

## **The Position of the article**

Mintzberg tries to argue in his article, that a strategy that is brought about by crafting, meaning a process that is done in long term, will give better results than just sitting down and figuring out the dos and don'ts of entering or progressing in a certain businesses or a certain field at a specific time. He argues that it is better to craft a strategy than just planning it out at a particular day, in a room with fellow executives and officials. Crafting is not entirely left to the executives and the top officials only. It also includes the staff in the lower ranks such as the salespeople, the men in the field and so on.

The article offers more of the emergent than the prescriptive approach to strategy. As Mintzberg puts it, emergent strategy is also known as the process strategy. The writer tries to put across that strategy is brought forth with a process; it will work much better a play a big role in improving the company/firm than just having an instant step by step, set rules to follow kind of approach. This is because when a strategy is crafted, it is done out of experience taking into consideration the past and the future of events and the company in general.

However, as most of the things talk about are true and make a lot of sense, it is quite hard to come up with plans or strategies as problems arise. It is important that the officials in a business or organization be able to sit down and analyze some of the problems that arise more often than not. There is nothing wrong with planning a strategy. It might as well work as effective as crafting it.

As mentioned earlier, crafting is a process, and so it might take time especially if it will involve a board of officials of an organization. Let us take an example and have a major official, maybe an executive leave the organization. What will happen next, do we start from scratch, what happens if they have a whole different idea and they do not agree with what the other officials had come up with earlier, does that mean that they start a fresh? This is a situation that could arise and these are some of the inconveniences that would be brought about by this process.

If we look at the school of thought this article belongs to according Whittington, it would be the evolutionary approach of strategy. The business that adopts best to the environment and stays ahead of the competition will be able to survive the highly competitive market. One of the main aims of developing strategies is to develop ways of maximizing profits and thus staying ahead of the competition. This is why the writer is telling us that crafting strategies will be better and help more towards achieving this goal than just planning them.

The writer continues and gives us an example of Sam Steinberg who stayed ahead of his competition by spending Saturday mornings visiting his stores thus getting the chance to know his customers, the merchandise, their costs, how they were sold thus giving them an advantage of knowing their business more than most of the other entrepreneurs. He kept teaching his employees making them to be constantly aware off their surroundings. This kept them way ahead since most of the others did not know about their business especially those with multiple stores.

This approach is more concerned with surviving in the market more than any other thing. This is normally done by increasing the profits so that they are higher than the others and then improving the other aspects that are important more than profit making. This is achieved by bringing forth good strategies but not only planning them but also crafting them.

## **Theoretical Underpinnings**

As the author tries to bring around into seeing his point of view, he feels that the assumptions he is making such as the business are there to make profit only. There are businesses which are out there for an entire different reason. For example, there are those that are out there to just win the job market by taking in as many customers as possible just for prestige purposes.

There are those that are out there to set an example of how the specific type of business should work. These businesses seem as though they are the 'perfect' type of business. The officials are more concerned with doing things right more than achieving the profits. It is like they want to show all the other businesses how things are done. They are like the path finders.

These businesses may need different types of strategies and to some, planning the strategies to be implementing may just work for them. Some businesses are just short term so they might not need all the detailing that is necessary in crafting. Having just a few plans that will keep the business running for the short term that it is due will just do it for these types of businesses.

In crafting, as we had mentioned earlier, there is the involvement the other staff in the lower level. This might not be easy since a suggestion or opinion put across by a subordinate employee might not be taken as seriously or might be looked down upon as it the others might not want to feel intimidated. This might jeopardize this crafting process.

The author accepts the world view based on rationality and logic. He tries to look at the world of business as somewhere one can easily make predictions and thus know the outcome so that one is prepared enough. This is not always so. There are times that things turn out better or worse than expected. Also, there are times that one cannot make any predictions at all. Though the method is nice as one can be able to evaluate the past events and thus be able to predict about the future, the outcome may not always be the same. A mother may deliver two children normally but have the third one delivered through a caesarian section despite the previous two births.

The important thing is to plan a business according to how one feels is best. One can apply both methods so as to as to maximize their aim of putting the business. One can never be too sure and every problem should be tackled as it comes depending on its magnitude. This does not mean that there should be no planning done, but rather it encourages the business officials to be more open minded in coming up with strategies and which methods to be used.

## **Strengths and weaknesses**

There are a couple of strengths and weaknesses in this article. One of the strengths is that the method or the author's point of view makes a lot of sense. He has tried to make us see how crafting rather than just planning any type of business can play a big role in helping a business or organization achieve its goal or aim. Having strategies that are based on both the past, the present and the future, work better than just having plans that were laid down sometime like when the business was started. Strategies that are laid down as the businesses progresses have more accuracy than the others laid down in another way.

The author has tried to give a few examples that have enabled us to understand his article better. He has used a potter as a metaphor to further explain and help the reader how crafting can help. A potter

takes each step seriously for she knows that each and every thing done will play an important role in the final result. When one thing is compared with another, a reader is able to feel the impact or the intense of what the author was trying to put across.

The author has given us information even concerned by his own personal research on this topic. This gives the writer confidence in what they are reading for what is put across is not based by purely reading but also by research. The author has really expanded on his thesis as he has given the explanations using practical examples.

The author has also brought about the advantage of this kind of approach as it involves other people than the main business or organization officials. Everyone is given the advantage of playing a role in the growth of the business especially in bringing forth ideas. This type also enables the officials to get to know what is going on at the grass root level. Getting feedback from the salespeople and other employees in the field and taking it seriously will enable the officials know the different the kinds of plans strategies and improvements that they need to make.

There are a couple of weaknesses that have been brought forth. Information brought by the less senior staff might not be taken seriously. This will mostly involve the kind of officials or leaders that are at the higher ranks. Some managers are too proud to accept that an idea has been forwarded by a junior staff. They mostly feel intimidated and very threatened. They are mostly driven by their selfish wants. This might not play a very good role in trying to implementing the crafting way of strategizing.

The involvement of other complex measures and procedures might also slow down this method. For example, if a certain product is to be adjusted or improved due to customers' demand, it might take long for the information to move from the salesperson in the field, to the top manager, then the idea to go through the necessary channels then the improvement to be made in the processing unit and finally reach the customer as an improved product.

One can never be too sure. A company cannot accurately predict its future by just looking at the past events or situations of similarity. As mentioned earlier, there are times that the future cannot be based on the past. There are times that same thing that was done in the past and gave a certain result, can be done in the future to give another different result.

## **Conclusion**

What I like about this article and especially the topic being talked about is the fact that the strategies are laid down as time goes on depending on the way things are unfolding. Past events are used to make a rough estimate on how the future is going to be. Everyone is involved in bringing forth ideas and thus better results can be achieved.

This method is much better in helping the company stay ahead of its competitors more than the other ones especially the ones that involve just sitting down and planning or putting down specific strategies based on theory.