UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

IMPROVING COMPETITIVE STRATEGIC PLANNING CONCEPTS:

A STUDY TO ENHANCE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE IN PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

A Dissertation submitted by

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CERTIFICATION

CERTIFICATION OF DISSERTATION

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, software and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

_____   20 March 2013

Signature of Candidate   Date

ENDORSEMENT

_____   20 March 2013

Signature of Supervisor/s   Date

ABSTRACT

This dissertation, which is also referred as the Summary of Learning of a professional doctorate, is intended to "pull together all the learning that had taken place" situated at the workplace. As this doctorate is oriented towards professional practice, with its emphasis on theory informing practice and practice in turn refining theory, it therefore includes distilled professional learning from the past as well as the learning synthesised from the workplace based projects. This in turn forms the basis and framework to which, new "working" knowledge is formulated and contributed.

This "thesis" entitled strategic planning, discusses two key topics of competitive strategy formulation and strategy implementation effectiveness are studied through two sequential integrated workplace based projects. Managers are sometimes tasked with the responsibility of formulating competitive business strategies. Mintzberg (2005), once criticised managers that they "analyse and plan like mad; they just don't strategize". This criticism is rightly justified because managers are often at a loss when required to formulate strategies. The managers engaged in the development of the Strategy Formulation Process (SFP), strategy models based primarily on Porter's (2004) work on competitive strategy, the Integrated Situation Assessment Framework (ISAF) and other various strategy models reported that they have become more equipped and knowledgeable to undertake such future assignments.

Likewise, the managers engaged in the development of the strategy implementation evaluation process (PEAR), Situation Implementation Effectiveness Evaluation (SIEE) model and matrix based on the academic work of the strategy evaluation by Johnson, Scholes and Whittington in 2008 have also reported that these new tools and processes are helpful in their understanding of how to evaluate the strategy and their implementation effectiveness. Their reflection and learning point to "change" and new knowledge in terms of both academic and functional knowledge which has benefited both business stakeholders and related community have been documented.

The application of Action Research methodology, appropriate for workplace based learning is reaffirmed through my collaboration with these managers in solving these two workplace problems. Real time distilled learning is acquired through reflection-in-action during the projects and past learning is distilled through reflection-on-action which when combined makes up the total reflective learning experience through workplace based learning.

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Finally, to my God and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ for His abundant grace to supply all the necessary resources and make my dreams come true.

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CHAPTER 1   INTRODUCTION

"The world is changing quickly and one must continue to be a student for life to be successful, no matter how the learning is acquired" is quoted from my interview with The Sunday Times on my doctoral pursuit (Wong, 2012). The newspaper interview is included in Appendix 1. This learning journey of over three and a half years is backed by a significant professional career, spanning across Australia and Asia and multiple academic qualifications including a foundational science degree followed by postgraduate studies in education, biblical studies and an executive Master in Business Administration (eMBA). This Doctorate of Professional Studies (DPST) is premised on workplace learning, exploring how academic knowledge, professional knowledge and practical skills interact in "working knowledge" through action research and together contribute new knowledge at the highest level.

1.1 The body of knowledge on Strategic Planning

The body of knowledge is described as a collection of information about a subject or subjects which is able to be identified, described and referenced. The main field of knowledge in this case is strategic planning as the "thesis" title suggests which examines the two key aspects of strategy formulation and the evaluation of its implementation effectiveness. The literature on strategy planning is discussed in more details in Chapter 2.

In regards to the wider body of knowledge, this study is critically framed by its focus on competitive business strategy which is aligned to my industry being a provider of professional services. The sub-disciplines of management of change and leadership are of utmost relevance to the discussion of the different stakeholder communities. The impact of management of change and leadership is further addressed in Chapters 4 and 5. Furthermore, the projects deploy project management model such as plan-do-check-act (PDCA) to ensure implementation success of process. This is regarded as a key process of action research. The discussions of literature and the theoretical basis of SFP and PEAR which are adapted from the Plan-Action-Observe-Reflect process in Action Research method are found in Chapter 2 with Chapters 3, 4 and 5 addressing its application, implementation, evaluation and reflection. These areas of knowledge make up the wider body of knowledge which sets the context for the entire workplace based action research. The definition and application of the concept of strategy will be articulated in the following sections.

1.1.1 The definition of strategy

According to Mintzberg (1978), the term, "strategy" has been defined in a variety of ways, but almost always with a common theme which is that of a

"deliberate conscious set of guidelines that determines decisions into the future". It is a plan of action designed to achieve a set of specific goals, which is aspiring to gain a position of advantage over adversaries or exploiting emerging possibilities. Adversaries in business strategy are usually competitors, whereas adversaries refer to enemies, in the context of military strategy.

In this study, the topic of "strategy" is focused on competitive business strategy and it covers the various aspects of the strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategy. In this respect, it is useful to identify that the aspect of strategy formulation, as proposed by Lynch (2003), is "built on the particular skills of an organisation and the special relationships that is has or can develop with the outside" leading to the choice of strategy options that gives the organisation "advantages over [its] competitors" . This follows through with strategy implementation which, as postulated by Hunger & Wheelen (1996) is "the process by which strategies and policies are put into action through the development of programs, budgets, and procedures." The third aspect of strategy evaluation, as explained by Rumelt (1980, in Mintzberg and Quinn, 1996) is the "attempt to look beyond the obvious facts regarding the short-term health of a business and appraise instead those more fundamental factors and trends that govern the success in the chosen field of endeavour." As such, strategy evaluation is crucial as "timely evaluations can alert management to problems or potential problems, before a situation becomes critical" (David, 2005). Thus, as emphasized by David (2005), "adequate and timely feedback is the cornerstone of effective strategy evaluation."

1.1.2 The strategy hierarchy

Most larger and more complex corporations are multi-layered in their organisation structures and hence, managed by several levels of management accordingly. The notion of strategy hierarchy is the different levels of strategy targeted at different layers of organisations with different objectives. According to Sutherland & Canwell (2004) and Lynch (2006), corporate strategy is the highest of these levels and probably the broadest and most overarching because the strategy has to apply across the diversified corporation, setting out the corporate vision, mission, goals and culture. It is further explained by Drucker & Maciariello (2008) that the timing horizon is also the longest in terms of its future outlook. The corporate strategy typically addresses the strategic question of the types of businesses, the corporation is currently involved and in the future, whereas, the Strategic Business Unit (SBU) is organised and focused on specific businesses within the corporate structure. The competitive business strategy is therefore, focused on the specific business or firm and can be very different depending on the type of business. One level down in the hierarchy is the functional strategy which includes marketing, finance, information technology, research and development, human resources, legal and risk strategies aimed at supporting the realisation of the business strategy. Drucker et al. (2008) introduces the concept of operational strategy where operational activities are managed and directed through management by objectives (MBO) to achieve a more granular focus on the day to day activities. This study is pitched at competitive business strategy at the SBU level within the strategy hierarchy.

1.1.3 The strategy planning process

Drucker et al. (2008) defines strategic planning as the continuous process of making risk taking decisions systematically with the greatest knowledge of their futurity; organizing systematically the efforts needed to carry out these decisions; and measuring the results of these decisions against the expectations through organized, systematic feedback. This process calls for a structured and analytical approach. Management sometimes refer to this process as the strategic management process which is an on-going function involving a series of decisions and actions to formulate, implement, monitor and respond to performance measures of strategies (Sutherland et al., 2004).

These two topics are studied in two sequential projects over a period of 28 months. The first project is aimed at developing a process and model to formulate competitive strategy. Through my experience, I have discovered that most managers, even those with significant management experience, find competitive strategy formulation a daunting task. Most resort to external management consultants for assistance. The aim of developing this process and model is to educate managers on how they can perform this strategic activity or at least, become better equipped to supervise this activity. As strategy is implemented, it is further noted that implementation managers do not have adequate knowledge, skills or access to tools and models to assist them in the evaluation of their implementation effort. The second project is to address this gap by developing a process and model to evaluate strategy and implementation effectiveness.

This research topic is very relevant to my profession as a management consultant wherein my job is focused on assisting organisations to transform and improve their business performance. The learning outcomes will be beneficial to both the management of my business and my profession as a management consultant. This fits appropriately with the design and intent of a work-based professional doctorate.

The timing of embarking on this study coincided with my appointment as the Regional Managing Director (RMD) of the Enterprise Risk Services (ERS) of Deloitte Southeast Asia (SEA). For the record, the name of this division, "ERS" is synonymous with "RCD" which is the abbreviation for Risk Consulting Division. The names are used interchangeably. This strategic appointment is aimed at transforming the Risk Consulting business into a sustainable, profitable and growing business.

My career background of corporate industry and professional services serves as a good foundation for this professional doctorate. I participated in countless assignments on addressing business issues and formulating appropriate competitive strategies for my clients and business portfolios, leveraging years of management experiences. My past work assignments in different geographies from Australia to Asia have added depth to my understanding of the concept of globalized businesses and different work cultures. The combination of past formal and informal education,

and knowledge acquired from working experiences have been helpful in my reflections and analysis throughout this study.

1.2 Overview of this work-based professional doctorate

The DPST is about the highest form of authentic learning in the workplace where learning spans across three phases, from distilling past experiences, planning future experiences and subsequently implementing them with analysis of the present experiences (USQ, 2009). The first phase is designed to "ease" the student into the program by first reflecting on one's past learning and development (Learning Portfolio). My learning portfolio, including the Recognition from Prior Learning (RPL), constituted a third (33%) of this program. The Learning Plan marks the second phase where future learning episodes are planned, discussed and finalised between my superior and I, at the workplace. It is ultimately a three way agreement between the work supervisor, the academic supervisor representing the academic institutions and myself. Upon approval, the implementation of the projects commence in earnest. This is the "present" phase. Experiences gained while implementing the projects in this phase are used to arrive at deep learning in real time. This component represents slightly under two-thirds (64%) of the study and is made up of the two inter-related workplace projects as described above.

This "thesis" is the summary of learning, which is the final module of the DPST program. Appendix 2 lists a transcript of my academic record and the composition of the DPST's 24 units' requirement. As the objective of this summary of learning is to "pull together all the learning gathered throughout the DPST" (USQ, 2009, p. 85), it clearly documents the key reflected learning and deep knowledge acquired from the different stages including the portfolio and learning plan (pre-project), two work-based projects (project implementation) and my final reflection at post project implementation. More importantly, this dissertation aims to describe advances in professionalism highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the development in areas of reflective practice, critical analysis and action research skills. This dissertation aims to demonstrate that:

1. Specialized research skills are embedded in my study through articulation of research design and methodology
2. Original knowledge contribution has been made to professional practice

These are documented and evidenced, demonstrating how new knowledge and new practices of strategy planning have helped judgments on work related issues or impacted work practices. This report also aims to demonstrate how this new knowledge and professional authority has also enabled "change" through the leadership of both my team members and other community of stakeholders (USQ, 2009, p. 93).

1.3 Structure of this dissertation (learning summary)

The structure of this thesis is developed in consultation with University of Southern Queensland (USQ) and East Asia School of Business (EASB). The intent is to conform to the five chapter structure listed below, incorporating the learning of the various modules such as the learning portfolio and learning plan of a professional doctorate. This five chapter structure is an established thesis structure and it aims to fulfill the requirements of the governing academic bodies.

The five chapters excluding abstract, artefacts and appendices are:

1. Chapter 1 - Introduction, past learning (learning portfolio) and learning plan
2. Chapter 2 - Literature review
3. Chapter 3 - Project implementation
4. Chapter 4 - Findings, analysis and learning
5. Chapter 5 - Concluding remarks and warranted assertions

Incorporating the reflection of past learning distilled from the learning portfolio into the above structure does have its challenges. This reflected past learning is quite different, both in contents and characteristics compared to the learning from the main projects on strategic planning. Hence it is quite difficult to incorporate this past experience learning in the main chapters without compromising the flow and analysis of the workplace projects. The decision is therefore to document the reflected past learning from the portfolio in Chapter One itself. The Learning Plan is also documented in this chapter. It outlines the planning of future learning episodes via the proposed work-based projects.

1.4 Artefacts

The artefacts serve as supporting evidence, and reference of the work and learning completed in the various study modules. There are a total of six artefacts totalling more than 860 pages and about 120,000 words. Table 1-1 summarises the contents of the artefacts.

Table 1-1 Description of Artefacts

Artefact	Description	Page	Word count
One	Learning Portfolio	70	12000
Two	Learning Plan	53	10300
Three	Project One report on competitive strategy formulation	400	48000
Four	Project Two report on strategy and implementation effectiveness evaluation	220	41000
Five	Communication strategy and journal	42	8600
Six	Completed questionnaire used in Project 1 Industry study and initiatives' evaluation sheets for Project 2	75	Not Applicable
	Total	860	119900

1.5 Reflection on past professional experience (Learning Portfolio-Artefact One)

The Learning Portfolio, as described above, is a key module in the DPST program. It is about revisiting previous experiences that relate directly to my professional life. The portfolio titled "Business and Management Models in Practice" aptly described my work routines where business and management models were applied in my previous corporate career and management of my consulting practice or on clients' assignments. The Learning Portfolio was submitted in January 2010, five months after program commencement in late August 2009. This is submitted as Artefact One in this thesis. The learning portfolio (course code WBL8000) was graded a pass of one credit unit and another seven units credit was awarded for RPL, earning a total of eight units.

The reflections on my 27 year career in the workforce, at the time of the report as a "Knowledge Technologist" were documented in this report. Knowledge Technologist is a name coined to describe today's workers in the Knowledge Economy (Drucker et al., 2008), as the world transitions itself from the post-Industrial Age to the Information Age. Different lessons were distilled from the reflection on my various professional experiences, gathered from the various employments throughout my career journey. It also described the personal and professional transformation towards my personal vision and ambitions over time. Appendix 3 outlines my employment record in chronological order for reference.

Three work episodes at different points in my career were selected to illustrate continued progression of distilled learning and acquired skills in the Learning Portfolio. The first work episode was a reflection of managing a technical project at the commencement of my career journey in the 1990s. It was a relatively smaller and non-complex internal project which was successful and there were some good lessons drawn from that experience. In work episode two, I reflected on the learning acquired from managing a significantly larger and complex client project in 2005 which had to address many difficult issues and how my project team successfully recovered from a near failure. The third episode was developing a new business sector in my professional services career in 2007 which required a different set of competency. Details of these selected three work episodes and their learning are in Artefact One.

1.5.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The justification for RPL was documented in Section 15 of the Learning Portfolio (page 49 of Artefact One). It describes the advantages of formal (tertiary and post tertiary) and informal education, and how this composite knowledge is useful and applied at the workplace. For example, business and management theory taught in the eMBA program is significantly used in my strategy and process improvement consulting assignments. The training on presentation and facilitation skills acquired from my postgraduate training in education (Dip Ed.) has proven to be very helpful in the designing of the staff training curriculum, training and facilitation at client workshops over the years.

Accumulated experiences from informal education and different work episodes illustrate how learning is constantly applied to improve work deliverables as well as increase professional knowledge. Recognition of the increase in personal capacity and capability has been evidenced by the promotions in my career over time. The continuing education including this DPST is testament of relentless pursuit of academic knowledge to integrate the on-going quest of professional, academic and work knowledge. The mastery of this integrated knowledge of pragmatic insights, built on proven academic theories at the marketplace is aptly used, especially when there is a request to facilitate discussions and workshops at company board levels.

1.5.2 Learning from my past professional experiences

My professional career is divided into two broad categories with the first 15 years (1982 to 1996) in three large multinational companies and then transitioning to a consultancy career providing professional services in the last 15 years (1996 to present time). This career switch from corporate to consultancy was aided by the completion of my executive Masters of Business Administration (eMBA) in that transition. It was at the eMBA program (1993 to 1996) where the academic foundations of many strategy models and management theories were taught. I was able to better comprehend the theory, concepts and models given the rich tapestry of my past work experience. This is similar to John's (2009) descriptions of reflective learning where concepts become "real" and start to form part of core skills. A point

of advice is that learning outcomes from MBA schools are better achieved if the student has had some level work experience. There is better appreciation of the academic rigour of these concepts and theories.

This switch was a significant milestone in my career in becoming a service provider. It was a defining moment. The work pressures are different. As a consultant, the pressure is to ensure that the value of the delivered work match the fees charged to clients. My accumulated experiential knowledge and learnt theories proved to be useful in this line of consultancy work. Clients have constantly acknowledged that my advice is principled and yet pragmatic. The principled part comes from the concepts and academic foundations. The pragmatic part is from the school of hard knocks – the workplace.

1.5.2.1 Risks versus Returns

Making that career switch was not easy from corporate to professional services. Selling professional services including meeting prospects when I had no prior experience or network was difficult. I was unknown in the marketplace. These were some of my early challenges which I had to overcome. Internally, the workplace was competitive and I had to deal with some of the difficult personalities and also a different work culture from my days as senior management personnel in corporate industry. The risk of failure was high. Diligence, friendly assistance from a few mentors and perseverance paid off.

The returns both in monetary gains, knowledge and capability far outstrips the early years of hard work. The lesson is to take some measured career risks because the law of risks and returns apply; the higher the risks, the higher the returns. Reckless risk is not what is advocated here. The process of due diligence, careful study and consideration must be part of the decision making process. Timing is also important. Taking risks earlier in one's career gives more time to recover should the decision turns out unfavourable. At all times, risk management should be applied on the decision taken.

1.5.2.2 Learning in the workforce beyond schooling

From a rookie graduate entering into the Malaysian workforce in the 1980s, I commenced my career at Avon Cosmetics in the computer department providing in-house information technology (IT) services. Basic management skills were acquired while working in this multinational organisation and while coordinating technical services in the broader Avon world. Business writing was a skill which I learnt and valued from my supervisor. My supervisor who was the Finance manager would meticulously edit my draft telexes before they were sent overseas. Correcting the edits on the drafts was learning in itself.

My reason to immigrate to Australia was to financially support my younger brother's education expenses. That opened up a new Sigmoid (S) curve representing

the start of a new career move. I was able to broaden and deepen my management skills, working in another work culture where management and work practices were more developed because of the maturity of developed economies like Australia. At Estee Lauder, a family owned global cosmetic company, I learnt the beginnings of differentiation strategies as each brand within the product portfolio is carefully positioned and managed. The Estee Lauder brand, for example, will always be positioned as the preeminent brand unlike Clinique which is positioned as a high quality skincare product.

Changing personal circumstances may lead to different career moves. The lesson is that one must maintain a perpetual hunger for learning, no matter how the learning is delivered or presented. It can be in the form of opportunities or corrections.

1.5.2.3 Power of Learning through informal and formal education

It was working at CSR, a conglomerate of building materials with its origin in sugar business, where I was first introduced to the concept of continuous improvements such as, Kaizen and Total Quality Movement (TQM) methodologies. This was during the Quality movement in the early 1990s where leading edge companies were pursuing operational excellence programs to improve productivity and efficiency. Programs like TQM, Six Sigma methodologies were introduced to reduce variations, and Lean Sigma methodologies to reduce organisational waste were prevalent. Exposure to financial planning and performance management, branding, marketing, operational excellence and strategic management were part of informal learning at CSR. Informal learning often came from trial and error. For example, most organisations do not have formal training programs when one is promoted to a role like a "manager". The learning is unstructured trial and error, at the school of "hard knocks" in a world of "sink and swim" (Mintzberg, 2005). Some learn better than others. Some use self-help books to complement their perceived skill gaps in their quest to be better equipped for their roles.

It was also at CSR, with its profound talent program which sponsors high potential employees, where my supervisor approved the full sponsorship of my eMBA program. This is consistent with what Mintzberg (2005) describes as the link of intense formal education to complement the informal learning and training in the world of "sink and swim" at the workplace (Mintzberg, 2005).

1.5.2.4 Clarity of rationale and reasons are important in major decision making

An advice from a former senior executive has always guided my career decisions. The executive advised that one must always be clear about the reasons and rationale behind every major career decision especially if it is being made by oneself. This has proven to be sound advice. The reason for the major career change to emigrate back to Asia was one of moral obligation towards my aging mother. It was a difficult decision given the apparent "success" and being part of the top 100

executives in the company. On reflections years on, this is a great decision, leading to another successful and rewarding career. The ultimate of which is the admission to global partnership at Deloitte.

1.5.2.5 Relationships, business networks and mentors are invaluable

Switching from an in-house career to that of service provider was not easy. Strong support and coaching therefore, made the transition easier. Business networks and communities were invaluable resources. Over the years, I had found that relationships mattered as much as subject content in any business dealings. Mentors and coaches who are genuinely interested in helping others went a long way to help workers succeed in their careers. My entry into Arthur Andersen to establish its Information Services business was introduced through a mutual mentor.

1.5.2.6 Capitalising on opportunities and building on momentum

Capitalising on opportunities and building on momentum has an upward spiral effect. The same is true if there are negative events which can spurn a spiralling downwards momentum. Intervention and rebuilding are key success factors to halting any downward spiral effect and turning the situation around.

My career has progressed over the years, from the days at Arthur Andersen to become the RMD of Risk Consulting Division (RCD) at Deloitte SEA. The charter of this appointment, as written in the introduction, is to develop a strategy to improve the business performance of this business unit, transforming it to become a sustainable and profitable growing business. This responsibility as entrusted from the CEO, is quite significant and as such, every effort is aimed at realising his ambitions.

1.5.2.7 Invaluable lessons from past mistakes

One can also learn from past mistakes. The cited second work episode was on a client project which nearly failed, and was subsequently rescued. The client witnessed this commitment, professionalism and is still a faithful client today. The lessons on maintaining good relationships, negotiation skills, addressing difficult problems factually and stress management, acquired during the process have become part of one's deep skills in managing future difficulties.

1.5.2.8 Learning from outside the workplace

I participated in a lot of school co-curricular activities during my development years and I believed that these activities played a significant role in my

development of social, cognitive and leadership skills. This recognition of holistic education is seen in Singapore's push to include co-curricular activities beyond Science and Mathematics in its education program (Trivitayakhun, 2009). Being an "activist" and "pragmatist" (Honey & Mumford, 1982) in learning style, the characteristic bias, toward active experimentation is dominant in my hobbies and outside work activities.

1.5.3 Continuous improvement through personal and professional transformation

Starting as a technical knowledge worker at the onset of my career, my personal development came from a combination of education and learning from the world of sink or swim. This continuous learning progressively honed my management and business skills. This transformation has enabled me to manage a regional business at this point in my career. I would characterise my professional career as continuous, successful, optimum in terms of maximising opportunities and rich in experiences, having had my share of glories and pains in the learning process.

1.5.3.1 The 4C Model of Competency, Capability, Capacity and Community standing

I developed a 4C model as part of the Learning Portfolio to capture the personal growth and development in the four attributes of competency, capability, capacity and community standing. The diagram reproduced from the learning portfolio (Artefact One, page 8) illustrates increasing breadth and depth of portfolio over time with increasing corresponding 4C attributes. The complexity and richness of learning in the three cited episodes demonstrate the same point above.

Figure 1-1 Career portfolio through 4C model

Career Portfolio over time– growth in Depth and Breadth
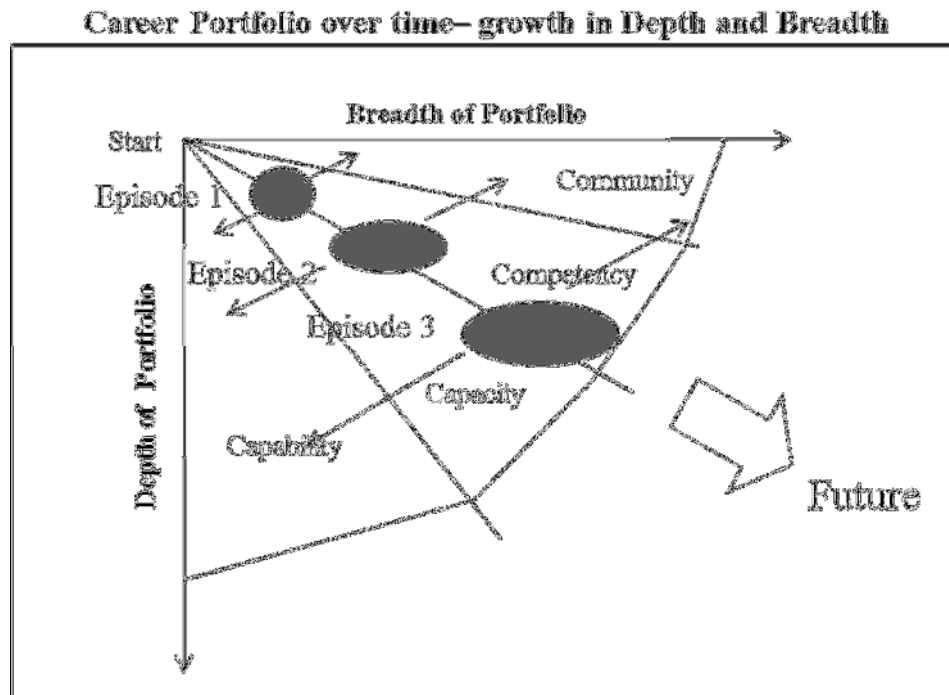
A summary of my personal growth is evidenced in my:

1. Capability in a wider business field, taking on more senior positions including developing a business

2. Capacity in terms of taking on diverse and more complex problems due to increased competence and capability

3. Competency in industry knowledge, processes, leadership skills and people development through experiential learning, complemented by formal and informal education

4. Role in community where I have progressed from a small IT community to a competitive consulting business community. With it, came many complexities in management issues which have become my daily challenges.

1.5.4 Reflective Practice as a skill

The intent of reflective practice is to embrace learning outcomes as a lived reality, that is, it becomes a core skill. When practiced consistently, one can use this learning method to capture learning from everyday experiences, working towards realizing one's vision of desirable practice as a lived reality (Johns, 2009). Managers need time to personally reflect on what they have been through (Mintzberg, 2005). When this happens, the person ends up being a stronger and more learned in attaining mastery in many life skills. For example, writing this Learning Portfolio helped with my self-awareness of the strengths and limitations of my knowledge and

competences. The practice of using "reflection-in-action" throughout the work-based projects, and authoring this learning summary helps hone this important life-long skill of reflective practice.

Moon (2008) cited Eraut (1994) on the concept of self-management which is the process of using self-knowledge to achieve a particular end. The "end" in this case is growth of professional behaviour that enables the tasks of the professional to be executed in a timely manner. This changing world will further impact and change how Knowledge Technologists work in the decades to come. The need for continuous learning and personal transformation to keep pace with evolving work requirements is important. The discussion of this skill is revisited in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

1.5.5 Academic writing

Anyone going back to school needs to be "re-tuned" to the world of academic studies. The biggest challenge encountered at the learning portfolio stage was writing style. The portfolio was meant to be a reflection and analysis of my prior learning and development, both professionally and personally. I therefore started writing in the first person. It then started to look like an autobiography. As this report was pitched at postgraduate level, writing in the third person seemed more appropriate. There was no clear guidance even when rereading the example in the candidate's guide. Discussions at the residential were helpful and after many revisions, the final pass grade of this unit was a relief. One helpful aid at the learning portfolio stage was learning the science and art of reflective learning.

The debate of writing in the "first" versus "third" person is raised once again here, in this thesis. It is normal practice to write in the third person in thesis writing. However, in a work-based, action learning thesis, it is all about the contribution I can make through qualitative research into real world challenges and hence the decision to write in the "first" person is logical and appropriate.

1.5.6 Hind sight vision is good, would I do things differently on reflection

The deepest level in reflective typology is a state of "mindfulness" which is seeing things for what they really are, without distortion (Johns, 2009). The wisdom of hind sight is always powerful. Prejudice is not a good character attribute. My dad was a salesman but he struggled through his career and was retrenched when he reached his early fifties. That was devastating. I unconsciously did not have a favourable impression of a sales career. In fact, my first post university job offer was a sales representative in an IT company which I promptly rejected. This can be associated with Nelson's (2001) idea that "one way we subtly get around the emotional dilemma of claiming to value something without acting on it is to procrastinate". It was not until I switched career from corporate to professional services that I learned to sell and market services. Today, one of my core competencies is marketing and sales. This skill has proven of use, not only in my professional life but also my personal life. If there is one thing to do differently, the

realisation of this prejudice should have been dealt with earlier and the personal transformation might have been stronger. Having an open mind is therefore, a key character attribute.

I had undertaken several personality profiling tests in the past and my profile is one of strong leadership attributes, supportive character and more of an introvert by nature. A suggestion from one of my previous supervisors, early in my career was to "smile more", spend more time building relationships and not just excel in technical capability. This was a useful lesson. A survey on clients' satisfaction conducted by Deloitte in 2010 reported that 79% of consultants did not know how to build relationships. If there was another thing to do differently, I would invest more time on building stronger client relationships, a very important success factor in the business of professional services.

I completed my post-tertiary MBA education when I was 36 years old. I had about 12 years of professional career at that time. The relative timing seemed to work in my favour given my acquired working experience and maturity. However, embarking on this DPST at age 49 seemed a little late, and on reflection, an earlier commencement would be better. The demands of juggling the different career "hats", study and personal life can be very stressful, especially in senior positions. It does not get easier especially if the career is progressing in the right upward direction.

1.6 The Learning Plan (Artefact Two)

The requirements of the Learning Plan (course code WBL9001) as outlined in the DPST involve identifying potential learning experience in the workplace. This is an iterative process and the elements must meet the criteria where the potential learning is pitched at the appropriate level of complexity, commensurate with doctorate learning. The other criterion is that the project offers enough analytical capability when exploring the learning opportunities with a diverse set of stakeholders. In addition, the projects must be workplace-based and in line with organisational agenda so that the work deliverables are of benefits to the organisation when implemented and tested (USQ, 2009). I can confirm that framing these two workplace based projects to meet the above criteria was not easy. The difficulty was in framing the project objectives and anticipating the corresponding learning experience at the appropriate complexity level as mentioned above. In my case, the framing of the two projects did iterate many times during the development of the Learning Plan. Section 1.6.2, 1.6.3, 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 describe the context and rationale for the two projects. Table 3.1 in Section 3.1 provides a summary of the project elements and its linkages to the theory and literature which forms the basic academic foundation of this linkage. The Learning Plan was adjusted during implementation by reducing the number of projects from three to two, because of the need to focus the learning more succinctly on strategic planning. The iterative process did happen as indicated in the candidate's guide. On hindsight however, this was the right decision.

The learning plan served different purposes over time. Initially, the plan helped me to implement the project based on the manner and approach designed for the project. Having the end in mind (Handy, 1994), I then used the plan to guide my implementation of the project. It was expected that what had been planned three years in advance, would not match the day to day realities as they unfolded. Hence the plan can only serve as an on-going log of the journey which was a useful tool to compare "what is planned versus actual happenings" for the final learning summary (USQ, 2009). This analysis itself has yielded some fresh insights from the study.

1.6.1 An introduction of the workplace, Deloitte and its Risk Consulting Division

This research is situated at the risk consulting division of Deloitte SEA which is the work place of this work-based study. Deloitte is the second largest of the "Big Four" professional services organisations providing audit, tax, financial advisory, risk and business consulting services to businesses around the world. It operates in an oligopolistic industry at the premium segment level which is dominated by the four competitors after years of market consolidation. The other three main competitors are Ernst & Young (E&Y), PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and KPMG. Structurally, it is a private partnership with representation in almost every country by member firms and has a population base of over 195,000 personnel generating USD28 billion globally in 2011. Rating agencies rated Deloitte as market leader

amongst its peers in 2010. It is however, a neck to neck competitor with PwC and in 2011, PwC managed to retain its former leadership position.

As businesses globalise, Deloitte too, has to globalise in its structures to match and serve its' clients' management structures. Commencing 2009, the seven Deloitte member firms of Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Guam and Vietnam are managed regionally under one management structure. This structure is referred as Deloitte SEA. The power culture is in a transition phase from an autonomous country centric culture to one that is operating on a region and country power matrix.

Within each member firm, the services are organized by SBUs, for example, audit, tax, financial advisory, risk and consulting (business advisory). These SBUs are managed regionally and in its matrix form, individual country SBU leaders indirectly report to the country member firm's Managing Partner (MP). This type of matrix management structure is quite common in today's business context.

Figure 1-2 Deloitte SEA organisation

The Strategic Business Units (SBU) of Audit, Tax, Financial Advisory Services (FAS), Enterprise Risk Services (ERS) and Consulting are managed regionally within country representation in matrix responsibility and accountability structure
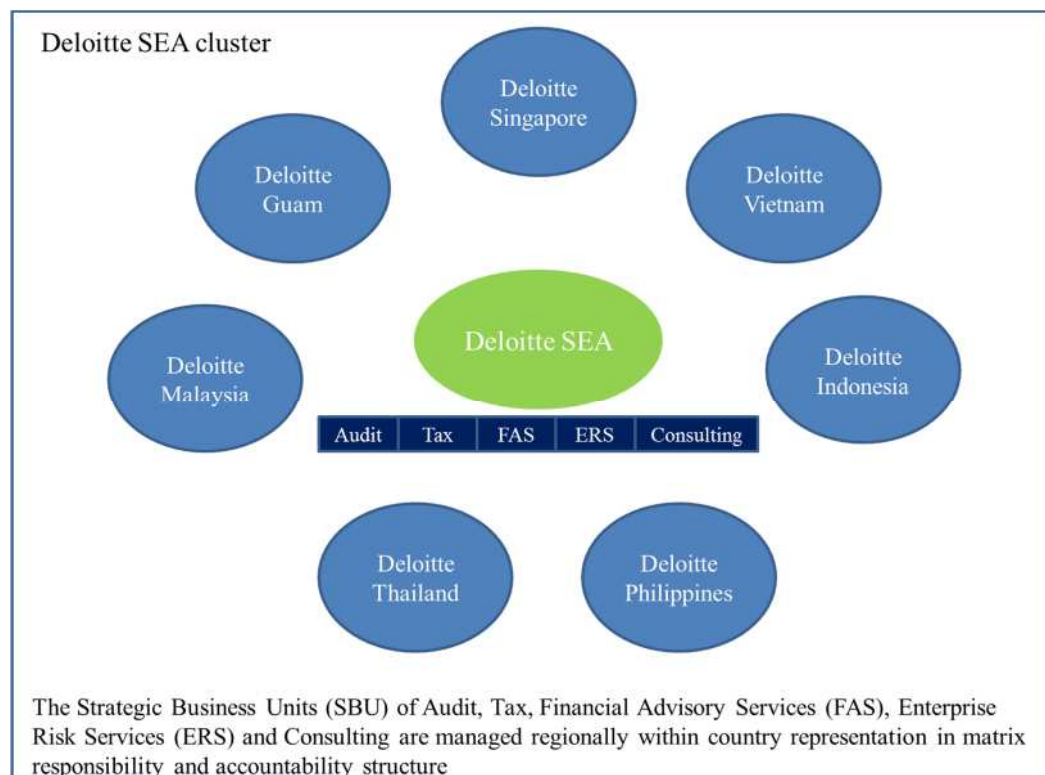
Revenue size of each country is not reflected in the diagram although most of the regional SBU leaders are from the Singapore member firm because the Singapore member firm is largest by revenue and most developed in terms of competency and capability.

