drive the seminar through to a productive result.

Get around to important customers or other partners and have their views of the situation. Pick up inspiration from articles in relevant professional magazines. Discuss the issues with somebody from the staff that you usually talk less with.

## 2. Invite the right people

Identify the key people, who will make a difference between success and failure of the organization. Often they are identical with your managerial staff, but sometimes there are other crucial people whose contribution and presence is equally important.

Sometimes it is a staff person like a project manager, sometimes it is a chairman of the board who is unusually knowledgeable or who can bring inspiration from another area.

There may also be people to exclude. For instance a manager with high seniority has already indicated that he or she want to leave in the next half year. Both parties may be better off without his or her participation.

The number is less important. From 3 to 15 is fine.

## 3. Bring an eye-opener

One day is not much time if you are going to “turn the business upside down”. To make sure valuable time is not lost in just getting to the point, you may be able to “jumpstart” the process with an eye-opener.

The eye-opener may be the feedback from henrikwbendix.dk. A neutral person inspiring you with observations, questions and hypotheses about your situation.

It may also be a statement from a customer or some other business partner, whose opinion is thought provoking and highly respected.

The main purpose is to pinpoint the main theme in an unorthodox way to make everyone think about the important issues.

#### **4. Set the stage**

Make sure the seminar surroundings are stimulating the right working atmosphere. This is preferably a tranquil place with a calming environment where you will not be disturbed by phones or by people.

Good space and good furniture are important when action people have to sit for a long while.

You also need ample white board/flip over capacity, because several people will have to illustrate their thoughts during the day.

Do not forget tape so you can decorate the walls with the flip charts to give you visual references of the previous contributions of the day.

#### **5. Have somebody else facilitate the seminar**

Hopefully, the session will involve you all deeply. When this is the case, the chances of a valuable outcome improve.

At the same time it is also difficult distance yourself from the discussion adequately in order to maintain the proper balance of power and responsibility among the attendees: Who dominates, who is too quiet, when to wrap up a discussion that “takes off into the woods” etc.

A person not directly involved in the process may find it easier to take the necessary authority. This may be a consultant you invite, but it may also be a generally respected person among the stakeholders of the company. Like a board member, a good colleague from another organization, or somebody else the participants will be comfortable with.

#### **6. Make sure to remember important contributions**

In the middle of the process everybody may see and hear the important observations or original ideas. But later on other contributions or heated discussions may overshadow them.

The facilitator or somebody else, if there is no facilitator, should make sure the important things are put on flip charts or taken down as notes right away, when they happen.

Somebody can be appointed “secretary”, a secretary from the staff may be present, or the participants can take turns taking notes.

#### **7. Leave room –also for the awkward element**

It is natural for the person arranging the seminar to be tense or even anxious. It is an important effort that involves many resources and much company time.

On top of this, some prestige is at stake. If the seminar fails, important people witness it, but they will usually also realize that you all share responsibility for the outcome.

Precisely because of this, the risk of a failure is relatively low. Usually, if you invite the right people, they will invest their talent in contributing to the success.

Instead, it is more important that your own primary contribution is in orchestrating (organizing) the event and in a few focused points. This will leave more room for the others to think, to voice themselves, and thus to take responsibility and contribute with their individual specialties.

Often the most valuable elements during such seminars are the very personal observations from somebody, who normally says less, or sometimes strange, even awkward stories that somehow illustrate important points.

The likelihood that such things happen increases, if the host leaves space for them, if you do not rush the session too much, and if you are open to improvisations.

### **8. Take a “puzzled” attitude**

Your authority probably is high among the participants. Often it will be higher than you expect it to be. Thus, the participants will try to interpret what you would like to hear, or what they should say, to make you listen.

Another hypothesis is that we all tend to stick to our well-established beliefs and interpretations of the reality. If you have been in the company or the market for some years, you often think you have spotted the other actors, their qualities and their behavior. This is dangerous, because this may inhibit your ability to see the important changes and crucial strategic shifts around you. Wars among nations have often started this way!

So, to avoid being tucked in by the respect of the other participants and overlooking an important challenge, we recommend you to take a puzzled attitude to the issues you discuss. “It is strange that we always/never.....” “Why does the competitor behave like this or not participate in that....?”. “I wonder why, it is so difficult for us to.....” These are the beginning of sentences that may really move the debate in a beneficial direction.

### **9. Sum up and give feed back**

Whoever is the authority of the seminar should explicitly at the end of the seminar sum up the observations, conclusions, and ideas. Often, when the debate has been extended, the participants have their heads full with impressions and statements.

So, most people need the essence of the session to be spelled out, to see it clearly. If nobody takes on that responsibility, everybody may leave slightly disappointed and in doubt whether anything will ever come out of it. Such cynicism is extremely dangerous, because it makes the organization less sensitive to changed circumstances. First and foremost it also decreases motivation, and thereby reduces the energy of the group.

