

Book Review

Strategy Safari, A Guided Tourthrough the Wilds of Strategic Management

Henry Mintzberg, Bruce Ahlstrand & Joseph Lampel

Reviewed by

Prof.Satya Sidhartha Panda

Marketing Leadership & Innovation Department

Jain (Deemed-to-be University), i-Nurture New Age Programme Bengaluru, India

Email: satyasidharth@yahoo.com

In this book the authors highlighted different views of strategic process (Strategy formation) in prescriptive schools and descriptive school. The authors emphasizes on strategic journey as safari of different school of thoughts as the design school, the planning school, the positioning school, the entrepreneurial school, the cognitive school , the learning school, the power school, the cultural school, the environmental school and the configuration school.

Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel explained in this book about the history of Strategy, its concept and appropriate application of strategy in Business operations. Strategy is complex: Business is uncertain, internal and external factors of circumstances to the organization in a business are changing frequently. In my opinion strategic remain programmed and unstructured. So it's important to bring a fresh prospective to strategy formation in a various level of Business Units.

The Design School model represents as a strategy formation process. The author's emphasize on fit match between internal and external appraisal (SWOT analysis) of organization. Development of strategy is a rational process .Here authors describe the environmental variables as a check list which will give a productive direction as a process of conscious thought and a reason for strategic move controlling by human thinking. Strategy must align with human resource of an organization.

The planning school emphasized on strategy formation as a formal process. The authors describe that in any organization there must be a formal strategic planning department. The positioning school emphasize as analytical process in the context of respective industry to support of strategic process. It helps you to identify the positions in the market place in the context of competitive edge based on analytical calculation. The entrepreneurial school emphasize on mental process of individual who involves for establishing the vision for the purpose of business. The owner of the business is a leader who is a pilot of respective business, the way they drive the organization will get similar kind of business result.

Strategy needs to be in the mind of a leader with a sense of long –term direction and a vision for organization growth. Strategy should focus the culture of building intreprenurship. The authors emphasize on Cognitive school as a science of brain functioning as a mental process and analysis how people process information in an organization .The authors describe that strategy can be learn with experience and its develop the body of knowledge and thinking process . I think it's very important for the business owners to see the big picture of Business. Execution of Strategy is about your own interpretation.

It's very important of a business owner to imagine and create opportunity. The authors nicely elaborated through a meaningful story (six blind

man and elephant.) Sensing, thinking, judging is important for strategy formation process. These all are intellectual mental structure to your body of organize knowledge to see the opportunity .The learning school is about close look what works and what not works for your business. Here the authors describe about lessons learned from plan of action. Learning is a for knowledge creation for individual, group and Organization and should consider learning as a strategy process. The power of school emphasize on the process of negotiation between the business owner and external stakeholders.

The authors describe if strategy is not about planning, analyzing, cognition and learning but also about negotiating, bargaining, handling conflict about individuals, groups inside the business operations. Strategy making is about inside and outside of the organization, authors explained as process inside the organization or behavior of organization in its external environment .Political dimension can have a positive role in organizations. Its emphasis on collective strategy of politics in promoting strategic change.

The cultural school emphasis on whole organization and its different business unit. Collective process for various groups and departments within the organization. Some body rightly said that, you can copy the products or services but you cannot copy the culture of an organization.

Authors describe as a process of social interaction in the context of understanding the members of an organization. In the book authors describe that mangers must know how to drive the culture of Innovation.

In the environmental school, the authors speak as a reactive process, how the business owner response to the challenges comes from external environment. The organization must response to the forces in the environment where the business is operating .It is about how leader adopt

to those challenges and how he is reacting to it. The Configuration School is about the process of business transformation and its decision making ability of a business owner. In this book it emphasize on identify the different stages like: development stage, adaption stage, struggle stage, revolution stage. Long period of stability is depending on revolution stage. The authors describe top-down transformation for manager's started with establishing a sense of urgency and ends with articulating with new behavioral approaches to ensure leadership development in an organization.

This book helps the business owner to understand the various approaches to strategy and its applicability in the life cycle of an organization. In this book the six blind men standing near elephant can make their own limitation, assessment of the situation. In business without the development of overall perspective, we may not able to discover the meaningful investigation.

The authors started with ten schools as various attributes in strategic management which is a guideline for managers in 21st century business. Business is a complex system that can be grown and develop. We should understand the whole business which we operate and accordingly we must formulate the appropriate strategy. The authors conclude that how the strategy can be complex in unstable environment and how to integrate the process of strategy. The authors proposed the various techniques of strategy integrated for successful business which starts with vision of integrate mentally.

End of the Book authors emphasized on various issues like: Integration Issue, General Issue, Control issue, collective issue, change issue, choice issue, thinking issue. The strategy formation is about the visioning, judgment; learning and transformation involve individual cognition, their social interaction. It's about analyzing before programming depends of demanding environment.

I believe, Strategy is more appropriate when you start practicing it with different tools which the authors in this book have suggested as ten schools. The focus on strategy thinking in response to the need of adoptability and ever changes business environment is the key to strategy formation.

Yes , I do agree saying that Business owners uses the strategy to deal with changing environment

and it's important to understand how effectively they can develop a framework of successful strategy formation for the benefits of an organization and its connected people internally and externally. In this book the authors also have given advantages and disadvantages of those ten schools and explained how effectively you can investigate and implement those strategy moves for your organization's Growth .