**MODULE 1 Discussion: Strategic Management: Vision, Mission, and Stakeholders**

WEEK 1:

As you research General Mills, you may want to compare and contrast that company with the other food service retailers – such as Kraft Foods, Nestle, Tyson Foods, ConAgra, and Kellogg.

Please visit the General Mills site, and identify the company's mission and vision, as well as their major stakeholders (you may need to interpret and/or make assumptions here, as all mission and vision statements are not crystal clear - nor are they always explicitly stated. You should note that the stakeholders aren't simply the shareholders. "Stakeholders" include everyone and anyone who is affected by the success or failure of the company).

WEEK 2:

In consultation with your peers, analyze how General Mills represents and advances the goals of its stakeholders.

Note: I want you to reflect on the above—and I also want you to analyze critically though you will want to consult the library, some websites, and other resources. Cite your sources, and **do** **not copy-and-paste material directly from those resources.**Use direct quotations sparingly, if at all.

**Week 1:**

Professor and Classmates,

General Mills is a multinational company that deals with several branded consumer foods. The company produces and markets branded consumer foods worldwide. General Mills also distributes unbranded food products to other industries that deal with food services. The company was formed in 1928 in Minneapolis and it is still located there. Since its establishment, the company has been able to acquire other companies thereby making it one of the world’s trusted food suppliers. (General Mills Inc, 2019).

**Mission and Vision**

General Mills has mission and vision statements that guide their operations. Its vision statement is “to serve the world by making food people love.” The mission, on the other hand, is: “To make lives healthier, easier and richer every day.” Their main target in the mission is to nourish lives, the whole society and the future (General Mills Inc., 2017). For the company to meet its objectives and achieve its mission, it has set up three aspects that will focus on nourishing the lives of its customers. Firstly, General Mills assists its customers to lead healthier lives by employing weight management strategies and by producing products that will boost the functions of the heart rather than affecting its performance. This is achieved through the enriching of the diets by incorporating essential nutrients. Secondly, the company also produces on-the-go foodstuffs that are conveniently packaged. Finally, the company also strives to enrich the lives of its customers by making products that can create special and memorable moments with their friends, family or colleagues.

**Stakeholders**

General Mills stakeholders are the stock owners, senior management, employees, traders, suppliers, delivery companies, farmers and consumers. The major institutional stakeholders are Vanguard Group Inc., State Street Corp, Blackrock Institutional Trust Company, Blackrock Fund Advisors, Massachusetts Financial Services Co.

Kraft Heinz Company should have a very similar mission and vision as both companies are dedicated to the sustainable health of the people and the planet, but apparently, that was not the case (Ocano, 2015). After searching the site intensively I could not locate the mission or vision but they do have their culture and values listed. Both companies do have similar values and strive to create a positive culture.

Nestle on the other had a very detailed mission statement, in my opinion, it was very clear and portions of the statement educated potential stakeholders on the company’s objective. In my opinion, their mission statement technically had parts of their vision in it. Their statement was long but I felt it covered the majority of their short term goals. After reading their mission statement I started looking at their stock details, I even downloaded their Annual report, financial statements and read their letter to shareholders.

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**Reference:**

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Ocano, S. (2015, August 31). *Top 10: US food and beverage manufacturers of 2015*. Retrieved from Buisness Chief: Top 10: US food and beverage manufacturers of 2015

**Week 2:**

Professor and Classmates,

            The goals of the company, General Mills, is to start and make a top class growth that will be able to assist and provide high returns to the stakeholders. The company has been able to procure several natural food companies such as Annie’s Foods (Huddleston, 2014), they also have bought Epic Provisions and Liberte Yogurt while growing and enlarging their brands. The company has had a rise in the net sales by raising their numbers from 2016 and has net sales of $1 billion by 2019 (White, 2016). The both healthy natural brands found in the health focused industry as per by General Mills is worth over $675 million dollars. The company is the one of the largest organic and natural food industries in the United States. The company's CEO, Mr. Powell provided information in his letter to the stakeholders how the company works directly on transparency by giving numerous updates across four different areas which are: Health and Wellness, Sustainability, Workplace and Community (General Mills, 2016).