1.6.2 Problem Statement or management dilemma

The senior management of Deloitte SEA was very concerned about the performance of the RCD which is one of its SBU. It reported a sharp decline of revenue and profitability in the year ending June 2010. Besides operating losses, there were other significant management issues. Team morale was declining, high staff attrition and there was infighting between camps in a business of USD16million with a headcount of 350 practitioners. Lack of leadership and ineffective business governance led to concerns about the sustainability and viability of this business. The evidence of its poor financial performance is presented in the Appendix 5. The net margin for the year ending June 2010 was a loss of USD344 thousand.

To put it simply, this business was on a "burning platform" and would be unsustainable if there was no intervention. It was uncompetitive. There was no focus because the leaders were driving the business in many directions. There was lack of business governance and the staff were confused. Senior management was unclear about the state of the business. The incumbent leader was unable to attend most of the management meetings to provide an accurate assessment and meaningful recovery plan of this business. Hence, senior management was frustrated.

1.6.3 The project objective

As it turned out, framing the projects to be studied in the Learning Plan was difficult and did take some time to be framed correctly. It was also the most important upfront activity, from which other activities were based on. There were a few false starts. Clear and precise definition of the various elements in the learning plan including project scope, literature review, targeted learning, outcomes and benefits to stakeholder communities was most important. Examples of the stakeholder communities in this context were my organisation and management, the university in terms of contributions to academic knowledge and myself. The CEO who made the decision to replace the incumbent RCD leader had asked me to address three strategic management questions (research questions):

1. Is the RCD business sustainable?
2. Can a set of competitive strategy be developed to transform the business and improve its performance in terms of growth and profitability?
3. How can management evaluate the effectiveness of this strategy and its effort?

The corresponding work-based project objectives (research objectives) are therefore to:

1. Develop and adapt a strategy formulation process including models and frameworks to evaluate the situation of a business and arrive at a set of recommended strategy which is relevant and suitable for that business.

2. Develop and adapt a strategy and implementation evaluation process, framework and model to measure the effectiveness of the strategy and associated implementation effort.

1.6.4 Proposed work-based projects and variations

The seriousness of the management dilemma and problem statement demanded a management response. My appointment into the role as the RMD of Deloitte RCD was part of that response. My charter was to address the management questions and successfully transform the business.

The original proposal was three work-based projects totaling 13 assessment units. The three projects were named Project 1-Part A, Project 1-Part B and Project 2. This was subsequently reduced to two more complex and tightly integrated projects.

Project 1-Part A was renamed Project 1 and Project 1-Part B was Project 2 respectively. Documentation which referenced Project 1 Part A and B were renamed as Projects One and Two in this learning summary. The rationale to recalibrate the projects and their assessment units was submitted in April 2011 for approval after experiences of implementing Project 1-Part A (Project One). This letter was submitted as part of Artefact Two for reference. The revised proposal of the two projects on the two topics of strategic planning did result in a focused and more holistic study. The third project proposed in the original Learning Plan would have distracted the study on strategy formulation and implementation evaluation even though talent management indirectly impacted strategy implementation. This third project was therefore cancelled after approval was obtained. The scope complexity of the earlier two projects was adjusted to ensure more time and effort was invested in these projects. This facilitated deeper learning as it demanded focus and attention on a stricter and more complex scope. This has proven to be a wise decision. This revision was another example of applying reflected learning to sharpen the research experience and learning.

Table 1-2 documents the proposed projects in the original Learning Plan and its revision.

Table 1-2 Original and revised projects

Proposed work-based projects in Learning Plan			Implemented work-based projects after revision		
Project	**Project description**	**Unit**	**Revised**	**Unit**	**Project description**
Project 1 – Part A	Develop Intervention Strategies - enhance Deloitte SEA RCD business	5	Project One	7	Develop Strategy Formulation Process (SFP), model and framework to assess the situation, develop and recommend a set of business strategy
Project 1 – Part B	Develop Organisation Capability - executing strategies to deliver superior performance	4	Project Two	6	Develop a Strategy Implementation Effectiveness Evaluation (SIEE) framework and model to evaluate strategy and implementation
Project 2	Develop Deloitte SEA Talent Program. Identify and develop future talent recruitment, retention and management of programs for next generation of Deloitte SEA Consultants	4	Cancelled		
	Total Units	13		13	No change

A key lesson while undertaking Project One was the lack of precision in defining the project scope. Subsequent discussions with my primary and secondary supervisors were helpful in sharpening the scope and objectives of the learning episodes. The iterative process of working on adjusting the projects' scope, supporting literature and redefining the learning outcomes were key factors in being aligned and meeting the organisation's business objectives. This was similar to the experiences of other doctoral students in getting the research questions or management questions accurate and precise in their research methodology.

1.6.5 The intended benefits of this study

The benefits of this study are to address the concerns of the management dilemma, the research and study objectives. The strategies when implemented successfully will result in a sustainable business which is growing and profitable. The outcomes will impact stakeholder communities which include the shareholders (partners), employees and clients. The business will be more focused and employees are proud to belong to a prestigious organisation. They will also be knowledgeable of the business directions. New contribution to academic knowledge is part of the study outcome including increased capability in the professional services business, particularly in the area of strategic planning. At the personal level, deep learning is achieved and rewarded with the conferment of the doctorate.

1.6.6 Action Research as the chosen research methodology

During the project planning stage, several research methods such as action research, "processual", descriptive and exploratory approaches were explored. The processual approach focuses on analysing and explaining patterns in management and change processes (McDermott, Coghlan, & Keating , 2008). This processual approach is inappropriate because the project focus is not about analysing the change process, but rather, it is centred on experiential knowledge of the implementation effort to validate the theory on strategy models and implementation evaluation.

A study on research design and approaches utilised by DBA thesis, points out that exploratory case study and descriptive research design types are most popular. Descriptive and exploratory studies are also unsuitable in this project because exploratory studies are normally centred more on literature review, interviews, and input from experts. Descriptive studies are more appropriate for profiling analyses of people and events. Cameron (2009) points to a rise of using mixed methods research design in DBA studies across business and management fields (Miller & Lim, 2010). Mixed method design involves the mixing of the quantitative and qualitative approaches in the methods stage of the study and draws inferences from both quantitative and qualitative data in this single study.

1.6.6.1 The definition of action research

The DPST program, which is another form of professional doctorate program, has it emphasis on action based learning at the workplace. This collaborative approach of involving both the practitioners and myself in managing the change resulting from the strategy formulation and subsequent implementation projects is the essence of action research. Luscher & Lewis (2008) who wrote on action research noted the same collaborative effort between organisation members on matters which are of genuine concern to them, and in which, there is intent to take action based on the intervention to address the matters. On the other hand, O'Brien

(1998) who wrote an overview of the methodological approach of action research describes it simply as being "learning by doing". This resonates perfectly with a workplace based learning approach which is to induce "learning by doing" projects.

The aims of action research as further explained by O'Brien (1998) are to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to further the goals of social science simultaneously. These aims are accomplished by a commitment in action research to study the issues systematically, and concurrently collaborate with members of the system in solving them. Through the process, change is a desirable outcome. The systematic study must also be informed by theoretical considerations. Chapter 2 of this dissertation focuses the review of literature on strategic planning, competitive business strategies by Porter (2004) and the work by Johnson et al., (2008) on strategy evaluation. In the literature review, the strengths and weaknesses of the academic models will be discussed and critically analysed.

The second aspect of action research as defined above is the concurrent collaboration with members of the team. In this case, I worked with the divisional management to first assess the business (situation analysis), develop strategy options and recommend them to senior leadership and the Board. Once approved, the strategies are implemented, working closely with middle managers and management team to improve the business performance. Reflective learning will take place at the same time. I distil learning through the inductive process on gained experiential knowledge to extend academic knowledge, and at the same time, enhance my own professional development as a leader, manager and professional. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 outline the involvement of the team members and stakeholders in the implementation of the projects and co-learning together as part of the outcome. Appendix 4 attaches some testimonies of learning and personal development.

As postulated by O'Brien (1998), another attribute of action research which separates it from other types of research is that its primary focus is to turn people into researchers. People learn by doing and when they have learned, they can then do it themselves. This is the social dimension as described above. Appendix 4 is evidence of that change that has impacted and benefited others. Tripp (2005) attributes to the effects of change to practice as a result of the action enquiry cycle. Chapter 4 and 5 of this dissertation describes the impact of this change on the various stakeholder communities which were brought about by the implementation of the projects and how that change has enhanced their personal advancement in professionalism. This also fulfils the essence of workplace based doctorate.

1.6.6.2 The action research process

It was Stephen Kemmis who developed the model on the cyclical nature of the typical action research process. Each cycle has four steps of Plan, Action, Observe and Reflect (O'Brien, 1998). This is in a sense, very similar in principle to the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle of project management methodology, an old methodology made famous by Deming (Tague, 2004). Another researcher, Gerald Susman (1983) as quoted in O'Brien (1998) proposed a slightly variant model of five

phases to be conducted within each cycle. He proposed a diagnose phase where data is collected for a more detailed diagnosis. The next phase is named action planning where a series of possible solutions are postulated into an action plan. Action is then taken and data on the results of the intervention is collected during this implementation. The evaluation phase which analyses the results and findings are interpreted in the light of how successful or unsuccessful the action has been. The learning from the findings is reflected upon together by reassessing the problem and the process begins another cycle. This process is repeated until the problem is solved.

The documentation of the Planning phase for the two projects in this action research process as described above was captured in the Learning Plan (Artefact 2). It detailed the management dilemma, rationale and context of the proposed projects and the project objectives to address these cited problems. It outlined the scope, proposed timeline, resources, deliverables and expected learning outcomes. As described earlier, action research differs from everyday problem solving techniques in that it is a method of systematic enquiry informed by theoretical considerations. In this case, the learning plan included the review of literature associated with the projects topics in question.

The documentation in Chapter 3 of this dissertation details the implementation of the projects which corresponds to the "action" phase of the action research process. The findings, analyses and learning in Chapter 4 correspond with the remaining Observe and Reflect phases of action research process cycle.

1.6.6.3 The principles of action research

Winter (1989) in O'Brien (1998) highlighted the six key principles of action research. The descriptions of each of these principles are outlined below with its possible alignment in these two projects.

1. Reflexive critique

   As explained by Winter (1989) in O'Brien (1998), the principle of reflexive critique ensures people reflect on the issues and processes and make explicit the interpretations and considerations, on which decisions are made. This lends to practical accounts giving rise to theoretical considerations. The use of reflective practice is heavily propagated as a key learning outcome in a professional doctorate. The triangulation of working knowledge and theoretical considerations leading to new knowledge which impacts the stakeholder communities, fulfil the ambitions of a workplace based doctorate which is oriented to professional practice.

2. Dialectical critique

   Reality, particularly social reality, is consensually validated (Winter, 1989 in O'Brien, 1998). The workplace based learning pedagogy which requires multiple stakeholders to participate in the learning process and the likely

alignment and tension during the implementation of the projects create opportunities of the management of change in a tangible way. The learning derived from reality and the validation of these outcomes leads back to theoretical considerations.

3. Collaborative resource

As stated above, participants in an action research are co-researchers. The status of a co-researcher presupposes that each person's ideas are equally significant as potential resources for creating interpretive categories of analyses, negotiated among the participants. The critical analyses derived from the multiplicity of viewpoints avoid the skewing of credibility stemming from the prior status of the idea-holder.

4. Risk

The change process potentially threatens all previously established ways of doing things. It changes the status quo. Risk management is a key aspect of managing change during project implementation phase. Most implementation are unsuccessful because they fail to mitigate the resistance (change) factors of stakeholders who might want to remain in status quo. The active management of change, be it positive or negative results in learning and this documented learning is a benefit for all.

5. Plural structure

This collaborative attribute of enquiry in action research leads to plurality of views, critiques and commentaries and in turn leads to multiple possible actions and interpretations. This is the dynamism of workplace based learning where actions have to be continuously aligned to changing feedback and realities.

6. Theory, practice and transformation

The iterative loop of theory informs practice and practice refines theory, in a continuous transformation. The workplace based learning which is oriented to learning situated at the workplace enabled working knowledge to refine theory and in some instances create new original knowledge within the wider body of knowledge. Each iterative cycle of the action research process is an opportunity of learning and knowledge creation, enabling continuous learning.

1.6.6.5 Ethical considerations in action research

Richard Winter (1996) as quoted by O'Brien (1998) listed a series of principles on ethical considerations associated in action research. The general principle is that the work and requests must be transparent and approval obtained before the work is commenced. For this workplace based study, the university had issued a consent form to be signed and the divisional manager had given his approval as the employer to participate in this program.

Another principle is that other's work and points of view must be negotiated with those concerned before being published. The submission of the joint authorship of the second article titled "A model to evaluate strategy and implementation effectiveness" had therefore, the signatories of both authors.

1.6.6.6 Appropriateness of action research in workplace based learning

As explained in the earlier sections and further reiterated by its key concept of "learning by doing", action research is therefore, the most appropriate form of research method to be used in both the workplace based projects. It also increases the integrity of the developed frameworks and models because they have the benefit of both academic rigour and validation from insights gained through actual experience. This is aligned with McDemott et al.'s (2008) description of action research, which is research concurrent with action. Research-in-action makes actions more effective as it deals with real issues, while simultaneously building up knowledge.

Beyond that, the collaborative attribute of action research also promotes learning and the dissemination of knowledge within the team involved in this study. This itself represents a key benefit of workplace based learning.

1.7 Submitted reports in the Learning Portfolio and Learning Plan

The successful submission of the Learning Portfolio and Learning Plan marked the completion of the Pre-Project stage of the DPST.

Table 1-3 Submitted reports of Learning Portfolio and Plan

Report Category	Submitted Deliverable	Page	Word Count
Learning Portfolio	Reflections of past learning	70	12000
Learning Plan	Proposed learning plan which outlines the planned learning episodes	53	10300
	Total	123	22300

The contents of chapter two to four will concentrate on the main research topic of Strategic Planning. Chapter five which is the thesis' concluding chapter will revisit the reflected learning from past professional experience of the portfolio and conclude on the totality of distilled learning from the past and the present, including the main research.

CHAPTER 2   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Drucker's et al., (2008) definition of strategic planning can be examined in two parts which is supported by two nominated work-based projects. The first part of the definition is "the continuous process of making risk taking decisions systematically with the greatest knowledge of their futurity". This is the process of formulating a set of strategies to achieve future business ambitions which is the essence of Project One. Drucker et al. (2008) then went on to point out that it is also the "systematic organisation of effort needed to carry out these decisions; and measuring the results of these decisions against the expectations through organized, systematic feedback". This second part of the definition is about implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of this effort which is the essence of Project Two.

Combined, these two projects are about strategic planning, befitting the title of this thesis. Hrebiniak (2008) commented that strategy formulation and implementation are separate, distinguishable parts of the strategic management process and these parts are interdependent of an overall process of planning-executing-adapting. Sutherland et al. (2004) who quotes the work of Wit et al. (1998) describes strategic management process in like manner. As these two projects were carried out sequentially, the literature review was conducted progressively, with an overview scan at the beginning, followed by more in depth review on strategy formulation in Project One, and subsequently on strategy evaluation in Project Two. It is also noted that there are more studies on competitive strategy formulation than on implementation evaluation.

There are two major deliverables in each of these workplace projects. The development of the process or approach is one of the deliverables. The supporting component model or tool used in their respective process or approach is the second deliverable. At the conclusion of this study, there will be a set of process or approach and associated tools to assist managers to first formulate strategy and then evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation effort. Literature review was conducted in a similar structure to ensure that the process (approach) and tools were supported by the appropriate academic foundation.

2.1 Process, framework and model to formulate competitive strategy

Michael Porter is a household name among business strategists. Porter's (2004) work on business competitive strategy is well studied. Many of his impressive arrays of frameworks and tools such as his five-forces of analysing existing industry conditions and three generic strategy models, have withstood the test of time. Other researchers like Kim and Mauborgne (2005) have commented that these tools which have helped many to compete in "red oceans", a phrase coined to denote competition in crowded market spaces, has remained virtually silent on practical tools to excel in blue oceans (less crowded competitive market spaces). Kim et al.'s (2005) work is focused on developing a set of analytical tools and frameworks to make formulation and execution of the blue ocean strategy as systematic and actionable, therefore, filling a central void in the field of strategy. Their work points to four guiding principles of successful formulation of blue ocean strategy which are first, reconstructing market boundaries, second, focusing on the big picture not the numbers, third, reaching beyond existing demand and fourth, getting the strategic sequence right. Kim et al.'s (2005) further commented that their work expands on identifying risk factors against each of the principles such as:

1. search risk against reconstructing market boundaries
2. planning risk against focusing on the big picture
3. scale risk against reaching beyond existing demand
4. business model risk against getting the strategic sequence right

Identification of risks in each of the categories of search, planning, scale and business model and respective mitigation must be emphasised given the vulnerability nature of competitive risks in today's market place. This factor will be taken into consideration when developing the strategy and subsequent implementation evaluation framework in the projects.

2.1.1 Process, methodology and tools to formulate strategy

An internal Deloitte publication titled "Three steps to sustainable and scalable change" examines a detailed review of organisation activities to produce sustainable and scalable change over time (Aquilar, 2008). The three steps include first, developing various business models to achieve business ambitions, followed by executing the model in an operational framework and third, implementing an organisation design and service delivery model to sustain the scalable change. The keywords of sustainability and scalable change in the title do resonate with the overall intent of this study, which is to drive the business toward sustainable, scalable and profitable growth. The proposed steps in Aquilar's (2008) study however only, addresses the business growth objectives portion. The proposed steps do not examine the current state of the business which is what most business improvement methodologies would propose. The examination of the current state is typically called the "As-Is" assessment followed by a "To-Be" step which is to review and develop potential solutions aimed at addressing the identified gaps.

Porter (2004) championed the Strategy Formulation Process (SFP) which outlines a similar three step approach. They are:

1. the situation assessment to appraise the current situation
2. the setting of objectives and development of strategy options
3. the recommendation of the plan

There are a number of conceptual studies that attempt to categorise different approaches on strategy formulation and implementation. These different models illustrate the range of implementation style that may exist in organisations (Andrews, Boyne, Law, & Walker, 2011). According to Drucker et al. (2008), the theory of business has three parts. First, there are assumptions about the environment of the organisation which include society and its structure, the market, the customer and technology. He then goes on to examine the second assumption which is about the specific mission of the organisation and third, assumptions about the core competencies that are needed to accomplish the organisation's mission. It is a closed loop and end to end methodology because it covers the entire value chain from formulation to implementation evaluation.

The SFP aims to address these three parts of the business theory advocated by Drucker et al. (2008). The situation assessment examines the business in its environment which is the first step of the SFP and the first part of business theory. Porter's structural and industry analysis fits this requirement. Besides Porter, there are other tools which have been developed to assist managers in analysing internal organisation and external environmental factors.

Examining the organisation's mission is step two of the SFP which is "setting the objectives". Honest critical appraisal of the organisation's strengths and weaknesses, capabilities and limitations is Drucker's et al. (2008) third assumption in the theory of business. This is addressed in step two of the SFP. The accurate assessment of its core competency is an important input, in developing the strategic responses to accomplish the vision and ambitions of the business.

The analysis tools used in the current state assessment (step two) ranges from the basic Strength-Weakness-Opportunities-Threat (SWOT) analysis to a full-fledged industry analysis which is more complex and difficult to accomplish. Porter's (2004) five forces of industry analysis framework examines rivalry amongst existing firms, threat of new entrants, threat of substitute products or services, bargaining power of customers and bargaining power of suppliers. These five forces do cover the full spectrum of the competitive landscape. PESTEL which is an acronym for Political, Environmental, Social, Technological and Legal are factors which need to be considered when formulating the strategic responses. STEER which is another acronym lists similar factors except for "R" which is the abbreviation for regulatory compliance. This is quite important in today's environment where different regulatory bodies such as Monetary Authority in financial industry, Federal Drugs Authority (FDA) in the healthcare industry shape public policies and regulatory frameworks to govern the conduct of the industry.

Porter's three step process is adopted in this project as the basic project approach. This three step process is comparable to another similar process on strategy formulation which includes preparation, analysis, decision making and

implementation (Wiebes, Baaij, Keibek, & Witteveen, 2007). The activities in the analysis and decision making steps are similar to the situation assessment and the development of strategic choices in the SFP.

2.1.2 Strategy models

There is significant literature on competitive strategies and models. A literature scan produced a substantial list. Most business schools teaching the subject of strategy incorporate Porter's (2004) generic strategy model as part of the module. It is therefore a good starting point for managers considering strategy options for businesses.

2.1.2.1 Porter's three generic strategy model

The original model proposes three different strategy models of differentiation, focus and cost leadership and the choice of which depends on competitive dynamics. The principle of differentiation strategy is applicable if customers are willing to pay for value uniqueness in their purchase of products or services. Differentiation strategy is applied on premium products because of the unique value proposition, whereas a low cost strategy should be pursued in an industry wide commoditised environment. Budget airlines, commoditised products and services which operate on high price sensitivity must adopt cost leadership strategies to survive. There are many businesses which operate in niche segments and in this case, a strategy focused on certain core competencies tend to do well. The discipline of a focus strategy in a niche business competitive environment is vital for success. Figure 2-1 is a common illustration of Porter's (2004) model.

Figure 2-1 Porter's three generic model illustrated
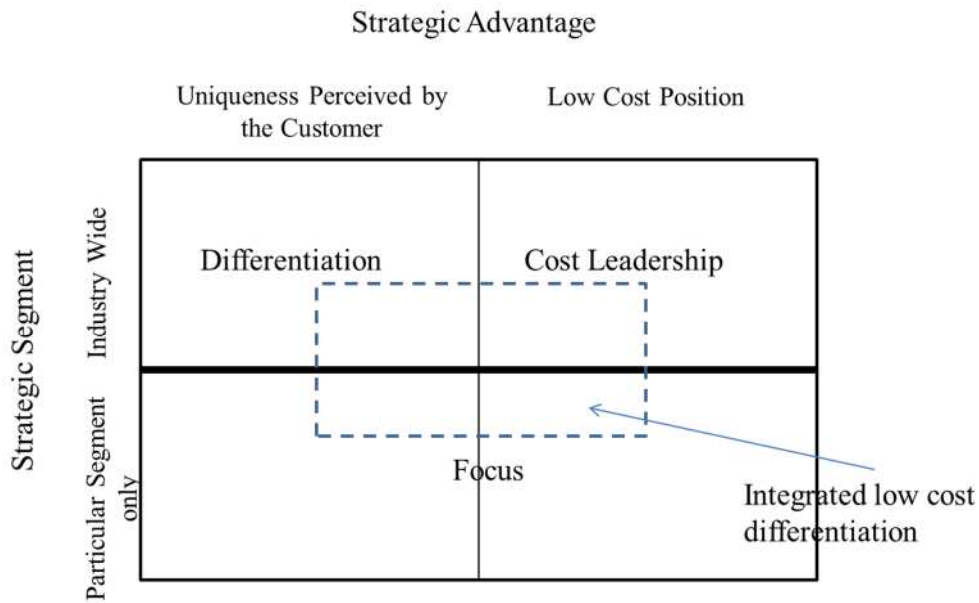
Porter's three generic strategy model

Source: Porter, 2004 (reproduced and adapted for this study)

In today's highly agile and complex competitive environment, it is difficult to find the pure application of these models, giving rise to mixed or hybrid versions of these models. Later variants of the model include focused cost leadership and focused differentiation where the attention is on developing cost advantage and differentiation in specific niche segments. Integrated low cost focused differentiation strategy is another variation from the original model where it integrates all elements of the generic strategy model. Theoretically, this strategy is supposed to work in mixed niche and industry wide business segments and customers will not necessarily reward the vendor for differentiation. Neither do customers just go for the lowest cost. An example of this integrated strategy in the risk consulting business may be embedding a new capability such as analytics in a service-line like Internal Audit and delivering this service by changing its service delivery model. Internal Audit which is a core competency is the "focused" part of the strategy. Embedding new capability like analytics is aimed at providing "differentiation" to this service line and changing the service delivery model to perform part of the process in a low-cost location is to pursue "cost leadership". Put together, this integrated low cost focused differentiation strategy is birthed. Kumar et al. (1997) finding which is quoted in Nandakumar et al. (2011) study indicates that firms which adopted integrated strategy perform poorly. Hence "integrated low cost focused differentiated" strategy needs further validation and study. To put it in simple terms, such a strategy model maybe too complex. There is uncertainty of its meaningfulness because it seems to embrace too many principles in a single model. Will the market understand what is being offered and can the managers understand what this means?

A fifth variant is a best cost provider strategy. This strategy gives consumers a blend of cost and value with the business offering products and services which have relatively high value characteristics, and quality is offered at a lower cost than most of its competitors (Sutherland & Canwell, 2004). The drawback of such strategy is that it is likely to reduce its margin. Introducing innovation to reduce the cost model, is an important success factor for this type of strategy to sustain.

Porter (2004) has stated that any of these three strategies is capable of producing superior results and firm a failing to develop its strategy in at least one of the three directions is a firm that is "stuck-in-the-middle" and one that holds no competitive advantage. Studies which have concluded the same include Miller & Dess (1993) and Nandakumar, Ghobodian, & O'Regan (2011). Gorman (2007) reported that better business outcomes result from focused strategies. Porter went as far as saying the firm that is "stuck-in-the-middle" is almost guaranteed low profitability. The Miller et al. (1993) study assessed Porter's model in terms of its generalability, accuracy and simplicity through its empirical analysis of PIMS data. One of the several conclusions drawn is that performance norms vary significantly across strategic types and Porter's predictions are not entirely accurate. It is also concluded that the simplicity of Porter's model does capture much of the complexity inherent in strategic gestalts and his framework can be improved by viewing it as providing three important dimensions of strategic positioning rather than three or four distinct strategies. Researchers like Kim et al. (2005) have already identified this limitation as explained earlier, and other strategy models are being considered to address this strategy gap. It is confirmed in another study that strategies like the Blue Ocean is commercially viable in the business to business (B2B) sector and fulfils the strategy evaluation criteria of suitability, acceptability and feasibility criteria as per Johnson et al. (1999) model (Cirvevskis, Homenko, & Lacinova, 2010).

Nandakumar et al.'s (2011) is one of the studies aimed at examining the relationship between business level strategy and organisational performance. It tests the applicability of Porter's generic strategies and uses the findings to explain differences in business performance using both quantitative and qualitative measures of business objective fulfilment, relative competitive performance, return on assets (ROA) and return on sales (ROS). The finding supported Porter's view that combination strategies may not be effective in organisations. As previously mentioned, Kumar et al, (1997) found that firms which adopted integrated strategies performed poorly. It did however, highlight that firms which adopted integrated strategy while performing poorly still performed better than those which adopted only one type of strategy (mono strategy). The correlations between the strategy types and performance measures indicate that cost-leadership and differentiation strategies do help organisations to fulfil their business objectives.

This leads on to discussions of other competitive strategy models and the need to look at combination of models which emphasise on cost leadership and differentiation when formulating strategy options.

2.1.2.2 Value creation through relationship closeness

Amongst other models and strategies examined by Aquila (2008), he explored value creation through relationship closeness, innovating business model versus replication, targeting the right customers through segmentation, market expansion strategy and competitive advantage through effective business alliance. Each of the models has their merits. Having been in the professional services industry for the past 15 years, it is a known fact that the probability to convert tenders into engagements by responding to market place "request for proposals" is very low. It is usually won by vendors who are incumbent providers having intimate knowledge of the business or have significant business relationships with decision makers in the organisation. Srivastava & Singh (2010) advocate the vital importance of strategic key account management and building rapport, trust and closeness of relationships which are common training topics in go-to-market strategies. Hesselbein & Goldsmith (2009) cited David Thompson's advice on exploiting high growth market segments, developing marquee customers and leveraging alliances to achieve exceptional growth. Customer orientation is "positively related" to segmentation complexity, differentiation and innovation, and "negatively related" to cost leadership as indicated in the study linking market orientation to strategy through segmentation complexity (Ali & Angelica, 2010). This finding lends credence to customer segmentation as a valid competitive strategy model. Lou Gerstner, the former IBM CEO was credited with his mastery of engineering one of the most stunning turnarounds in business history. "The major lesson to learn from him is how important it is to focus a business totally on generating customer value" (Arnold, 2012, p. 7).

2.1.2.3 Business model innovation versus replication

A study by Aspara, Hietanen & Tikkanen (2010) found that companies which either innovate their business models or replicate other business models intensely tend to be more profitable that those that just do not act on either models. Therefore the survey results support the hypothesis that companies should seriously review their business models and either innovate or replicate as part of its strategic orientation. The worst outcome is when companies just operate on cruise mode. Replicating existing business models however, do often result in "me-too" strategies and price competition becomes acute. This is echoed by the finding by Ali & Cortes (2010) on model innovation.

2.1.2.4 Reconstructing market boundaries, innovation and market expansion

Kim et al.'s (2005) concept of avoiding the crowded "red ocean" market place by applying the principle of thinking the big picture and reconstructing market boundaries are also concepts of innovation. Bang & Joshi (2010) looked at untapped markets and in turn, explored market expansion entry into additional markets. It is

important to note that market expansion strategies are complex and risky, as many early entrants fail because they do not understand the cultural and political implications of the targeted markets. However, having noted the risks, the need to consider new regional and global market expansion is still unavoidable because many multinational clients look at their vendor partners to be present in their respective markets. Ku (2002), in his paper on Southeast Asia: Opportunities and Challenges described the significant changes of the Southeast Asian nations since the mid-1980s, politically and economically. Long's (2002) article on "Asean in the New Millennium" in Ku's (2002) study, further pointed to the aspiration of Asian's 10 nations in regional unity, but a unity in diversity governed by the six principles as laid down in the Bali agreement. The inter-dependence and cooperation of Asian nations have been increasing over the years. Even with the various economic crises since then, the growth and resiliency in these economies have remained intact. In the Deloitte context, the market expansion for RCD will include Indo-China markets like Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar and Laos. Vietnam in the last five years has been experiencing significant double digit growth rate and it has a significant population base to generate a growing demand. It is a known fact that many companies found their investments into Vietnam to be vulnerable and challenging despite the enormous potential. Personally, I find the Vietnamese workforce to be generally diligent but challenging when it comes to aligning their work cultures and value systems to corporate agenda. This often silent tension, has sometimes led to strategy implementation challenges. The recent lifting of US sanctions in 2012 and opening up of the Myanmar market is closely monitored as a new frontier market. Companies are cautious about this emerging potential reinforcing Kim et al. (2005) description of the need to mitigate search, planning, scale and business model risk factors in their business expansion considerations.

2.1.2.5 Innovation as a strategy

It is widely acknowledged that technological change and innovation are at the very heart of the competitive process and are major drivers of economic growth (Castro & Desender, 2010). The same study quoted several other researchers like Lieberman and Montgomery (1988) and Kerin et al, (1992) on prime mover advantage in developing and bringing to market innovative products to generate competitive edge, advantage and influence industry trends. This study did confirm Porter's assertion about innovation being an early mover, to be able to then enjoy prime mover advantage.

Innovation strategy, as defined by Lendel & Varmus (2011), is the "innovative direction of company approach to the choice of objectives, methods and ways to fully utilise and develop the innovative potential of the enterprise". Innovation strategy is further emphasised to be the key to long term success as emphasised by Zheng (2006) in Castro et al.'s (2010) paper. It is from this perspective that firms should invest in research and development (R&D) and introduce new products to market speedily. Here, the study differentiates the results between one or more firms investing on innovation via R&D. The finding is that there is negative relationship between level of horizontal differentiation (products having different characteristics) and incentives to invest, if there is only one firm

investing. When both firms (more than one) invest in R&D, the optimal level of R&D investment depends on the horizontal differentiation parameter. These findings are lessons on firstly, whether there is merit on innovation and secondly, what should be the level of investment on innovation through R&D. The response to the first lesson is positively affirmative. The response on the second question is best answered when the strategist understands the structural and industry analysis of the competitive landscape and has knowledge on the competitive forces (five forces) and activities in bringing horizontal differentiation (products with different characteristics) to the market. That insight and knowledge should be used to determine the investment quantum on R&D as it relates to payback and returns.

In thinking about innovation as a strategy, Steve Jobs of Apple fame is an ultimate example of the capital "I" in innovation with his "i-product" series which has transformed industries and consumer behaviours. Steve was a visionary who constantly challenged his team to "think differently", one of the seven principles of innovation (Gallo, 2010). He once said, "Our belief was that if we kept putting great products in front of customers, they would continue to open their wallets" (Beahm, 2011). Innovation is unstructured and principled based. It is clear that creativity and innovation comes through different means, and organisations should use whichever method is most applicable in their context. Thomas Edison (1847-1931) who was an archetypal inventor and registered over 1200 patents in his lifetime quoted the following, "successful managers do not sit around waiting for brilliant ideas to occur to them; they work methodically" (Arnold, 2012, p. 82). He highlighted that organisations should be constantly scanning its environment for sources of innovation. He also pointed out seven sources of innovation, of which the first four are crucial in innovating systematically. They are the unexpected, incongruity, process necessity and sudden change.

