UNIVERSITY OF THE
WEST *of* SCOTLAND
UWS

UWS Academic Portal

Strategic planning for higher education

Jalal, Akram; Murray, Alan

Published in:
Journal of Higher Education Service Science and Management

Published: 06/09/2019

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Link to publication on the UWS Academic Portal

Citation for published version (APA):
Jalal, A., & Murray, A. (2019). Strategic planning for higher education: a novel model for a strategic planning
process for higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Service Science and Management*, *2*(2).
https://joherd.com/journals/index.php/JoHESSM/article/view/31/12

Strategic planning for higher education: A novel model for a strategic planning process for higher education

Akram Jalal[a] and Alan Murray[b]

aDirector of Centre for Higher Education and Academic Development (CHERAD)
bSchool of Business and Enterprise, University of the West of Scotland

Abstract

In the 21st century higher education institutions must not focus solely on educating and tutoring students, but they should also generate strategies which match the organization's skills and resources to the opportunities and associated risks in its environment (Grant, 1991). Today, higher education institutions face fierce competition in the market both in terms of recruiting highly qualified academics and also attracting students. There is also considerable pressure for universities to enhance their reputation and develop their credentials. With this in mind educational institutions adopt strategic planning as a method to improve quality, solve problems, and to overcome common challenges. Strategic planning can be described as a process applied by organizations to develop strategies and provide the right atmosphere for making meaningful future decisions which build a strategic position for the organization in the marketplace to ensure future viability (Ansoff, 1984; Crisp, 1991; Hunger and Wheelen, 2003). If Universities are to survive the challenging times ahead then a clear focus on strategic planning is essential (Kotler & Murphy, 1981).

Strategic planning is a well-researched field however there is a gap in the research around the application of strategic planning within the field of higher education. A comprehensive investigation of the literature was carried out and an overview of the nature of strategic planning and the core concepts is provided. This article provides considerations for a regular strategic planning process, and has value for higher education leaders and the professionals who support them who are involved with developing strategic planning. This leads to the proposition of a novel model for developing a strategic plan for higher education institutions. This model will assist leaders to develop their perceptions of strategic planning in higher education, discussing the difficulties they may face during the process of developing their plans, and outlining the key steps of the development planning process. This work is limited in that it focuses on a single social field and the findings cannot be immediately transferred to other fields.

Keywords: Strategic planning, strategic planning process, higher education, model of strategic planning process

1. Introduction

The extraordinary growth of the international economy as well as its subsequent socio-political fluctuations have brought pressure on higher education institutions to compete in the global marketplace (Newman and Couturier, 2001) to recruit valued academics and students, in addition to improving their prominence and reputation. However, they have repeatedly faced significant challenges when attempting to achieve these targets around factors such as: developments in technology, changing demographics, globalization and funding cuts (Bishop, 2003).

Nowadays, strategic planning is one of the most urgent and important non-teaching activities that educational institutions will undertake (Taylor, Machado, and Peterson, 2008). Strategic planning is fundamental for any institution and represents the most effective way to attain its key goals. It is a process of future planning and identifying the most appropriate movements to align institutional priorities of colleges or departments. Despite the claims of some authors that added bureaucracy coupled with strategic planning could inhibit organizational creativity (Taylor and de Lourdes Machado, 2006), there is wide agreement that strategic planning provides higher education institutions with a secure method for achieving objectives. Strategic planning methods can assist direct senior management and encourage middle managers by supporting their daily activities towards the institution's main goals. This article sheds light on the significance of strategic planning in higher education based on the researchers' experience in addition to the publications that have affected our perceptions of strategic planning.

The model presented in this article was developed following a comprehensive literature review, conducted to summarize the current state of strategic planning in higher education. Themes emerged as the analysis progressed and specific techniques being used in the context of strategic planning were identified. These were then used to develop the novel model for a strategic planning process for higher education proposed in this paper.