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References:

Huddleston, Tom. (2014). General Mills Stocks up its organic pantry by buying Annie’s. Retrieved on July 28, 2019, from http://fortune.com/2014/09/08/general-mills-expaning-organics-natural-foods-annies/

White, Victoria. (2016). General Mills to reach $1 billion in net sales from natural & organic products by 2019. Retrieved on July 28, 2019, from http://www.newfoodmagazine.com/23203/news/industry-news/general-mills-reach-1-billion-net-sales-natural-organic-products-2019/

General Mills (2016). To our Stakeholders. Retrieved on July 28, 2019, from https://globalresponsibility.generalmills.com/PDF/general\_mills-global\_responsibility\_2016\_0003.pdf

**MODULE 2 Discussion: SWOT**

In Module 2, we focus on SWOT. In order to complete a SWOT, we are required to identify and analyze the key opportunities and threats in the external environment. Then, we need to identify and analyze the company’s key strengths and weaknesses (internal analysis).

WEEK 1:

During Week 1, you are asked to address the following:

a) Evaluate the operating industry of General Mills using *a minimum*of two forces included within Porter's Five Forces model.

b) Using PEST, assess General Mills’ remote environment using a *minimum* of two PEST forces.

c) Conclude your assessment about the overall environment. Is it more or less favorable for General Mills? Give your ranking from 1-10 (in which 1 = vast gloom and doom for this company; 10 = *huge* bonus this year!). Where do you think General Mills fits on this 1-10 scale?

WEEK 2:

a) Assess what you believe to be the most important aspects of the internal environment at General Mills. Do not try to analyze every aspect of the internal organization -- rather, identify *a minimum*of two internal strengths and/or weaknesses*.* Do your best not to repeat the observations made by your peers, although you are encouraged to build on each other's observations (or to disagree).

b) Complete your SWOT by integrating the external environmental analysis you completed in Week 1 with your Week 2 internal analysis. Use your SWOT to conclude whether the organization’s *overall* outlook is more – or less – favorable.

It is very important for a company to assess its strengths so that it can use them to neutralize (or better yet, to *eliminate*) environmental threats and take advantage of opportunities. The organization must recognize (and it must work to shore up) its weaknesses so that opportunities are not missed, and such that threats are much less likely to put the company at risk.

Be sure to respond to the conclusions of your classmates.

**WEEK 1:**

Classmates and Professor,

A)

General Mills is looking to expand globally and it operates in a very competitive global market. The rivalry between competitors is one of the Porter’s forces. With companies such as Nestle and Kellogg’s, General Mills is operating in a market full of competition and is expected to compete favourably. Nestle and Kellogg’s produce similar products and services as General Mills thereby making the company to change its area of focus to other new products such as energy bars. Furthermore, the acquisition of Greek Yogurt has given the company an advantage abroad as it has been able to expand into new markets (General Mills, 2017).

Secondly, substitute goods are also an important aspect of the Porter’s forces. When referencing the power of the buyer, it is possible the company can lose some of their customers to their rivals because consumers can turn to other firms that deal with similar products. In order to deal with this kind of situation, the organization can adjust their prices and ensure that the customers are satisfied and loyal to their products through innovation and maintenance of quality standards.

B)

PEST which is also called PESTLE abbreviated means Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental (Adamkasi, 2017).  These are tools that are utilized to better and improve their competitive positions in the business sp the company can be more successful in the future in the business market (Hall, 2019).

Economical: A high portion of the world's economies are constant and secure, these also increases in the inflation rate, saving rate, interest rate, both domestic (United States) and internationally, in other countries, and economic cycle to figure out the aggregated requirements and aggregated investment in an economy.  All these economic factors provide a positive change for General Mills to be successful (Fern Fort University, 2019).

Technological: With some technology that is extremely advanced in the agriculture field, General Mills can certainly make various natural products at a lower price to make a bigger profit for the company and its stakeholders.  Innovation goes farther than new product development.  This assists the company’s environmental stability attempts to improve and overcome other companies in the market (General Mills, 2019). Drastic change is controlled assists on reducing cost in acquiring lower production price on products, this has an impact on cost structure and impact on value chain structuring (Fern Fort University, 2019).