The problem with these principles, sources of innovation and methods is their applicability. There must be millions of opportunities which has surfaced and passed by, without being noticed. Yet, once in a while, a big breakthrough comes. Does this invalidate innovation as a strategy? No. Progress in society is through innovation, otherwise, there is no electricity, computers, internet, i-devices, self-parked cars and the list goes on. One must keep sourcing and searching for the next unexpected idea, incongruity where reality does not tally with what it "ought to be" and needs that must be fulfilled and intrinsic to a process. With huge market uncertainty and turbulence in today's business environment, an eye on the sudden change is a must. The volatility of markets may present innovation opportunities called disruptions. The disrupters differentiate the innovators and "me-too".

2.1.2.6 Competitive advantage through strategic alliances

Strategic alliances (which work) do create competitive advantage. The premise is that no company can afford to have it all. This is very real in today's pharmaceutical industry where the "big pharmas" like Pfizer, AstraZeneca and others no longer wish to risk billions into research in search of the next big blockbuster since the failure rate is proven to be very high. They resort to strategic alliances with niche bio-tech companies which have advanced discoveries to short

circuit the development process. "The future will belong to those companies that embed alliance management capabilities into the fabric of their culture and how they do business" Fred Hassan, CEO of Schering-Plough was quoted. Gibbs & Humphries (2009) labels this as "Stable Pragmatists" whose partnership quality, collaborative innovation and value creation attributes are high in Partnership Types model.

2.1.2.7 High performance businesses pursue Operational excellence

Bender (2004)'s view of successful operations starts with a commitment to know the reality of the current state which is derived from an accurate view of the current state of affairs. He listed this as strategy number one in operational excellence. The title of the book, "Execution: Create the Vision, Implement the Plan, Get the Job Done" (Gorman, 2007) describes the essence of operation excellence accurately. It is about getting the job done well to deliver superior performance. Operation Excellence is a common strategy in today's organisation transformation agenda. The Kaizen culture of continuous improvement made popular during the quality era has become a common training program in organisations' pursuit of operating more efficiently and increasing productivity. Methodologies like Total Quality Movement (TQM) and Toyota Production System (TPS) are the basis of which Lean Sigma programs are taught and implemented.

In cost reduction or cost management, one immediately focuses on reducing expenditure, which in many cases leads to reduction of personnel. The paradox is one of focusing on profit improvement paradigm versus cost reduction mentality (Ludy, 2000). This has to do with reduction of waste and maintaining quality of service and products.

Most of the concepts in the strategy models reviewed above are already in use in businesses. They will be considered in conjunction with the generic strategy model. As such, Porter's model together with its strategy formulation process (SFP) is nominated as the academic foundation and framework for Project One.

2.2 Process, framework and model to evaluate strategy and implementation

The literature review starts with a broader search on key words such as strategy implementation, effectiveness, and business performance. As the project progresses, the search was narrowed to focus on key words pertaining to strategy obstacles, implementation effectiveness, failures, and evaluation criteria. For the record, over 500 article titles were browsed throughout the search, later being narrowed to a 100 articles which were read and checked for relevance. Over 70 articles were downloaded and read in more detail. From this, some key lessons on strategy implementation are outlined in the following sections. The structure of this review is organised as follows:

1. key insights on strategy implementation
2. process to evaluate strategy implementation
3. criteria and factors to evaluate strategy implementation

2.2.1 Key insights on strategy implementation

There are key insights on strategy implementation distilled from the literature review. They highlight the importance of implementation capability, the management of change, the need to address risks in order to be successful, and reap the benefits of the strategic objectives. Otherwise the investment and effort in formulating the strategies are in vain.

2.2.1.1 Strategy Implementation is not easy and not always successful

Wiebes, Baaij, Keibek, & Witteveen (2007) in their research on strategy formation note that implementation is difficult and this is a commonly acknowledged fact. A study on failed strategies concluded that "70% of the cases are not about bad strategy but bad implementation" (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). This statistic is startling and therefore, more must be done to help managers implement their strategies successfully. Studies on the subject of business strategy, managerial performance, and monitoring are extensive (Mintzberg, 2005). There are many studies linking strategies to business performance. It is well documented that valuable strategies are faced with problems and failure at the implementation stage.

2.2.1.2 Better business performers are those with clear strategies and objectives

Academics have long examined the relationship between strategy (such as Porter's generic strategies) and business performance. Javier and Isabel (2010) examined the integration of strategies, capabilities and performance in a single model and proposed that both competitive strategies are essential in explaining the link between generic business strategies and business commercial and financial performance.

Post hoc tests in the study conducted by Gonzalez-Benito & Suarez-Gonzalez (2010) as documented, indicates that organisations with clear business level strategy perform better than "stuck in the middle" (no clear strategy) companies in terms of objective fulfilment, relative competitive performance and return on sales. This implies that an articulated purpose driven strategy is a success factor for enhanced business performance.

Kaplan and Norton (2004), who have conducted extensive research on business performance, proposed that elements of financial performance, success with targeted customers, internal processes and intangible assets (Balanced Scorecard) must be interwoven with business objectives. Together, they form the cause and effect chain, and when properly executed, create customer and shareholder value. This combination of financial and non-financial elements produces a more holistic view of performance.

2.2.1.3 Right strategy comes first

In another study on making strategy work, effective execution is impossible if strategies are flawed (Hrebiniak, 2008). "Will the strategy work?" is often used to question this suitability criterion of strategy effectiveness. Therefore developing a means to evaluate whether strategies are suitable is important before significant resources are wasted on strategies which are unsuitable.

2.2.1.4 Staff obstacles, Inadequate planning, and managers' self- interests must be addressed

Ali et al. (2012) cited five categories of obstacles impeding successful strategy implementation. Staff obstacles and consequences of inadequate planning are listed as top two impeders. Guth and MacMillan's (1986) work focuses on middle management's motivation to implement strategy and concluded that middle management's self-interests motivate the degree of commitment. This clearly illustrates the concept of commitment theory that deals with level of individual managers' commitment being crucial to the success of strategy implementation. Therefore, their needs are to be anticipated and managed carefully to ensure positive alignment. This is also confirmed through another study which found that organisation-level actions of senior executives appointing middle managers to influential positions can elicit positive responses by appealing to the right social organisation emotions. The study observes that such responses lead to higher positive organisation-level outcomes such as strategy implementation success (Huy, 2011).

Addressing the needs of diverse agenda in a larger organisation is complex and difficult. The changing role of talent versus conventional human resources management has become increasingly important. In overcoming people resistance, community based change approach is advocated. It is noted that in some cases, Human Resources (HR) partner other functions to lead organisations to embrace fundamental change for sustainable strategy implementation (John, 2012). In another

research, it is the partnership of marketing and HR alignment that is key to contributing to strategy implementation success (Chimhanzi & Morgan, 2005). Both of these concepts underscore the importance of talent in strategy implementation.

2.2.1.5 Management of change is key in implementation

The management of change is emphasised in different ways. Johnson et al. (2008) summarises the concept of implementation as making changes to execute the strategic plans. This is certainly illustrated and evidenced in this project where substantial effort is invested in managing the subjective component of change, arising from leadership resistance, self-interests agenda, communication gaps and suspicion of motives, all of which contribute to challenges, which need to be addressed. Wiebes et al. (2007) note similar challenges encountered during implementation which include the lack of support from senior management, communication failure, inexperienced teams, resistance, and capacity shortage. Some textbooks recommend proper implementation planning, having adequate staff and organisation, proper governance which exercises strict control, design communication plans, and proper leadership involvement to mitigate these challenges. Strong senior management support is emphasised. Therefore, Hesselbein et al. (2009) conclusion that today's leader needs to prepare for the future is crucial to the future sustainability of the business. This preparation includes the formulation and implementation of the right set of competitive strategy.

2.2.1.6 Increasing organisation capabilities improve performance

Strategies focused on operational efficiency and productivity are often pursued. Commonly known as operational excellence strategies, companies implement them in their pursuit of productivity and profitability improvement. The business principles of Toyota's Total Production System (TPS), which are built on two drivers of "continuous improvement" and "respect for people" (Liker, 2004) are designed to improve achieve such objectives, leading to increased business performance. Another methodology, Six Sigma has evolved over time from operational productivity to customer growth and profitability (Abramowich, 2005). A study conducted on 123 firms in South Korea in the electronic industry concluded that a firm must effectively allocate its resources to create and sustain a competitive advantage against its competitors and Porter's competitive strategy framework is found to be one of the widely adopted tool for strategic planning (Koo, Koh, & Nam, 2004). This finding supports the feasibility criterion of Johnson's et al. (2008) strategy evaluation process where allocation of resources is an important success factor in implementation. It is also found that that Porter's framework is an effective tool for strategic planning.

2.2.1.7 Performance Measurement is a key management tool

Literature by Dess & Robinson (1984), Pearce et al. (1987), Priem et al. (1995) and Brew and Hunt (1999) provided strong support for techniques of subjective performance measurement. This is reinforced by another study on strategy and business performance using the dimensions of adaptation, effectiveness, and efficiency (Homburg, Krohmer, & Workman, 1999). Hagel (1994), in his article on "fallacies in organising for performance" supports aggressive performance focused milestones to hold the design taskforce accountable for near-term performance as well as long-term performance targets. The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) model developed by Kaplan and Norton in 1992 is a method for analysing performance measurements and reward systems in organisations and this activity helps organisations make continuous improvements in their operations due to the emphasis on performance measurement (Tseng, 2010).

2.2.1.8 Strategic governance in guiding strategy implementation through the Board

Following a host of corporate corruption scandals, board of directors are facing amplified pressure from investors, creditors and shareholders in a bid to ensure effective corporate governance of their investments (Schmidt & Brauer, 2006). Where previously, the board only dealt with structural governance issues, it is now proposed that boards address strategic governance issues through the concept of "strategy consistency" which is the allocation of appropriate firms' resources and its announced strategy as a proxy for the board's effectiveness in guiding strategy implementation. Against the same backdrop, authors of risk intelligence study are also propagating the need that the board must thoroughly understand the enterprise strategy and its risks. It proposes that strategy formulation is a collaborative process between management and the board (Funston & Wagner, 2010).

2.2.2 Process to evaluate strategy implementation

Managers already find it difficult to formulate strategy. Requesting them to evaluate their implementation effort is even more difficult. Most resort to subjective feedback and financial results as proxies to evaluate the effectiveness of their strategy or effort. The need to develop a process to evaluate both strategy and implementation effectiveness so that systematic, timely and holistic feedback for improvement and alignment is increasingly important to address the identified problems of poor implementation.

2.2.2.1 Comparatively, fewer literature on strategy and implementation effectiveness

There are fewer studies addressing the topic of evaluating the effectiveness of strategy and its implementation. This need is further emphasised in Lester's (2009) work on companies adopting the "two hats" approach of managing operations while driving sustainable growth. He categorised feedback into commercial, process and strategy elements. Commercial elements cover financial, customers and competitors, while process elements include communications, team dynamics and organisation. The strategy element looks at strategy fit. Much of the literature on strategy processes focuses on a rational approach to implementation (Andrews et al.2011). The same study quotes literature by Joyce (1999) which argued that the main advice on implementation tends to be framed by rational steps to be taken. Bryson (1995) and Hart (1192) on the other hand, recommended that strategy be piloted before its full implementation as a key factor to implementation success. One of the studies which is most relevant on strategy implementation is work by Johnson, Scholes & Whittington (2008) which describes the entire strategy process as a three step process involving analysis-choice-implementation with the latter, making changes to execute the strategic plans in a controlled way (Payne, 2007). This approach is similar to what Joyce alluded to as a "rational" approach.

The study by Hastings (1996) proposes a strategy evaluation model which addresses on-going criticisms aimed at capital budgeting model which in turn, employs purely quantitative methods such as discounted cash flow techniques, financial ratio analysis, and ignoring key issues in the strategy making process. This model, as proposed by Hastings (1996) provides a method for ranking strategy on quantitative, qualitative and intangible criteria based on their prioritised relationships with the mission of the firm. While the model addresses the gap of strategy evaluation, it does not evaluate the implementation effort of strategy.

2.2.3 Criteria and factors to evaluate strategy implementation

The gleaned learning indicates that most of the reviewed literature and studies examine linkage of business performance to different strategy models. Examples of

literature which studied such linkage through financial measures and fulfilment of business objectives include Cirvevskis et al. (2010), Nandakumar et al. (2011), Koo et al. (2004) and Miller & Dess (1993). There are other literature and studies such as Gorman (2007), Gonzalez-Benito et al. (2010), Aspara et al. (2010), Kaplan et al. (2004), Dess & Robinson (1984), Pearce et al, (1987), Brew et al.(1999) and Homburg et al. (1999) focus on more subjective performance aspects of strategy performance. The discussion on the effectiveness of the implementation effort is somewhat implicit and assumed neutral in these studies. Studies by Ali et al. (2012), Hrebiniak (2008), Guth et al. (1986) and Wiebes et al. (2007) examine more qualitative factors such as obstacles and negative circumstances which impede success of strategy implementation.

Much of these literature focuses on the effects of strategy formulation and business performance but there is little evidence of engaging the manager in the process and tool to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation. Johnson's et al. (2008) study which specifically examines the criteria of suitability, feasibility and acceptability is the most direct study on strategy and implementation evaluation. Understanding these drivers and criteria enables strategy teams to focus on evaluating whether the strategy is suitable, feasible and acceptable. Nandakumar et. al.'s (2011) study on generic strategies and performance quoted Homberg et. al.'s (1999) study specifically on the three dimensions of performance measurements using adaptiveness, effectiveness and efficiency. Some of the performance measurements resonate with some of Johnson et al. (2008) criteria of strategy evaluation. However it is important to note that businesses operate in live competitive environments. Evaluating the implementation in context of its environment, provides insights on why the same strategy may work in one place and not another. In the same company, it may work in one division and not another and that has to do with the type of business in the same market. The three criteria of suitability, feasibility and acceptability, are in themselves insufficient. This perceived limitation will be investigated in this Project Two to validate whether the three criteria are insufficient and more criteria need to be considered.

2.3 Summary of literature review on strategy planning

The main field of knowledge related to this study is strategic planning which examines the two key aspects of strategy formulation and the evaluation of its implementation effectiveness. The first part of Drucker et al., (2008) definition of strategic planning relates well to the strategy formulation project which is the "continuous process of making risk taking decisions systematically with the greatest knowledge of their futurity". To survive and succeed in a market, a firm must formulate and sustain a competitive advantage against its competitors. Although Porter's competitive strategy framework has long been adopted as a tool for strategic planning, questions have been raised on where the Porter model still holds true in today's turbulent and dynamic competitive landscape, with the pervasive use of internet and e-commerce (Koo, Koh, & Nam, 2004). There are already variants of Porter's three generic strategic model giving rise to hybrid versions of this model such as focused cost leadership and focused differentiation. Studies by Miller & Dess (1993) reported better business outcomes for companies which deploy focused strategies. In the same study, it reported that Porter's model does not capture much of the complexity inherent in strategic gestalts and his framework can be improved by viewing it as providing three important dimensions of strategic positioning rather than three or four distinct strategies. Researchers like Kim et al., (2005) of Blue Ocean fame proposed other strategy models to address this strategy gap. The literature review reviewed at least six other strategy models in section 2.1.2.1.

Drucker's (2008) theory of business has three parts and they align with Porter's Strategy formulation process. The three step process involves a study of the current environment, setting the objectives and recommending a plan. The fundamental management questions are implicit in such an approach and given today's turbulent environment, this question cannot be taken for granted. This limitation will be addressed in the implementation of the workplace project. Other authors like Wiebes et al., (2007) propose preparation, analysis decision making and implementation as the key steps in the strategy formulation process. In summary, Porter's three step process is well aligned to the action research process cycle of plan, action, observe and reflect (O'Brien, 1998).

The second part of Drucker et al., (2008) definition of strategic planning aligns with the strategy and implementation evaluation project which is the "measuring the results of these decisions against the expectations through organised systematic feedback". The key words are "organised systematic feedback". This again compliments the action research method which involves a systematic enquiry into evaluating whether the strategy or its implementation is effective. Although there is less research on strategy evaluation, the literature review yielded:

1. key insights on strategy implementation
2. process to evaluate strategy implementation
3. criteria and factors to evaluate strategy implementation

There are eight key insights on strategy implementation which should be studied if one wants to know how to implement strategy successfully. Second, Joyce (1999) recommended a rational approach to strategy implementation. Bryson (1995)

and Hart (1992), on the other hand, recommended a phased approach to implementation. None of the reviewed literature has a process designed specifically for strategy evaluation. This is the gap which this study will address through Project 2. It will develop a strategy and implementation effectiveness evaluation process (SIEE) which is organised and systematic that is in line with Drucker's definition of theory of business above. Third, the work by Johnson's et al., (2008) model on strategy evaluation is focused on the three criteria of suitability, feasibility and acceptability of strategy. Early review of this literature is that it does not consider the internal and external environments in which strategy is implemented and this is very important in light of today's turbulent and chaotic competitive landscape. The gaps in this model will be studied in Project 2.

In regards to the wider body of knowledge, this study is further framed by the sub-disciplines of management of change and leadership. The literature on action research which is documented in Section 1.6.6 emphasises the key concept of "change" due to the collaborative nature and plural structure of this method (O'Brien, 1998). There is much literature on the management of change and leadership and this will be referenced as appropriate during the implementation (chapter 3) and the discussions on findings, analysis and learning in chapter 4. The literature review on the main research topics of strategic planning serves as theory to inform "practice" which is to be documented in chapter 3 and in turn, the findings, analyses and learning in chapter 4 serve to refine this theory. This essentially is the motivation of professional doctorate. The closed loop principle of learning by doing, is achieved through action research.

Table 2-1 summarises the literature review on the two main topics.

Table 2-1 Summary of literature review

Overall research subject	Strategic Planning (Drucker et al., 2008)	
Research Topics	Strategy formulation	Strategy implementation effectiveness evaluation
Process or Approach	3 step Strategy Formulation Process	4 stage PEAR process
Model	Porter's (2004) generic strategy model and complementary models	Johnson et al.(2008) Strategy evaluation criteria
Academic foundation	Porter's work on competitive strategy	Johnson et al., work on exploring corporate strategy. The focus is on the evaluation of strategy and implementation

CHAPTER 3   PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The business was on a burning platform and needed timely management intervention. The overall goal of the two interdependent projects is therefore, to address the business issues, develop and implement a set of strategies aimed at improving its business performance. One of the projects outcomes is also to educate managers on the total concept of strategic planning which includes the separate and interdependent parts of strategy formulation and implementation evaluation. The stated management questions to be addressed in these two projects are:

1. Is the RCD business sustainable?
2. Can a set of competitive strategy be developed to transform the business and improve its performance in terms of growth and profitability?
3. How can management evaluate the effectiveness of this strategy and its effort?

Questions 1 and 2 will be addressed in Project One. Question 3 will be addressed in Project Two.

3.1 Objectives and deliverables of Projects One and Two

The objective of the first project is competitive strategy formulation. It involves enhancing an existing strategy formulation process and models to assist management in formulating strategies to achieve sustainable and profitable growth. The deliverables of project one include a set of approved strategy for the business, findings and analysis, and derived learning from applying the strategy formulation process and model. Some operational tactics will have to be implemented as immediate measures to address some of the uncovered business issues.

Once the strategies are approved, the implementation phase follows. The objective of the second project is the development of a process and associated models to evaluate the effectiveness of the formulated and implementation effort. The deliverables include a strategy and implementation evaluation process, model with its findings, analysis and conclusions. The impact of the implementation of the agreed strategy on the business will be analysed and distilled to derive learning. Table 3-1 uses the similar table structure in the discussion on literature review (Table 2-1) to summarise the planned projects, research topics, proposed process, approach, model and academic foundation leading to intended learning in academic, professional and work knowledge.

Table 3-1 Integrated end to end Strategic Planning project

Integrated Strategic Planning Process and Model		
Research Topic	Strategy Formulation	Strategy and Implementation Effectiveness Evaluation (SIEE)
Project	Project 1	Project 2
Process and Approach	Develop a process and framework to assist in strategy formulation and implementation evaluation	
Model	Porter (2004) Strategy formulation process and generic strategy model	Johnson et al. (2008) model of strategy implementation criteria
Academic foundation	Adapt, test and validate the process and model. Use findings to contribute to new knowledge. The process for SIEE does not exist and will be developed as part of Project 2	
Professional Knowledge	Use the tested process, framework and model to educate professional managers to use these methodology and tools internally and for clients' strategic planning assignments	
Work Knowledge	The knowledge to formulate, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy will be applied. The finding is used to fine tune the strategy	

The choice of these two projects as explained above, originated from the workplace situation. It is also the charter of my appointment as the RMD of the SBU. This is understandable and sensible. My risk of choosing these study topics, particularly the one on strategy formulation, is that it is already a broadly and deeply studied subject in the academia. Contributing new insights and learning to academic knowledge in this topic of strategy model is therefore anticipated to be challenging and difficult. Acknowledging this challenge, the focus of this study is therefore, the applicability of Porter's generic model in today's professional services competitive landscape and the new strategy models that have emerged to address these gaps. It is concluded from the literature review however, that the strategy formulation process, implementation evaluation process and criteria is less studied. The focus of the study is therefore, on the processes of these research topics and their associated models.

Given that this is a work-based doctorate where the learning is centred on workplace projects, the choice of projects remains because these projects are part of my job's mandate. The topic of strategic planning is one of my main study interests and focus as a management consultant.

3.2 Project One - Competitive Business Strategy Formulation (Artefact Three)

Managers are sometimes tasked with the responsibility of setting directions and strategies for their strategic business units or functions. The outputs tend to be operational tactics aimed at improving efficiency and productivity. However, Mintzberg's (2005) criticism of managers where they "analyse and plan like mad; they just don't strategize" is rightly justified. Interviews with managers during consulting assignments have revealed the fact that most managers do not know how to facilitate or undertake a strategy formulation exercise. They are at a lost on how to obtain information about its competitors. Some do not even know who constitutes their direct and indirect competitors. A contributing factor could be due to the change in competitive landscape. Friedman (2006), in his book, "The World is Flat", metaphorically described the changed competitive environment while he was "sleeping". The CEO of Deloitte Asia Pacific, Chaly Mah challenged his partners at a recent internal conference on future strategy, to innovate and disrupt current business models in the professional services business. He cited how Borders, a world renowned books and music retailer failed to recognise the disruptive model of Amazon which led to its demise in 2011. This new Amazon model itself will be challenged if it fails to comprehend its future competitive landscape in time to come.

The title of this project is "Competitive Strategy Formulation" and its objective has been documented in Section 3.1. The management dilemma (problem statement), research question, action research methodology, project details and finding analysis were documented and submitted in May 2011. The entire documentation is included as Artefact Three. This is the first of the two work-based research topics.

3.2.1 Project One - Scope and timing

The business scope is professional services specialising in risk management. The geography scope includes Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam and Guam. These are the seven operating geographies in the Deloitte SEA oganisation. The total project time of Project One was 14 months, commencing April 2010 and completing in June 2011.

Table 3-2 Project One information

Item	Name / Value	Comments
Project name	Formulate Competitive Strategy	Referred as Project One. Also known as Project 1- Part A
Course code	WBL9002 – WBL9008	Recorded in both USQ and EASB systems
Units	7	First 7 of 13 units across 2 projects
Duration	14 months	April 2010 to June 2011

3.2.2 Project One - Plan and approach

As mentioned, Porter's work on competitive strategy and its core disciplines of industry analysis, competitor analysis and strategic positioning, are now an accepted part of management practice. Companies and management consultants use different aspects of his framework when reviewing and developing corporate or functional strategies. His work on competitive SFP examines what the business is currently doing, followed by happenings in the environment and finally what the business should be doing in response to the earlier findings (Porter, 2004). This is not dissimilar to other systematic approaches.

3.2.3 Project One – The enhanced Porter's Strategy Formulation Process (SFP)

Porter's SFP outlines a three step approach in strategy formulation with Step 1 performing a baseline situation analysis, followed by the setting the business objectives and the exploration of strategic options (Step 2) and finally recommending the strategies (Step 3). This is a logical approach in that the results of the situation assessment provides insights and inputs towards exploring the improvement options and filtering them through tests and facilitation to arrive at a final recommended set of strategies. Drucker et al. (2008) defines organisational strategic planning as a continuous process of making risk taking decisions systematically with the greatest knowledge of its futurity. The key lesson in applying this approach is that due discipline in following through the process must not be

compromised for optimum result. The formalisation of the approach in the strategy formulation process is illustrated in the diagram as shown in Figure 3-1 below.

Figure 3-1 Strategy Formulation Process (SFP)

Management Problem 1. Is business sustainable 2. Intervention Strategies to assist business achieve sustainability, profitability and growth	Perform Situation Analysis	Set the Objectives & Strategic Options	Recommend the Strategies
Action Research	Current Situation SWOT analysis Industry Analysis Study Industry Structure using Porter's 5 Forces	Revisit Vision Observations from Situation Analysis to explore types of Strategic Options - Porter's 3 generic strategies of Differentiation, Cost Leadership and Focus	Recommend the Strategies Use the preceding month's results to fine tune strategies Get Management Approval
Induction	Observations Inductive reasoning on issues	Patterns, and tentative Hypothesis Broader Generalizations	Porter's Competitive Strategy model refined - Theories
Timeline	Cross Sectional Set for 3months	Cross Sectional Set for 2 - 3 months	Cross Sectional Set for 2 - 3 months
Data Samples	Internal staff – 20 Clients & Prospects – 30 Alliances - 10 Secondary Research on Addressable space	Back up : 10 prospects in case further input is needed for strategic options	Validate the strategies with a group of Leaders

The proposed change or amendment to this three step SFP framework is to add a step at the beginning for the manager to explicitly frame the management questions. Getting this right sets the foundation for other steps to follow.

3.2.3.1 SFP Framework Step 1 - Framing the management questions

Defining the set of management questions at the onset of the process was most important and if incorrectly defined, could result in a lot of wasted effort and time. The questions posed in this project were to:

1. Determine whether market for risk consulting services exists and is it sustainable
2. Determine Deloitte's competitive positioning in this industry
3. Identify internal organisational strengths and weaknesses

As expected, there were several iterations when framing these questions. The temptation to short circuit this step, not invest sufficient and quality time to frame the questions correctly, and immediately dive into designing the strategies was very real. This was further compounded by pressures of daily operations and the need to demonstrate some short term results as proof of managerial abilities.

3.2.3.2 SFP Framework Step 2 - Performing situation assessment

The goal of an assessment of the situation is to establish the baseline of the business in terms of its competitiveness in its business landscape. This includes both an internal and external view, complemented by a top-down and bottom up feedback of the issues and opportunities faced by the business. Being a new entrant into the risk consulting business (although a seasoned management consultant), I conducted the analysis on the organisation in terms of its Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threat (SWOT). The analysis did have its advantages. This technique was first introduced by Albert Humphrey in 1960s and is well known and frequently used by managers to analyse the current situation before developing remedial actions. One of the recommendations in a new leaders' 100 day plan is to conduct an organisation SWOT (Bradt, Check, & Pedraza, 2009). The Art of War with its origin in Chinese military strategy advocates a similar concept of root cause analysis called "zhi ji zhi bi, bai zhan, bai sheng". It means knowing yourself will lead to knowing your enemy and in a hundred battles, hundred is won. It is about "knowing the inside from outside" (Wee, 2005).

I took three to four weeks to complete the exercise and it involved designing a questionnaire and conducting interviews with selected partners, management and staff. There was some objectivity in such exercises. The summary of the SWOT analysis is included in Appendix 6. Some key weaknesses and issues such as schisms in the organisation, lack of leadership, poor management governance, and a work culture which strived on activities rather than performance quickly surfaced. The external market threat was low compared to internal issues and problems. The concern was whether the staff and partners' assessment of the market was accurate. Identified issues were mainly internal organisational weaknesses which could be rectified. The SWOT analysis also highlighted significant opportunities for the business. In all, it was a "blunt" tool and one, which most managers were quite comfortable in conducting when confronted with similar situations. A limitation of this tool is that it was not comprehensive and tended to focus too much on internal feedback.

3.2.3.2.1 Industry study

Porter's recommendation of conducting an industry study is more comprehensive, insightful and difficult to carry out. I felt that the insights of the SWOT analysis were too internally focused, and fixing those issues, might in some ways improve the business. However, it did not address the fundamental issue of whether there was a market for risk services in SEA. Therefore, conducting an industry study was necessary to address the first research question of business sustainability. The answer to the second research question of developing a set of "appropriate" strategy was dependent on the first answer.

An industry study on the market opportunities and size was conducted over four months through primary and secondary research. There were a total of more than 60 respondents across the seven geographies in scope. This exercise required

collecting of data outside the company and the question of ethical considerations in regard to data acquisition arises. This is addressed in section 3.2.3.2.3 titled "Ethical considerations on data acquisition in Industry study". The completed questionnaire answers are collated in Artefact Six. The outcome was very helpful in determining the market position of Deloitte's Risk Consulting business, the types of services clients purchase, and their purchasing attributes. The industry study was guided by Porter's Five Forces framework which examined the forces of potential entrants, buyers and suppliers' bargaining powers, and availability of substitutes impacting industry competitors (Porter, 2004). Another framework used was PESTEL which is abbreviation for political, economic, social, technological and legal framework. This helped me in contextualising the five forces analysis in its environment. The deliverable of this study was a 153 page report which provided insights for the next step in the SFP which is to explore the appropriate strategy options. There are five key findings distilled from the industry study which are summarised in the paragraphs below.

The first finding is that the PESTEL or STEER analysis on professional services business is favourable. The insights on the macro-economy, market trends and opportunities, clients profile, buying attributes, emerging industries and business trends over the next few years seem favourable. Although there had been several economic crisis in recent years, for example, the market crash and US crisis in 2006-2008, the softening of the Chinese economy and the current Euro credit crisis (from 2010), the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of all ASEAN economies remained positive and was still growing, although they were growing at different pace. The GDP of United States (US) is expected to be 1.5 to 2.4 whereas the GDP of Asean economies is ahead of US between 4.0 to 4.5 over the next few years to 2015 (internal Deloitte study, 2011). Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia and Singapore are identified as key growth markets which is positive news for Deloitte SEA. Furthermore, new frontier markets like the Mekong region has emerged with Laos and Cambodia being new entry markets. The latest positive political development and easing of US sanctions in Myanmar is another future significant market of over 85 million consumers.

Regional inter-government trade bodies like Asia Pacific Economic Community (APEC) and Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) are instrumental in promoting free trade between member nations, enabling greater market access. Deloitte SEA which is organised under one management structure in Asean is therefore able to leverage its strength, capitalise on this trend and gain competitive advantage.

With globalisation and regionalisation on most large companies' agenda, key economic activities are moving towards the east from the west in line with a business trend called "West moves East". Organisations need assistance and support from professional services firms like Deloitte in their business transformation and this is another favourable trend for Deloitte risk services.

Although Deloitte is positioned number two in the global "Big Four" professional services business, its market position in SEA is weaker. It is ranked number three or four in most SEA markets. According to a recent brand survey involving 250 participants of clients and prospects by Millward Brown (2012), the Deloitte brand and acceptance is relatively weaker than its competitors with

prospective clients. In terms of existing client segment, the finding is that Deloitte is a trusted brand and they are prepared to be advocators of the brand. This finding supports the need for more aggressive marketing and branding of the Deloitte services. The rise of regulations and compliance in industries such as financial services, manufacturing, life sciences and telecommunication is a favourable driver for risk services.

The second finding is that the present positioning of Deloitte's risk consulting business and market size has room for it to grow. I estimated the risk consulting market to be about USD250 million in a professional services market of about USD2.5billion in the industry study. Deloitte's share is estimated at 5% to 8% using available market information, intelligence and proxy to estimate this share. The market position perceived by the survey respondents was number 3 or 4 in most SEA markets. Analysis of the services footprint suggested that Deloitte's share of the services footprint was about 8%. It was also estimated that Deloitte was not serving at least 25% of the addressable risk services footprint. This represented a significant "white space" for Deloitte's risk business to explore and pursue.

The conclusion from this analysis is that Deloitte's brand position is weaker than its "Big Four" competitors and the business is under scale. This is both a weakness and an opportunity for Deloitte's risk business. It is a weakness in terms of brand acceptance and relatively smaller market share. The market opportunity and white space to grow exists, and with Deloitte being a premium global brand, the RCD should strategise to leverage the value proposition of this brand and pursue a bigger share of the addressable market.

The third finding is that demand of risk consulting services is increasing. According to the industry study respondents, the demand of risk services is expected to grow annually at 30%. They identified technology risk & governance (TRG), security, privacy and resiliency (SPR), data risk services (DRS) and contract risks and compliance (CRC) as the types of services expected to grow. The RCD of the Big Four firms is known for its Internal Audit (IA) services. This is a core competency for most of the risk consulting firms in this industry. Unfortunately, clients deem this service as a commodity and hence it is very price sensitive. The IA service line accounts for 40% of the business.

This particular finding is very important when considering the application of Porter's strategy model of differentiation, focus and cost leadership in the formulation of go-to-market strategy for these risk services. More recent research by Kim et al. (2005) on "blue ocean" is aimed at identifying markets, services and client segments and the combination of them which are less crowded. The client segments which are likely to purchase professional services are those in regulated industries like financial services, life sciences, healthcare, manufacturing and telecommunications. Gallo's (2010) suggestions on "thinking differently" while innovating service offerings will lead to the redesigning of an alternative service delivery model of some of these risk services for differentiation and competitive advantage.