2.   The nature of strategic planning

There are countless definitions of strategic planning however most researchers agreed on key aspects such as; long term decision making, planning processes and the nature and direction of an organization's activities leading to sustainability or competitive advantage (O'Regan & Ghobadian, 2007; Bryson, 2011). McNamara (2006) describes strategic planning as the determination of where the organization will be in the next few years, and how they will progress their processes so they can get there. Allison and Kaye (2005) recognize the nature of strategic planning as being a systematic process whilst also highlighting the importance of securing buy in from internal and external key stakeholders in order to agree key priorities that will support the overall goals of the organization. Here the importance of involving stakeholders in the process cannot be overstressed (Burby, 2003). Higher education institutions have a degree of autonomy (Hawkins, 2003) and can therefore develop their own strategic plan to include the best and highest educational standards. This is highly significant, but by itself is useless unless it includes strategic thinking. Strategic thinking concentrates on the bigger vision, identifies the external and internal indicators that affect the institution, and detects the right route that should be taken within that vision. Additionally, a precise analysis needs to be undertaken in order to establish which of these directions should be selected as the main goal for the subsequent years. As both strategic thinking and detailed planning are significant, there is an urgent need for the institution to build a unified team that has high skills in developing strategic planning. It is important to note that there is no single approach for a strategic plan, nor one accurate method for developing a strategy in higher education. Strategic planning is composed of two different components: planning and strategic thinking. Although they are different strategies, both are required to develop the entire strategic planning process. It is vital that the institution adopts the most appropriate approach to strategic planning as this will shape its organizational structure, and most likely its educational atmosphere. However, planning could ultimately still result in failure particularly when strategic planning becomes a tool for overcoming barriers for institutional performance and growth when it was intended to be a supportive tool. This phenomenon occurs when faulty or weak implementation of strategic planning exists, or when the process of implementation starts when no appropriate training had been provided.

3.   Strategic planning in higher education

In the context of higher education strategic planning is concerned with creating the future mission and vision of the higher education institution in an active situation and enhancing the environment, establishing strategic goals and quantifiable aims, and assessing the accomplishments through predetermined factors (Arslankaya and Korkusuz Polat, 2010). Higher education institutions (HEIs) are motivated by a wide range of influences to develop strategic planning processes, such as increasing the number of applicants, compliance and control considerations, changes in student demographics, and a demand to emulate the new evolving standards of higher education while preserving the core of a traditional complete institution (Altbach, 2001; Johnstone & Teferra, 2004). However Dawson (2003) states that strategic planners must consider "the politics of change" stating that the culture and politics of the organization itself are important factors which will influence the implementation process of any strategic planning process. However Tromp and Ruben (2010) warn that in higher education the obstacles to strategic planning are great and there are generally limited means available to leaders to motivate others to become involved in, and engaged with, the strategic planning process. Most academics and administrators are aware of the importance of strategic planning in higher education, however some confusion may be evident around the exact meaning of strategic planning, it's role in promoting HEIs and even its main components. It has been frequently shown that the HEIs that are in dire need of strategic planning can be the most unenthusiastic towards such a process but it is important that those affected by the strategic planning process have at least a conceptual understanding of the process (Mintzberg, 1994). Strategic planning in higher education is not a contemporary event, but it is a cumulative process. There has been considerable attention in the second half of the 20th century regarding the quality of higher education, which is a key driver of strategic planning innovations in higher education. Consequently the research points to a persistent need for effective strategic planning for higher education institutions. The targets offered by strategic planning will stimulate HEI stakeholders to think about, anticipate, identify and pursue advantage and commercial opportunity.

4. Drivers of strategic planning

The main driver of strategic planning in higher education is the need to present a continuing process of inspection and assessment of an institution's powers, limitations, aims, resource requirements, and future vision. The literature identifies a number of different approaches for identifying the motivations behind higher education strategic planning. Motivation is the main stimulus for initiating the development of strategic planning. It is the center of strategic planning's institutional significance, and it works towards assisting higher education institutions organize their procedures smoothly and professionally (Larsen & Langfeldt, 2005). Competition is also an essential stimulus for success, and strategic planning plays a major role in securing buy in from stakeholders (Jennings & Wattam, 1998). This approach can be considered as the key motivator for developing strategic plans. Strategic planning should motivate and encourage the institution's main goals, the model used, and the members of the higher education institution. Furthermore attempting to raise standards in higher education institutions brings with it a range of other types of challenges, leaving the institutions under pressure from several directions, all of which need to call on strategic planning to scale and deal with them positively. Furthermore, financial fluctuations and funding concerns may cause HEIs to re-evaluate their procedures. Strategic planning is a contributory process which allows the financial plan of an institution to be in line with the goals stated by the strategic plan. It also provides significance to resource distribution. Other challenges can also lead to strategic planning such as government regulation, variations in the student marketplace, growth in the number of universities which increases the level of competition, or global pressures are all requirements to start developing strategic planning in order to minimize the negative side effects and reach the agreed-upon goals.