C)

I would rate General Mills an 8 out of 10, they have a better chance for improvement in its market industry but other organizations are trying as much as General Mills to be in the top in the business market.  With more countries that are growing drastically, General Mills has a better chance than most companies in the market as long as they maintain their innovation and willingness to stay ahead as much as they can in the portion of their sales. General Mills should think outside the box on different natural products because of the needed requirements in the market demand and persist on keeping certain updates towards their market strategies.

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Reference:

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Fern Fort University. (2019). *Economic Factors that Impact General Mills, Inc.*Retrieved from General Mills, Inc. PESTEL & Environment Analysis: http://fernfortuniversity.com/term-papers/pestel/nyse4/670-general-mills--inc-.php

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**WEEK2:**

Classmates and Professor,

A-

The most important aspect of the internal environment at General Mills is the effort applied or given in innovation and invention.  Additionally, General Mills and the top organization are also committed to the success of the company and proper conduct.  The company’s most important aspect of internal environment is its drive for updates or changes.  The company utilizes innovation in which assist towards new merchandise creation. This would also contain various improvements for the company’s surroundings, location and the environmental sustainability efforts to discover other methods to combine other famous brands with changing requirements in the market (General Mills Inc., 2019).  General Mills works towards the food safety which utilized millions of dollars and over 650 trained workers there and certified quality engineers in the company (General Mills Inc., 2019).  It is important for the company to make sure that it is working rapidly with a fair and equitable to stakeholders: providing a professional ethical business image to secure and grow market share.

B-

General Mills as a leading firm in the market industry, General Mills has various strengths that enables it to stay strong in the business market.  The strength that is firm has enabled it to penetrate new and various markets while allowing it to continue to cement its hold in the market. Some of the organization’s internal factors that facilitate its developments are a strong cash flow and their successful tracking of recording utilized in developing of new products.  This is possible through their innovation techniques and superb performance in their operations within different markets.  The organization also exhibits their strength from external factors such as new clients from online platforms.  It has also set a new trend in their consumer’s behaviors that has led to opening up of new markets thus increasing sales.  The organizations outlook is much favorable as it enables the business to overcome all competition and operate in all markets.

**Strengths In General Mills:**

Strengths that General Mills provides would be that its high “Reputation Score” in the last 15 years providing an excellent brand image and outstanding product values.  The company also has a social responsibility, vision, leadership, better financial performance, emotional appeal and notorious workplace environment (General Mills Inc., 2019).

**Weakness In General Mills:**

Weakness that General Mills has most of time is that they are constantly reliant on the United States and the other country’s market to vary its numerous products.  An common issue would be that General Mills found itself lagging in a product because other companies would provide a better product in the same category or a better product that clients wanted or preferred (Kell, 2017).

**Opportunities in the SWOT Analysis of General Mills:**

General Mill focuses on the emerging markets since the influence of Western Cultures are providing the customers in other countries to have an improved necessity for processed food, this would raise the concern for the health of the customers (Bhasin, 2017).

**Threats in SWOT Analysis of General Mills:**

Some of the threats that General Motors encounter would be with the competition such as Kraft foods, Mondelez, Kelloggs, and PepsicCo (Bhain, 2019).

Kellogs could be considered to be one of their biggest competition, the reason is because they manufactured their products in 18 different countries and is marketed with an estimate of 180 or more countries. This would make the competition real intense with both companies (Bhasin, SWOT analysis of Kelloggs – Kelloggs SWOT analysis, 2019).

Another threat would be the increased concerns for health.  The health issue within the clients are causing twice as much in the customer’s thoughts for safety consumption of processed food (Bhain, 2019).

**SWOT Analysis of General Mills:**

The final point of view for General Mills is looking completely positive.  General Mills has both weaknesses and encounter numerous threats, the methods are placed to contradict if anything is changing, this is where innovation comes into play.  General Mills has analyzed and diagnosed its deficiencies and flaws but has bounced back turning them into chances for improvement.  They are also a dynamic company that stands firm in the marketing industry and continues to succeed over any marketing obstacle that is thrown at them.

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Bhasin, H. (2017, December 16). *Types of Market*. Retrieved from Marketing91: https://www.marketing91.com/types-of-market/

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# MODULE 3 Discussion: Strategic Choices

Using the framework discussed in the background readings, critically analyze General Mills’ strategic choices at the Corporate level (remember that “corporate” level is the very highest level of the organization, with lower levels being the “functional” and the “business” levels).