The fourth finding is knowledge of the clients' buying criteria helps to focus on what is important. The industry study further listed specific skills and industry expertise, experience and price as the top three buying criteria in order of importance.

Professional knowledge and expertise were confirmed as key differentiators and drivers in professional services business. Price sensitivity has also become a buying criterion when the requirement is homogenous or commoditised. Continuous training, setting up knowledge centres to support staff in their assignments and hiring experts in their respective domains are important operational excellence strategies.

Last but not least, the fifth finding is that the eminence of Deloitte's risk consulting services is a key success factor. The combined findings from the industry study in 2011 and brand value proposition survey in 2012 highlighted an inherent weakness of Deloitte RCD whose market share is smaller and less known amongst prospects. With this industry still in its growth phase, the importance to build the mind share of the Deloitte's risk consulting brand in the market is a priority.

The targeted message should be on growth services, Deloitte's expertise and knowledge on the respective subjects and its ability to serve multi-disciplinary clients seamlessly across the SEA market. The targeted audience is decision makers, most likely professionals in the C-suite executives in Finance, Compliance, Operations, Internal Audit, and Corporate departments including the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Higher regulatory standards do not exempt chief executives from their accountability and discharge of ethical and compliant matters in their organisations today. The onus on these executives to provide positive assurance on these matters means opportunities for professional risk services. Hence the need for Deloitte RCD to increase its "mind share" in the market place.

3.2.3.2.2 Industry study findings and Porter's five forces model

The learning from this industry study was that the findings were significantly more robust, data driven and insightful about the business and its competitive landscape than the outputs of the SWOT analysis. Porter's five forces industry framework lists rivalry among industry competitors, threats from potential entrants and substitute products and services and bargaining power of customers and suppliers as the forces to manage in the competitive landscape. According to Wiebes et al. (2007), it can be used to measure the attractiveness of the business sector. Applying the industry study findings against this framework is revealing. The derived insights are listed in the paragraphs that follow.

The first of Porter's five forces is the rivalry among industry competitors. The professional services industry has consolidated over the years. The rivalry amongst the "Big Four" is intense. Tier 2 players are not global and the investment to become a global player is substantial in terms of investment on systems, methodologies, knowledge management and other supporting infrastructure.

The second force in Porter's model is the threat of new entrants. The threat of new entrants who are within the scale of the "Big Four" is low. Regulators are also weary of further industry consolidation to avoid anti-competitive behaviours. New entrants who are smaller will not be able to compete at the premium level although price elasticity is their competitive element. Therefore, differentiation is an important strategy to avoid direct competition with these Tier 2 providers.

The third force in Porter's model is the bargaining power of customers. Buyers' criteria in order of importance as deduced from the industry study were expertise and skills, experience and then price. Feedback from the internal team during the earlier SWOT analysis seemed to suggest that price was the only buying criterion, which was not true. The industry study also highlighted clients' and prospects perception of Deloitte's market positioning and the types of services they seek in the future.

The fourth force in Porter's model is the bargaining power of suppliers. Professional services businesses, unlike other industries, do not rely on suppliers in their value chain. There are collaborators or strategic alliances and business partners who sometimes collaborate on assignments. The threat of "suppliers" in this business model is low. The key asset of any professional services firm is its professional staff. The constant threat in this industry is the community of practitioners. Management of staff turnover is often the challenge of any manager in this business. The war on recruiting and retaining the best talent is on-going.

The fifth and final force in Porter's model is the threat of substitute products or services. This threat is also low. The Professional services business entails knowledge, capabilities and advice. Although automation might be able to assist some of the analysis in professional services, the key success factors are knowledge, experience and capability.

The mapping of the analysis against Porter's five forces in this project suggests that the threats from the five forces are relatively low and can be managed. Using the illustration of the model, figure 3-2 explains the mapping of the industry findings against Porter's five forces.

Figure 3-2 Mapping of industry study on Porter's five forces model
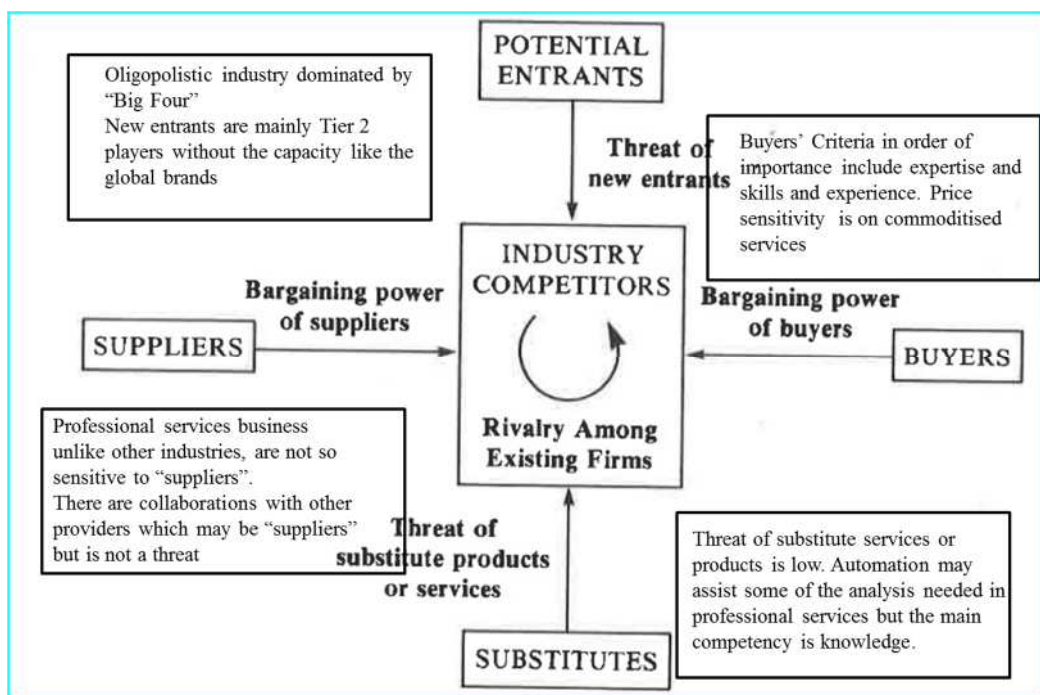
Source: Porter, 2005 (application of five forces model created as part of this project)

The industry study did require the gathering of data from over 60 respondents as reported. Ethical considerations in action research involve close and open communication among the people involved and such considerations must be pursued before action research is carried out in real-world circumstances. The industry study required data gathering through surveys conducted in the market place. The ethical considerations included seeking permission from the CEO to perform this industry study as key ISAF input to understand the risk consulting competitive landscape as part of Step 2 in the SFP. Permission and guidance was also sought from the internal Risk and Reputation leader on the intent of the survey and a disclaimer noted in the data collection instrument. The wordings of the disclaimer in the survey form are reproduced below:

Figure 3-3 Disclaimer at the front of the survey instrument

Disclaimer							

1 By partaking in this survey, I understand that any data provided by me as part of this survey may be used by Deloitte & Touche Enterprise Risk Services Pte Ltd ("Deloitte") in connection with this survey and other studies performed by Deloitte.

2 I understand that this survey and the survey results are the proprietary property of Deloitte.

3 I understand that any such data may be disclosed by Deloitte to related entities or other third parties, including, without limitation, publications, in connection with this survey or such studies, provided that such data does not contain any information that identifies me or the responses I have provided to this survey.

4 I understand disclosure of such data may be required by law, in which case Deloitte will endeavor to notify me.

5 I am authorized to complete this survey on behalf of my company, including, without limitation, in accordance with the policies of my company, its board of directors (or similar governing body), and, if applicable, its audit committee.

The disclaimer was shown to the survey respondent and the respondent was deemed to have given "passive approval" through participation in the survey. The signature of the respondent was not sought. This step of seeking internal approval before embarking on the survey and showing the disclaimer to external respondents is to make sure the principle of obtaining permission before making observations is adhered.

3.2.3.2.4 Integrated Situation Assessment Framework (ISAF)

I used a SWOT analysis to obtain a quick assessment of the business' strengths and weaknesses. I then conducted the more elaborate and difficult industry study using a combination of primary and secondary research. The PESTEL or STEER model was used to analyse the findings from the industry study. This gave me good insights on the competitive business landscape for this risk consulting business. Mapping the findings against Porter's five forces study was another analysis which gave me understanding and further insights into Deloitte RCD business and its competitors.

These insights and learning gave me a comprehensive understanding of the risk consulting business ecosystem. Arising from this step 2 of performing a current assessment of the business was a recommendation to combine the different models and tools into an Integrated Situation Assessment Framework (ISAF). This framework has become an important enabler to support managers who are engaged in conducting similar exercises in the future.

The ISAF starts at the basic level where a tool like SWOT enables a quick internal and external analysis. The analysis becomes more insightful using Porter's five-forces framework which examines the various threats encountered in the business' landscape. The analysis is more externally focused. Combining these analyses using a STEER or PESTEL framework provides a contextual macroeconomic view point of the business relative to its competitive ecosystem. It is recommended that a combination of these tools be used to assess the business in its current state.

Figure 3-4 Integrated Situation Assessment Framework (ISAF)

Situation Analysis – Baseline Assessment

PESTEL or STEER analysis on the Environment - focused on the Risk Consulting Industry . Factors examined will include political, Economic, Social, Technological, Regulatory Compliance

Macro / External Analysis

Porter's 5 Forces Framework for
Risk Consulting Competitive Industry Analysis focused on impacts of potential entrants, buyers, suppliers, substitutes on industry competitors

External / Internal Analysis

SWOT analysis on Risk Consulting Division - Internal Strengths and Weaknesses
Needs of market

Internal / External Analysis

This learning will form part of the contribution of new academic knowledge on the strategy formulation process from this project. This recommendation is published in the article titled "Adapting Porter's Model for Business Strategies formulation" in the inaugural edition of Singapore Management Journal.

3.2.3.3 SFP Framework Step 3 - Setting the objectives and strategic options

This step marks the beginning of addressing the business gaps and issues identified in the previous step. A key activity in designing the future is establishing or understanding the ambitions of the business. Most organisations are quite explicit in stating their strategic objectives. This is commonly described as the Vision and Mission of a business organisation. The more successful organisations are those which are able to operationalise their vision and mission as a lived reality.

3.2.3.3.1 Setting the objective

Revisiting the business vision, if one exists, is a good starting point in formulating the business objectives (vision) which underpins the work on evaluating the various strategy options. It sets the tone, although one must be careful in the calibration of the scale of the ambition. Too many businesses have set unrealistic objectives only to be frustrated because the market environment and the capability of the business are totally unaligned. One of the responsibilities of leaders is to set business objectives that are ambitious, yet pragmatic and have elements of desirability of the future without necessarily knowing all the answers to get there and yet not totally impossible.

Achieving market leadership in risk consulting and generating a revenue of about 11% of firm's revenue which translates to USD50 million was the set vision after much consultation and discussion with my leadership team. This was calibrated against the earlier industry finding which supports an annual growth of 30%. More importantly, it must be built on the foundation of a sustainable and profitable growing business. The article by Guttman on the new high performance horizontal organisation quoted in the book, "The organisation of the Future" comments on the need for a high speed intelligent organisation which is characterised by a flat and efficient structure (Hesselbein & Goldsmith, 2009). This echoes my ambitions of developing the RCD business into a high performance organisation. The culture and DNA to be developed is of sustainable high performance. The timeline to achieve this vision is by 2015. Commencing in 2010, this therefore represents a five year journey.

3.2.3.3.2 Exploring the strategy options

Another key activity in step 3 of the SFP is the exploration of various strategic options and the recommendation of an appropriate set of strategies. The strategies are aimed at addressing the findings of the current assessment and achieving the stated ambitions of the business when implemented successfully. The strategies will take the form of operational tactics which can be applied immediately (first aid treatment) and strategies (longer term treatment) which are focused on addressing the more systemic issues in the business.

The effect of strategy implementation takes time. Being on a burning platform, the business required immediate operational tactics to improve performance. Stopping the immediate "slide" in the business and high staff attrition by strengthening country management was an immediate priority. This was prioritised from June to September 2010. There was a series of workshops with each country leader to structure and implement a country management team to strengthen the day to day management of the business.

The "Back to Basics" initiative was to request the country management team to focus on what they knew best by focusing on their core competencies which were primarily internal audit services, some computer assurance testing work for audit clients and basic enterprise risks assessment assignments. This focus helped to achieve short term traction in the results. As the business stabilised after the management change, the next step was to start the risk industry analysis and develop longer term strategic response.

The consideration of strategy options came from a combination of inputs and findings. The insights and findings from the situation assessment of the SWOT analysis and industry study provided inputs which were more current, factual and objective. Learning from the literature review provided an "outside-in" view of strategy while the wisdom of past experience and "gut feel" provided invaluable input. The business ambitions and vision set the stretch and orientation in terms of strategic direction. It is important to note that these inputs and findings are multi-dimensional and often overlapping. Strategy is not an exact science and therefore some strategy options will directly address certain weaknesses as in a cause and effect relationship. Other strategy options will address a combination of multiple findings and insights. It is not a linear relationship. This is the complexity of strategy design.

The Table 3-3 below summarises the inputs and findings from the various analyses and possible strategy options. It is clear that Porter's generic strategy model of differentiation, focus and low cost leadership is found to be too limiting even with later adaptations of this model, such as best cost provider and integrated low cost differentiation model (Porter, 2008). There is a need to complement this model with additional strategy models like market expansion (Bang et al. (2010), blue ocean pursuit and innovation (Kim et al. 2005, Gibbs & Humphries, 2009, Gallo, 2010), develop marquee clients, key accounts development through relationship closeness and strategic alliances (Hesselbein & Goldsmith, 2009). Researchers like Gittell (2009) and Hesselbein et al. (2009) promote the notion of high performance culture

and teams creating a performance advantage for organisations through increased employee participation in problem solving or improved customisations of solutions.

Table 3-3 Mapping of requirements and considerations to possible strategy choices

Inputs and findings	Possible strategies
Ambitions of becoming a leader. Favorable market conditions for the foreseeable future based on industry study. Five forces study reinforce positive industry outlook Increasing demand of risk consulting services	Market expansion strategy Strategic alliances Reconstruct market boundaries and look for "Blue Oceans" – niche client segments and services footprint Innovate services
Weaker Deloitte brand and business footprint	Improve marketing to increase brand eminence Increase service footprint through growth and strategic alliances
Clients' buying criteria prefer experience, skills and expertise. Will not pay price premium on commoditise services	Implement marquee client strategy Increase value creation through clients' relationship closeness Deploy experts and centre of excellence Use of low cost leadership through change of service delivery model for commoditised services Increase quality of service deliverables Implement Focus and differentiated strategies in conjunction with other strategy models for selected services
Weak and subscale business footprint Weaker Deloitte brand in risk services	Increase business footprint through strategic alliances.
Address internal organisation weaknesses	Deploy Operational Excellence strategy focused on high performance, efficiency, productivity and service. Innovate service model

Another known tool for analysing various growth opportunities is the Ansoff Matrix, developed by Igor Ansoff in the Harvard Business Review in September 1957 which is a 2x2 matrix for exploring product and market factors (Lester, 2009) . Using this Ansoff Matrix and replacing "products" with "services", the four resultant options are increasing market share through aggressive business development, expanding services footprint into new markets like Guam, innovating services in

existing markets and diversifying by simplifying the services for new immature markets like Indo China and Guam.

3.2.3.3.3 Proposed strategy options for risk consulting

An earlier exercise to map the existing risk services using Porter's generic strategy model was useful in determining and positioning the different services as part of the go-to-market strategy. The discussion is fully documented in Section 5.3 of the final report of Project One (Artefact Three). The summary of service lines and their positioning is distilled in the following table for the two categories of risk services including business and technology risks.

Table 3-4 Profile of Business Risk services

Service Line	Unique-ness	Segments and Competitive Pressures	Possible Strategies
Contract Risks and compliance (CRC)	Low	Industry Wide. Medium and becoming important where non-compliance carries financial penalties	Focus on segments where penalties are severe like contract compliance in software use
Sustain-ability & Climate Change (SCC)	High	Niche segments such as Oil & Gas and other industries impacting environments. Demand is slowly increasing Clients value specific experience and expertise. Willing to pay higher rates due to lack of available skills & competence	Identify niche industry segments where regulation on pollution and environmental damage attracts penalties and social responsibility rebuttals. Focus and Differentiation by expertise and experience.
Governance, Regulatory & Risk Strategies (GRRS)	Medium-High	Industry Wide. Increasing demand on risk services in regulated industries. Regionalisation and expansion increasing demand on risk mitigation and governance Buyers evaluate consultants on skills and experience	Differentiation by industry segments. Differentiate by skills and experience
Internal Audit (IA)	Low	Industry wide. Mature. Price Sensitive.	Compete on cost leadership. Focus on key accounts who are willing to offer higher rates Innovate on service delivery models

Table 3-5 Profile of Technology Risk services

Service Line	Unique-ness	Segments and competitive pressures	Possible Strategies
Data Risk Services (DRS)	Low	Not well understood. Specific segments. Medium where non-compliance carries financial penalties	Focus on segments where penalties are severe like software contract compliance
Information & Control Assurance (I&CA)	Low	Industry wide requirement of assistance on computer assurance testing as part of audit service. Low margin and high price sensitivity	Cost Leadership strategy is applicable. Innovate to increase efficiency by changing service delivery process
Risk Management Technologies (RMT)	Medium	Industry wide. Companies are looking for tools and platforms to assess, record and manage risks portfolios Demand is steadily increasing.	Differentiate by industry segments, skills and experience Partner and develop strategic alliances with branded technology vendors
Security, Privacy and Resilience (SPR)	Medium to High	Advancing technology and business regionalization drive demand technology security and privacy requirements. Focus on selected technology alliances and differentiate by subject matter expertise	Differentiate by industry segments Partner and develop alliances with branded technology partners
Technology Risks and Governance (TRG)	Medium	Industry wide. Technology implementations need to embed governance as part of automated controls Price not too sensitive because solution is non-commoditised	Differentiate through skills and experience in managing technology enabled controls and increase on governance

Figure 3-5 is reproduced to illustrate the mapping of service lines on the model.

Figure 3-5 Adapted Porter's generic strategy model

Strategic Advantage
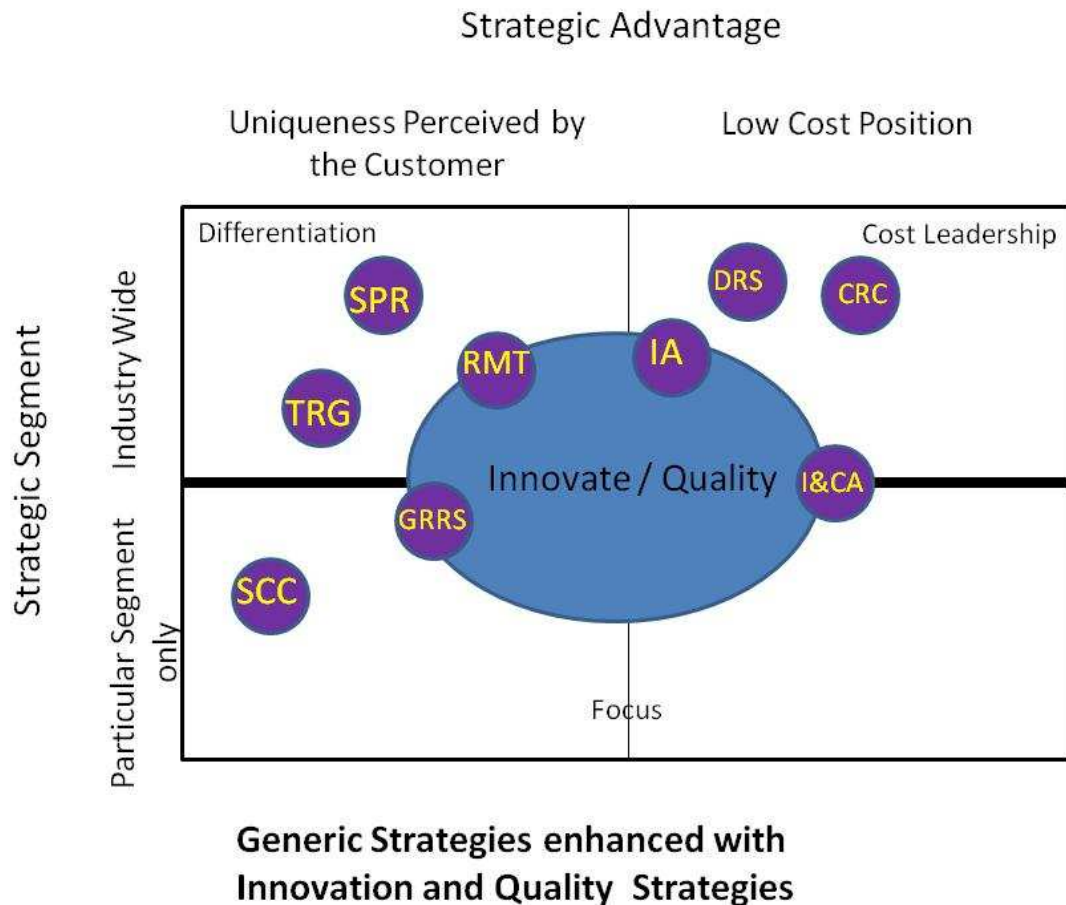
Source: Porter, 2004 (Adapted for project 1)

This is only part of the set of strategies as far as positioning of services onto the strategy model. It serves as a good foundation model to position the service lines in this professional services business. There are other strategy options identified from the literature review, research, books and past learning which cannot be directly mapped onto Porter's generic strategy model. Hence the model of strategy formulation needs to be enhanced. Table 3-6 below summarises the consideration of the entire set of strategy options based on all the inputs and findings. Some of these 10 strategies were eventually implemented as separate initiatives and resulted in a total of 14 strategic initiatives.

Table 3-6 Summary of strategy options

Strategy Options	Discussions and Rationale
Apply differentiation strategies	As per the above discussion on service line strategies
Focus on developing marquee clients	Better understand clients' needs and value creation through relationship closeness.
Introduce new markets and acquisition	Part of market expansion strategy. Deloitte Guam is identified as one of the markets
Breakthrough on new ideas through innovation	The benefits of innovation are clear. The use of data analytics and introduction of "Risk Intelligence" concepts are new ideas.
Focus on implementing quality process and service culture	Quality and service excellence are key attributes in professional services businesses. This is needed to cultivate relationship closeness with clients
Adopt operation excellence and manage cost responsibly Upgrade business development capability Call on management to action	Efficiency and productivity will lead to profit improvement addressing a weakness identified in the SWOT analysis. Management responsibility and accountability and stronger governance are also internal weaknesses which needed remedial actions
Migrate to high performance	Migrating to a high performance culture is to improve team morale and performance
Develop talent for tomorrow's organization	The competition for good talent is intense. Addressing business sustainability is by implementing a holistic and well developed and effective talent strategy.

3.2.3.4 SFP Framework Step 4 - Recommending the plan

With the completion of considerations of the various strategy options, I proceeded to the final step of the SFP framework by recommending the agreed strategy. A strategy plan is the outcome of this step. It is one thing to formulate the strategy and another to market the strategy. Senior management is likely to ask how these strategies will address the questions on business sustainability and performance improvement. Short term result is a key success factor in demonstrating that some of the remedial actions mentioned earlier did arrest the business decline. Metaphorically, it is important to see the fire on the "burning platform" being brought under control. This will provide some relief for my team and for me to focus

on the recommendation and marketing of the strategy, acknowledging that it will take time for improvements to materialise with the implementation of the strategies. The RCD Strategy Plan was approved as part of the overall Deloitte SEA 2015 Strategic Plan by the Strategy Committee. This was subsequently endorsed by the Deloitte SEA Board in March 2011. There are five components in a Strategy Plan which are outlined in the next section.

3.2.3.4.1 RCD Strategy Plan

The recommended strategy plan comprises the following components including strategic vision and goals, both go-to-market and operational excellence strategies, organisation structure, roadmap, risk management and business case. This strategy plan must be marketed internally for buy-in and endorsement. The marketing of this plan is both a formal and informal engagement with the key stakeholder groups which include both the management and the organisation. It is found in the subsequent project (Project Two) that acceptance of the strategy and the degree thereof, is a key criterion in the implementation success of the strategy.

The first component is the articulation of strategic vision and goals. The vision of Deloitte RCD is to become a premium risk consulting leader offering quality and outstanding advisory services in the market place. The prognosis for the risk consulting industry is favourable. The successful implementation of this strategy is projected to increase both mind and market share by capitalising on this favourable industry prognosis and its current position in the market. The issues which are largely internal can be addressed to produce better performance. This RCD Strategy Plan spans over 5 years right up to 2015. Table 3-7 summarises the strategy goals.

Table 3-7 Summary of strategy goals

Attribute	Goal description
Superior financials	Revenue of USD50million which is approximately 10% of firm's revenue target. Compounded annual growth of 19%. Profitability and other key performance indicators above firm's benchmarks
Eminent market position	Competitive first or second position in selected markets of Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.
Operationally efficient processes	Innovative go-to-market strategies for growth Efficient and productive operational processes
Organisation of the future	High performance, build to change, high talent workforce, high quality leaders, agile and responsive

The second component of the Strategy Plan is objective driven strategies. The set of proposed strategies is in the go-to-market and operations excellence categories. Each of these categories has strategic initiatives as concluded from the previous SFP step. Innovation and Quality are value systems which will be cultivated as part of the future organisation culture. Table 3-8 summaries the initiatives.

Table 3-8 Summary of go-to-market and operational excellence strategy

Go-to- Market strategy	Operational excellence strategy
Differentiated strategies for service lines	Upgrade business development capability
Differentiation through industry and subject matter expertise (SME)	Call on management to action
Focus on developing marquee clients	Migrate to high performance culture
Introduce new markets and acquisitions	Develop talent for tomorrow's organisation
Breakthrough on innovation – new ideas	Manage costs responsibly
Focused quality – service	Implement quality process & culture

The third component is the design of organisation structure. Structure follows strategy. There will be two-levels of business governance in the proposed structure. The first level is the Regional SEA RCD management team which will lead and guide the business as a collective whole. Execution is applicable at both levels; region and local countries. The management team in each country (Level 2) is responsible for execution and implementation of the strategies. The management team structure is already in place for each country and on-going effort to strengthen the team and upgrade its capability is a continuous process. Training and personnel changes are part of this upgrading program.

The Regional SEA RCD management team is structured with a core and an extended team. The core team of five positions include the RMD (myself), head of service lines, industry and operations. Each of the five positions has a secondary role to oversee the performance of one specific country and this will translate into direct oversight of over 85% of the business.

The fourth component of a strategy plan is a strategy roadmap. The Strategy Plan includes a five year roadmap. There are several major milestones in this roadmap. The first year is focused on re-establishing the foundation. The second year is focused on the implementation of the strategy plan and it is expected that the country practices will scale as a result of the impact of the strategies. At the same time, in the second year, a team will be formed to identify targets for acquisition growth to reap the benefits beyond the third year. The momentum continues into the third and fourth year targeting exponential growth. The fifth year target is closer to USD50million with most of the initiatives at full momentum and it is the correct time to initiate the next generation of the Strategy Plan. The target growth is three times the original revenue.

The fifth component, which is gaining importance especially in today's turbulent world is the consideration of strategy risks. Every strategy plan has its risks during implementation. The risks are in both external and internal categories. External risks arise due to changes in competitors' actions, changes in the economy or regulations. They are unpredictable and therefore, difficult to mitigate. Internal risks can be caused by changes in leadership or management direction and internal capability. These changes are more manageable. Depending on whether there are substantial changes in the environment, the regular review of RCD's holistic performance should signal whether the strategies need to be revisited and realigned.

The framework and tools identified in the SFP can be used in different combinations to review the external and internal environments. A SWOT analysis can be used as a quick scan on internal and external risks. An adapted PESTEL analysis can be used to better understand the market and its situation. Mitigating actions can then be planned against the findings. Industry or structural analysis is not expected to be frequently conducted other than being part of strategy assignments due to the cost and practicality of doing such analyses.

This plan-do-check-act project methodology keeps the strategies relevant and feasible at all times and the actual results should be more in line with the expectations of the strategies. One of the reasons contributing to the high failure rate in strategy implementation is the lack of risk monitoring and management during implementation.

The sixth and final component is the business case for this strategy plan. Management will examine the merits of the business case and hence significant effort should be invested in producing a coherent, rationale and robust business case. The investment on implementing the strategic initiatives in both the go-to-market and operation excellence strategies is budgeted within the operating budget. In the go-to-market strategy, capital investment is planned to cater for the acquisition one to two firms to support inorganic growth. Over the strategy horizon timeline, the total cost of delivering services which are pursuing cost leadership should be lower due to benefits of wage arbitrage and efficiency gains through centralization. The proposed gains are partially offset by initial investments needed to set up the necessary technical infrastructure.

3.2.3.4.2 Strategy Agreement & Endorsement

The key stakeholders in endorsing or approving the strategy plan are the firm's senior management team and Deloitte SEA Board of Directors. First, it is important to understand the differences in expectations of the two stakeholder groups. The firm's senior management team will expect visibility of short term results and clarity of the longer term plan. Confidence of the senior management team is very important because they have witnessed first- hand, the sharp decline and management ills leading to the change of players. The Board will examine the longer term vision and assess if the strategies are aligned with the greater strategic picture of the entire firm. They too, will be looking for reports on the capability of the new team and how they have addressed both the some short term issues and long term

strategy. Therefore, vigorous communication with the senior management team is recommended throughout the year. I made a conscious effort to provide quarterly updates on the issues identified through the various analyses and status of the recovery plan. The goal is to ensure that the strategy plan is not a surprise to these stakeholder groups at the end of this project, but rather that the different stakeholders acknowledge that it is the right conclusion having had the benefit of all the different updates along the way.

In this respect, the effective communication and engagement with stakeholders must be carried out both informally and formally. The informal engagement can be in the form of discussions and road-shows. In the first and second quarter of financial year ending June 2011, there were a series of meetings with the country RCD team, followed by a presentation or discussion with each of the Deloitte Country CEO for update and information on the progress of each country's RCD performance.

Typically, there is also a formal communication and engagement of the key stakeholders to endorse the strategy plan. The vision was presented to the SEA Partners group at the SEA Partners conference in October 2010. The half year result was presented to the firm's senior management team and board at the Deloitte SEA strategy retreat in January 2011. The plan was challenged and revised, following feedback from the committee and the senior management team. This was resubmitted and presented to the Deloitte SEA Board and the entire plan including the RCD strategy plan was approved in March 2011. This step marked a significant milestone for both the business and also the agreed strategy which is a key deliverable for this Project. The combination of the above activities proved to be very effective in getting the entire strategy plan approved and endorsed.

3.2.4 Project One - Deliverables and outcomes

The key project outcome from the organisational perspective is the beginning of a strengthened organisation delivering improved business performance. The first year scorecard reflected improved financial performance which included revenue growth of 19%, improved gross margin and more importantly, positive net margin contribution compared to an operating loss of USD343,000, the year before. The growth and improved competitiveness were outcomes of the continuing implementation of the go-to-market strategies.

The strengthened organisation now operates with improved structure and governance, processes and working culture which are results of the operational excellence strategies. Organisation morale has improved, partly evidenced by reduced staff turnover. Productivity has also improved as evidenced by revenue generated per practitioner (Revenue/FTE) of 26%.

3.2.5 Project One - Reports

There are a total of 13 reports submitted in this project. The combined word count is approximately 48000 words over 400 pages. Although word count and the number of pages do not represent project and deliverables quality, the number does indicate focus and significant effort by my team and I. Table 3-9 summarises the reports produced.

Table 3-9 Project One submitted reports

Report Category	Submitted Deliverable	Pages	Word Count
Project and learning plan	Project Plan document	34	6057
Progress reports	Four progress reports – May 2010, June 2010, August 2010 and February 2011	24	4800
Learning journal	Five learning journals – May 2010, June 2010, August 2010, November 2010 and February 2011	50	9900
Industry study	Primary and secondary research on the Risk Consulting competitive landscape	150	
Published article	Article published in the Singapore Management Journal	16	4800
Final report	Final report of Project One	127	22400
	Total	400	48000

3.2.6 Project One - Summary

The vigorous follow through on the SFP process steps are key to the successful formulation of strategy. I have applied and validated this four step approach and adapted the models and tools in each of the step. The ISAF can be adapted accordingly depending on the complexity and size of the business problem (management dilemma) and ambitions of project objective. It can range from using a simpler SWOT analysis to a comprehensive industry study when performing a current assessment of the business.

Managers who are involved in the formulation of strategy were requested to provide feedback on their experiences, learning and reflection. Manager A, in particular had written about her personal growth, thus becoming more holistic in approaching strategy formulation assignments as a result of this learning experience. Appendix 4 provides evidence of this personal growth. Not every team member (co-researcher) embraces change uniformly. Change is subjective, contextual and

individualistic as each person responds to changed environments differently. The principles of dialectical critique, plural structure, risk and collaborative resource are often at work. Manager C's feedback featured the outcomes and drivers, for example, he mentioned that "physical "sign off" does not automatically ensure success when the level of commitment differs with self-interest" (Appendix 4 – Feedback of Manager C). This is consistent with the general finding that manager's self-interests as a motivation factor (acceptability factor of SIEE) is important to increase strategy implementation success. His key learning is in the area on communication and although, the specific questionnaire is aimed at how the development of tools and processes (new knowledge) has been disseminated, the feedback is limited. The dialectic critique principle examines reality and if the relationship between manager C and the set of changes introduced through SFP and SIEE in regards to strategy formulation and strategy implementation evaluation conflicts or reinforces his own knowledge, the trigger in response and learning dictate the "change" in his own development. Manager D wrote on his improved awareness, analyse the issues more clearly and collaborate with others to solve his issues. Manager E mentioned that the engagement process in the study has improved his strategic thinking and enhances his accountability of the solution through his participation. This is the concept of acceptability in strategy evaluation criteria at work.