HEIs may also develop strategic planning to reach national and/or international accreditation, such as the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and others.

The institutional mission and vision are always considered as the basis of strategic planning and most HEIs realize the need to visibly identify their vision, mission, and objectives, their goals for development, and the activities that need to be taken in order to achieve such goals.

5. A strategic planning process model

Not every component of strategic planning will be a part of every higher education planning model. The model explained below is a model of what has been agreed upon and adopted by most educational institutions. It has been proven successful and has survived the test of time. Effective strategic planning must have focus and a clear direction. HEIs must therefore stay away from the routines and bureaucracies that inhibit innovation. Strategic planning may require standardized activities and procedures, which should not entail excessive paperwork and bureaucracy. Strategic planning should avoid data accumulation and embrace the significance of strategic thinking. The powerful process of strategic planning can provide stability and consistency in a chaotic and fluid environment, whilst allowing the institution to be more agile in order to take advantage of unintended consequences and the potential opportunities they offer.

6. Steps of the strategic planning process

It is important to note that there is no specific model for strategic planning that can match all of the institutions individual needs and conditions. As a result there is no universally agreed-upon standard format for developing a strategic plan and every institution may decide to choose to adopt their own approach and format of its own strategic plan. However, every institution should ensure its own strategic plan is consistent with its exceptional requirements. Also compatibility and harmony between mission, vision, values, goals, strategies, and implementation are required. Furthermore, frequent evaluation and modification to the current plan should be carried out at each stage of the strategic planning process. Worksheets should be provided at the end of each stage to assist those involved in the process in building a practical concept for how to develop the components of strategic planning. The start point for any educational institution is to identify its mission and vision. When these are clearly articulated the institution will begin a sequence of internal and external evaluation processes and benchmarking to determine the overall approach for developing effective strategic plans. The mission and vision are the main components of the strategic plan and so they will remain as the whole context of the strategic plan cannot be developed in isolation of the mission and vision. As well as the institutional mission and vision, the goals, objectives and values statements are the main documents that provide the context of a strategic plan. These documents offer key guidance in the development of strategic planning. The institution should regularly

assess its strategies and evaluate its plans, taking into account all of the new developing strategies and evolving modifications. This periodic review will confirm similarity and suppleness, and also prove that new changes are needed to add to the newly uncovered perceptions. The following sections are dedicated to explaining the steps for developing institutional strategic planning.

6.1 Initialization and readiness to start

The essential step needed before starting the main stages of strategic planning processes is to initialize, prepare, and arrange for planning. Without appropriate preplanning, complete strategic planning may struggle and possibly stop. Thus, the following actions must be taken because they will ensure a correct start, based on clear grounds leading to an effective strategic planning process. The first step in this stage is to obtain institutional assistance before then selecting the most effective person to be the leader of the strategic planning process. Some institutions start by signing agreements to sustain strategic planning, while others concentrate on the uncomplicated decision-makers' consensus that reflects the significance of such a step.

6.2 Forming strategic plan committees

For the strategic planning process and the following activities to be efficient, wide-ranging institutional involvement is vital. It is necessary therefore that a strategic planning steering committee be established and that it be filled with members from all segments of the institution in order to ensure buy in at all levels of the organization as without this the plan will ultimately fail.

6.3 Planning heads and committees

Before embarking on the main stages of strategic planning, it is important to start forming strategic planning committees and subcommittees, and assign who will participate in the process and what their contribution will be. Higher education institutions should select the right people for strategic planning committees using representation system techniques, whereby each member in the planning process is acting for a specific stakeholder group such as the student body, faculty, academic staff, affiliated agencies, and so on.

6.3.1   Director strategy, planning, and performance

Leadership of the strategic planning process should be provided by top management and this must also be fully supported by other ket parties such as the board of trustees. The leaders of this process should show high efficiency in communicating and assisting in the processes of development and implementation of institutional strategic planning. Although the director of strategy brings trustworthiness to the approved plans, the board of trustees or similar party should also contribute to core elements of strategy development and inward responsibility. The director of strategy is also in charge of including other key stakeholders in the key features of the strategic planning processes, and should have a periodic communication with them to inform them of all that has been achieved, the main challenges encountered, and the proposed solutions.

