

Dalberg

Strategy for public engagement

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A (science-y) definition of strategy

A strategy is an actionable plan to optimise for one or two variables within a set of constraints

Key elements:

- Actionable: **feasible, but not the roadmap itself**
- 'One or two': **focused** – you cannot have a strategy that is aiming to achieve everything
- 'Variables': **sector agnostic** – you can apply the way of thinking to all sorts of organisations and challenges
- 'Within a set of constraints': **context matters**, and the strategy should be **grounded in real world challenges**

Strategy is all about choices

“We want to do it all, and we want to do it now”

Eckhard Pfeiffer, CEO Compaq, 1998

“Our game plan is to be an infrastructure technology company using our R&D resources to compete against Dell, and leaving IBM to focus on business processing”

Mark Hurd, CEO, HP, 2005

What's a strategy and what's a plan?

Differences in:

- Scale
- Specificity
- Timeframe
- Uncertainty
- Focus – outcomes or activities

A plan tells you what to do, whereas a strategy helps you make decisions about what to do (and what not to do)

Strategy prompts

- **What are the barriers and opportunities to [what you want to achieve]?**
- **What are the key assumptions that your route to change depends on?**
 - Which are in your *control*?
 - Which are in your *influence*?
 - Which are *out of your control*?
- **What is dependent on what?** (This could be a dependency in time or feasibility.) Are some issues 'first order' and 'second order'?
- **What is the 'rate limiting step'?** What is the biggest lever for change?

- **What are you going to stop doing?**
- You do not have to do everything. **Which parts of the change you want to see are others working towards?**
- **What have excluded from this strategy?**

- **What information do you need to test your assumptions/test you are on course?**