3.3 Project Two – Strategy and Implementation Effectiveness Evaluation (Artefact Four)

All too often, implemented strategies do not yield the intended benefits and outcomes. It is published that 70% of strategy implementations fail due to bad implementation (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). Ali & Hadi (2012) commented that valuable strategies are faced with problems and failure at implementation stage. The results of a survey conducted as part of the "White Paper of Strategy Implementation of Chinese Corporations in 2006", as cited in "A literature review on factors influencing strategy implementation" by Li, Sun & Eppler (2008), indicated that 83% of surveyed companies failed to implement their strategy smoothly. This high failure rate is similar to the statistic published by Kaplan et al. (2004) on strategy implementation failures. The learning derived from many strategy implementations over the years is that implementing strategy to achieve the targeted outcomes is difficult due to a host of reasons. The resultant management questions are whether it is the strategy or the implementation effort which is ineffective.

This second project is a continuation from Project One which is about strategy formulation. It moves from the design into the implementation phase in this project. Appropriately titled "Strategy and implementation evaluation", Project Two is about developing a process with its associated framework, model and tools to perform this task. The project objective (research question), project details and analysis were submitted and assessed in July 2012. This is included as Artefact Four in this thesis.

The academic foundation first examined the linkage of strategy to business performance. As gleaned from the literature review, the learning can be categorised into the three groups of key insights, evaluation process and criteria and factors to evaluate strategy implementation. The most relevant literature on the topic on evaluation criteria is by Johnson et al. (2008). This research examined the various criteria of suitability, feasibility and acceptability of strategy implementation. Suitability examines the suitability of the strategy relative to the goals and context of the business. The question of "will the strategy work" is asked in connection with this criterion and is a measure of strategy effectiveness. The other two criteria of acceptability and feasibility are measures of implementation effectiveness. Will the stakeholders work on the strategy? This is the question of acceptability of the strategy. Unless stakeholders "buy into" or accept the strategy, it is observed that the success of the strategy implementation might be hampered. Feasibility deals with capability and resources. There are two factors, one on continuous improvement which is capability and the second is people. Together these two factors are the key success factors in implementing strategy. The question "can the strategy be made to work" is often asked when addressing this criterion.

3.3.1 Project Two - Scope and timing

Continuing from Project One, the business scope for Deloitte's RMD is professional services, specialising in risk management. The geography scope remains the same as Project One and includes the SBU in the seven countries of Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Guam and Vietnam. The total project time for Project Two is 14 months, commencing April 2011 and completing in June 2012. Table 3-10 summarises Project Two information for the record.

Table 3-10 Project Two information

Item	Name / Value	Comments
Project name	Strategy and implementation evaluation	Referred as Project Two. Also known as Project 1- Part B
Course code	WBL9009 – WBL9014	Recorded in both USQ and EASB systems
Units	6	Total of 13 units across 2 projects
Duration	14 months	April 2010 to June 2011

3.3.1.1 Recap of the agreed strategies to be implemented

The implementation scope involves all 14 approved strategic initiatives by the Board of Directors in May 2011. There are two categories of strategies namely, Go-to-Market strategies and Operational Excellence strategies. These strategies were formulated and documented in Project One. The set of approved strategic initiatives is reproduced in this table below for reference.

Table 3-11 Summary of strategies formulated in Project One

Go-to- Market strategy	Operational excellence strategy
Differentiated strategies for service lines	Upgrade business development capability
Differentiation through industry and subject matter expertise (SME)	Call on management to action
Focus on developing marquee clients	Migrate to high performance culture
Introduce new markets and acquisitions	Developing talent for tomorrow's organisation
Breakthrough on innovation – new ideas	Manage costs responsibly
Focused quality – service	Implementing quality process & culture

3.3.2 Project Two – Plan and approach

The project plan which was submitted at its commencement outlined various elements. These elements included objectives, scope, relevant management questions, approach, literature review, potential challenges, a set of agreed strategies, and a proposed model to evaluate the strategy and effectiveness of implementation effort. It also served as a plan of record for the project journey ahead.

The proposed approach to evaluation was via a framework, developed specifically for this project. Literature review on the topic of strategy implementation has previously noted that there is no direct or explicit process to evaluate the effectiveness of strategy and implementation evaluation. Although Johnson et al.'s (2008) work has identified several criteria to evaluate strategy performance; this project extends on this research and makes it into an evaluation model specifically to support the above framework. The development of both the framework and model is part of the contribution of new academic knowledge resulting from this project.

3.3.3 Project Two –SIEE framework and process

Most project management methodology follows a three to four stage process, starting with planning, actual effort of performing, analysis of the effort, and alignment or adapting the forward activities based on the analysis feedback. The plan-do-check-act approach of the project management methodology follows the same structure (Wiebes et al, 2007, Harper-Smith & Derry, 2009). Likewise, this SIEE Framework developed for this project follows a similar four evaluation stage structure from Plan (P), Evaluate (E), Analyse (A) to Refine (R). These four stages (PEAR), underpin the evaluation stages while the strategy is being implemented. The entire strategy implementation evaluation process begins with planning. During the evaluation, the evaluation feedback can be used to strengthen the strategy and its implementation.

There are five key components to support the evaluation activities in each of the PEAR stages in the framework. The SIEE model and matrix is the most critical component in this framework. The other components are performance measurement, methodology and tools, analysis and interpretation and improvement agenda. The SIEE model and matrix are jointly developed in conjunction with this framework and the integrated design of evaluation criteria and factors are embedded in this same framework. The performance measurement indicators, methodology and tools are developed to enable an integrated evaluation as per the criteria and factors in the model. The analysis and interpretation is intended to explicitly encourage the critical analysis of the evaluation result. The improvement agenda resulting from the analysis is aimed at improving both the strategy and the implementation effort which is the goal of the entire evaluation process. Figure 3-5 below pictorially illustrates the evaluation stages and components in this Integrated SIEE framework. It is tested and validated in this project.

Figure 3-6 The SIEE Framework for strategy and implementation evaluation

Strategy Implementation				
Strategy and Implementation Effectiveness Evaluation				
Evaluation Stages	**1** Plan	**2** Evaluate	**3** Analyse	**4** Refine
SIEE Model and Maturity Matrix	Revisit Strategy and its rationale. Define evaluation criteria as per model	Perform evaluation using SIEE Maturity Matrix	Revisit business environment, suitability, feasibility and acceptability criteria	Adjust strategy and implementation details
Performance Measurement	Research performance indicators relevant to strategy	Apply and validate the appropriateness of indicators	Due diligence on performance indicators and adjust as needed	Adjust performance indicators and thresholds if needed
Methodology and Tools	Decide methodology and tools to assess business environment, measures of SIEE	Apply the methodology and tools to evaluate strategy and implementation	Review appropriateness and completeness of methodology and tools	Adjust the methodology and tools as appropriate
Analysis & Interpretation	Plan the possible analyses	Perform the evaluation of SIEE	Reflect and analyse on strategy and implementation effectiveness	Revisit strategy objectives and replan if needed
Improvement & goals	Define baseline estimates	Perform risk review and develop mitigation plan	Demonstrate feasibility and undertake remedial action	Communicate measures and follow through activities

The main part of this project is to evaluate the implementation activities using this framework. There are four evaluation stages and five components in this comprehensive framework as described earlier. The documentation is therefore, divided logically into two sections; the evaluation stages and the components of the SIEE framework. A discussion map is provided below to guide the discussions on the framework application.

Table 3-12 Discussion map on SIEE framework

Topic subject	Sub topics
The four evaluation stages of the SIEE Framework (section 3.3.3.1)	
Stage 1 – Plan (P) Stage 2 – Evaluate (E) Stage 3 – Analyse (A) Stage 4 – Refine (R)	
The five components of the SIEE Framework (section 3.3.3.2)	

Component 1- SIEE model and matrix	Environment evaluation
	     Business Context and timing
	     The 3A of business infrastructure

	Suitability evaluation
	Feasibility evaluation

	Acceptability evaluation
	     Business Outcome reflection
	     Risk management and monitoring

Component 2 - Performance measurement	The eight evaluation factors
Component 3 - Methodology and tools	The SIEE maturity matrix
Component 4 – Analysis and Interpretation	Various insights from the analysis
Component 5 – Improvement agenda	
The validation of the SIEE Framework (section 3.3.3.3)	

The first section addresses the evaluation activities of the four stages. Appendix 7 lists the comparison of the planned activities and the actual experience in each component as the evaluation progresses through the various stages. This is a revised framework after testing it in this project.

3.3.3.1 The four evaluation stages of the SIEE framework

My team and I have been actively engaging the country teams to commence the implementation of the strategic initiatives since June 2011. It is noted through re-examining the progress reports that the first version of the SIEE framework was only developed in October 2011. I was preoccupied with addressing a serious leadership issue at the project commencement in June 2011 and that issue took priority. Testing the framework began five months into the strategy implementation from October 2011 onwards.

3.3.3.1.1 Stage 1 – Plan (P)

Stage 1 is the Plan (P) stage which is the beginning of the four evaluation stages. As noted in literature review and supported by observations at the workplace, most managers involved in strategy implementation do not systematically or proactively evaluate their effort. This stage in the SIEE framework is designed to address this gap. This stage is timed to coincide with the planning phase of project implementation. It will force the manager to think about the details of SIEE model, the evaluation criteria, as well as the tools and methodologies to be deployed during the project.

All implementation managers were requested to plan their evaluation accordingly. Investing the time to understand the SIEE model, its evaluation criteria and factors is a prerequisite step in the entire evaluation exercise.

3.3.3.1.2 Stage 2 – Evaluate (E)

Applying the SIEE model and its component evaluation criteria are key activities in this evaluation stage. The manager uses the SIEE maturity matrix to guide the implementation evaluation more objectively. All 14 initiatives implementations were evaluated. The initiatives evaluation was conducted nine months into the project allowing sufficient time for the project to progress so that the evaluation is meaningful. The most difficult and time consuming part of this stage are in the following areas:

1. Reviewing the business environment for example, the business context, timing and the business infrastructure question. Information is not easily available and the manager needs to invest the time to investigate the relevant facts for this evaluation to be effective
2. Revisiting the business case as part of the suitability criterion evaluation.
3. Making a honest appraisal of the capabilities of the resources and work methods to support the evaluation of the feasibility criterion
4. Thinking through a holistic view of the performance indicators and reflecting on the business outcomes. It is more important to check if the implementation manager has invested time in thinking about the risk factors that may derail the success of the implementation effort. This is risk mitigation in action.

3.3.3.1.3 Stage 3 – Analyse (A)

Reflection is vital in this stage. Being able to critically appraise the evaluation feedback is a key success factor. Better analysis of the performance indicators, the data and information coming out of the criteria and evaluation factors review helps in understanding the cause and effect relationships between these factors. More importantly are the resultant mitigation responses based on this feedback.

The section on SIEE Model Test Analysis describes the analyses and insights from the evaluation effort. This is a key deliverable of this stage. Again, the lesson is that the manager must invest sufficient time to study the outcomes, perform the inductive analysis and derive insights for further actions. The power of collective thinking and discussion can be a useful way to study and interpret the information from the evaluation. The formation of small groups to address this issue should be considered.

The tendency of not acknowledging negative feedback and honestly reporting the true status are very real issues in this analysis stage. Hence coming back to management with remedial actions in the refine stage tends to be superficial and lack lustre unless the reality of the issues is acknowledged. It is often noise level swelling from the ground level from different stakeholder groups which force the manager to admit to these issues. This leads back to organisation culture in the way bearers of negative news are treated. The honesty of the analysis feedback is dependent on whether the culture is one of threat and negativity or one of acknowledgement, support and working together to resolve the issues.

Most managers feel that their careers or jobs are compromised if they acknowledge issues and delays. Senior management must promote a culture of integrity and support regardless of the severity of issues. Managers are more likely to acknowledge negative facts and issues if they feel secure in a safe and supporting environment. Safe, secure and supportive environments do not mean weak environments. On the contrary, it needs strong management in order for such an environment to be established. Responsibility and accountability management are important in this aspect.

3.3.3.1.4 Stage 4 - Refine (R)

This stage is similar to the "Act" stage of Plan-Do-Check-Act methodology in project management and it helps the manager to use the feedback and adjust his effort and tune the strategies accordingly. This may mean going back to management and requesting for more funds and budgets, reporting on delays and negotiating on scope management. A contributing factor of high failure rate in strategy implementation (failures and can be as high as 70% as reported by Kaplan et al. (2004)) is because issues and negative news are not timely acknowledged and mitigated. Management must reinforce the culture of openness, continuous monitoring and early intervention. Seeking counsel and assistance to ensure that mitigation plans make sense and are aligned to the business case of the project is recommended. This closes the loop in this iterative framework.

3.3.3.2 The five components of the SIEE framework

Businesses operate in live competitive environments. Evaluating the implementation in context of its environment, provides insights into why the same strategy may work in one place and not another. The three criteria of suitability,

feasibility and acceptability, are in themselves insufficient and the model proposes adding environment as the fourth criterion. Business environment which is implicit in evaluating whether the strategy works (Johnson et al. 2008) is proposed to be explicitly evaluated, given today's dynamic changes in the marketplace. Furthermore, recent analysis from the tests in this project indicates significant correlation between the business environment and the other three criteria reinforcing the need to evaluate the business environment criterion independently. Each of the five components is discussed in the following sections.

3.3.3.2.1 Component 1 - The SIEE model and matrix.

This project therefore examines four interdependent criteria of strategy and implementation effectiveness. They are:

1. Environment evaluation – Business context in which strategy is being implemented

2. Suitability evaluation – Strategy effectiveness

3. Feasibility evaluation – Implementation effectiveness

4. Acceptability evaluation – Business outcome monitoring and risk management

Strategy effectiveness relates to strategy suitability and its environment. Implementation effectiveness deals with implementation feasibility and strategy acceptability. These two criteria are "people" related.

The SIEE matrix (Table 3-13) describes the eight factors and their categorisations, implied questions, and relevant success factors. Three of the eight factors are categorised in the environment evaluation criterion. They are business context, timing and 3A (availability, accessibility and affordability) of business infrastructure. Business case is the single factor in the suitability evaluation criterion. There are two factors in the feasibility evaluation criterion and they are continuous improvement (capability) and resources. Likewise, there are two factors in the acceptability criterion and they are business outcome reflection, and risk management.

Table 3-13 SIEE matrix

Criteria	Factor	Questions	Key success factor
Strategy effectiveness			
Criterion 1 Environment evaluation	Business context	Is it conducive and relevant?	Appropriateness, conduciveness and relevance of strategy to environment
	Timing	Is it the right time?	Right time for market and organization
	3A of business infrastructure	Is the assumption on business infrastructure realistic?	Availability, accessibility and affordability (3A) of business infrastructure
Criterion 2 Suitability evaluation (What)	Business Case	Will the strategy work?	Soundness and relevance of strategy
Implementation Effectiveness			
Criterion 3 Feasibility evaluation (how and who)	Continuous improvement (capability)	Can the strategy be made to work?	Capability of resources
	Resources	Are there skilled resources to implement the strategy?	Skilled resources who are willing to implement the strategy
Criterion 4 Acceptability evaluation (monitoring)	Business outcome reflection	Will the implementation managers work on the strategies?	Leadership, business governance, stakeholders commitment and performance culture
	Risk management and monitoring		Internal and external risk intelligent management

I developed the SIEE model to examine the interactions between the four criteria and eight factors in this project. At the centre of the SIEE model is stakeholders' reaction, and all the different criteria are interdependent. Implementation outcomes are often a reflection of the acceptance of the strategy and how risks are managed. As Hrebiniak (2008) pointed out, implementing the right strategy is as important as implementing it correctly with appropriate resourcing and capability. Suitability is as important as feasibility in this SIEE nomenclature. Figure 3-7 is the pictorial diagram of the SIEE model.

Figure 3-7 The SIEE model
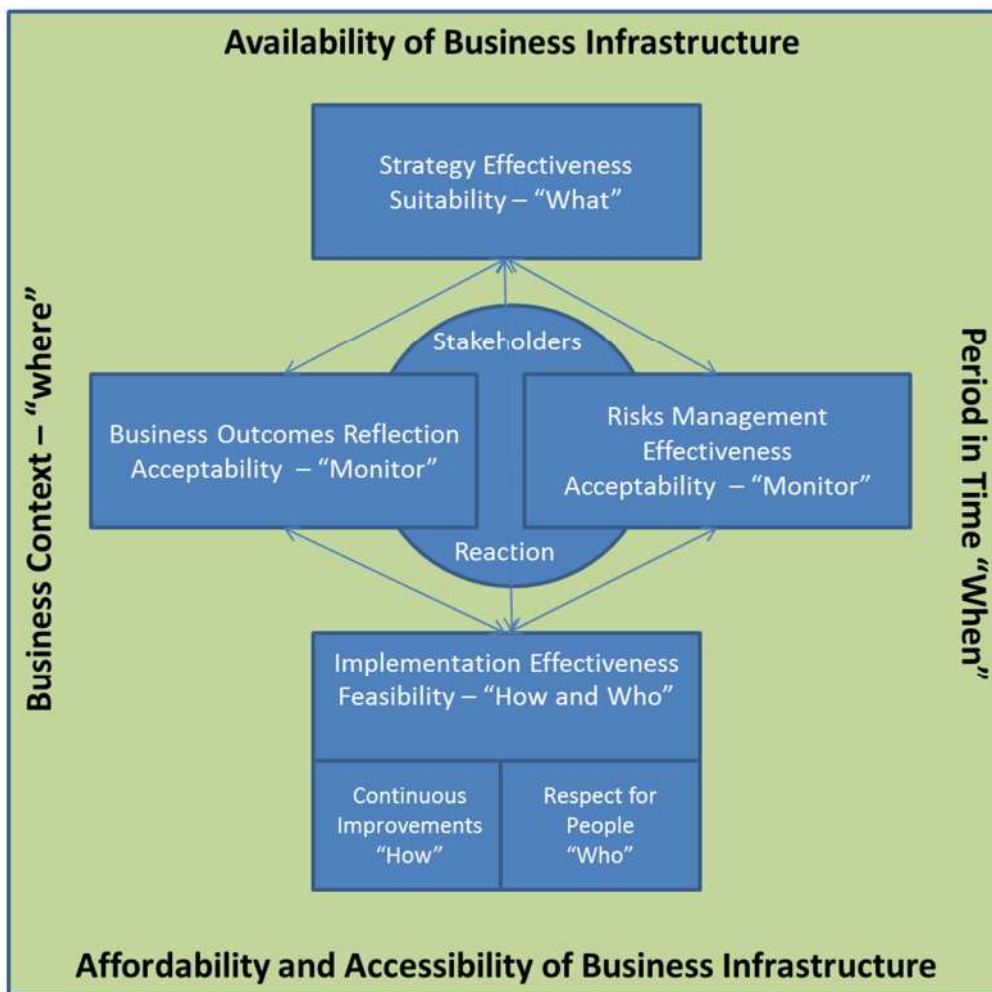
The first of the four evaluation criteria in the SIEE model and matrix is Environment evaluation. Strategy operates in competitive business environments. Evaluating the implementation leads to the questions of:

1. Is the strategy relevant and conducive?
2. Are assumptions about business infrastructure realistic?

Under environment evaluation criterion, it is important that one looks at not only business context, but also the timing and the 3A (availability, affordability and accessibility) of business infrastructure.

In business context and timing, strategists often make certain competitive and economic assumptions in formulating strategies. These assumptions should be revalidated during implementation. In today's dynamic competitive environments, evaluating implementation in its current context is of utmost importance. Increasingly, a longer implementation timeline increases the risks of vulnerability and relevance.

Strategy implementation also requires close consideration of essential business infrastructure. In this respect, the 3As of availability, affordability and

accessibility of business infrastructure must be considered. This may require significant capital investment. For example, the implementation of a shared services centre for transaction processing in low cost locations requires significant start-up costs. A key enabler for this strategic initiative to work effectively is internet connection. The availability and accessibility of stable high speed internet can be a limiting factor in some less developed locations. These factors can make or break the success of the implementation.

Suitability evaluation is the second criterion in the SIEE model. Both environment and suitability are criteria to evaluate strategy effectiveness. Strategies, regardless of whether they are differentiated, niche, focused or cost driven, are designed to address both internal and external competitive market opportunities. Johnson et al. (2008) defines suitability as whether the strategy addresses the circumstances in which it is operating. Business cases supporting well designed strategies are more robust and comprehensive. Managers should reflect on this question: Are the assumptions and rationale of the strategy's business case still sound, applicable and correct during implementation?

As described earlier, companies with integrated strategies perform better than companies without strategies. Hrebiniak (2008) proposes that sound strategy should come first. Translating these strategic objectives into short term operating tactics are critical factors in successful implementation. This is consistent with my own experience in transforming this business where short term tactics have to be quickly implemented to demonstrate some results and improve the morale of the division while working on the longer term strategy. One method to evaluate strategy effectiveness is to validate actual condition against the assumptions and rationale of the business case during implementation.

The third criterion is feasibility evaluation which is aimed at implementation effectiveness evaluation. Strategies are implemented by people. These resources need to be competent in appropriate skills and equipped with the right tools. Koo et al. (2004) study as cited earlier, emphasised the allocation of resources in strategy implementation to create and sustain competitive advantage as an important factor. This feasibility criterion deals with capability in terms of continuous improvement (how) and capacity in terms of resources (who) in implementation. Many organisations which are pursuing operational excellence strategies train their leaders and managers in problem-solving techniques and continuous improvement methodologies. Organisation capability is a function of talent quality, and high calibre talent is scarce. The increasing demand for talent is also driving up labour costs. A key item on the organisation's agenda is talent strategy which is aimed at attracting, recruiting and retaining the best talent.

The fourth criterion is acceptability evaluation which examines the two factors of business outcome and risk management. Successful implementation may be compromised by incompetent leaders. Equally, unwilling but capable leaders will sub optimise the effort. Success or otherwise, is dependent on the alignment of one's self-interests to strategy goals (Guth & MacMillan, 1986). Therefore, understanding and managing middle managers' self-interests is important to successfully motivate them. This is the acceptability criterion which asks the question, "will they work on the strategy?". The acceptability criterion in Johnson et al. (2008) model looks at

return, risk and stakeholder reactions which are performance outcomes of strategy. Monitoring acceptability is normally done through constant evaluation of organisation's commitment and alignment of the middle managers' agenda. This stakeholder group is crucial for implementation success because they are the go-between general management and the workforce.

Feedback from the employee survey in early 2012 still indicated a significant gap in their motivation despite vigorous communication on management agenda in terms of business vision and priorities. Investment in talent agenda had not achieved its desired impact. The analysis also indicated that personal agenda had not been adequately fulfilled. Reproduced below is a framework designed by me to develop the Professional Development (talent) Agenda Framework (PDAF) in order to bridge the practice corporate agenda and personal (individual) agenda. This framework is now accepted as part of the talent development framework in Deloitte RCD's talent strategy.

Figure 3-8 Professional Development Agenda Framework

The first of the two factors in assessing whether the strategy is well implemented (acceptability criterion) is reflecting on the business outcome. Business performance through financial result is often used as an indicator of strategy effectiveness. It is explicit and objective. There are other subjective factors that should be considered. Just like doctors who use a combination of visual inspections and objective results when evaluating patients' progress against treatment plan, managers should likewise use a combination of financial results and other performance indicators to evaluate strategy and implementation effectiveness.

The performance measures are stakeholder specific because different stakeholder groups have different expectations. For example, shareholders expect appropriate investment returns while the management measures by profitability and growth, the demands of "two hats" (Lester, 2009). Customers require assurance that

their purchased products and services deliver on their promises and uphold the brands they represent. Employees value rewarding career development in "brand recognised" companies. A commonly accepted performance measurement system is the balanced scorecard system (Kaplan & Norton, 2004).

Another increasingly important factor being discussed among management is risk management and monitoring when implementing strategy. The article "How to build risk into your business model" describes how management should examine major sources of risk and mitigation when designing their value chains, which are focused on the revenue, cost structure and resource velocity factors (Girotra & Netessine, 2011). The risk of strategies failing increases when assumed value drivers do not happen and there is insufficient mitigation. While the management may decide to form specific implementation teams for reasons of focus and attention, their activities must form part of business routines. Continuous evaluation should be integrated into the fabric of management governance for maximum traction.

3.3.3.2.2 Component 2 -Performance measurement

An evaluation matrix covering the spectrum of the eight component factors was designed to assist the manager to evaluate his effort. Mapping the score against each of the factors provided a perspective on the effectiveness of the implementation. The manager could use this scorecard to develop remedial or proactive actions to improve the effectiveness of strategy implementation.

There was equal weightage on the eight factors which contributed to the final rating index indicating managers viewed these factors of equal relative importance. These eight factors were classified into the four said categories of environment, suitability, feasibility and acceptability criteria. Figure 3-9 shows the eight factors grouped in the four criteria.

Figure 3-9 Weightings of the 4 main evaluation criteria and the associated 8 factors

Breakdown of the weighted main factors
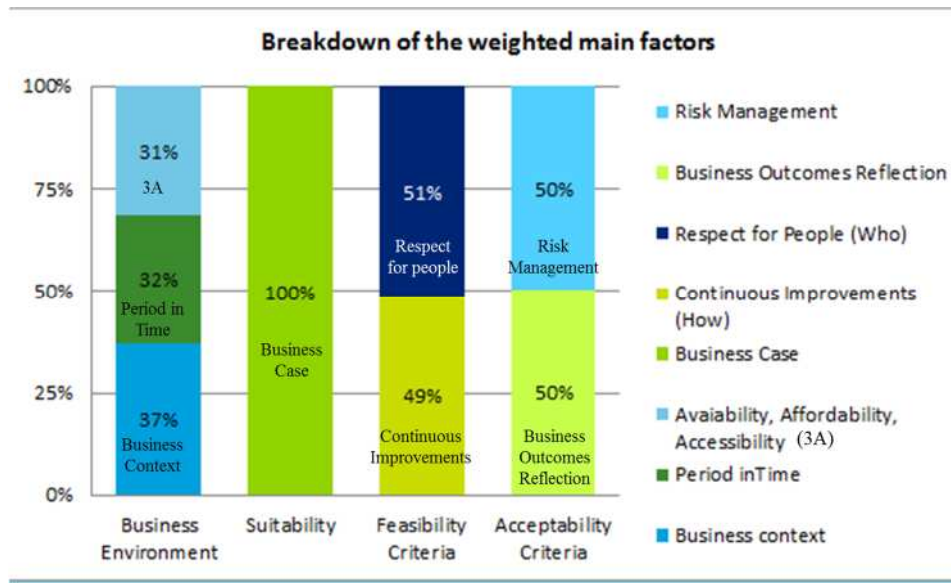
3.3.3.2.3 Component 3 -Methodology and tools

A "SIEE maturity matrix" questionnaire was designed to assist the manager in his evaluation of the implementation against each of the eight factors in a more objective manner.

Table 3-14 SIEE maturity matrix

Sub criteria	1	2	3
Environment Evaluation			
Business Context	Client and Market do not need this product or service.	Client and market view the product or service as "nice to have" in their business life	Client and market absolutely needs product or service. It is both relevant and conducive
Timing	A past requirement for business.	Not institutionalized or optional requirement. Business can choose to use this product or service.	Mandatory to use this service and it may be a regulatory requirement.
Availability	Not available to support strategy	Intermittent availability	Highly available to support strategy

Affordability	The business infrastructure is not affordable	Business Infrastructure is affordable and business can stretch to afford	Affordability is not an issue
Accessibility	Organisation has no access to Business Infrastructure to support strategy	Business Infrastructure is accessible for most part to support the strategy	Business Infrastructure is highly accessible to organisation to support strategy
Suitability Evaluation			
Business Case	No formal strategy and business case	Strategy supported by partial business case. Only qualitative benefits are defined.	Proper study completed. Strategies addressed business issues. Business case is well defined, with agreed strategies, investments, timeline, risk mitigation, qualitative and quantitative benefits
Feasibility Evaluation			
Continuous Improvement (How)	No framework to manage the strategy implementation. Strategy may require new capability. Not addressed	Framework exists but not followed Strategy may require new capability and team has some methodology and tools to implement strategy	Framework duly followed using PEAR approach to continuously monitor implementation. Much like PDCA of project management Implementation team has access to methodologies and tools to successfully implement strategies
Respect for People (Who)	Implementation team does not know how to implement strategy	Implementation team has some skills and competency. Leaders can follow instructions	Implementation team is competent. Leaders are capable and competent. They can provide direction and manage teams, duly supported by experts

Acceptability Evaluation			
Business Outcomes Reflection	Emphasis on financial performance and ad-hoc reflection on non-financial indicators on talent, processes and organisation. No formalised linkage of performance to evaluation of strategy implementation	Balanced scorecard system of evaluating business outcomes formalised Periodic assessment of getting updates on strategy implementation but not vigorous other than using feedback for adjustments to strategy implementations	Governance structure to report on strategy implementation at the highest level Objective, subjective, financial and non-financial measurements in place to evaluate business outcomes Surveys undertaken to derive insights on strategy acceptance Linkage of business outcomes to strategy implementation evaluation
Risk Management	Ad-hoc risk review of strategy implementation Address issues as they surface	Develop risk management framework during planning stage of strategy implementation Follow through on risk management framework	Implement governance on risk management framework associated with strategy implementation Mitigate risks and refine strategy as appropriate to protect strategy implementation success

3.3.3.2.4 Component 4 – Analysis and Interpretation

All 14 implemented strategic initiatives were evaluated. Each of the initiative had completed its implementation cycle, from planning, resourcing and execution, led by an experienced implementation manager.

The managers were briefed and were requested to use this SIEE maturity matrix to evaluate the effectiveness of their strategy and implementation. This effectiveness evaluation was "guided" by the use of the maturity matrix. The manager was also requested to rate his overall perception of the initiative's effectiveness. An example of applying the evaluation matrix is reproduced here for illustration. The illustrated initiative is on service delivery model changes of a service line with the aim of improving service quality and margin.

Table 3-15 Example of an implementation evaluation

No.	Criteria	Factors	Rating	Comments
1	Business Environment	Business context	3.0	Low margin service line. Therefore, the need to change the service model after root cause analysis
2		Period in Time (Timing)	2.0	Recommendation is to implement new model immediately due to rate and margin pressures
3		Availability, Accessibility and Affordability of Business Infrastructure	2.5	Locate part of the service delivery centre in an off-shore location to benefit wage arbitrage. Requires affordable and accessible high bandwidth internet capabilities.
4	Suitability	Business Case	3.0	Robust business case with financial impact study, resourcing, rationale and implementation timeline.
5	Feasibility	Continuous Improvement ("How")	2.0	Initial processes for multi-location processing are not detailed enough.
6		Respect for People ("Who")	2.0	Implementation team lacks experience and skills in managing work activities across different locations.
7	Acceptability	Business Outcome Reflection	3.0	Financial results and scorecard achieved 70% of intended benefits
8		Risk Monitoring & Management	2.0	Manager did not recognise some operational resistance risk
9	Overall manager's perception of implementation effectiveness		2.0	The calculated index is 2.5

The manager made the following observations based on this evaluation. The business environment and suitability criteria were aligned and rated a "3". The business case which was developed over a four month period to address the gross margin issue concluded that the change of service delivery model was essential. The business context was rated a "3" because this initiative perfectly addressed the business gross margin issue. Timing was rated "2" indicating that timing for this initiative was right and in line with the business context. Business infrastructure was largely found to be available, accessible and affordable to support the implementation of this strategy and hence was rated "2.5". Feasibility was rated lower at "2" due to the slower pace of getting the appropriately skilled resources in place. Initial processes designs were also insufficiently detailed. The two factors of

the acceptability criteria were rated "3" for business outcome because the margin issue did get addressed and achieved about 80% of intended benefits. Risk monitoring and management was rated slightly lower at "2.0". The calculated overall effectiveness index (cOEI) was 2.5. The manager's own perception of implementation effectiveness (pOEI) was lower at 2.0. The manager concluded there was a need to further improve on the design of the end to end delivery process including the activities at off-shore locations. Another implementation refinement was increasing the training of the resources to operate the process. It was also recommended that the monitoring and mitigating of the process performance of the resources be implemented. These elements formed part of the improvement agenda.

3.3.3.2.5 Component 5 – Improvement agenda

The improvement agenda provides feedback at each of the evaluation stages with the goal to improve the strategy or the implementation effort. It is through constant monitoring and refining of the activities at these two levels that the manager and his team are aided in the implementation of the strategy correctly. The experience of this project is that this framework, model and use of SIEE maturity matrix assisted the team in their focus on addressing on-going issues and improving the success of the implementation effort. This mitigates Kaplan's et al. (2004) finding on failed implementations and also provides a systematic solution to partly address Wiebes' et al. (2007) remark about the difficulty of the implementation process.

3.3.3.3 The validation of the SIEE framework

My team of implementation managers and I conducted the evaluation of all 14 strategic initiatives using the SIEE framework. Both the PEAR stages and components of this framework were followed thoroughly throughout the evaluation exercise. A key lesson is that evaluation of strategy implementation is often an afterthought and implementation managers are likely to be reactive rather than proactive in planning the evaluation while they are planning the implementation. They also found that the SIEE model and matrix which articulates the evaluation criteria and factors to be very useful because it is explicit, more systematic, holistic and forces the managers to think through the various elements. The maturity matrix may be "simplistic" but using it as a guide to evaluate the initiative and substantiated by qualitative and quantitative proof increases the integrity and quality of the exercise.

