

# The strategic thinking mindset: Are your managers seeing the big picture?

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## Abstract

In most traditional companies, the management team gets together to go through their annual strategic planning process. The process usually involves some type of vision for the following year being provided, with each manager then being responsible for following up with an action plan to achieve the proposed vision. This vision is most likely focused on the short term, usually one year, with minimal focus on the future. This approach is probably outlined in a strategic planning flowchart that the company follows each year. If you ask the managers involved, you will probably discover that they see the process as a required exercise that they must follow because it is required to get their operational budget for the following year reviewed and approved. So what is the problem with this approach? A strategic planning process that does not begin with, foster and integrate strategic thinking will result in marginal improvement at best. If your company's strategic planning process is solely based on what you did the previous year, revised to consider some additional short terms goals, you are most likely not realizing your company's true potential. This article discusses how you can create a strategic thinking and planning paradigm shift in your organization, engaging your management team, stimulating innovation and establishing a proactive big picture focus on your company's future.

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If you would like a full copy of this article please contact [sean@seanoneill.org](mailto:sean@seanoneill.org).

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## About the Author

Sean O'Neill has more than fifteen years of diverse experience across multiple industries, managing operations and spearheading business transformation for companies during high-growth, turn-around, merger and/or acquisition. Starting in 1997 with Micros Systems, Mr. O'Neill has successfully delivered a broad range of business and technology solutions, both as internal corporate initiatives and for key clients including NASA, DOD, AOL, Merrill Lynch, Subway, Marriott, Burger King and ARAMARK. Most recently, with Serco North America, Mr. O'Neill has focused on defining and implementing corporate strategies to support growth and achieve organizational and operational excellence. In his current book "Why Leadership Matters", the implementation of these concepts are discussed with practical insight and examples, providing a guide for today's business executive to get the most from themselves, and their teams. Mr. O'Neill has been a contributing author for numerous industry publications and received recognition for his work with academic institutions and professional associations. He earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from George Mason University and master's degree's in business administration (MBA) and information systems, both from the Smith school of business at the University of Maryland.