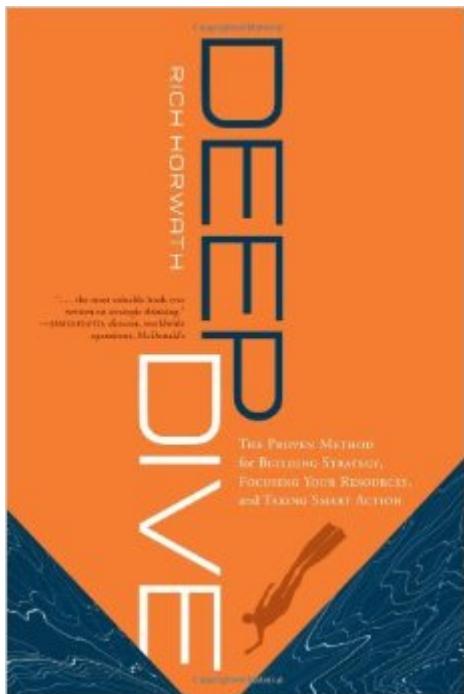


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Deep Dive: The Proven Method For Building Strategy, Focusing Your Resources, And Taking Smart Action



Synopsis

The inability to set good strategy can sink a company - and a leader's career. A recent "Wall Street Journal" study revealed that the number one most sought after executive skill by organisations is strategic thinking, but few leaders have that skill set. In this book, Rich Horwath dissects the three most important elements of strategic thinking, breaks them down into simple and attainable skills, and shows readers how to apply them every day. He provides managers with a clear path to mastery of three disciplines: Acumen - generate critical insights through a step-by-step evaluation of the business and its environment; Allocation - focus limited resources of time, talent, and money; and, Action - implement a system to guarantee effective execution and communication of strategy throughout the organisation. This book is based on research with senior executives from more than 150 companies and Horwath's own experience as a professional strategist. Armed with the knowledge from this book, every reader can become an expert strategist and an invaluable member of his or her organisation.

Book Information

Hardcover: 224 pages

Publisher: Greenleaf Book Group Press; 2 edition (August 1, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1929774826

ISBN-13: 978-1929774821

Product Dimensions: 1 x 5.8 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (58 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #141,878 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #200 inÂ Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Strategy & Competition #473 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Business & Finance > Management #475 inÂ Books > Business & Money > Processes & Infrastructure > Strategic Planning

Customer Reviews

Having worked with management in different industries in various parts of the country it has become apparent to me that strategic thinking occurs significantly less than I first thought. Business leaders over the past couple of years seem to be very short term thinkers. While times were good it was easy to cover up bad decisions but now that revenues are down it is very obvious that their acumen was overestimated. I was somewhat surprised to read in Rich Horwath's book that 85% of executive

leadership spends less than an hour a month discussing strategy, what are they doing the rest of the month? I believe all leaders can use further development in the strategic thinking arena to keep their skills sharp and to enhance their companies performance. Rich Horwath offers in his latest book, "Deep Dive", a plunge into waters of business creativity, and the unseen jewels that reside beneath the surface. Complacency has caused more damage in corporate America than foreign competition. New strategies and ways of thinking are how we can turn things around. During an economic downturn, when all of your instinct tells you to hold onto your business model at all costs, this is the precise moment when new strategies are needed the most. What "Deep Dive" does is to identify how to maximize the productivity of a brain storming sessions and eliminate any unnecessary risk when implementing a new strategy. Several great strategic thinking concepts and methods are introduced in "Deep Dive" and are summarized at the end of each chapter. These examples given through out the book can be utilized across any organization in any functional area. Tools such as the OODA Loop and Contextual Radar methods reveal the context in which particular ideas need to flourish.

In business, have a plan. Apply strategic thinking to the plan. Implement. That about sums up this common sense book. Books that tout a methodology for business success are always problematic, in my view. They point out failed companies because they've failed, saying, "See, if the company's leaders only did x, y, and z, they'd still be in business." And, "Now, these companies, still in business, are obviously applying x, y, and z correctly." 20-20 hindsight. Take General Motors. In 2009 General Motors filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. Before this time, it was an example of a company with a strategic plan (which apparently was to sell large, gas-guzzling cars and trucks). You hear that call from the stands for fuel efficiency? Author Rich Horwath writes that Bob Lutz, former chairman of GM, stated "The customer is at best just a rear-view mirror. He can tell you what he likes among the choices already out there. But when it comes to the future, why expect the customer to be the expert in clairvoyance or in creativity? After all, isn't that really what he expects us to be?" (p. 64). The Wall Street Journal lamented, "For the many individual General Motors Corp. shareholders wondering what their stock is still worth, the answer looks pretty bleak." So, what does this mean? Before, they were strategic thinkers, and then they were not strategic thinkers, and then they failed, and if they reemerge from their new organizational structure then they must be strategic thinkers again? I have a diver's headache. Here's what I want, one time. I want authors like Horwath to make predictions. "Companies A, B, and C are not applying the type of strategic thinking that I believe is required for their success.

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