3.3.4 Project Two - Deliverables and outcomes

The above are the methodology and tools to support the evaluation effort. The insights and value come from the last two components of analysis and interpretation and developing the improvement agenda. The reflection and critical appraisal of the qualitative and quantitative feedback during this analysis and interpretation component across the four stages helps in forcing the implementation manager to think through whether the strategy and the implementation effort are effective. The summary of the distilled learning from the analysis and interpretation component includes:

1. The framework, model and process increases objectivity in implementation effectiveness evaluation
2. It is a better gauge of effectiveness if the nature of the initiative is more objective in its measurement
3. Implementation is difficult with strategy acceptance as a challenge. The analysis of the evaluation exercise reinforced this finding
4. Knowing that the strategy is right (suitable), helps in gaining acceptance.
5. Strategy and implementation effectiveness are both important
6. While feasibility is perceived as a key driver at implementation, it is not necessarily the case at actual implementation
7. If initiative implementation is overly dependent on external environment, it increases the importance of risk management

3.3.5 Project Two – Reports

There are a total of 7 reports submitted in this project. Artefact Four total over 220 pages. The table 3-16 summarises the reports produced.

Table 3-16 Project 2 submitted reports

Report Category	Submitted Deliverable	Page	Word Count
Project and Learning plan	Project Plan document	35	6500
Progress Reports	Five progress reports – June – July 2011, August - September 2011, October 2011, January - February 2012 and April – May 2012	130	23000
Final report	Final report on Project Two	56	11500
	Total	221	41000

3.3.5.1 Progress update meetings

The supervisor, program administrator, and I met monthly to review the progress of this study. This has proven to be a useful practice, both in governance and maintaining momentum. Minutes of each meeting was filed as part of project governance. The foundation of developing this model was based on the literature review of strategy and implementation evaluation (theory), and experience gained through implementing strategies at the workplace (practice). The concept of metacognition which is knowledge of one's own thoughts and the factors that influence one's thinking was actively applied in this project. My metacognition on strategy evaluation is that the SIEE framework and model (SIEE model and maturity matrix) are practical tools to address this management question.

Brown et al. (1986) cited metacognition as the ability to monitor one's current state of learning (Moon J. A., 2006). This metacognition process was pursued through reflection-in-action (Schon, 1983), and knowledge gained in the past 12 months was first recorded in the progress reports and secondarily used in influencing responses and actions in this workplace based project. The development of the SIEE framework and model went through at least five to six versions and each version was updated based on improvements from the reflected feedback.

3.3.5.2 Progress reports

Yinger and Clark (1981) were cited in Moon (2006) about use of journals in the context of problem-based learning. The opportunity to write about, and reflect on what was done, often led to the ability to think of new solutions to solve problems. A total of five progress reports had been discussed and submitted. In the case of this thesis, the process itself was also useful in forcing me to maintain momentum at the learning level. Much like the experience in developing the project plan, it provided an opportunity to reflect on the collaborative actions of both the practitioners and myself (Schon, 1983) as part of daily management practice.

The details of the five reports were filed in chronological order.

Table 3-17 Synopsis of submitted reports in Project Two

	Focus	Lessons
1	June – July 2011 Commencement of Project. The necessity of change management, addressing leadership issue and mitigating that risk. Commencement of the strategy implementations. The proposed SIEE model was introduced	Address Leadership issue upfront. Sought counsel to manage and dealt with sensitive leadership issue Managed personal stress Managed cost early in the year. Confronted issues early.
2	August – September 2011 Discussed the strategy and evaluation of implementation effectiveness. Examined different strategy evaluation criteria of suitability, feasibility and acceptability as per Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2008) Reviewed early results from strategy implementation Reviewed the SIEE model in more detail.	This progress report tracked the business outcomes as at first quarter of the fiscal year. Lessons were used to adjust strategies
3	October 2011 The SIEE framework was introduced. There are 4 evaluation stages including plan (P), evaluate (E), analyse (A) and refine (R) bearing the abbreviation of PEAR. The SIEE model was used to evaluate the implementation progress of one of the strategy initiatives.	The feedback in using the SIEE framework and model was used to refine both the framework and model.
4	January – February 2012 Various aspects of the SIEE framework and model were tested and documented. Ongoing business risks arising over the same period were monitored and managed. A scorecard	3 objectives in this report. a. Reflect and document key issues while implementing strategies b. Review academic literature c. Half year review of the strategy implementation effectiveness

	of the evaluation was produced.	
	March – April 2012	
	I was researching and preparing the second article for Singapore Management Journal. The first draft was submitted at end of March 2012. The second draft which contained amendments and corrections were resubmitted in May 2012. This was accepted for the next edition in August 2012.	
5	April – May 2012 Analysis report on the implementation effectiveness evaluation of the 14 strategic initiatives. Evaluation was conducted by the respective implementation managers	Findings and analysis reinforced and supported some of the literature conclusions on strategy implementations. These insights were included in the final report

The compilation of these five progress reports as reported above totalled 130 pages and close to 23,000 words. It reflected my commitment in implementing the PDCA cycle of the project methodology in this project. Project progress and monitoring were tracked closely. The associated learning was also documented.

3.3.6 Project Two – Summary

The successful evaluation of the 14 strategic initiatives is a significant project milestone. With the discipline instilled in monitoring project progress, the periodic updates explicitly forced the review of risks and identification of remedial actions to align the strategy and improve the implementation effort. The business outcome at the end of June 2012 was very favourable. The business grew another 15% in addition to the growth of 20% in the prior year and improvement in profitability was even higher at 220%. The business had returned to sustainability and achieved growth and profitability at the same time. It marked the completion of the first year of strategy implementation and this was encouraging.

In terms of study objective, the framework, model and tools were developed, refined and validated as required. Further analysis, findings and learning arising from the two projects are documented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4   FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND LEARNING

One of the key findings from these two interdependent projects is confirmation of the points made by Hrebiniak (2008) in that strategy formulation and implementation are separate, yet distinguishable parts of the strategic planning process. The sequential completion of these two work-based projects proved that these two processes are separate parts and yet one, in the same continuum of the strategic planning process. The logical sequence of formulation, first (project one) and then followed by implementation (project two) is another confirmation of what Joyce (1999) argued, that strategy processes are characteristically carried out in rational steps of formulation and implementation. The fact that these projects are interdependent suggests that there is overlap and the work activities do confirm that the "burning platform" in the workplace necessitates some operational tactics to be implemented immediately to arrest the business decline while waiting for the strategy to be formulated and approved for implementation. It also addresses the "double hat" syndrome (Lester 2009) of long term growth and an immediate fix on profitability. As my team and I are involved in both the formulation (planners) and implementation ("doers"), this improves the probability of implementation success. This same team on both projects mitigates another of Hrebiniak's concern about the risks of misalignment, knowledge transfer, commitment and acceptance of someone's work if they are different between projects.

The completion of these projects marks the fulfilment of the planned learning episodes representing 64% of the DPST program. The combined deliverables are compiled in Artefacts Three and Four. There are 620 pages of supporting evidence to support these learning episodes via the work-based projects. It is appropriate to re-examine the management questions (research questions) as stated in the beginning of chapter three.

The questions are:

1. Is the RCD business sustainable?
2. Can a set of competitive strategy be developed to transform the business and improve its performance in terms of growth and profitability?
3. How can management evaluate the effectiveness of this strategy and its effort?

All three questions have been addressed with questions 1 and 2 in Project One and question 3 primarily in Project Two.

4.1 Answers to the management questions (combined projects finding and analysis)

The conclusion of the Integrated Situation Analysis Framework (ISAF) analysis is a favourable prognosis of the market for risk services. This industry is also expected to grow 30% per annum. Although the Deloitte's RCD business is assessed to be subscale, with a weaker brand position and some strategic gaps, these weaknesses and growth opportunities are addressable through a carefully formulated strategy plan.

The plan comprises both go-to-market and operational excellence strategy. The design and implementation of this strategy plan in the past 28 months has achieved significant positive results. This business has grown 35% over the same period and profitability has been greatly enhanced. It is also the fastest growing division within the SBUs in Deloitte SEA. The organisation is more stable, managed by a stronger and more cohesive management team. The culture being developed is one of high performance. This is therefore, a transformed sustainable, profitable and growing business.

The development and implementation of the PEAR framework, SIEE framework, PDAF (Professional Development Agenda Framework) and models provides the necessary tools to support my implementation team and I to evaluate and refine both the strategy and the implementation effort, thus improving their effectiveness.

The answers to all three management questions are affirmative and positive. Further finding and analysis of the individual projects are documented in the following sections.

4.2 Project One - findings and analysis on strategy formulation

The timing and choice of project topic matched the business requirements and the academic study very well. The business needed to be transformed and formulating a set of strategy was a key step in the transformation. Formulating a strategy is not just a matter of holding a brainstorming session (Wiebes et al. 2007). Strategy formulation is of great professional and personal interest to me given my job as a business consultant assisting many businesses in their transformation agenda. There were several learning objectives articulated in the project plan. Schon's description on reflection-on-action in a professional business is the form of reflection that occurs after action, as cited in the book on reflections by Moon (2008). Much of the learning in the proposed categories of academic, professional and work knowledge are reflections-on actions as per Schon's definitions and documented in the following sections.

4.2.1 Contributions on academic knowledge

Undertaking this project of such complexity and importance is an intimidating and daunting task. There are several key lessons from this project.

1. The enhanced 4 step Strategy Formulation Process (SFP) with its foundation from Porter is validated in this project
2. The conducted primary and secondary research on the risk consulting industry is the basis of the inductive analysis and subsequent development of strategy options in this project.
3. This research activity validated the Integrated Situation Assessment Framework (ISAF) which has been developed as part of this project
4. Learning on Porter's proven generic strategy model is greatly enhanced and its limitations are complemented by other strategy models found in other literature.

4.2.1.1 Strategy models

Porter's generic strategy model of differentiation, cost leadership and focus and its variant is discussed in some detail. The benefit of firms implementing "some" strategy versus stuck-in-the-middle (neither cost nor differentiated) leading to improved business performance is confirmed through the various studies as noted. Firms which adopt integrated strategy perform poorly and therefore, are not recommended as an option although empirical evidence suggests that it is still better than those on mono-strategy. Additional strategy models like marquee clients, key accounts (value creation through relationship closeness) strategic alliances, blue oceans, innovation, market expansion and operation excellence are just some examples researched and discussed in the literature review (chapter 2). These models together with Porter's generic strategy model are examined and applied against the findings from the industry analysis and SWOT (step 2) as part of the strategy options consideration (step 3) in the SFP. This is documented in chapter 3.

Four of the recommended 14 strategic initiatives focused on differentiation and another three strategic initiatives on cost leadership. It was found that the average of the effectiveness ratings of these four differentiation strategies was between 2.4 to 2.5. The ratings of initiative "I" which was differentiation through introduction of centre of excellence was rated between 2.7 (calculated) and 3.0 (perceived) which were higher than the overall average of 2.2. This quantitative result supports the suitability and acceptability of differentiation strategies in a professional services business.

The average of the effectiveness rating of the strategic initiatives which focused on cost leadership was between 2.0 to 2.37. Initiative "G" which was designed to use wage arbitrage to reduce cost of service was rated 2.0 (perceived) and 2.5 (calculated). A financial saving of USD150,000 was achieved through the implementation of this strategic initiative. The effectiveness rating of strategies which focused on cost leadership was partially impacted by the poor rating of initiative of initiative "H", and a root cause issue was the acceptance of that strategy by the stakeholders. If the rating of initiative "H" was excluded from the calculation of the average, the revised average rating would be between 2.25 to 2.65. This quantitative result also supports the suitability of cost leadership strategies in professional services business.

Table 4-1 Ratings of initiatives majoring on Differentiation and Cost Leadership strategies

Initiative	Description	pOEI	cOEI
Strategic Initiatives focused on Differentiation			
D	Increase learning	2.00	2.40
I	Differentiate through centre of excellence	3.00	2.70
J	Increase market eminence	3.00	2.10
N	Increase Business Development Capabilities	2.00	2.40
	Average	2.50	2.40
Strategic Initiatives focused on Cost Leadership			
C	Deploy Cost Management	2.50	2.80
G	Change service delivery model to improve productivity	2.00	2.50
H	Introduce centralised support to increase efficiency	1.50	1.80
	Average	2.00	2.37
	Average without considering initaitve "H"	2.25	2.65

These findings reinforce the conclusion of a case study which recommended the use of cost leadership and differentiation strategies to overcome internal weaknesses and environmental threats as appropriate strategies in professional services business (Ou & Chai, 2007). This is, in this respect, highly relevant particularly due to the type of business in this specific study. These findings also support the views of Porter (2004) and various other writers such as Miller et al. (1993) and Nandakumar et al. (2011) as indicated in the literature review that application of Porter's generic strategies in a business do lead to stronger business performance. The discussions in both chapters 2 and 3 bring both theory (literature review) and practice (project implementation) together which is the essence of the work-based learning in regards to strategy models, a key component of the strategy formulation process.

4.2.1.2 Limitations of traditional strategy models

No one can deny the power of technologies and the pervasive nature of the internet which have transformed businesses and lifestyles in today's world. The global business is increasingly characterised by the interconnectedness, interdependence, and an increasing level of complexity which force organisations to be flexible, proactive and dynamic (Lerro, Iacobone, & Schiuma, 2012). This is the

"new normal", a term coined to describe today's dynamic and changing business landscape where businesses compete on new competitive models, rules and increasing regulations. Most organisations, particularly those involved in global businesses have found their traditional strategies, approaches and policies no longer adequate and competitive. Border's demise as cited earlier, is an example of a business which had failed to recognise the new disruptive Amazon business model which capitalises on the power of the internet.

I can testify that most of my clients' assignments in recent years are to assist organisations transform their business models and work processes into more "intelligent" organisations which capitalise on information and knowledge. It was acknowledged in a research by Skok and Goldstein (2007) that an improved knowledge management strategy could be an enabler of competitive advantage for a small or medium sized professional services firm. This is consistent with Drucker's et al. (2008) description of the new knowledge based economy. As a result of this, as further proposed in Lerro's et al. (2012) study, organisations need to integrate the measurement and management of company's tangible assets with the assessment of their knowledge assets.

In this study, strategic Initiative "I" which was a differentiation strategy was rated highly at 3.0 (pOEI) and 2.7 (cOEI) which was much higher than the average rating of 2.2. The differentiation came from the setting up of knowledge centres of excellence which included the hiring subject matter experts in the respective industries such as a medical doctor to support the work assignments in the Life Sciences and Healthcare industry and an ex-banker in the Financial Services industry. One of the findings in the previous industry survey, conducted as part of the situation assessment in the strategy formulation process cited that one of clients' buying criteria was proven experience and subject matter expertise from professional services firms. This insight addressed that finding. The higher rating as indicated earlier also supported the observation that the deliverables were of a higher quality due to their knowledge, experience and industry insights. As such, clients were more engaged and satisfied. The lessons derived from this work-based project support the above research finding, emphasising in this case how both theory and practice have validated each other.

4.2.2 Contributions on professional knowledge

This DPST program provides the opportunity for me to pursue and integrate academic study while working. Embarking on this project and attending to day to day work routines heighten the awareness of self-discipline. Personal discipline and systematic coordination of activities are therefore key success factors. There are some lessons on professional knowledge detailed below.

4.2.2.1 Professional Certification and Integrity

The work performed by professional services firms require the deliverables to be benchmarked against relevant current standards and regulations. Professional certifications and Continuing Professional Education (CPE) are on-going requirements of professional staff in this organisation. Since I am new to the division, it is important to set the right example by acquiring another relevant professional certification in addition to my doctoral study. This requires additional time investment on my part to attend classes and prepare for the certifications examination. I registered for the Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA) program and passed the examination in December 2010 after three months of preparations and studying. See Appendix 11. Listed below are other lessons on project management and leadership disciplines.

4.2.2.2 Having a plan is important

There is a common saying that failing to plan is planning to fail. It is impossible to implement this project without a plan. The earlier Learning Plan describes the choice and rationale of the projects. Subsequent project plans which describe the detailed planned project activities are outputs of the more important mental process of ensuring the objectives, approach and measures are designed in advance. By doing this, the various stakeholder groups have a better appreciation of what is intended and therefore coordination is better synchronised.

4.2.2.3 Responding to dynamic changes while keeping project objectives in focus

The overall duration for both projects was over 28months. Today's business environment is very volatile. Therefore, responding to the dynamic changes in the market is of utmost importance. For example, the market dynamics may require the business to be restructured thus impacting my position. If that were to happen, these two projects would in turn, have to be restructured and disruption would have occurred. However this did not happen. Hence the projects were completed within the planned time.

4.2.2.4 Small wins matter

Another factor to help maintain momentum is the celebration of small wins. This business has a higher Gen-Y segment of the workforce. They definitely prefer vibrancy and recognition of their contributions and success. The High Performance Project awards which celebrated quality performance in selected projects and recognition in front of their peers are highly valued. This was the feedback given to

management in one of the people survey conducted in December 2011. Celebrating small wins in a timely manner is an important motivator.

4.2.2.5 Solicit advice and assistance

Trusted advice is invaluable. A selected group of internal and external advisors can be resources who can serve as sounding boards on strategy and sensitive matters. In some ways, it is risk mitigation in action. Senior Management appointed a retiring partner to be the advisor for the new management team. He proved to be an invaluable resource given his experience and knowledge of the internal workings of the business. He also played an advocacy role at management meetings given his standing with senior management. This was very helpful especially when I am still new and building my own credibility with the senior management team.

4.2.2.6 Passion and persistence are key success attributes

The constant challenge throughout the project is maintaining momentum and delicately managing priorities. One of the leaders recently commented that my character traits of passion and relentless pursuit of stated objectives are admirable. Hamel (2007) certainly highlights the value of persistence in his book, "The Future of Management" where he noted that the deeper and more thorough of what managers understand and believe, the better and more robust their innovations. The organisation at large monitors the behaviours of their leaders. If the leaders' behaviours are inconsistent and they keep changing directions, their stated directions will not be impactful. They will not have the respect of the workforce. Passion and Persistence are key success management qualities and attributes.

4.2.3 Contributions on work knowledge

I documented in my final Project One report that the department previously thrived on a task oriented or "do-ers" mentality. There was also a sub-culture of providing an opinion on every topic, lack of empowerment, divisiveness and infighting. This work culture was neither productive nor cohesive. My new leadership team and I together embarked on cultivating a new work culture. This new work culture focused on performance is certainly a valuable contribution to the work knowledge.

4.2.3.1 High performance culture

Cultivating a new culture takes time and effort. Sutherland et al. (2004) cited Schein (1997) on adaptive culture where the strength of the organisation is not on the culture alone but its adaptability depending on business demands. I embarked on introducing a different work philosophy based on performance, productivity and efficiency in the division. Labeled as a high performance culture, I coached my management team to behave differently, and set new performance measurement systems. I also regularly authored on the topic of high performance in my newsletter editorials and took every opportunity to demonstrate what high performance means. It was also pertinent to refresh the team through staff turnover. This proved to be very helpful because the new team members were better at assimilating into this new culture.

The writings of Sutherland et al. (2004) which contrasts the characteristics of high performance teams and non-high performance adaptive culture echo the discussions above. They note that high performance teams maintained a better strategic fit between organisation and business context, built trust, enabled some risk taking and are more proactive. The improved financial performance of the department and team morale reflected the positive effect of the introduction of this new culture and change of directions.

I took it upon myself to set the tone at the top. I often worked on many of the activities and events, setting myself as the example in regards to this new culture. It is evident that developing a sustainable profitable and growing business requires a high performance culture to support it. An earlier commencement on this journey will definitely provide more time for the organisation to assimilate this culture in its DNA and become more sustainable. On reflection, this is one of the more significant achievements of my role.

4.2.3.2 Strategy formulation capability is limited

Strategy formulation is not an inherent capability amongst leaders. It is observed that leaders are generally comfortable in executing a SWOT analysis when analysing problems and exploring recovery options. The lesson gained from conducting the industry study is that most leaders do not have a good understanding of the competitive market place. They are mostly consumed by their daily routines and the ability to gather market intelligence is ad hoc and simplistic. Their ability to formulate strategies using a structured approach is also limited.

Leading the team in using the structured SFP to assess the current situation, develop strategic choices and finally recommending and marketing the strategic plan is a lesson for the management team itself. Some researchers document a problem solving approach to formulate strategy. They first define and analyse the problem and develop strategic choices to address them (Wiebes et al., 2007). This is similar to the approach taken by the SFP except that this project has proven the need to invest time and effort to frame the management questions upfront and refine the precision

of the questions during the process. It is found that this activity does require some skills and practice helps to further hone it.

4.2.3.3 Change management continues to be a key success factor

This transformation program impacts job responsibilities and accountabilities of many people in the department. While the organisation generally welcomes change, it gets personal when the change happens to an individual. There are cynics, approvers or supporters, small group of critics and the silent majority who are monitoring the situation. The best solution is proactive, timely and continuous communication directed at the senior leaders and the organisation. In the book titled "100 day action plan", Bradt, Check & Pedraza (2009) advocate planning, communication and high performance teams as priority agenda items for a new leader. Besides formulating the strategy options, it is just as important in communicating and marketing the strategy for acceptance amongst various stakeholder communities. This concludes the discussions and experiences gained from Project One.

4.3 Project Two - findings and analysis on strategy implementation effectiveness evaluation

The reality of what Liker (2009) wrote on "double hat' rings true in the last twelve months. The organisation, while focusing on delivering day to day operations, was also simultaneously pursuing longer term sustainable growth and profitability. The pace and stretch was enormous at the workplace, and yet the passion and energy continued to increase, because positive results were motivational. Extensive learning also took place at the same time.

4.3.1 Findings and analysis on the four evaluation stages in SIEE framework

Honest and timely acknowledgement of issues and negative news is vital in the Evaluate and Analysis stages of the evaluation process. Most managers attempt to recover from the issues either by working more diligently or ignoring the tell-tale signs. A phrase often quoted in project management is "failing to plan is planning to fail". Likewise, here in strategy implementation, "failing to acknowledge issues is acknowledging imminent failure".

Issues do not self-resolve. I pointed out that most managers hesitate to report issues during evaluation and analysis stages for fear of reprisal or loss of face (shame). There are some who are unable to recognise the issues and this is a capability issue. The concern is not the latter. Providing a safe, secure, and supporting environment does not mean a "weak" environment where responsibility and accountability is not practiced. On the contrary, it requires strong management and governance to address the truth, whatever and however serious. The managers must believe in the integrity of management that they are serious about a safe, secure and supporting environment which promotes openness, integrity and truth and not just pay lip service. Managers will monitor management actions and make judgements accordingly. On the other hand, Hesselbein et al. (2009) describes one of the genomes of management is applying judgement on issues pertaining to people, strategy and crisis. The managers will appraise the judgements of their supervisors. Translated into organisation culture, the task of senior management is to cultivate an organisation culture of integrity, openness, continuous monitoring and that failure can be forgiven but mitigation is equally expected. Mutual team and individual responsibility and accountability are part of balanced performance measures that need to be implemented to support this culture.

The three key findings on reflection of the four evaluation stages are:

1. Acknowledgement and acceptance of issues and negative news is the first step
2. Strong management is needed to provide a safe, secure and supporting environment
3. An organisation culture of integrity, openness, continuous monitoring and where failure can be forgiven but mitigation is equally expected

The individual evaluations were completed over timeframe of a month. I compiled the ratings and performed the first round of analysis. Further analyses were conducted on the data in search of correlation. Induction and learning from the analyses are documented in the following sections.

4.3.1.1 Objectivity in implementation effectiveness evaluation

Managers' qualitative feedback was that the maturity matrix was useful in guiding them to exercise some level of objectivity when evaluating the various factors. Statistically, it is easy to calculate an average of the effectiveness rating, based on the eight individual ratings. The cOEI index is abbreviation for the calculated Overall Effectiveness Index. This measurement is a more objective measurement because the guidance through the maturity matrix provides some consistency during the evaluation process. The manager's own perception of the overall implementation effectiveness is abbreviated as pOEI. This index is more subjective. The difference between the pOEI and the cOEI, is a measurement of the difference between perceptive and objective evaluation.

The managers were unaware that their objective assessment (cOEI) would be compared to their own perceived evaluation, and therefore, this delta (pOEI-cOEI) provided insight into the consistency of the manager's perception as well as their objective guided evaluation using the factor elements. The result of this calculation for each of the initiatives is shown in Figure 4-1 below. The ratings of each initiative (A to N) are found in Appendix 8.

Figure 4-1 Perceived effectiveness versus calculated effectiveness by initiative
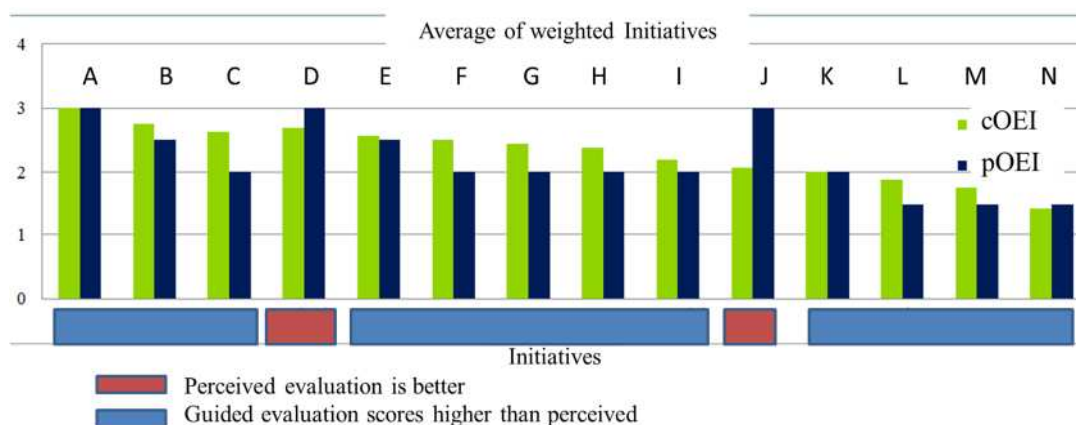
Taken across all 14 initiatives, the managers proved to be quite good at determining the OEI consistently. The average pOEI was 2.2 against cOEI at 2.3. The difference was negligible in this case, supporting the use of matrix as a guide to help the manager think though the effectiveness of the effort when evaluating the

initiatives. At the individual initiative level, there were differences and further analyses have yielded additional insights.

4.3.1.2 Better gauge of effectiveness when initiatives are objectively measured

In some initiatives, the factor evaluations were easier to determine based on the objective metrics, in use by the business. In others, the measurements were more difficult to establish and were more subjective. The more objectively the initiative was evaluated, the closer the alignment of each individual initiative's pOEI to the guided cOEI. Initiatives E and K which were objectively measured, resulted in the perfect alignment between perceived and guided evaluations. Initiative E was increasing practitioners' charge out rates and initiative K was improving the governance of the Philippines risk business to become a better performer. Both initiatives were easy to objectively evaluate in terms of their business outcomes. The measurement of Initiative E was a performance indicator of rate per hour. Initiative K can be evaluated by examining the growth and profitability indicators of the business.

Figure 4-2 Analysis of the difference between perceived and calculated effectiveness
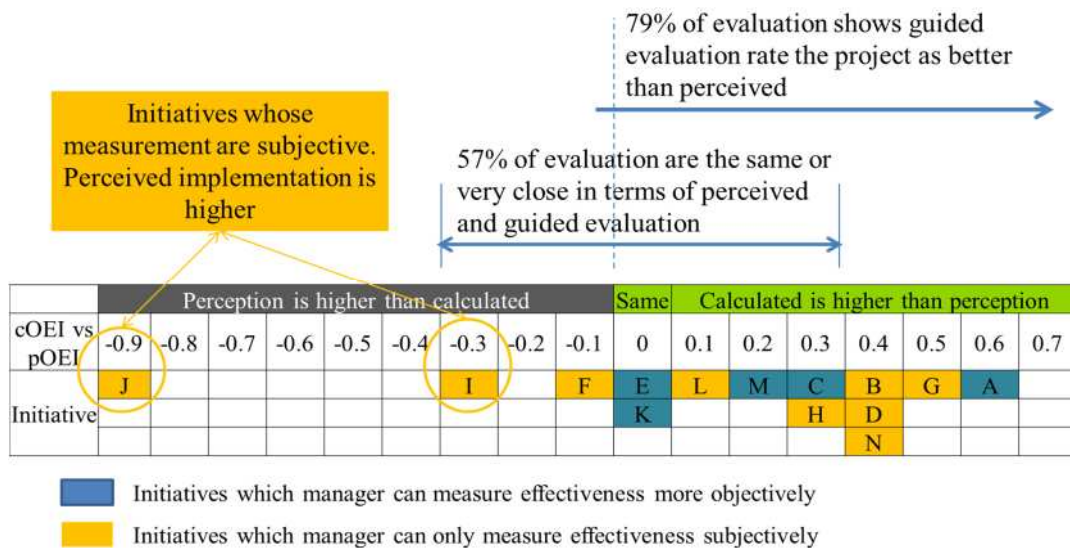
About 57% of the evaluation was within the range of ±0.3 (see Figure 4-2) between calculated and perceived effectiveness. Over 79% of guided evaluations scored higher than perceived evaluation indicating that guided evaluations were more objective (see Figure 4-1 and 4-2). The analysis also showed a big difference with perceived evaluation of initiatives whose measurement system was more subjective. Managers perceived the implementation effectiveness of initiatives, "I"

and "J" very differently compared to their corresponding guided evaluations. Initiative "I" is an initiative on talent and "J" is on marketing. Both initiatives are subjective in contents and evaluation.

This finding that effectiveness of strategic initiatives implementation is better gauged when objective measures are available, reinforces the broader finding that most managers link business performance as a measure of strategy effectiveness as seen in literature by Kaplan et al. (2004), Gonzalez-Benito et al. (2010), Dess & Robinson (1984), Pearce et al. (1987) and others. A tool is developed in this project to assist the manager to evaluate the strategy at a granular level.

4.3.1.3 Implementation is difficult with strategy acceptance as a challenge

When considering the four main criteria, the managers evaluated the initiatives highest in the business environment (2.63) and the acceptability criteria showed the lowest rating of 2.02 against a maximum score of 3.0 (see figure 4-3). This was interpreted as the managers' agreeing that the strategy was right (suitability) in the context of the business environment is the most important criterion for implementation success. The second priority was "concerns about ability to implement" (feasibility) at 2.16. Acceptability which is willingness to execute the strategy was the lowest (2.02) amongst the other criteria but higher than the critical threshold. The critical threshold basically means the organisation rejects the strategy if the rating falls below 1.8 (60% of potential).

Figure 4-3 Analysis of the relative effectiveness of the 4 criteria in project
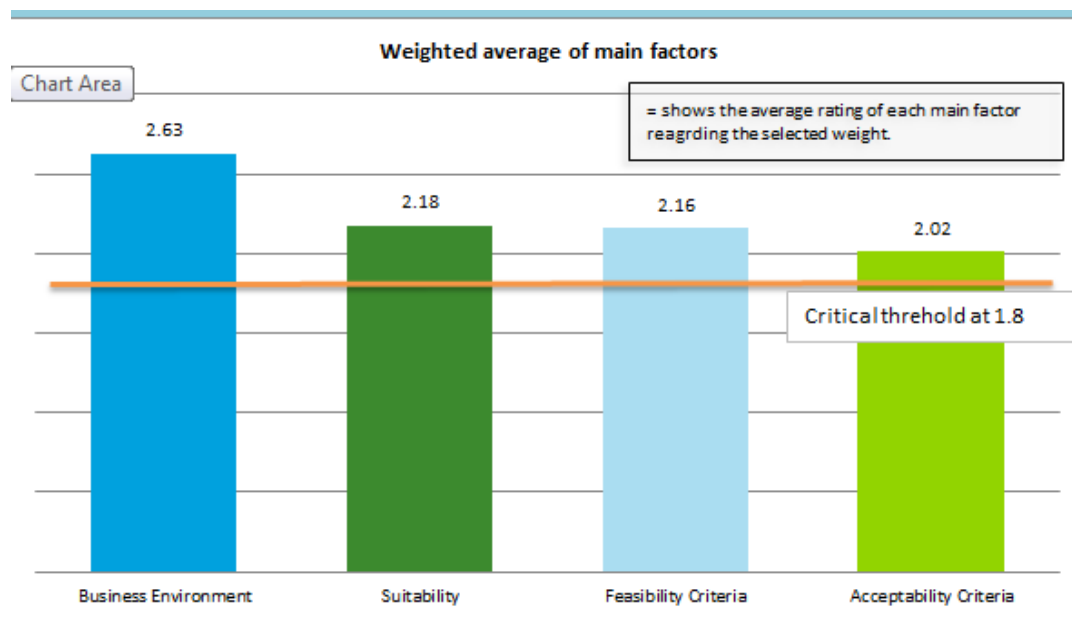
The above finding validates Wiebes et al. (2007), Kaplan et al.(2004), Ali & Hadi (2012) and many other researchers that strategy implementation success is not a given regardless of how good the strategy design. Implementation effectiveness must be worked on to ensure success. There is a degree of reluctance to implement strategy.

4.3.1.4 Knowing that the strategy is right, helps in gaining acceptance

The analysis showed a strong correlation (>70%) between suitability and acceptability (82% in figure 4-4). This indicates that organisation is more willing to work on the strategy when they are convinced that the strategy is the right thing to do. Against the work by Johnson et al.(2008), there is better acceptability of the strategy when managers know that the strategy is suitable for the organisation. This same point is made by Hrebiniak (2008) that having the right strategy is a pre-requisite. This also reinforces the finding that better performers are those with clear strategies (Gonzalez-Benito & Suarez-Gonzalez, 2010). Figure 4-4 examines the correlation between the four main factors.