WEEK 1:

What are General Mills’ corporate-level strategies? What generic Porter strategy does the company follow? Are General Mills’ strategic choices aligned with the Porter generic strategy you believe the company follows?

WEEK 2:

Using the Grand Strategy Selection Matrix, or GSSM (the GSSM can easily be found via a Google search), decide which one of the four quadrants General Mills fits best within? Defend your decision!

**WEEK 1:**

Classmates and Professor,

General Mills has employed the corporate strategy that utilizes the Porter’s Generic Competitive Strategies which provides the various distinction of strategies that pertains to production and deals directly on the specific attributes of the merchandise. They also provide a positive corporate-level administrative practice.  General Mills’ corporate-level strategies would be: Competing effectively, accelerating the growth, and reshaping the portfolio for growth (General Mills Inc., 2018).  The Porter’s Generic Competitive Strategies also contains and carries the cost leadership strategy that forces the company to work directly towards a relatively abundant portion of the market and utilizes these strategies to convince and assure their consumers that the company assists and supports by giving more quality products than their adversaries in the business market. The strategic choices are also coordinated and aligned to target the changes made from the company’s outlook to become a major food producer. The company is highly devoted to establishing a long-lasting partnership and a direct connection with the farmers for business.

General Mills uses the strategic choice model to estimate its sale volumes as well as the services that they provide in the target markets (Warnock, 2000).  By the use and implementation of the strategic model, General Mills is able to outdo its competitors thereby gaining a larger market share in the business industry (Akan, Allen, Helms, &Spralls, 2006). General Mills has also dedicated itself to making sure that partnerships are maintained to making sure that there is enough supply chain and effective management while converting the regular product to a natural product. When the company changes its requirements for a better and healthier food product in the United States, it will also increase certain demands for them to meet. General Mills will have sufficient assets to meet the developing interest of consumers which is expected to have a higher sales volume in the next couple of years (Ireland, 2012).

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Reference:

Akan, O., Allen, R. S., Helms, M. M., &Spralls, S. A. (2006). Critical tactics for implementing porter's generic strategies. *The Journal of Business Strategy, 27*(1), 43-53.

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**WEEK 2:**

Classmates and Professor,

In consideration of the present competitiveness in the market, it is important and vital for an organization to look into conducting analysis and review of some of the related problems in the market, an aspect that denotes the development of a long term strategy aimed at achieving sustainability in an organization. The continuous growth and evaluation of an organization's successful products require strategic management, an element that is implemented through the inclusion of the Grand Strategy Matrix (Iansiti&Levien, 2004). The Grand Strategy Selection Matrix can be established as an approach that diverse alternative strategies, an aspect that depicts the need to subdivide organizations lying under this approach into four quadrants. Suitable strategies are therefore used within each quadrant going towards achieving a competitive position and growth within a business market.

As given within the four-quadrant matrix, General Mills has the capacity to make various alternative approaches in measuring and gauging its growth and competitive position in the market. In regard to this, it is important to consider that General Mills fits within the third-quadrant in which it has formulated horizontal integration, diversification, and portfolio as a rampant approach in making sure the organization does not fail in its strategies, an aspect that enables the organization to capitalize on the diversification of its operations (Scilly, 2015).

In justifying this use of this strategy in General Mills, it is important to consider that the organization has a mission, vision, long-term objectives and a SWOT analysis that aligns to its grand strategy(Scilly, 2015). General Mills vision clearly points out the purpose and objectives of the organization, with its mission clearly describing the manner in which the organization can carry out and obtain these purposes and goals. On the other hand, the SWOT analysis determines the organizations status in the market, by establishing its strengths and weaknesses and the approaches of being competitive in the market.

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Reference:

Iansiti, M. and Levien, R. (2004). Strategy for small fish. *Harvard Business School Working Knowledge*. Retrieved from:  <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/4331.html>

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Scilly, M. (2015). Examples of cost leadership and strategic marketing. *Small Business Chron.*Retrieved from: <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/examples-cost-leadership-strategy-marketing-12259.html>