6.3.2   The institution's external consultants

Some higher education institutions prefer to select an external consultant to provide the required support concerning their strategic planning process and/or to develop a part of or the entire plan. The highest level of support throughout the external participation may include specific stages of strategic planning, as opposed to the complete plan. The external consultant may provide a degree of strategic thinking beyond the institutional limitations and procedures.

6.3.3   The strategic planning steering committee (SPSC)

A board of trustees normally forms a strategic planning steering committee (SPSC) to evaluate the current impact of distractions, risk, and opportunities for advancement, and it may provide recommendations about the strategic direction that the institution should follow in order to guarantee its continuing strength and excellence. It should comprise a broadly varied group of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community representatives. More commonly, the main duty of the strategic steering committee starts by naming major topics for the

strategic plan, which is supposed to be chosen after an in-depth study of the institution's key strengths and opportunities that will influence higher education institutions. Such groups of higher education institutions have to participate, one way or another, in the strategic planning process. Those groups will assist in feeding any required information and ideas into the planning process, where needed. Among these groups, it has been considered that the campus, the administration, faculty, and staff are the most prominent groups participating in the strategic planning process. Normally, a steering committee will be chaired by the director of strategic planning. In order to make the committee more effective, each member should be selected to indicate the diversity of schools, colleges, and departments of the institution as well as provide the required skills to the committee. This reinforces the fact that the selected members should be a combination of strategic thinkers and planners. The board of trustees tells the SPSC to provide advice to the trustees concerning the strategic direction that the institution should take for a given time period in order to put the university in an advantageous position in the marketplace. The strategic committee also provides comments, suggestions, and recommendations on the proposed strategy that formulates both a proposed vision of the institute and the implementation that assists in reaching that vision. Typically, in a small institution the strategic planning steering committee could be the only committee needed to develop strategic planning. However, for larger institutions, more sub-committees and working groups may be needed in order to develop different phases of the strategic plan and write reports to the steering committee.

6.3.4   Strategic plan working groups

The steering committee is also responsible for setting up a number of working groups, normally related to major areas of the plan; for example, the academic working group, the student working group, research and endeavors, the enrollment management working group, and the recruitment and marketing working group. Working groups have been formed to provide the required enhancements to the main institutional strategies approved by the steering committee, and to develop the more detailed plans for converting the comprehensive strategies into action. The working groups may involve members of the steering committee and other members and external consultants. Working groups will be responsible for counseling and implementing the proposed plan to assist the institution in reaching its goals. By moving towards the implementation stage of the strategic plan, working groups will perform or supervise the completion of the goals defined in the strategic plan. To guarantee a higher level of liability, each working group should be chaired by a senior administrator who will report to the steering committee and/or the applicable senior leader. Each working group is encouraged to "think big" and will be asked to provide an official report that will elaborate on an indicated topic and recommend achievable strategies with the potential to add value to the institution. In this section, the working groups may accomplish literature reviews, acquire a benchmark from other institutions, or receive advice from individuals or from external consulting offices.

6.3.5   The board of trustees

Where applicable the board of trustees will only be responsible for the way that the institution is replying to the major votes of the strategic plan guidelines.

7.   Designing the strategic planning process

As soon as the institution makes its decision on the necessity of starting a strategic planning process and start to form planning committees, the next step is to agree on the design of the adopted planning model and make a commitment to make contributions. The institution should obtain its first input at this stage. An example of implementing this stage is the creation of open forums, which can be initiated where the first draft of the strategic planning model is presented. This provides interested parties with the opportunity to ask questions, seek clarifications, and suggest recommendations. At the end of such meetings, the planning model should be well defined and approved when the majority of the meeting attendees have approved it.

7.1 Institutional mission statement

The mission statement is essential for institutional identity. It is a key component of strategic planning. The mission statement is the solid foundation of any strategic plan and the statement outlines, in short sentences, the reason behind the existence of this institution and what its activities are intended to accomplish. Mission statements cope with the existing identity of an institution and may be ordered by the state. Mission statements which concentrate more on the institution's current performance, status, and targets normally do not have to be

adjusted or modified frequently. Nevertheless, it is important to review it on a regular basis to guarantee that it remains relevant. A valuable mission statement can be memorized simply. There is no need to discuss everything in detail; institutional objectives will fulfil this role. One or two phrases will be sufficient if the focus takes account of the following key questions; what is the institution about, who does the institution serve, and how will the institution reach its goals? Specifically, a mission is focused on identity, framework, and process. Mission statements should be approved by the board of trustees or similar.

