TOPIC: Importance of Firm Strategy and Its Execution for Firm Performance

OBJECTIVES & COMPETENCIES:

In this session, we focus on the “big picture” and demonstrate the importance of strategy to long-term firm health and success. We also consider the importance of effectively implementing a firm’s chosen strategies.

KEY CONTENT OF MODULE:

1. Problem Solving
   - Nonlinear thinking
   - Staying focused on the long-term and the whole organization
   - Sustaining a competitive advantage for the purpose successfully implementing strategies

2. Strategy Execution
   - Developing and implementing an effective organization structure
   - Managing integration: coordinating and sharing resources
   - Designing and implementing successful incentives and controls

PREPARATION READING:

Making Strategy Work, L.G. Hrebiniak, Chapters 1-4

READINGS:

“How Netflix Reinvented HR” Harvard Business Review (afternoon session)
“Contextual Intelligence” Harvard Business Review (afternoon session)
“The Great Repeatable Business Model” Harvard Business Review (afternoon session)
“Airborne Express” Harvard Business School Case (afternoon session)

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PRE-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS:

Look-over/examine the first four chapters of the Hrebiniak book. You do not need to specifically and in detail read these chapters. We will discuss the core points from these chapters during class. In this manner, materials included in the Hrebiniak chapters will be integrated into our classroom discussions. Longer term, this book can serve as a reference for you regarding actions to take to successfully implement chosen strategies. In this sense, my belief is that Hrebiniak’s book is one that you can “keep on the desk” for future reference and use.

In contrast to the book though, please do carefully read the articles from Harvard Business Review that we will consider during today’s class. For each of the articles, please prepare answers to the following three questions (We’ll use your answers as a foundation for discussing the articles in class. You are not required to submit your answers in writing to me.):

- What major insights are featured in the reading?
- How can these insights be applied in your job or in organizations in general?
- What points included in the reading do you have trouble accepting and why is that the case?

Thus, this assignment asks that each team be prepared to discuss the assigned materials during our class on November 21, 2015.

CASE ANALYSIS

Each individual should also carefully read the two cases we’ll consider today prior to coming to class. We may work within your assigned teams (during class) to examine the two cases. For each case, prepare answers to the following three questions (You will not be required to submit your answers to me):

- What are the major strategic management issues appearing in the case?
- What actions do you believe should be taken to successfully address the issues you believe the firm and/or leaders in the firm are facing?
- What are the strategic management-related insights you draw from this case that can be applied in your job and/or in your organization?
**TOPIC:** Strategy Execution and Innovation

**OBJECTIVES & COMPETENCIES:**

In this session, we continue discussing strategy implementation or execution, emphasizing the importance of innovation for competitive success while doing so.

**KEY CONTENT OF MODULE:**

1. Strategy Execution
   - Managing organizational change
   - Developing and sustaining an effective culture
   - Integrating acquisitions

2. Innovative Capabilities
   - Critical importance of innovation
   - Developing an innovative culture and processes
   - Managing the ‘politics’ of innovation in organization

**PREPARATION READING:**

*Making Strategy Work*, L.G. Hrebiniak, Chapters 5-9

**ARTICLES/CASES:**

“You Can’t be a Wimp: Make the Tough Calls” *Harvard Business Review* (morning session)
“GE’s Two-Decade Transformation” *Harvard Business Case* (morning session)

“What CEO’s Really Think of Their Boards” *Harvard Business Review* (afternoon session)
“Louis Vuitton in Japan” *Harvard Business Case* (afternoon session)

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PRE-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS:

Look-over/examine chapters 5 through 9 from the Hrebiniak book. You do not need to specifically and in detail read these chapters. We will discuss the core points from these chapters during class. In this manner, materials included in the Hrebiniak chapters will be integrated into our classroom discussions. Longer term, this book can serve as a reference for you regarding actions to take to successfully implement chosen strategies. In this sense, my belief is that Hrebiniak’s book is one that you can “keep on the desk” for future reference and use.

In contrast to the book though, please do carefully read the articles from Harvard Business Review that we will consider during today’s class. For each of the articles, please prepare answers to the following three questions (We’ll use your answers as a foundation for discussing the articles in class. You are not required to submit your answers in writing to me.):

- What major insights are featured in the reading?
- How can these insights be applied in your job or in organizations in general?
- What points included in the reading do you have trouble accepting and why is that the case?

Thus, this assignment asks that each team be prepared to discuss the assigned materials during our class on December 5, 2015.

CASE ANALYSIS

Each individual should also carefully read the two cases we’ll consider today prior to coming to class. We may work within your assigned teams (during class) to examine the two cases. For each case, prepare answers to the following three questions (You will not be required to submit your answers to me):

- What are the major strategic management issues appearing in the case?
- What actions do you believe should be taken to successfully address the issues you believe the firm and/or leaders in the firm are facing?
- What are the strategic management-related insights you draw from this case that can be applied in your job and/or in your organization?