Quite simply, all the other participants may also feel that it is difficult to run such a seminar in a good manner. So, they need encouragement to invest their efforts in another effort or under similar conditions in the future.

### **10. Publish the result to the rest, and let them reflect themselves in it**

Nothing vanishes so fast into thin air as the excitement coming out of a fine seminar. When all participants return to daily routines, these routines will soon dominate, and there is the risk that important conclusions will be forgotten.

This should not be allowed. If you make sure that Form C is filled in, there is a visible reminder that can be used in the further implementation of the strategy.

This is, however, only half of the work. The top managers are rarely the ones to actually carry out such efforts. They need the support of the rest of the staff.

But the staff will not know what to do unless they hear and read about the results. Even more importantly: if they later get a chance to work actively with the strategy, then they can learn, whether there is “space” for the staff members to interpret the strategy implications for themselves. They can also see how they can fill out some of the space within the framework so they can mirror themselves in the strategy, take it in, and gradually make it their own.

# Checklist: 10 Key Points for the Strategy Seminar

## **1. Strategy is about direction – to identify goals and decide what methods to use in order to reach them**

As indicated by the article enclosed in this package, there are numerous definitions and perspectives of strategy and the way it should be carried out.

In most of them there is an element of long term. Strategy is about decisions and actions with a lasting effect. In some situations (like establishing hydroelectric power stations) the perspective should be in the range of 20 years. When we think about mobile telecommunications, however, a durable strategy may last only for 6 months. So in practical terms, it very much depends on the pace of the market!

Also, in most of its definitions, strategy is about both external conditions (competition, government regulation, consumer demands etc.), as well as internal elements (competence, motivation, production equipment, financial resources etc.).

## **2. Strategy is more about what you do, than what you would like to do**

Conducting a strategy seminar may obviously be a very relevant thing to do if you have identified a new situation, which must be reconsidered by a number of key people.

When at the end, you feel good with having created a document with a good description of the strategic challenges and the intended responses, you should be cautious.

Now it is time to concentrate the effort, because the difficulty is in the doing. It may be difficult to find the resources, or difficult to lay off old habits. Sometimes the environment does a lot to keep you within the old framework, and very often it is not rewarding in the first place to pursue a new strategy. With it comes trouble, conflict and doubts.

However, you have to do something (and often quite much), for the World to realize your strategy.

## **3. There is a strategic element in every little daily operation – you just have to identify it**

What is the most important strategic element in the enterprise today? Is it the expensive profiling brochure that was recently printed after half a year of project work with company values? Or is it the decision that the technical manager just made not to let a new development engineer follow a training course in a very special subject?

It may be the latter. Because, this decision might be the first in a long time signaling that management wants to focus its activities on a few important areas. To some, the decision may seem un-fair, unpleasant or simply negative. But others might interpret it as the management finally becoming visible and showing the courage to define their priorities. This is a signal that should be followed by other actions.

This is just another illustration that strategy is in the doing and that the word “strategy” may not be mentioned even if what happens is very strategic in nature. It is if it signals a change of direction.

#### **4. Strategy is influenced by a lot of things, but we should think about it as something we decide in order to influence other activities**

To elaborate on the previous example: You might say that the technical manager turned down the request for a training course, because the company is under financial strain and can't afford the class. Alternatively, you might say he took the decision because the engineers' department has a very heavy workload, and this person should not be away at that particular time.

Anyway, the strategic importance of the decision could become quite clear if the young engineer decides to leave for another job because his request for training was turned down.

So, the management could say to themselves and to the personnel that the decision was made because of financial necessity or the necessity to service the customer orders on stock. This may be true, but it is also reactive, like a decision forced upon the technical manager. Even if he did not want to make it, it was necessary.

If, on the other hand, the technical manager decides to explain to the engineer that the decision was founded on business development plans directly conflicting with the engineer's interest, the explanation would be more proactive in nature. So, management must decide how to prioritize the training budget, and they directly explain the plan provoked by the application from the engineer. The proactive element is strengthened if the technical manager adds that he would support it if the engineer chose another course more directly in line with company plans.

#### **5. The situation of the organization changes constantly, and so we must constantly be prepared to reconsider the strategy.**

On the next morning the management reads in the technical press that a large international competitor just cancelled a development program, which is similar in nature to their program. This should be an eye opener for the technical manager, and it should make him reflect with the rest of management about the news and its impact on the company. Is it a warning not to waste time and money in this field and go for something else instead?

Or is it an indication that this competitor failed, and the reasons and consequences should be investigated? Maybe their own company has another approach to the problem, and thus they have better chances to succeed? Maybe the failure of the big competitor has the effect on the market that nobody will believe in this kind of solutions?