7.2 Institutional vision statement

The vision statement of a higher education institution is one of the most significant parts of a strategic plan. It paints a picture of what the institution is aiming to become within the next few years and points to the direction of travel for example if the institution has a vision to become a market leader in online learning. The vision statement describes the institution's strategic level in the upcoming years and how the components of that level are related to the institutional mission statement. The vision statement should illustrate what type of organization the institution is attempting to become and should reinforce it with a significant amount of determined action. Typically, the vision statement is reviewed and adjusted by members of the campus community, especially the strategic planning steering committee. It illustrates an institution's upcoming goals, urging and encouraging all its faculty members, administrative staff, and students to break through the lethargy and strive to achieve. The mission and vision statements specify the two boundaries of a critical view of the institution, from which the strategic plan is established. They indicate the present and future status of the institution. In other words, the strategic plan is used as a bridge between the two. The completion of the appropriate strategic planning is determined by the accurate identification of vision and mission statements.

7.3 Values statement

A statement of values describes the beliefs and standards that manage an institution's internal performance in addition to its association with the external world. Thus, while mission statements reflect what the institution is presently trying to accomplish and vision statements reveal where it wants to be, the aim of expressing statements of values is to define the type of institution one would hope to serve. The statement of values is the source of what a higher education institution deems essential, which as a result will determine what an institution is or plans to be. It reveals how the institution achieves its educational production, which will reveal how such production may influence the main players of the institution such as faculty, staff, students, partners, and the wider community. It identifies the significant values that reveal the required institutional culture such as care, kindness, obligation, honesty, and quality.

7.4 Environmental scanning

In order for the institution to clearly identify where it plans to go; there is a need to obtain a common awareness about what the institution is about, its strengths and weaknesses, and where it is exceptional. In general, the first step in the process of strategic assessment requires identifying the institution's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (a SWOT analysis). This analysis will assist in constructing a solid base of awareness to guarantee that the strategic development plan remains appropriate, that it meets the requirements of the client population, and that it makes the most efficient use out of the obtainable resources. The evaluation of environmental scanning can best be evaluated using SWOT analysis techniques. This allows decision makers to integrate projections based on current and foreseeable trends and influences in their strategic planning (Reeve, 2002).Scanning the environment is one of the most significant tasks in the strategic planning process and is used to assess the location of the institution in the environment. This requires a reliable and comprehensive assessment of the internal tasks and the external influences imposed on the institution. Environmental scanning is at the center of the evaluation stage of the strategic planning process. It is the methodical procedure of gathering and analyzing the required information for the aim of developing, estimating, and selecting a desired future. The results of such processes are particularly beneficial in determining the goals and objectives of strategic planning. Valuable environmental scanning measures both quantitative and qualitative variations. Eventually, higher education institutions should generate a number of internal and external key environmental indicators that have the essential influence on the work they perform. The internal indicators may include internal concerns and trends that are essential to the institution, such as budgetary issues, continuing education, quality assurance, continuing improvement, student success indicators, enrollment variation, research, and changes in leadership. The process of managing internal scanning is normally effortless if compared with

the external processes, provided that the institution is straightforward and truthful during this process. The internal scanning process should identify the strength and weakness indicators of the institution. Students, faculty, and staff all play a major role in identifying the top strengths and weaknesses of the institution, as their opinions are very important providing their answers are truthful and accurate. The external indicators in the environment outside the institution may include: developing new trends in higher education, sustainability, demographics, politics and public policy, economies and technological forces that impact the goals of an institution, and how it operates. This requires an evaluation of the existing environment and the implications that may influence it. The scans may also include an assessment of competitive and cooperative influences. The outcome of an external evaluation exposes the opportunities and threats that face the institution. Universities are affected by factors outside the institution and are highly susceptible to any changes that emanate from the outside environment. Collecting the required information needed to detect externally affected opportunities and threats to an institution will involve additional time and strenuous effort and the subcommittees, working groups, consultant groups, or strategic planning committees may be asked to accomplish the analysis for the strategic steering committee.

