Student Name

Professor’s Name

Course

Date

**Planning and strategic management**

1. **How does the planning/control cycle help keep a manager’s plans headed in the right direction?**

The planning/control cycle is made up of two planning steps which are 1- making the actual plan and 2- going through with the selected plan. It is also made up of two control measure steps which are, 1- monitoring the direction of the plan which is done by relating the outcomes to the laid plan and 2- controlling the set direction of the plan. This can be accomplished in two distinctive ways. They include; refining any future plans and modifying the bends that affect negatively the plan laid out.

Taking examples from electronic producers, they release some information about their products in advance. This strategy allows them a window for the correction of mistakes as well as refining their products according to the unanimous customer demands.

Planning can involve confidentiality for the company thus eliminating the potential threats from competitors as well as cultivating the degree of public inquisitiveness about a certain product. Organizations also opt to utilize this aspect of mystery in luring their potential customers who got exited from the earlier released buzz over the product. In case the sales are not as planned, a company through the managers they choose to change their marketing plans or in closed cases, are enabled to plan better for their next project (Miles et al, 1978).

1. **What is strategic positioning, and what are the three principles that underlie it?**

Strategic positioning is a business term meaning the critical stages undertaken to define various business strategies. This also stretches to such strategies stretches to serve their customers as well as maintaining a competitive advantage from competitors. It’s a twofold operation where an organization has to create and maintain their clientele while still working to overcome the competition within the industry.

The first principle is opening with a precise goal. These might be long term or short term depending on the organization. If an organization settles on long term economic goals, they should be well prepared as the returns on their investments should be based on this long-term platform. This means that the company should be self-sustained without the returns on investment (Markides, Constantinos, 1999).

Second, the organization’s strategy should allow it to offer a value proposition or some benefits to their clientele. Value proposition and benefits which are far from the reach of their competitors. This strategy includes study and recognition of what the customer really needs as well as realizing what other competitors are doing about it.

Lastly, the gained competitive advantage should be maintained throughout the run of the business. The practice of such balance would enable the organization to maintain a leadership position in the industry of its operations. If the organization fails to uphold this strategy, then it is bound to lose its lead in the competition chain.

1. **What’s the five-step recipe for the strategic management process?**

Strategic management involves a five-step approach in that, the upper management of an organization must design a strategy before they can apply it in their processes. First of all, the organization’s vision must be clearly set to avoid working outside the scopes of the business. This can be done by first identifying and classifying the organizational goals and then followed on a precisely designed process on how those goals can be achieved.

Next, the management should source for the relevant information needed to thrive the business. This is by understanding the requirements of the organization and the overall growth of the organization. At this point, all internal and external matters are examined as they have the ability to affect the business (Stark 2015).

Then the management formulates a working strategy which would identify the key competencies and weaknesses of the organization. It looks at the already gained resources as well as the resources the business would need to obtain to operate. At this point, the organization then realizes the resources they need to source from outside its perimeter.

After the strategy is formulated, it is at this point that a business might be forced to adopt a diverse structure if their existing one fails to comply with the selected strategy. All employees and staff at this stage are made aware of what is expected of them and in what way their responsibilities are incorporated in the overall business goals. Finally comes the evaluation step where the measure of the organization’s performance is observed. Also, the internal and external factors are reviewed with the aim of discovering any loopholes that might be working against the organization.

1. **How can three techniques—Porter’s four competitive strategies, diversification and synergy, and the BCG matrix—help me formulate strategy?**

Potter’s four competitive strategy- This strategy framework enables a company to maintain a competitive advantage by considering four approaches which are; cost leadership, differentiation, cost focus, and differentiation focus. Cost leadership advocates for the lowest costs in the industry while differentiation helps in making the company unique from all other competitors in the industry. Cost focus would enable me to find the advantages of my production cost. The differentiation focus would enable me to strategize my business focused on the uniqueness of the business practice.

Diversification and synergy would aid in my business strategies in that it would aid in expanding my business to broader markets and expounding on the products my company deals with. For example, if my business revolves around the production of cellphones, then it would help me diversify my products to secure customer preferences and thus expand the territories of the company as well as its revenue buildup (Reed & George 1986).

BCG Matrix would aid my strategizing by helping me realize the position my business holds in the industry as well as the potential it has to better its performances. This is by analyzing the market share and the growth rate the business has as compared to the other competitors within the industry.

Work Cited

Miles, Raymond E., et al. "Organizational strategy, structure, and process." *Academy of management review* 3.3 (1978): 546-562.

Markides, Constantinos. "Six principles of breakthrough strategy." *Business Strategy Review* 10.2 (1999): 1-10.

Stark, John. "Product lifecycle management." *Product lifecycle management (Volume 1)*. Springer, Cham, 2015. 1-29.

Reed, Richard, and George A. Luffman. "Diversification: The growing confusion." *Strategic Management Journal* 7.1 (1986): 29-35.