

15.568 – Practical Information Technology Management – Spring 2005

Class 21 Tuesday April 26, 2005

Read the following articles:

Treacy, M. & Wiersema, F., Customer Intimacy and Other Value Disciplines, HBR, Jan-Feb 1993 pp 84-93

Semler, R., "How We Went Digital Without a Strategy", HBR, Sep-Oct 2000, pp 51-98, reprint R0051I

Venkatraman, N. & Henderson, J.C., Real Strategies for Virtual Organizing, SMR, Fall 1998, pp 33-48, reprint 4013 - Available for download on MIT Server under file: "Class 21 – Real Strategies"

Review the article assigned last Thursday:

Eisenhardt, K.M. & Sull, D.N., "Strategy as Simple Rules", HBR, Jan 2001, reprint XR0101G

Come to class prepared to discuss the following:

1. From these articles and other reading or courses you may have had, what is "business strategy"?
2. In what ways do these articles reflect the impact of information technology and digitization on industries and the competitive landscape for a business?
3. List what you think are the three to five most important principles, maxims, and/or steps which you would recommend a company follow in its business strategy to succeed long term in the face of continuing importance of IT and digitization. If possible, indicate the counterpoint to your point to crystallize its meaning.

(For example: "Align your IT investments and IT architecture with the primary value discipline of your business; eliminate or minimize the exceptions to promote focus; avoid excessive experimentation and exceptions to this alignment for applications systems.")

In developing your list, think about the items on it would be understood and received by the top executives of a) Lifeline, and b) Customs and Border Protection, c) any other company or institution you are familiar with or have studied.

(Note: you are encouraged to discuss the development of your list with a teammate or other members of the class.)

4. As a class exercise, we will consider several current examples of actual organizations. These will be presented to you in class and you will be asked to be a consultant to apply your list to their situation in a dialogue with the "CEO".