7.5 Strategic goals and objectives

The next step in developing a strategic plan for higher education institutions is to define the key strategic goals and supporting objectives. Goals and objectives provide the basis for strategic assessment (see Figure 1). Within each goal, one or more strategies should be identified. Goals are statements that outline what an institution is aiming to achieve. They are typically a collection of connected plans, a reflection of the main activities of the institution, and a compass for the quality of work of the institutional staff and academics. They are typical rules and guides that clarify what the institution wants to achieve. They are normally long-term and denote global visions. Thus, goals can be likened to an umbrella with a number of spokes branching out from the center. Once the main strategies (goals) have been clearly identified, the next step is to realize how the institution will act to reach such goals. Objectives, on the other hand, are very specific, time-based, accessible activities that sustain and carry the achievement of a goal. Therefore, objectives naturally must be aligned directly with goals. Objectives should be well-defined, brief, start with an action verb, quantifiable, and comprehensible. To convert a strategic plan from theoretical insights into a practical reality, the committees, academic members, and administrators in the institution need to carry on creating action plans accompanied by full strategies, quantifiable outcomes, and a clear agenda.
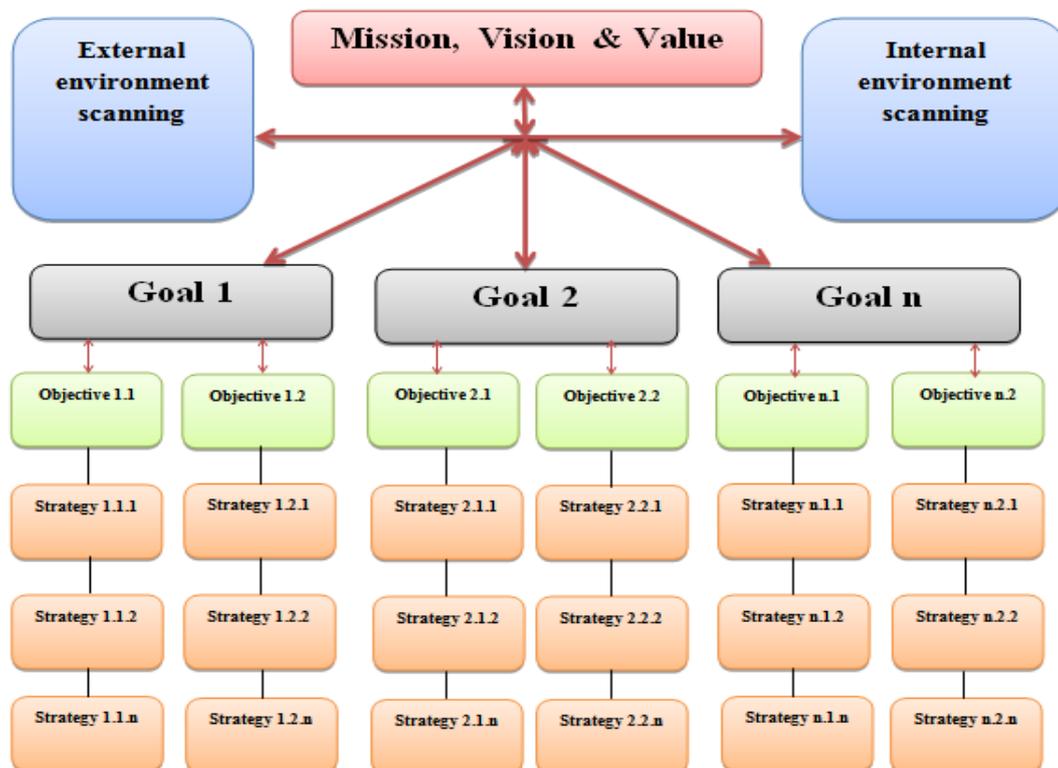
Fig. 1. Strategic planning process model for higher education

7.6 Key performance indicators (KPI)

The development of mission, vision, values, and institutional goals and objectives, as well as environmental scanning, will establish a solid foundation for strategies and the planning development process (Figure 1). The next step is to choose key performance indicators (KPIs), which consequently lead to identifying detailed objectives and actions (the core of the strategic plan). Key performance indicators (KPIs) specify institutional aims, which if achieved, would assure institutional capabilities. They offer strategic thinkers coherent results, which can assist in designing new effective strategies. They provide the planning process with quantifiable conditions that will determine the extent of the distinct assessment of strategies and plans. KPIs should not control the strategic planning process; KPIs should only provide a criterion of opportunities and should be highly accurate in order to confirm the plan's reliability. Usually, KPIs are used with a distinct attached measurement, such as percentages, total figures, etc.