#### **6. The more we know and control the fundamentals of our business, the better we can constantly monitor the situation and make the needed responses to important changes**

How do you determine what is of strategic importance? ? This is difficult to say if – popularly speaking – you do not really know your enterprise, and the kind of business it is in. If you are a non-profit organization this is still relevant. If our enterprise from the previous examples is small, has limited financial funds, and still has a number of large and expensive development programs going on, it may be because the management is unclear about the fundamentals of the business.



Maybe everybody is allowed to do whatever they want, maybe their ambitions are unrealistically high, or maybe those in charge disagree about where to move the business.

If the managers have different perceptions of what the company should be, they will probably focus on different things internally and externally. So, what one manager finds extremely important, another may find uninteresting.

In a non-profit organization resources are also limited, and it will also take some time to swing the organization in a new direction. So, here the management must also try to find agreement about what is the mission of the organization, what are the core competencies of the organization, and which changes in the environment are important to the organization.

If your enterprise is in such a situation, the SWOT Analysis Tool-kit could be relevant for you.

### **7. Making good strategy takes more than good analytical thinking, it also takes intuition, imagination, and guts**

When you are preparing to take a thorough discussion about the strategy, you want to do it well. Often people will start looking for statistical data about competitors, collect prognoses about the economic trends in their primary markets, study the technological opportunities, etc.

This can be extremely relevant. The better you know such facts, the stronger your decision-making foundation will be. However, this still requires that you know what is important and what not.

Often, collecting some of this information is very time and resource consuming or even impossible, because valid data is not available.

This is no reason for despair; however, because it is equally important during a strategy seminar is the ability to think creatively. It is important to give inspiration to others and to be inspired by them. It also important to use all your senses to interpret the things you experience when you are with customers. Finally, it is important to have the courage to make a decision, even if you are not, and cannot, be sure whether it will be successful.

### **8. The more responsibility is delegated in the enterprise, the more people need to be involved in making and revising the strategy**

Traditionally, strategy was for the top of the organization to deal with. It still is, but increasingly top management will have to involve others in putting together the background for strategic decisions, both in making and implementing them.

Logically, this is necessary if many of the operational decisions traditionally taken by management are delegated to others. If they should behave rationally, they will have to know what is in the best interest of the enterprise. To know this, they must know the strategy well.

Maybe it is also logical that well-educated people usually need to be able to involve themselves and feel that they are part of decisions in order to stay motivated. This is the way they were raised by their parents, and the way their education was organized.

The hard thing for management often is to let go. If you feel very responsible for an operation, and if you feel very comfortable with making decisions, you really have to restrain yourself or to go out of your way to involve others.

However, if you want them to get involved and take responsibility, you will have to.

### **9. Efforts made to implement the strategies are more important than efforts made to conceal them to the World**

Making strategy requires some effort if the result is going to be good. On top of this, it is not routine work. Therefore, when the process resulting in the final text is over, it is a risk that the energy and time is gone also! If this is the case, probably those being involved had a positive mental outcome, and there may be an impressive document, but the actual effect on the activities of the organization may be very limited.

Another typical observation is that traditionally the strategy of an enterprise is considered a vital secret. It is to be kept away from the eyes and ears of the rest of the World, including employees, customers, competitors, and partners. The argument is: if they know our intentions, they can react accordingly.

This is exactly one of the reasons why strategies should be published to all stakeholders taking a primary interest in the enterprise! As mentioned above, employees may work in a more responsible and appropriate way, if they know the strategy. Customers and partners may know what to expect and competitors may also.

However, this is not so dangerous as it sounds. What is really important for competitors to know is how the strategy will be pursued in practical detail (plans), the way it is done in detail (methods and technology) and the commitment actually to do it (morale). If they do not know this, they cannot really use the information. They may even be tricked to over-react, if they take the words too much at face value.

If you want to review your strategy for the purpose of refocusing or redirecting the business activities, you should do at least two things: Make sure at least 50 % of the time and energy allocated in the beginning should be preserved for the implementation phase and make sure all relevant stakeholders know about it.

### **10. Not having a strategy or doing anything is also a strategy, but will it fit in the current situation?**

Often you may be in a situation where somebody in charge, including yourself, realizes that you have no written strategy that is understood and accepted by all the key people. Various circumstances make you accept this fact and do nothing about it. Because there is no time, because operations require all available resources, because some situation is unclear, and you need that to be settled, before it is meaningful to do strategy work etc.

This may be true, and it may be justifiable for a brief period. But based on the understanding of what strategy really is that we presented above, doing this is also a kind of strategy. However, subconscious and uncoordinated it may be.

The risk is, if you accept this situation for more than a short period, the operations will soon be unfocused and possibly fluctuating. By chance, it may be a good response to the challenges of the organization, but there is a high risk that it is not!