Figure 4-4 Project feedback on 4 evaluation criteria in SIEE
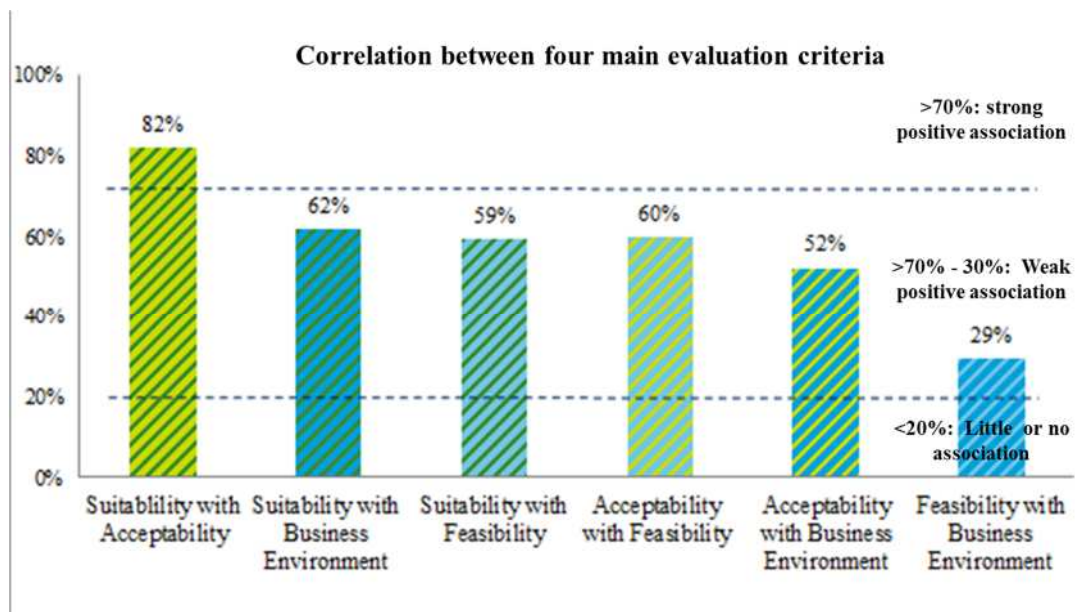
4.3.1.5 Strategy and implementation effectiveness are both important

While the analysis supported that strategy effectiveness is crucial, the analysis also showed a close correlation between suitability and feasibility (59%) and acceptability and feasibility (60%). This suggested that once the organisations understands the rationale of the strategy and believes that this is right thing to do,

they are more willing to work with it. Implementation is then more effective when the project is supported by having the right skills (competency and know-how) and the right resources, indicators of capability and capacity. Work by Hrebiniak (2008) and Ali & Hadi (2012) list similar issues like individual and staff obstacles as barriers to successful implementation. Remedial actions include designing programs aimed at improving staff capability, resource capacity and change management which are "feasibility" issues to address these concerns.

4.3.1.6 Feasibility perceived as key driver but not at implementation

The correlation of the eight factors to the OEI, indicate which factors most influenced the overall measurement. Interestingly, there was a difference between the correlations of the factor ratings between the perceived evaluation and guided evaluation.

Figure 4-5 Correlation between 8 factors and Overall Effectiveness Index (OEI)
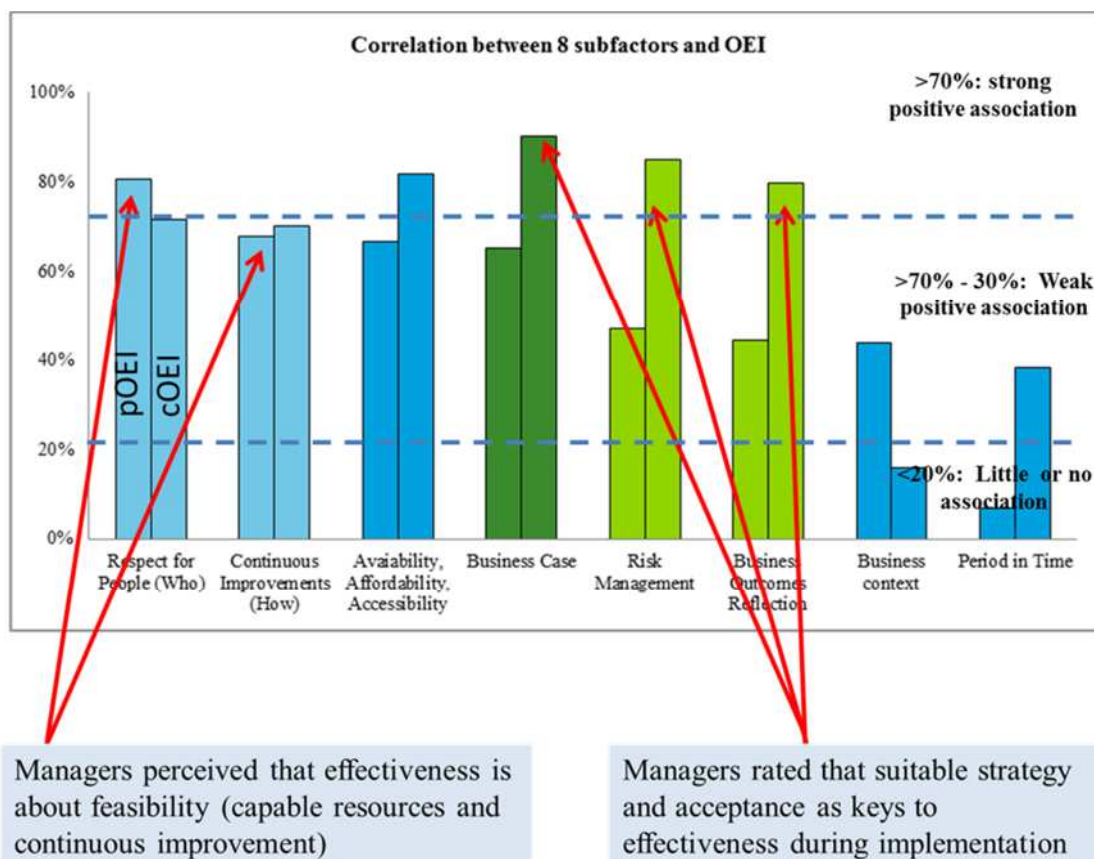
It implied that the managers' perceived view of what was effective to the success of the strategy did not perfectly align to the way they rated their implementation effectiveness. Specifically, the managers held the expectation that the initiatives that were most effective were also the most feasible (see figure 4-5). The initiatives in which the managers gave themselves the best set of individual

factor ratings were those initiatives which were most suitable (see figures 4-3, 4-4, 4-5) and acceptable (see figures 4-4 and 4-5).

In other words, the managers attempted to rate the initiatives for best effective performance, when they had readily available what they needed, resources and capability to do the job. They actually performed best, when they clearly understood why they were doing the work and were willing to do so.

The acceptability criterion which captures the willingness of the managers to work on the strategy is a very important implementation factor. As middle managers are likely to be the constituent group to implement strategies, this finding reinforces the need to communicate and align middle managers' interests, for implementation to be effective and successful. Hrebiniak's (2008) counsel is to communicate effectively because strategy implementation involves large groups of stakeholders. Another researcher, Huy (2011) advocates promotion of key appropriate middle managers to influential positions to positively invoke the right social emotions at the organisational level. Guth et al. (1986) and Ali et al. (2012) discuss the need to address middle managers' self-interests to get their commitment on the strategy implementation. My development of the Professional Development Agenda Framework (PDAF) as part of this project is to address this gap. Despite vigorous communication of the practice agenda to the employee group, my experience is that the middle management is still not fully "engaged". This is because the personal agenda of the employees is not aligned and therefore their motivations are not properly energised. The combination of personal performance evaluation together with its professional development agenda will encourage the middle managers to be more aligned with the goals of the firm. When this happens, the acceptance of the strategy will not be an issue. This PDAF is now tested and proven through this project.

4.3.1.7 Sensitivity to environment raises the importance of risk management

Changing the weightage in one factor can change the correlation analysis. For example, if the strategy is highly sensitive to business environment, the model proposes that risk mitigation which is part of the acceptability criterion becomes very important as well. This is explained pictorially in Figure 4-6.

Figure 4-6 Change in business context increases risk management
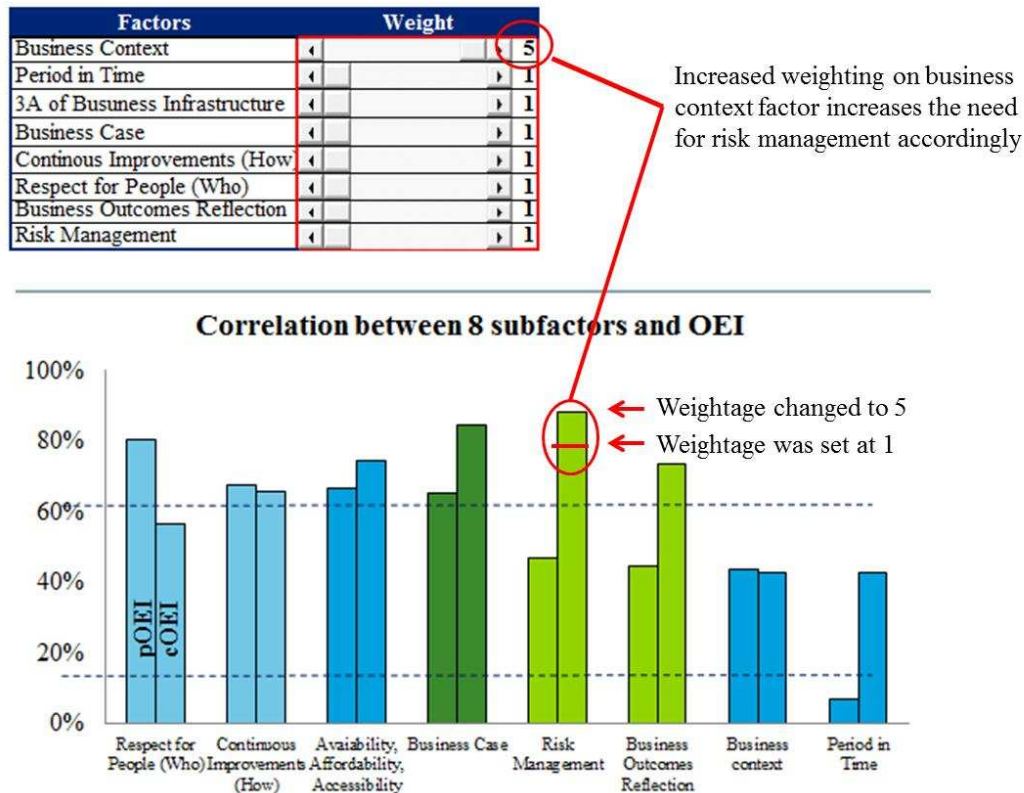
Dynamic changes in the business environment are, to some extent uncontrollable, and can completely render the strategy ineffective. Managing this risk is critical to implementation success. According to Funston et al. (2010) and Schmidt et al. (2006), risk management is a key governance function in today's Board of Directors, and part of their charter is to ensure their organisation is prepared for crisis. The analysis supported this observation. The case study conducted by Bordean, Borza, & Maier (2011) illustrates the increasing importance of the Board of Directors' involvement, as part of their corporate governance, in assisting the executive committee in formulating and implementing the strategy in the firm.

4.3.2 Contributions on academic knowledge

Contributions to new academic knowledge are in the areas of:

1. The development of the four stage PEAR framework
2. SIEE model and matrix
3. Evaluation using the SIEE maturity matrix
4. PDAF (Practitioners Development Agenda Framework)

The foundation of this knowledge contribution is the work by Johnson et al. (2008) on strategy evaluation criteria. The analyses from the test results validated much of the researched findings about strategy and implementation evaluation and the linkage of strategy to business performance. The learning induced from the analyses is as follows:

1. SIEE maturity matrix helps the user to exercise objectivity in the evaluation
2. Better gauge of effectiveness when initiatives are objectively measured
3. Implementation is difficult with strategy acceptance as a challenge
4. Knowing that strategy is right, helps in gaining acceptance
5. Strategy and implementation effectiveness are both important
6. Feasibility is perceived as key driver but not at implementation
7. Sensitivity to environment raises the importance of risk management
8. PDAF is helpful in aligning managers agenda to the divisional professional agenda and this will address any middle manager's reluctance to implement strategy

The literature review on factors influencing strategy implementation conducted by Li's et al. (2008) summarised the research findings of the nine factors into three categories of soft factors such as people oriented factors, hard factors which are institutional factors such as organisation structures and administration systems and mixed factors which contained both soft and hard factors. Relationship among different departments and different strategy levels was treated as a mixed factor. There were preliminary conclusions of this review by Li et al. (2008), among which people issues (soft factors) received the most attention. This conclusion is further supported by another research which unequivocally suggested the importance of human capital in the successful implementation of strategies for professional services businesses (Hitt, Bierman, Shimizu, & Kochhar, 2001). Another conclusion by Li et al. (2008) was that the reviewed studies did not present a clear picture of the relationships of implementation variables such as communication, commitment and consensus.

The reported learning from Project Two also pointed to the management of change and the addressing of staff obstacles as important factors in regards to the acceptance criteria of strategy implementation evaluation. These factors are the same "soft factors" as labelled by Li et al. (2008). Furthermore, the learning in Project Two which concluded that the factors of capability and resources in the feasibility criterion corresponded to the Li's et al. (2008) research finding that the "hard factors" of organisation structure and systems were important in strategy implementation. In summary, the learning does reinforce the findings in the literature review by Li et al. (2008) and various other researchers documented in Chapter 2.

The table below maps some of the learning to the list of literature review findings.

Table 4-2 Linking learning from the test analyses to literature review findings

Learning	Findings from Literature Review
Implementation is difficult with strategy acceptance as a challenge	Strategy implementation is not easy and not always successful
Knowing that right is right helps in gaining acceptance	Better business performers are those with clear strategies and objectives Right strategy comes first
Strategy and implementation are both important	Staff obstacles, inadequate planning and managers' self-interests must be addressed Management of change is key in implementation Increasing organisation capability to improve performance

4.3.3 Contributions on professional and work knowledge

Experiential knowledge is powerful. The school of hard knocks often validates theoretical knowledge. Addressing people related matters at all levels of management, often labelled as change management in literature, is a key lesson in this project. On reflection, engaging the leaders and organisation to understand and accept the strategy early in the implementation pays off. This is getting the "suitability and acceptability" criteria in place.

Feasibility is about resources and capability (continuous improvement). Supporting the weaker leaders through coaching programs, and introducing productivity tools training at the organisation level are programs aimed at improving organisation capability. This is "feasibility" in action. Dealing with capable leaders who are unwilling to embrace the approved strategies, and working effectively to implement them are part of the acceptability challenges. Early and timely mitigation of this management risk is very important to implementation success. Decision to let such leaders leave the organisation is part of managing change.

Good governance is also sound management practice. Continuous monitoring of business outcomes and risk mitigation is "acceptability" in action. The monitoring should cover both internal and external environmental factors. The European economic crisis dampened and softened market demand. Implementing cost

containment strategy effectively is crucial in maintaining profitability. These lessons cover all four SIEE criteria of environment, suitability, feasibility and acceptability.

4.3.4 Managing risks and possible consequences

I documented a serious leadership issue and the need to mitigate issues of such nature as early as possible. Sometimes consequences of mitigation can work both ways depending on the circumstances and political considerations in the business environment. A responsible leader must be willing to accept the consequences if the result is not as expected or anticipated. This is an important lesson from this project. Not all managers are willing to risk their status quo and this was part of the problem with the previous leadership.

4.3.5 Business growth

The evaluation concluded that 85% of the initiatives were rated yellow and green. Only two of the 14 initiatives were deemed unsatisfactorily implemented. The financial result showed that this division was the best performing division in Singapore and Southeast Asia for fiscal year 2012 in terms of growth in revenue and margins, and other agreed key performance indicators. Revenue growth was 15% over the prior year. Over two years, its growth was close to 35%. Gross margin improved by over 10% year on year. Net margin also improved by over 18%. Appendix 9 and 10 provide evidence of significantly improved financial performance of the Risk Consulting Division.

4.3.6 Personal growth

The division has just been notified that its entry on Life Sciences and Healthcare Asia Pacific program held in October 2011 has been awarded the best branding initiative of industry program category in the global Deloitte Green Dot competition. This was the only entry in Asia Pacific to win this global award and is therefore, a great accolade to the effectiveness of this strategic initiative. It is also a great win for the division and the team who implemented this programme as part of Initiative I (market differentiation though Centre of Excellence) and Initiative J (increase market eminence through branding).

Analytical skills and ability to distil the learning and lessons from the SIEE evaluation is part of personal growth. Learning acquired through the literature review process has helped increase my knowledge of strategy and implementation. This continuous life-long learning is articulated in my interview with the Sunday Times on 8 January 2012 titled "A Student for Life" on DPS program.

4.4 Learning from the projects

The uniqueness of the DPST program is that learning is tracked in all three spheres; academic, professional and work knowledge. Table 4-2 documents the learning highlights.

Table 4-3 Learning outcome of the Integrated Strategic Planning process project

Integrated end to end Strategic Planning		
	Strategy Formulation	Strategy and Implementation Effectiveness Evaluation
Renamed	One	Two
Previous	A	B
Approach	Enhanced 4 step Strategy Formulation Process (SFP) – section	SIEE Framework incorporating the PEAR evaluation stages
Academic knowledge	Academic contribution is in the enhancement and development of the SFP, Integrated Situation Analysis Framework (ISAF) and Porter's generic strategy model	Academic contribution is in the development of SIEE Framework and model and PDAF
Academic foundation	Primarily Porter's work on competitive strategy	Primarily work on strategy evaluation by Johnson et al.
Professional knowledge	The key benefit is that frameworks and models are now developed in the area of strategy management from formulation to implementation evaluation. This will greatly assist managers in their work either internally or externally for clients' engagements in the professional services business	
Work knowledge	The acquired learning helps to transform the workplace at the organisational level. Personal growth and development takes place simultaneously. The business is back to sustainable growth and profitability.	

The structure of this section is explained here so that the reader can follow the discussion and it also serves as a tool for easier navigation and reference. There are two main topics in this section. The first topic documents the reflections of the literature and contributions made by me in the course of this study. It documents the distilled findings into the three spheres of academic, work and professional knowledge as discussed above. The associated learning within each sphere of knowledge is documented under their respective headings. The second topic documents the actions taken in this project and their impact on the stakeholder

communities. It is about the research methods and contributions made through this project. The structure is illustrated diagrammatically below for visual reference.

Figure 4-7 Illustration of section structure
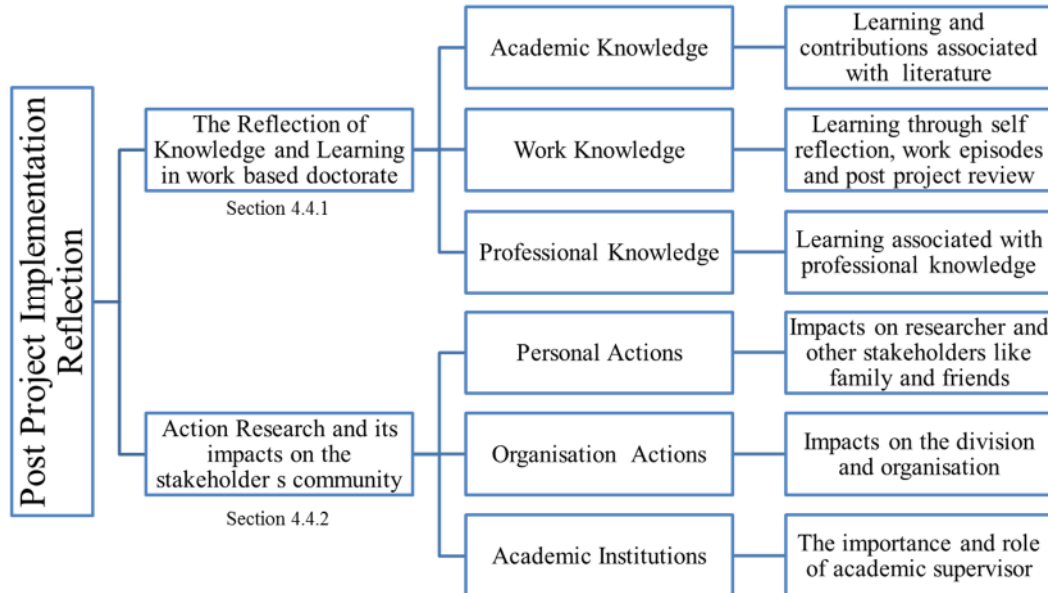
4.4.1 The reflections of knowledge and learning in work-based doctorate

Work-based learning is different compared to other forms of doctoral learning in that this mode of learning integrates both theory and practical knowledge. The theoretical foundation is based on literature review and practical knowledge is learning acquired from the work place. This acquired practical knowledge will either validate the theory or reveal alternative insights, thereby enhancing the critique, endorsement or debate of the literature. Professional knowledge refers to knowledge associated with skills and competency of the profession. The knowledge of governance, professional standards and regulations is of utmost importance in this business of risk consulting.

The confluence of these three spheres of academic, work and professional knowledge enhances the holistic knowledge development of the individual adding credibility and integrity to his capability. This is the potential of work-based learning when it is realised. Miller et al. (2010) cited Sarros, Willis and Palmer (2005) where a DBA requires more applied learning outcomes through a portfolio of coursework and dissertation rather than just thesis writing. Work-based learning is similar in concept to the DBA program.

4.4.1.1 Academic knowledge

The process of conducting literature review is a valuable lesson. It was difficult in the beginning but became slightly easier with practice. The iterative loop of finding relevant literature, distilling the lessons and validating them against the experiences gained through action research while implementing the project enables new academic contributions to be distilled and documented.

Two main areas in the strategic planning process of the strategy management continuum are studied in this program. The first is strategy formulation and the second is evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation effort so that the manager can take remedial action to improve the implementation for success and performance.

4.4.1.1.1 Validation and adaptation of academic models and approaches

The literature search process narrows the review to Porter's research and work on competitive strategy. His work is well researched, critiqued and has withstood the test of time. Porter's five-forces framework, generic strategy model, industry analysis and the strategy formulation process are good starting points as an academic foundation for this project. The undertaken action research has validated this foundation and, the frameworks and tools have been adapted as appropriate during the course of this project.

Moving from strategy formulation to implementation and evaluation, Johnson et al. (2008) research on strategy evaluation criteria was the nominated academic foundation. The three criteria of suitability, acceptability and feasibility were tested and a fourth criterion of business environment had been added to the criteria suite.

There was a component of primary research in both projects. An industry survey involving over 60 respondents was conducted across SEA to understand the business landscape of the risk consulting business in the strategy formulation part of Project One. This fieldwork was to provide objective insights in the situation assessment step of the SFP. The subsequent field work in the second project dealing with strategy evaluation involved testing all 14 strategic initiatives by the implementation managers. This too, was to provide objective evidence of testing the developed frameworks and tools in Project Two.

4.4.1.1.2 Packaging the models and tools into a framework

One of the observations during literature review is that most of these tools are discussed as individual tools relevant in their respective domains. For example, the discussion on SWOT is to help conduct a situation assessment of an organisation or business. An industry study which is more extensive and difficult to conduct is also

an important tool in situation assessment. Understanding how these tools can be used and in the relevant business context can be useful to develop an integrated end to end framework. It is validated in this project that packaging and integrating the various models and tools into an integrated framework is helpful to explain the interdependencies of these tools and how they should be used and applied. The Integrated Situation Assessment Framework (ISAF) is an example of this process.

4.4.1.2 Work knowledge

Work knowledge is acquired through the "happenings" and events at the work place. It tends to be informal and unstructured unlike academic knowledge. Work knowledge is however, just as valuable. This work-based learning is structured in three phases; starting with reflections on past learning, planned learning derived from project episodes and finally, reflective learning from the post projects review. Each of these phases has significant learning opportunities as experienced in this program and some of the key lessons are distilled in the following sections.

4.4.1.2.1 Learning through self -reflection

Self- reflection and the power of reflective learning was first introduced in learning portfolio. The candidates guide points to it but the real power of this mode of learning comes from understanding the research and philosophy of reflective learning. Moon (2006, 2008), Schon (1983) and Johns (2009) have written on this topic. The reflection-on-action has enabled me to better understand my historical learning in a more systematic and structured manner in the learning portfolio. Three key lessons emerged from my reflection. The first lesson is that this program is a journey of discovery and self-development. The insights from my historical learning reflection provided me an objective and realistic view of my skills, capabilities and limitations. This program also offers great co-development opportunities with different stakeholders to achieve mastery status in some skills. The second lesson is that clear objectives and rationale are keys to sustaining the momentum of this journey. Thirdly, being the proactive identification and management of risks as part of strategy implementation.

In that self-discovery and reflection, there were several other learning points including:

1. The continued learning in the workforce beyond schooling
2. The power of learning through informal and formal education. A point which is reflected again later.
3. Relationships, business networks and mentors are invaluable
4. The capitalisation on opportunities and building on momentum
5. Invaluable lessons from past mistakes
6. The learning from outside the workplace

4.4.1.2.2 Learning through work episodes - school of "practice"

The lessons from Projects One and Two are already documented in their respective reports. Since this is an integrated project, the learning is distilled into one set of lessons. One of the key lessons from this integrated learning in addressing the business transformation issues and strategy planning is to recognise the following:

1. Managers' knowledge and capability of strategy formulation is often limited and hence the need to support them through assistance or training is essential
2. A four step strategy formulation process is a tested and proven approach with:
   a) framing the management question in step one as very important
   b) performing the situation assessment is a prerequisite step before developing strategic options
   c) setting the objectives and exploring the options using Porter's generic model can only be a good starting point and need to be complemented with other models
   d) recommending, communicating and marketing the plan is key to obtain stakeholders' acceptance and agreement

Another lesson besides being able to formulate strategy is that strategy implementation evaluation capability is essential to improving implementation effectiveness. One must also take note of the following:

1. Recognise that strategy implementation is not easy and not always successful
2. Better business performers are those with clear strategies and objectives
3. Having the right strategy takes priority
4. Recognise staff obstacles, inadequate planning and managers' self-interests must be addressed
5. Increased organisational capabilities improve performance
6. Implementing a performance measurement system is a key management tool for implementation success

4.4.1.2.3 Learning through continuing education and research

As noted earlier, learning and knowledge can be acquired through several modes. Learning through self- reflection and work episodes are documented in earlier sections. The third learning mode is through continuing education and research. Some professions and licensed trades require continuing certification credits to ensure professionals are updated in their knowledge and skills. My participation and passing of the CISA qualification is an example of continuing education. More importantly, I was setting the tone from the top.

A key element of doctoral programs is conducting research. Literature review and conducting field work requires knowledge of research methodology and skills.

Students who have not undertaken research activities or completed an equivalent master's qualification may experience some difficulty. Reflecting on the past 40 months of study requirements, it is my view that a prerequisite knowledge of equivalent master's qualification is recommended before embarking on a DPST program.

4.4.1.3 Professional knowledge

This study is situated in a professional services business. There are no products to sell. The "product" in this business is service, skills and knowledge. This knowledge is applicable for both internal use and in clients' assignments. This is knowledge- in-action internally and externally. It is further noted from the previous industry study that clients' value consultants whose professional knowledge is constantly current and insightful. As such, the characteristics of increasing professional knowledge are in the areas of:

1. Professional certification and integrity is an increasingly important attribute of a professional career especially in the era of the "knowledge technologist"
2. Project management capability is a key capability because work patterns are moving towards project work rather than routine operations. The following elements are best practices in project management:
    a) Having a plan
    b) Responding to dynamic changes while keeping project objectives in focus
    c) Delivering small wins matter
    d) Soliciting advice and assistance
    e) Having passion and persistence are key success attributes
3. High performance culture in the professional services organisation
4. Change management being recognised as a key success factor

4.4.2 Action research and its impact on the stakeholder communities

The actions deployed throughout the study impacts many stakeholder communities. This study requires the collaborative actions and cooperation of the stakeholder communities for it to be successful. The communities are in the categories of personal, organisation and academic institutions.

Table 4-4 Program stakeholder communities

Communities	Primary	Extended
Personal	Myself	Family and friends
Organisation	Risk Consulting Division	Deloitte
Academic Institution	Primary Supervisor, EASB	Second Supervisor, USQ

4.4.2.1 Personal actions

First, I am the primary stakeholder in the personal category. Obviously, the impact is greatest. Embarking on this program is not a walk in the park. One will be mistaken if the student can obtain a doctorate through writing up what he learns from his workplace. My actions include taking primary responsibility in driving and executing most of the project activities as documented in the learning plan and project plans. In addition, the effort on the literature review, studying the materials and cross referencing literature is substantial and has taken up a significant portion of my time. Reflection, analysis, documenting and editing the reports consumes the bulk of personal time outside the workplace. This is a significant investment and sacrifice throughout the program.

Another lesson is that health and personal well-being is an important success and sustainability factor in managing the overloaded work and study requirements. Having a regimented exercise program every weekend since the commencement of the study has improved my health status, and in turn, this has assisted my mental and emotional abilities in enjoying this busy lifestyle with passion and determination.

The program does have a direct and influential impact on my family and friends. Time is a finite element and therefore the time spent with family and friends is limited and compromised. The support from family cannot be understated.

4.4.2.2 Organisation actions

The divisional workforce is about 330 practitioners, led by a small team of less than 15 partners in senior management. This team under my leadership in managing and driving the transformation of the business is most impacted as they have to carry out my planned activities. The commencement of this study coincided with my new role as RMD of the division. This creates a conducive environment for the planned actions to be performed. I also deliberately weaved my planned actions into my daily management routines impacting my core management team and the organisation of 330 people. Artefact Five provides evidence of my communication messages which are designed to communicate my vision and operating principles of a high performance operating culture within the organisation. The business performance matrix of nine KPI based on the Kaplan's Balanced Scorecard principles is intended to measure the business holistically and not just on financial indicators.

Starting the activities is easy and sustaining the momentum is difficult. This is seen and felt both the management team and I. After two years of performance improvement, the management team is now into its third year. Even with the addition of new leaders, the stress level is felt and I am working diligently on mitigations to sustain this momentum. This includes changing some of the leaders' responsibilities and accountabilities, and moulding new leaders to share the load. It is a marathon.

The broader Deloitte organisation as a whole is certainly more knowledgeable of the division's activities, its achievements, results and the operating culture built on the principles of high performance and sustainable profitable growth. Appendix 4 provides evidence of change and personal development as a result of engaging in this action research in both the strategy formulation (Project 1) and strategy implementation evaluation (Project 2) assignments.

Feedback from Manager A in particular describes her growth of "working knowledge" which is the linkage of academic concepts to professional and work knowledge. This is evidenced in her reflection of how using the ISAF framework has helped me in her understanding of academic concepts such as SWOT and Porter's work on competitive strategy. In her reflection, she wrote about her learning on "the practicality side of the tools and frameworks (e.g. SWOT, Porter Five Forces Analyses, and Balance Scorecard) which I used to study in my University textbook. It has grown me from a manager who executes and delivers jobs, to a manager to understand what a business really is, how a business should be monitored and managed, how different types of personality impact on a business". She further describes her own development in being able to manage situations as per this feedback, "Being calm and not take things emotionally is something I have seen myself improves a lot for the past months and I believe I am still improving now. I was once told "a master is someone who simplifies complicated matters". And, I believe one must be calm and with clear mind in order to simplify difficult condition." (Appendix 4 – Feedback from A). Another manager B, who was involved in evaluating the effectiveness of a strategic initiative pointed to personal growth in the area of discipline and testing the willingness of managers (feasibility factor) in strategy implementation. Reproduced from his journal record is a section of his feedback, "the model further strengthened my project discipline and the critical need to test the acceptability of strategy with the key stakeholders before commissioning the project team to implement the project. This ensures that the project team receives the necessary top leadership and resource support during the entire project cycle (not just the beginning when interest is highest) and for the project to be successfully implemented" (Appendix 4 – Feedback from B).

In the area of using the SIEE matrix to guide the implementation evaluation more objectively, Manager B alluded to the model being helpful in guiding the project team to ask a set of critical questions when evaluating their projects. He quotes "It serves to provide a holistic outcome whether the implementation is effective within the organization and linking back to the overall business objectives". He further encouraged the tracking of change as per the guidance given by him, "the evaluation matrix could be conducted more periodically (eg. quarterly) during the implementation phase to assess and compare the change of state of the project over time" (Appendix 4 – Feedback from B).

4.4.2.3 Academic Institution

The DPST program's delivery method is an example of collaborative education (Miller & Lim, 2010) between USQ as the international university and EASB as the local educational institution. Synchronisation of administrative matters between the two institutions is not seamless. With considerable effort, the situation did improve over time. The personal intervention of the head of school at EASB to improve the "system", the processes and human interactions cannot be underestimated. It kept me motivated to continue in times of doubts and frustrations.

The role of the academic supervisor in a doctoral program is most crucial. The assigned supervisor by EASB is instrumental in formalizing the monthly progress meeting schedule wherein my momentum and pace is monitored. The supervisor's corporate background, experience in doctoral research, work-based learning and lecturing have proven to be very useful in guiding my journey. The characteristics of effective supervisors are described in Miller et al.'s (2010) book on doctoral research. The most important criterion for my success is the supervisor's willingness to spend time with me, his student. The secondary supervisor from USQ is also very instrumental in pointing out the program structure with relevant examples so that the deliverables are properly guided. His ability to understand and engage in meaningful dialogues on the research project through distant communication is a good testimony of his own experiences in both doctoral research and lecturing. This is an example of good collaboration between the institutions.

4.5 Limitations and disclaimers of the findings and analysis

Generalising findings from these two projects should be treated with caution. The nature of the work-based study with its broad ambitions, means that the literature search (academic study) is extended to topics such as reflective learning, formulation and implementation of the strategic planning process. Besides that, this study also embraces both process (approach) and the associated models for each part of the process. This increases the breadth and coverage of the study and hence depth of study is compromised as a trade-off.

Besides that, another limitation of this study is that it is interdisciplinary. Although the research is situated in the context of risk consulting, the concepts used to frame the accompanying projects are borrowed from a spectrum of disciplines including strategic planning and the accompanying aspects of strategy formulation and implementation evaluation and also competitive business strategy with its focus of management of change and leadership. As such, there is always a danger when generic concepts are borrowed to discuss specific contexts as in the case of this study.