7.7 Creating broad strategies

For any institution the choice of strategic goals is critical and this process requires a degree of creativity. In many cases, there may be many strategies that could be created for a specific institutional goal, while in other cases there may be more than one strategy that could be designated to more than one institutional goal. It is very important to note that at this stage of the process, the focus should be only on developing the broad strategies. Initially, it is important to recognize the real justification behind the selection of specific strategies and why one strategy should ultimately be selected over another. The developed goals, objectives, and strategies within the strategic planning model can be considered as the fundamentals of the action plans and the road map toward achievement.

8. Implementation plan

The most significant complementary stage of the strategy for HEI is the implementation process. Focusing on the implementation process will lead to a transfer from "strategic planning" to a larger "strategic management" approach. An implementation plan reveals whether a strategic plan is an active document or merely a decoration. It is a function of turning goals, objectives, and strategies into an action plan, and there are various opinions on what should be done during this stage. As a principle, only information useful to the implementation plan should be involved in this phase. The process of implementing a strategic plan is determined by the institution's capability to transform strategic notions into action plans. Therefore, it is vital to identify and recognize who is actually in charge of implementing the various elements of an action plan, the expected date to complete implementation of each element, and the type of measurement that will be applied to evaluate the accomplishments of the actions taken. It is preferable to assign one or more people from the working groups to take responsibility for managing the accomplishment of the action. Furthermore, it is also preferable to guarantee that only a qualified and competent person should be selected and given the full authority to complete the assigned task. It is also very important to write an executive summary of the plan. This is normally needed for publicity, and institutions may present it in the form of a catalogue or brochure in order to translate the vision to others and secure buy in.

9. Strategic, operational, and tactical planning

Higher education institutions are normally comprised of a number of colleges, schools faculties, departments, or other subsidiary units, which are given a degree of independence over their respective operations and it is quite common to create an overall strategic plan in addition to associated operation and action plans at the college, department, or affiliated unit. The first stage of an institution's planning is the strategic planning process, which takes into account the institution as a whole, and this involves scanning the external environmental together with internal examination and this stage can often cover up to a period of five-years. The second stage is the tactical planning process, which thinks through the requirements and accomplishments of a particular division of the institution. It covers the goals, and objectives delineated in an institution's divisions. This stage commonly covers a three-year period. Tactical planning assists each division in developing and executing activities that can help reach the institution's overall mission and vision, specifically the techniques in which the divisions will be reinforcing the execution of the institution's strategic

plan. Operational planning comes in the third stage. It covers every department within the institution on an annual basis. Operational planning is developed based on the department's goals and objectives that can be accomplished within a period of one year. It supports the accomplishment of goals identified in tactical plans, and reveals the essential procedures for each department. In their annual reports, each department should describe how their achievements are related to the institution's strategic and tactical plans.

10. Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to explore the nature of strategic planning within the field of higher education. The relevant literature around this topic was interrogated leading to the proposition of a novel model for developing a strategic plan for higher education institutions. This model will assist leaders to develop their perceptions of strategic planning in higher education, discussing the difficulties they may face during the process of developing their plans, and outlining the key steps of the development planning process. This work is limited in that it focuses on a single social field and the findings cannot be immediately transferred to other fields. This limitation can be overcome with future research by applying the proposed model in other domains.

Strategic planning has the potential to overcome obstacles within complex organizations such as universities. However, negligence and lack of experience in using the fundamental phases of the process leads many plans to gather dust instead of leading the institution towards its mission and vision. Strategic planning should start with deep knowledge and a clear understanding of the role of motivation in the strategic planning process. It is a realistic action-oriented process, based on a scanning of internal and external indicators, which turns identified goals, objectives, and resource allocation into significant outcomes. A strategic plan starts by creating a statement of the institution's mission and vision, highlighting key goals and objectives, and creating the main strategies that adopt those indicators to reach the institution's desired achievements. One of the main reasons for the development of a strategic plan is to guarantee that each planning component is interlinked with other components in order to be mutually supportive. The mission statement is a foundation block of the entire process as the strategic plan components should be aligned to the organization's mission. Along with the mission statement, a vision statement, strategic goals, objectives, and values statement should all be part of the supporting documents that establish the context for a strategic plan. The vision statement is the statement of the institution's desires, and it is in conformity with the analysis process of the institution's environment. Without a strategic plan, there will be no clear path towards improvement and without a mission, vision, values, and strategic goals there will be ambiguity and confusion around where the institution is going or why they are doing what they are doing. Strategic planning provides commitment, motivation, and a clear direction for modern higher education institutions seeking to compete in the marketplace of today and tomorrow.

