



## M-Level Systems: M-Guide Reach New Levels

March 2007  
Strategic Change

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I recently came across an interesting quote...

**The bad news is there is no key to the universe.**

**The good news is it was never locked.**

**-Swami Beyondananda**

This perspective ignited my thoughts toward the concept of change and how some can find it quite difficult to move beyond the conceptual phase to actually making things happen.

Often people find success because they are great at what they do, although their skills are not always all inclusive when it comes to implementing collective change efforts.

If the above is true in your case, you're normal. Creating change is not easy. It takes focused leadership, a solid team of people, and an awesome strategic plan; and that's just for starters.

So let's take a look at the changes you want to make or have been thinking of making. We'll start with the sometimes scary or often non-existent strategic plan.

### **This Is Not Your Grandma's Strategic Plan**

Believe it or not, my Nana had a strategic plan. She kept it locked in her bedroom chifforobe (free standing wardrobe for those born late in the century). Inside the closet, the plan was locked again within a metal box.

Nana's strategic plan involved a grand design... for her death. She even had a mission statement. It read: Do Not Bury Me Next To My Late Husband Robert. The plan was fleshed out with objectives, initiatives, and clear directives to all stakeholders who would be impacted when her time came. The short list contained my sister and myself.

Nana reviewed her plan quarterly, updated funeral home specials, and gave my sister and I a semi annual tour of her plot at Calvary Cemetery. Nana lived her plan.

Even though it would not be put into play until her expiration, Nana used the

plan as a tool to remind herself to get the most out of life while she was facing her later years. Its purpose was simple; it gave her comfort and relief.

Which brings me to my first question. What is the purpose of your strategic plan?

Those of you who have worked with me know that I love questions. Asking questions is one of the most powerful ways to begin to create change whether you are a business owner or part of an organization. Let's take a look at some questions relating to your strategic plan.

How is it structured and what assumptions did you make when you created it?

How have you aligned your plan with your vision and the results you want to achieve?

As Nana would attest, no two strategic plans are alike, but there are some basic ground rules that can make quite an impact on its success.

#### **Tips On How To Create A Strategic Plan...**

## **Tips On Strategic Planning**

There are a few essential elements you can use to ensure that your strategic plan is reflective of your business needs. These elements include structure, perspective, and purpose.



### **The Right Strategy Begins With Asking The Right Questions...**

The questions you will ask amount to putting your business into discovery mode. Questions can be asked and answered up front that will clarify purpose as the process becomes more complex later on. Of course, the questions will vary by industry, although there are also CORE QUESTIONS that need to be asked and are required as a foundation across industries.

To make getting started a little easier, we have assembled a list of CORE QUESTIONS for you. You may go to the web link below to access the questions.

[CLICK HERE FOR CORE QUESTIONS](#)

### **Tips To Create Structure, Perspective, And Purpose In Your Strategic Plan**

- \*Align the plan with your vision and the results you want to achieve.
- \*Involve your people.
- \*Identify obstacles...Build in an action plan to eliminate them.
- \*Create the culture needed to make the strategy a success.
- \*Consider all those who will be impacted, such as employees, customers, vendors, and alliances.
- \*Clarify new roles and responsibilities as it relates to the changes you want to make.
- \*Ensure your people receive training if they lack the knowledge and skills needed to handle their new roles.
- \*Plan how you will fund your strategy.
- \*Consistently re-evaluate... Decide how you will measure progress and success.
- \*Keep asking questions to keep pace with growth and change in your organization.
- \*Treat the plan as a living document. Use it as an important guide for your business NOT a drawer liner.

### **You Are Invited To Our Strategy Party...**

## Strategy Party

To kick off Strategy Month...Betcha didn't even know it was Strategy Month...



**You Are Invited To:** M-Level Systems' Virtual Strategy Party

**When:** The party begins on March 12 and runs through March 26.

**Details:** Send us an email or give us a call between March 12 through March 26 with a question about how to create or structure your strategic plan and we will be glad to respond. One question per company please.

**Share The Knowledge: If you would like to share what you have learned, there is a Forward To A Friend or Colleague tab located near the bottom of the page.**

Cheers!

Diana

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