References

Allison, M., & Kaye, J. (2005), Strategic planning for nonprofit organizations: A practical guide and workbook. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Altbach, P. G. (2001), Higher education and the WTO: Globalization run amok. International Higher Education, 23, 2-4.

Ansoff, H.I. (1984), Implementing strategic management, Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Prentice-Hall.

Arslankaya S. & Korkusuz Polat T. (2010), Strategic planning for local government: A case study 6th International Strategic Management Conference, St. Petersburg, Russia.

Bishop, J.S., Spake, D.F. (2003), Distance education: A bibliographic review for educational planners and policymakers, 1992-2002.

Bryson, John M. (2011), Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations: A guide to strengthening and sustaining organizational achievement. 4th edition. San Francisco: Revised Edition, Jossey-Bass.

Burby, R. (2003), Making Plans That Matter: Citizen Involvement and Government Action. Journal of the American Planning Association, 69:1: pp33–50.

Crisp, P. (1991), Strategic Planning and Management. Blagdon: The Staff College.
Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı (DPT). (2006). Kamu idareleri için stratejik planlama kılavuzu. Ankara: Yazar.

Dawson, P. (2003), Organizational Change: A Processual Approach, London: Routledge.

Gayle, D. J., Tewarie, B. and White, A. Q. Jr. (2003), Governance in the Twenty-First Century University: Approaches to Effective Leadership and Strategic Management. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report 30 (1).

Grant, R. M. (1991), 'The resource-based theory of competitive advantage: Implications for strategy formulation', California Management Review, 33, pp.114-135.

Hawkins, B. (2003), Distributed learning: Promises and pitfalls, 2003 UCEA 88th Annual Conference: March 28-30, 2003—Chicago, Illinois.

Hunger, J. D. & Wheelen, T. L. (2003), Essentials of Strategic Management. 3rd ed., New Jersey, USA: Prentice Hall.

Jennings, D. & Wattam, S. (1998), Decision Making: An integrated Approach. 2nd ed., London, Pitman.

Johnstone, B. & Teferra, D. (2004), Introduction. Journal of Higher Education in Africa. 2(2), 1-5.

Kotler, P. & Murphy, P.E. (1981), Strategic Planning for Higher Education, The Journal of Higher Education, 52:5, 470-489.

Larsen, M. I. & Langfeldt, L. (2005), Profiling Comprehensiveness? Strategy Formulation and Effects of Strategic Programmes at Traditional Universities. In Å. Gornitzka, M. Kogan & A. Amaral (Eds.), Reform and Change in Higher Education : Analysing Policy Implementation (p. 343-361). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.

McNamara C. (2006), Consulting, LLC. Available: http://www.managementhelp.org/plan_dec/str_plan/str_plan.htm.

Mintzberg, H. (1994), The fall and rise of strategic planning, Harvard Business Review.

Newman, F. & Couturier, L. (2001), The New Competitive Arena: market forces invade the academy. Working Paper. The Futures Project: Policy for Higher Education in a Changing World. Providence: Brown University.

O'Regan, N. & Ghobadian, A. (2007), Formal strategic planning: Annual rain dance or wheel of success?. Strategic Change, 16(1-2), 11-22.

Reeve, R. T., & Perlich, P. S. (2002), September/October). Utah economic and business review. Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BERB), 62 (9-10), 1-15.

Taylor, J. S., Machado, M. D. L., & Peterson, M. W. (2008), Leadership and strategic management: Keys to institutional priorities and planning. European Journal of Education, 43 (3), 369-386.

Taylor, James, & Maria de Lourdes Machado. (2006). Higher Education Leadership and Management: From Conflict to Interdependence Through Strategic Planning. Tertiary Education and Management, 12, 137–160.