However, it is hoped that the integration of the three spheres of academic, work and professional knowledge has brought both theory and practice together so that the learning, findings and analyses in each process is rich and insightful and new knowledge is contributed. It would be right to point out that the integrated work and academic knowledge gained on each of the processes can be the basis for further

research and study either in the current area of focus which in particular, is risk management consulting or to other industries of interest. Should the findings be applied to other industries beyond that of this study, then it is anticipated that adaptations and interpretations to the current proposed model is required. Secondly, future research may also be directed at addressing the anomalies in this study. For example, with the dynamics of the fast changing and sophistication of the competitive business landscape, will current strategy models survive in such environments? Section 4.2.1.2 which documented the limitations of traditional strategy models and today's models may as such, become the subject of scrutiny in tomorrow's landscape.

Thirdly, the current research and its findings on strategic planning may be used as a springboard for other research exploring the different dimensions for example, in aspects such as Strategy Formulation Process (SFP), Strategy Implementation Effectiveness Evaluation (SIEE) and strategic planning. Future action research process cycles on the SIEE maturity matrix may also be developed for other professional disciplines as suggested by Manager B in his reflection.

The primary data collected from over 60 respondents for the industry study is on best effort basis. The respondents are not incentivised to participate and provide the responses. Likewise the 14 implementation managers requested to perform the evaluation of the strategy and implementation are not incentivised other than this is part of their implementation requirement. The ethical considerations of the primary data collected in this industry data is addressed in section 3.2.3.2.3 titled "Ethical considerations on data acquisition in Industry study".

Secondary research on macro-economic information is from published sources. Literature review is from published journals, books and publications on known databases. Findings and analysis in the various projects are based on the limited data set and information collected from primary and secondary research. The interpretation and learning is based on known literature review, past learning, findings and analysis.

4.6 The power of effective communication (Artefact Five)

Ali & Hadi (2012) who conducted a study on factors affecting successful implementation of business strategies have shown that if the members of a company are not aware of the common strategies of the organisation, a low level consensus would be gained. This finding resonates with my own experience in that lack of communication is often an impeding factor in the success of work programs. Ali et al. (2012) further quotes Noble (1999) that lack of common understanding may act as a major obstacle in implementing strategy. Carnegie (2009) proposes that leaders must be able to communicate. I designed a communication strategy at the commencement of my career focused on engaging the different stakeholders in the business. Building relationship with the practitioners is a priority to create a sense of belonging and association with Deloitte. This is to address a SWOT analysis finding that staff did not understand the direction of the business and management agenda. This is therefore aimed at addressing the risk as highlighted by Ali et al. (2012).

Wikipedia (2012) defines "communication" as an activity of conveying information. This word is derived from the Latin word "communis", meaning to share. Communication is between parties, a sender and a receiver. Effective communication requires sending the contents with their objective, and receipt of the message to be accurate and timely. Communication also requires that the communicating parties share an area of communicative commonality. The communication process is complete once the receiver understands and comprehends the message of the sender. Therefore, feedback is critical to effective communication between parties.

4.6.1 Communication channels

I wanted to ensure that my messages are disseminated to my community of practitioners who are located in various locations as efficiently and timely as possible. The choice of communication channels is important. As postulated by Carnegie (2009, p. 19), "Communication has always taken many forms" and therefore is a multi-channeled, ranging from individual counseling, email communication and gatherings at "town halls" (mass communication). This "diary" is a collection of key written communication messages over the past two years.

4.6.2 Communication messages analysis

Analysis of these communication messages indicates my intention to improve communication with the organisation. The analysis reveals that the mixture of message categories is aimed at different objectives. This analysis also covers the reach of the communication to the different stakeholder communities and the timing of the communication to achieve its intended impact.

4.6.3 Communication categories and contents

The different categories included news and information, seasonal greetings, messages to congratulate teams or individuals on good work and management directions. In 2010, the business was at the beginning of its reconstruction phase as part of the transformation journey. The messages were therefore, biased towards communicating management directions and information about the business. There were many messages written to motivate staff especially when there were positive behaviour or favourable outcomes. Carnegie (2009) calls this sincere praise and honest appreciation. There were some messages which were about lessons and learning.

As expected, communication which dealt with disciplinary and corrective matters were limited. Such matters were usually dealt with through other communication vehicles and seldom through mass communication.

Table 4-5 Type of messages

Year	Praise and Motivational	Lessons and Learning	Correction	Information and News	Directional
2010	1	2		6	5
2011	9	9	2	17	9
2012	1	2		4	5
	11	13	2	27	19

4.6.4 Communication and stakeholders (targeted audience)

The targeted audience of these messages was mainly staff. This was particularly so with the new leadership team and previous lack of engagement between management and staff. The messages were deliberately honest, sincere and repetitive, particularly on management directions. When appropriate, examples were cited in the newsletter (mainly information centric) to illustrate the type of culture and desired behaviours to be developed in the business.

Leadership examples were highlighted and promoted so that the organisation could observe that leaders were willing to "walk the talk' (leadership by example). One such example was the message on JP Morgan's charity run in April 2012. The communication between leaders was on business planning and operational matters. Some of the communication was specifically on business strategies, priorities and operational disciplines. The more appropriate communication vehicle for leaders managing the business was generally through active participation, discussions and dialogues. As such, the leaders met frequently and the written communication channel was utilized to confirm what had been agreed and discussed. The analysis

showed that communication with the senior leaders group increased in 2011 and 2012. The senior leaders are the key stakeholder group which initiated the change in leadership and requested the business to be transformed. Engagement with this stakeholder group had been via monthly management meetings where qualitative and quantitative performance indicators were reported and discussed. Written communication engaging the broader stakeholder community of other senior leaders, body of partners commenced in late 2011 and 2012 when there was tangible result. This added integrity on the communication.

Figure 4-8 Communication and stakeholder analysis
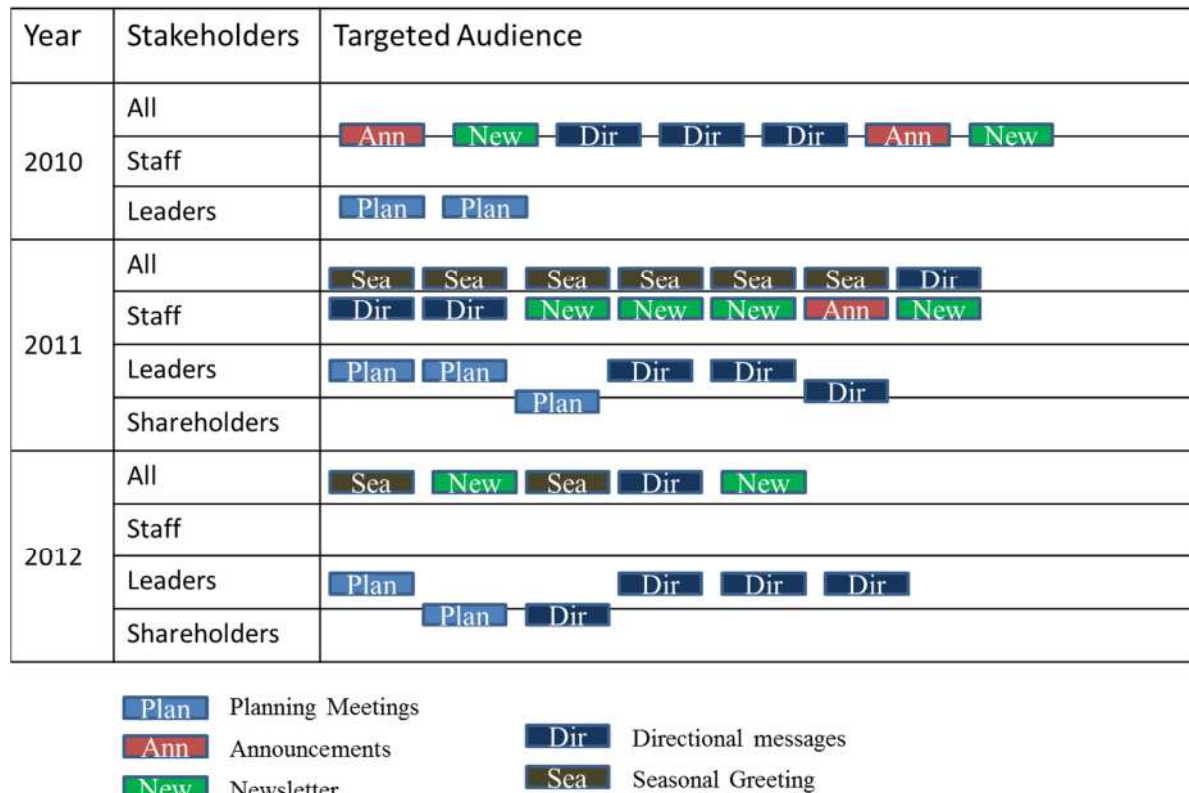
4.6.5 Communication and timing

My commencement date with the division was 1 June 2010. During the months of April and May 2010, I assisted the previous leadership team in the annual planning cycle. It is evident that the communication was constant and appropriately in the multiple categories for good reasons to support the culture and direction which the team was building.

Table 4-6 Calendar of messages

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2010					Plan Plan Ann	New Dir Dir Dir		Ann		New		
2011	Sea New	Sea		New Sea	Plan	New Plan Dir		Dir Sea Ann	Dir Dir	Sea New	Dir Dir	Sea Plan
2012	Sea Sea Dir	New	Dir	Dir Plan	Dir Dir New							

Plan	Planning Meetings
Ann	Announcements
New	Newsletter
Dir	Directional messages
Sea	Seasonal Greeting

4.6.6 Communication and impact

It may come across that the planning of the communication was too vigorous, scripted and sterile. This was not the case. A recent people survey which covered the question on communication indicated that the organisation was better informed and that sense of connection and belonging was reinforced, largely through this communication effort. The analysis below addresses the various communication disciplines:

1. Why – The business went through a period of turmoil, change of leadership and communication vacuum. The instability, lack of integrity and trust between the management and staff was significant

2. How – Communication was multi-channeled. This channel of written communication helped to engage the staff and leaders timely and broadly across locations

3. What – Messages were written with specific objectives in mind. Some were news and information. Others spelt out the agenda and directions of the business. Messages meant to motivate were sincere, honest and praise centric

4. Who – Targeted at staff and leaders. Communication to senior leaders, like partners were scheduled later in the timeline when there was more integrity with this stakeholder community through improved business performance.

5. When – There was active engagement since the beginning of the transformation journey. Communication was also throughout the year. The design of this communication strategy leveraged seasonality, festivity and business events of the annual calendar to integrate message contents enhancing relevance and balance.

These messages were by themselves, a reinforcement that communication was a key tool in getting the organisation to first understand the strategy, believe in them and encourage them to work on the strategy. This vehicle helped in achieving the goal of gaining acceptance of the strategy.

CHAPTER 5   CONCLUSION

This professional doctorate study (DPST), as defined at the beginning of this thesis is focused on the acquisition of deep learning at the workplace across the different career phases. Starting from the reflection of learning from past professional experiences, the study moves on to current work-based learning in which, I have chosen strategic planning as the research topic and ends with my reflections on the overall doctorate learning experience. Besides deep personal learning, another DPST objective is that the outcome should benefit the workplace as well.

The term "strategy" as defined by Mintzberg (1978) and supported by other writers such as Drucker et al. (2008) and Sutherland et al. (2004) is about a deliberate conscious set of guidelines that determines decisions into the future. Lynch's (2003) definition of strategy formulation and Rumelt's (1980) explanation of strategy evaluation were the starting point of this study. As described in the introduction of this thesis, the study topic of strategy is contextualised to competitive business strategy at Deloitte's RCD which is at the SBU level in the strategy hierarchy. This study has successfully triangulated academic theory on strategy formulation (based on Porter's 2004 work) and evaluation of implementation effectiveness (based on Johnson et al. 2008 model) with actual practice as evidenced through the two work-based projects. This is further elaborated in the next section.

5.1 Work-based learning at the highest order and continuing reflective practice

The essence of this work-based learning is premised on distilling experiential learning through reflective practice, and supported by evidence collected during the projects. Reflective practice such as reflection-in-action is carried out real time during the main project implementation work whereas reflection-on-action is more at work at the learning portfolio module when learning from past professional experiences was reflected and distilled. The associated learning is further captured in the three spheres of academic, professional and work knowledge.

5.1.1 Evidenced-based learning

In evidenced-based learning, the implementation of the work-based projects provides the learning environments for me to link and validate academic foundations (theory) and work knowledge through practice. There are over 860 pages of working papers and reports accumulated as "evidence" and support material for this final thesis. These are a combination of the final deliverables in the various DPST modules, working papers, interim and progress reports on the projects. The discipline of linking theory and practice is strongly asserted in the final reports of the various DPST modules such as the learning portfolio, learning plan and the two

work-based project reports. The working papers comprise management reports on findings and analysis, such as industry study, SWOT analysis and strategy plan. It is inappropriate for these papers to reference theory and academic dissertation in professional and work environments. Review of these working papers and even some reports will quickly highlight another limitation in my weaker proficiency of the English language because English is not my primary language. The constant practice of editing and writing these module reports is training in English writing itself. I can attest to the improvement of my writing ability over time.

The study on strategic planning from formulation to implementation evaluation has reached new heights with new knowledge contributed through this study. The academic foundations (theory) have indeed been validated through professional and tested work knowledge. In strategy formulation, the enhanced four step strategy formulation process is validated. A model specifically developed for this study is the ISAF model which is used in Step 2 of the SFP in determining the baseline assessment of the business. Application of Porter's generic strategy model has reinforced the need to complement the current generic model with new strategy models and concepts in today's design and formulation of competitive strategy. In strategy and implementation evaluation, new academic knowledge is in the development of the four stage SIEE framework and its model. Strategic planning is an important management process, particularly as more companies restructure and transform their businesses to remain innovative and competitive. This newly validated knowledge helps management to perform and discharge their fundamental obligations more professionally and with greater capability.

5.1.2 Reflective practice

The habitual practice of processing happenings, events, outcomes and feedback in a reflective cycle to analyse and reason the above beyond what he sees, read and hear is increasing. This is similar to Gibbs model of reflection which involves the six components of description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan (Gibbs G. , 1988). This heightened awareness of using reflection and increasingly becoming my routine is like a reflective practitioner who lives reflection as a way of being, according to Johns (2009). This concentration of practice in the last three years due to this thesis work has improved my metacognitive abilities. Metacognition refers to a level of thinking that involves active control over the process of thinking that is used in learning situations. The word "cognitive" refers to thought patterns (Morrison & Conaway, 2007). I have learnt to sieve the data that I am taking in every conscious moment. Some is just noise and is ignored, while some is of value, and hence is accepted. I am certainly more conscious of what I know and try hard to discover what I do not, a reference to "blind" spot or Johari's window which is also sometimes labelled as unconscious incompetence is the four stages of competence. The ability to accept criticisms from confidantes or well-meaning associates is a mitigation of this negative trait if left unchecked. For example, my highly competitive nature, which is a positive trait in terms of his tenacity and passion, is also a blind spot in being overly competitive as seen by some internal stakeholders. My ability to accept defeats is not as graceful inwardly although I am consciously learning the art of maintaining composure in all circumstances. The

limitation of reflection as written in Schon's (1983) work is that the practitioners' knowing-in-practice mechanism is self-preserving and will become immune to the reflected outcomes because the practitioner misses the conclusion of the reflected analysis. I am mindful to avoid this happening in my mental state.

5.2 The experience of undertaking work-based doctoral study

As expected, the journey has its moments of ups and downs. Liker (2004) commented on pressures faced by managers "wearing two hats", a phrase to describe juggling between delivering short term immediate results versus longer term business sustainability. Embarking on this journey means wearing more "hats". This additional study program together with the "double hat" syndrome significantly compounded my activities and workload. There were other issues with the study program. While the basic structure is well explained in the candidates guide, expectations on the deliverables of the various modules remain unclear, even with the cited examples. Being a remote student, further adds coordination complexity between USQ and EASB in Singapore. It did settle down towards the later part of this journey.

5.2.1 Meaningful self-reflection from past professional experience

My continuous learning and strive for personal transformation in the past three decades has enabled me to take advantage of some career opportunities along the way, progressing to what it is today, which is the RMD responsible for managing a multi-million dollar business. The lessons acquired through formal and informal education (school of hard knocks), quick recovery from past mistakes are some examples of my success factors. The combination of which has assisted my personal transformation and growth.

In my reflection and being in a state of mindfulness, I have also identified that my own set of prejudices may have compromised some career opportunities. I recognise that prejudice is not a good character attribute and having an open mind is probably more advantageous. In today's work climate where discrimination of any kind is less tolerated, dealing and managing one's prejudices is a good discipline. Investing time and effort to develop meaningful relationships is also an important attribute in one's work life and more could have been done on my part. Finally, while I have probably completed more studies than most peers, embarking on serious post tertiary education, earlier than later should be considered. Acting on this hindsight wisdom is never too late.

5.2.2 The power of structured work-based learning in the present

Actively addressing and collaborating with other work colleagues to address this live work problem which is research-in-action while pursuing my academic pursuit ambitions, makes this journey more contextually rich and relevant. This is applied learning where it matters, and not just some theoretical model in a laboratory or some samples in an experiment. The power of action research is once again demonstrated in this study.

Since this is an academic pursuit, researching literature is a given. Reviewing hundreds of articles, reading countless books on strategy management, distilling the learning and academic writing are part of my personal knowledge and capability development. Tapping into the wisdom of research, the sourcing and referencing of proven models and methodology either helps to enhance the models in development or provide alternative insights on how to address the problem. This increases the depth and breadth of my capabilities in addressing the constantly evolving work issues and in so doing, increases my integrity and soundness as a seasoned professional. This is a title I have earned from my CEO and colleagues in turning this business around in such a short time.

My diagnosis and discussions on strategic planning are increasingly deeper and more insightful while maintaining pragmatism and practicality from the actual work knowledge gained from the ground. This wholesome development will not have happened without this course of study, especially in the area of reflective learning and the need to read and research strategic planning. Covey's (2004) notion of "iron sharpening the iron" proves true where informal learning and trusted advice from my select group of confidantes were very useful when I was deciding on the course of action to deal with a serious leadership issue. It was a stressful period of time. Solving this real and complex problem in a real business context makes this work-based learning incredibly satisfying and rewarding. This learning does come at a personal price of sacrifice, focus and strict discipline.

5.2.3 The spiral effect of Interlocking development as a whole

Knowledge is progressive and so is capability. New knowledge and capability constantly builds upon past learning and existing foundations and this is how society progresses. This interlocking development of past learning, coupled with current knowledge and the compounding spiral effect leads to a nonlinear creation of a new and more informed future. This is often described as "one plus one is greater than two" which is a metaphoric expression of synergy and leverage derived through the principle of the whole being more than the sum of its parts.

The DPST uniqueness and differentiation is in its integrated and interlocking development of past and current learning in all three spheres of professional, work and academic knowledge. I referred to continuous learning as part of being a student for life in my opening paragraph of this thesis. Feedback on my increasing ability to critically analyse, appraise and provide tempered guidance to resolve complex issues

is further evidence of my continuing professional and personal growth in this learning journey. Veteran Hong Kong actor Wu Fung, who is in his 80s and was recently bestowed a honorary Professional Spirit Award at The StarHub TVB Awards 2012, said in his acceptance speech that "Professionalism is about being serious, focused and diligent, but most importantly, one must always be wanting to learn" (Yip, 2012). Wu's comment on "wanting to learn" is evidence of his dedication and professionalism in terms of his enduring tenure in this competitive industry for over 50 years. Likewise, this integrated learning in all three knowledge spheres has enabled me to be more prepared for my future endeavours, leveraging my past and present, be it professionally and personally. It is also clear that being professional, is a personal choice and does require discipline, focus and commitment. I have certainly invested my time, effort and commitment in this journey.

5.3 Benefits for the student

The Australian Qualifications Framework specifies that graduates of doctoral degree are able to demonstrate systematic and critical understanding of a complex field of learning and specialised research skills for the advancement of learning and/or for professional practice (AQF, July 2011). It further lists the skills of graduates as being able to:

1. engage in critical reflection
2. synthesis and evaluation
3. develop, adapt and implement research methodologies to extend or redefine existing knowledge or professional practice
4. disseminate and promote new insights to peers and community
5. generate original knowledge and make a substantial contribution to a discipline or area of professional practice.

5.3.1 Advancement in personal critical reflection, synthesis and evaluation

Reflective practice is very much a lived reality. The discipline of adopting the action research process of plan, act, observe and reflect or its equivalent in plan-do-check-act in project management methodology has enabled me to systematically approach any complex problem or issue be it personal or professional. The years of training in this study program has sharpened my synthesis and evaluative abilities. My ability to constantly summarise, distill and induce information to the core issues and evaluate the relative materiality, timeliness and relevance when addressing issues or evaluating options has also been heightened. These are important life skills. These skills are demonstrated through the actions in the various study modules, projects design and implementation and application of the action research method. The evidence is in the documentation, artefacts and in subjective outcomes resulting from the actions deployed.

5.3.2 Advancement as a researcher

The project management method of plan-do-check-act is a simple method which propagates planning as a forefront activity and then having to close the loop through checking and then reassessing the actions with the intention to refine the actions in the next cycle. The six principles (section 1.6.6.3) of action process working in concert with the four phase action research cycle bring into it, the attributes of collaboration reflexive critique and hence, more depth into the systematic enquiry of addressing the problem. In addition, the linkage of practice to theory and vice-versa triangulates the three spheres of knowledge leading to new knowledge being birthed or current knowledge being critiqued.

5.3.2 Advancement as a mentor or "master"

Through the project implementation process, the project team as co-researchers and collaborators both learnt from the development and application of the tools and frameworks. Knowledge is disseminated and new insights such as the ISAF framework and SIEE model have been promoted to peers and the community. Appendix 4 provides more evidence. Manager A describes her own growth and learning as a result of applying the tools. Manager B reflected on the use of the tools and recommended enhancements to the process.

5.3.3 Advancement and of learning with contributions for professional practice

The element of "learning by doing" in action research is documented in the contribution of original knowledge in the context of a wider body of knowledge of strategic planning. This new or extended knowledge though a workplace based pedagogy where the theory informs practice and where practice refines theory has helped to advance professionalism in the discipline of business management. This is done via the study of the strategic planning process. This contribution of integrated working and academic knowledge from this action workplace based research is first distilled from the individual projects (Section 4.2 and 4.3) and then synthesised into a coherent contribution of knowledge (section 4.4 and chapter 5). Figure 4-7 is a graphical illustration of the above framework. This knowledge is set in the context of the wider body of knowledge, with its distinctive focus on competitive business strategies and evaluation (strategic planning) and sub-disciplines of management of change and leadership. The scope is in the professional services industry and the deployed research method is that of action research, appropriate for workplace based learning as documented in Section 1.6.6. This is the summary of the contribution of original knowledge to professional practice.

5.3.4 Right mindset for continuous learning and professional integrity enhanced

An intangible reward is the personal growth and development which has taken place at the same time. This journey can be enjoyed if one approaches it correctly with the right mindset. I have found that having the right mindset helps with sustainability of this "marathon". I have certainly enjoyed it. This journey itself must be a collaborative effort between many stakeholders including the school, its administration staff, immediate and secondary supervisors, family, colleagues and personal attributes of dedication, focus supported by books and internet.

The business outcomes are just as significant as the learning. The business has returned to profitability. The foundation of this business is much stronger and it has grown by 35% over two years. Profitability is now over 20% in line with internal professional services business benchmark. Business productivity has improved by more than 43% in revenue generation per practitioner. Utilisation, which is another productivity measure has improved by 13.2%. Market rate recovered per hour has improved by 11%. This is very important to me from the view point that I am able to deliver what is requested by management to build a sustainable profitable and growing business. My professional integrity is reinforced.

5.4 Benefits for other stakeholder communities

The business division is now armed with its five year strategy plan and there are early signs of success as the implementation of the agreed set of strategy becomes more embedded in the business. The business is growing at the right rate and is profitable as evidenced in the results. The benefits have directly and indirectly impacted many external and internal stakeholder groups.

The external stakeholder communities include strategic alliance partners, Deloitte alumni practitioners (ex-staff), competitors, prospects and customers. The management team is more focused as a result of implementing the recommended strategy and as a result, external parties such as strategic alliance partners working with Deloitte's practitioners feel that the division is more focused and positively contributing in its partnership programs. Deloitte RCD Singapore was awarded partner of the year by both Computer Associates and Symantec Corporation in 2012. See Appendix 13. The marketing and branding campaigns carried out as part of the business development and eminence strategy is achieving its intended impact in the marketplace. This is evidenced by increased sales activities, as well as a larger and deeper client footprint. At alumni gatherings, ex-Deloitte staff share the observations that they are seeing a higher profile of Deloitte's RCD activities. Competitors also acknowledge that Deloitte's risk services is becoming a formidable competitor.

There are many internal stakeholder communities. Among them are the Board of Directors, senior management committee, peer partner group, RCD management team and the 330 practitioners of RCD across SEA. The Board of Directors is pleased that the RCD has a longer term strategy to pursue its business vision and has addressed the immediate issues in the business. The senior

management team is also satisfied that the "fire" at the burning platform has been controlled and has delivered significant improvements in its financial performance. More importantly, my management team and I have addressed the three strategic management questions of business sustainability and a set of strategy to pursue growth and profitability. "Sustainability" is becoming increasingly important as regulators, academicians, analysts and the market are reinforcing the need for organisations to implement sustainable strategies. A study on the role of management control systems in implementing sustainable strategies concluded that formal (formalised set of objectives and measures and performance measurement systems) and informal (corporate culture, sense of ownership leadership commitment) elements are both necessary to integrate sustainability in the organisational way of thinking and operations (Riccaboni & Leone, 2010).

While there has been good performance in the last two years, the effort in building this business is far from over. Hence I am still working diligently in implementing the control systems as well as training and upgrading the skills, capability and mindset of my immediate management team even though this organisation is a lot stronger today as a result of a stronger governance model, led by a stronger and more able management team. The morale at the workplace is also improving as documented earlier. Deloitte RCD's entry in the Life Sciences and Healthcare section for the prestigious Deloitte Global Green Dot Award in 2012 was also awarded top prize for its branding eminence. See Appendix 13. At the recent inter-department games in Deloitte Singapore, RCD came in second place attesting to the increasing cohesiveness of the team and the culture of high performance inculcated by the management team. See Appendix 14.

The team of professionals working together with me have become more skilled in strategy formulation and evaluation of the implementation. This team is also becoming better business managers as they focus on building the business together. The past schisms and infighting were also addressed in the process. Appendix 4 provides the evidence of the testimonials of three managers involved in the implementation of the workplace projects. The impact of this collaborative action research with my co-researchers is documented in the section titled "Project 1– Summary " (Section3.2.6). The development of the Strategy formulation process, implementation evaluation framework, enhancement of Porter's generic strategy model and the development of the SIEE model to evaluate strategy are also beneficial to the business in that managers and practitioners have access to new methodology and tools to assist them in their work tasks. Manager B in his journal entry, encourages the cycle of evaluating the effectiveness of strategic initiatives implementations be conducted regularly using the developed tools and frameworks (see Appendix 4). Not everyone embraces change uniformly as reflected in section 3.2.6. Management of change is personal and subjective as per the principles of plural structure and dialectic critique. Hence, as in the case of Manager C, who is silent on the new knowledge on tools and frameworks, but at the same time, he still acknowledges in his reflection that improving communication is a key lesson in the evaluation of strategy implementation (see Appendix 4 – Feedback of Manager C). Managers D and E testified in their own journals of their professional advancement.

Another attribute of action research which separates it from other types of research is that its primary focus is to turn people into researchers. People learn by doing and when they have learned, they can then do it themselves. This social

dimension of action research is achieved in the community of co-researchers (project team members) at various skill levels depending on their pace of learning and advancement.

5.5 Concluding remarks

While the essence of this work-based learning study is already addressed above, the depth and breadth of study dimensions on the research topic of strategic planning is designed to meet the criteria of higher order of thinking and originality, commensurate of a doctorate.

5.5.1 Originality of work

I have faithfully carried out all aspects of this DPST study including researching, writing and editing all deliverables and reports. I am involved from the reflections on past learning experiences in the portfolio, to designing of the learning plan, right through to authoring this learning summary (thesis) and everything in between.

All work is original and attributable to me other than referenced materials which are properly sourced and acknowledged. The American Psychological Association (APA) style of referencing and formatting is adopted.

5.5.2 Principles of situated cognition

The experience of doctorateness involves the transition from "supervisor manipulated" strategies to "learner generated" strategies. The choice of work-based projects on strategic planning is evidence of this learner generated orientation. The principles of situated cognition in doctoral learning are commonality, situatedness, interdependency and infrastructure (USQ, 2009).

5.5.2.1 Commonality

The concept of "communities of practice" (COP) is gaining ground at the work place. This concept is to bring groups of people together who share common interests, objectives or like-minded in terms of agenda. Hung and Chen (2001) was cited in the USQ Candidates guide that it is important to have a valid reason for participants to work together in a way that makes sense to them. To this respect, the various stakeholder groups of senior management, peers and employees are aligned and focused on addressing a serious burning platform. This community could not

have been more united. This rationale of coming together is current, contextual and right at the heart of everyone's interests. There is common agenda. This, in itself, have avoided many people related issues which otherwise may have surfaced, specifically with communities whose agendas are diverse.

In the case of this study, the community has learned to reflect together, which is very effective besides personal reflection. Mintzberg cited McCall (1988) in that all reflection is ultimately personal but managers must learn to reflect personally by reflecting collectively too (Mintzberg, 2005). There were hundreds of meetings, conference calls, formal and informal gatherings where my teams and I had spent time reflecting on past management actions, their outcomes, lessons and what could been done better or differently. This act itself helps in bonding this community of practice and building the team spirit.

5.5.2.2 Situatedness

It is useful to define what "situatedness" means. Hung et al (2001, p.7) defines it as "learning embedded in rich situations and social constructive acts where meaning can be made sense in the contexts of application of use, learners pick up both implicit and explicit knowledge". Reflective practice is at the heart of this "situatedness". As described previously, both reflection-in-action and spontaneous reactions take place in a real time setting in the projects. It is common that daily interactions are a combination of "thinking on the feet", spontaneous reaction through "gut feel" and thought through responses. As I have accumulated 30 years of work and management experience, I rely on the school of hard knocks in a lot of my managerial activities. The "reflection-on-action" is applied extensively during the learning portfolio where the reflection goes back in space and time to think about lessons and ponder on whether outcomes would have been different if different actions were taken at that time. This reflection of the past and drawing lessons drawn from that experience is really "reflection-on-action". Mintzberg (2005) quoted McCall's encouragement to managers to reflect personally and collectively as a habit.

I have chosen an elaborate communication strategy as a way to connect with my organisation over a diverse geographic scope as evidenced in Artefact Five. I constantly resorted to metaphors to better communicate his messages. For example, I used the JP Morgan's charity run message to illustrate the point on pacing one's career. Some of my other messages are synchronised with seasonal greeting messages to drive home a management viewpoint. There is less spontaneity in this "reflection-on-action" approach but this gives time to reflect on the next course of action to achieve a smoother flow with reflected intent. This consistent practice over a three and a half year period is sufficient time and practice for a lot of these concepts to be now lived as part of my lifestyle.

5.5.2.3 Interdependency

Deloitte's publication of the "As One" research is about the organisational behaviour archetype where the central theme is about successful collective power (Baghai & Quigley, 2011). In my implementation of high performance culture, I have constantly taught the organisation on teaming and the use of archetypes learnt from this home grown research. I have adopted the "General and Soldiers" archetype as I wanted my team in the different geographies to efficiency deploy his strategic initiatives. This archetype places high premium on efficiency in carrying out instructions. This worked well in 2011 when the business needed significant directions and instructions. As the business settles into the new structure and as stability returns, the second organisational archetype of "Architect and Builders" becomes more appropriate. This is because the organisation needs to drive towards the clear vision (architect) and local expertise (builders) is needed to continue to execute the strategy plan across borders. Appendix 12 is an extract of the description of the two archetypes from internal communication decks.

The implementation of business governance on management responsibility and accountability is about making sure that the team understands that there is individual accountability within team accountability. Each one is interdependent of the other and the collective whole matters though individual accountability is still not absconded.

5.5.2.4 Infrastructure

Hung et al (2001) further lists three tenets of rules and processes, accountability mechanisms and facilitating structures in infrastructure. The implementation of the operational excellence strategy is about improving the business infrastructure, improving operational processes and increasing accountability within the organisation. The operational strategy include initiatives like talent strategy, training programs, high performance teams, structure, nine KPI scorecard, annual high performance awards, performance measurement system, senior promotion interviews and vigorous quality processes. The recent employee survey conducted across the Deloitte SEA network at the end of 2011 lists team morale and engagement as having improved over prior years. This is testimonial of the effort invested in building a more collaborative and adhesive RCD.

5.5.3 Closing thoughts

These four principles of situated cognition as required of the DPST are well covered in my "learner generated" study. The learning is comprehensive and of the highest possible order.

Returning to the Victoria Institution's school motto of "Be Yet Wiser", where I was educated, the motto that has always represented the students, since the day it was established in 1893. It is derived from the proverb, "give instruction to a wise man and he will be yet wiser". It is my wish that my community and I, will be yet wiser through the "instructions" learnt in this study.

This concludes this thesis, which is also the learning summary of the DPST.

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Appendix 1 - Interview with the Strait Times on continuous learning

Sunday Times interview on my pursuit of Professional Doctorate

Figure A1-1 Special Feature of Sunday Times: Interview on learning

Source: Straits Times, 8 January 2012

Appendix 2 – Unofficial transcript of my DPST program

Table A2-1 Reproduction of my unofficial transcript of his DPST record

0061000875   Teow Hiong Yap   07/09/2012

Doctor of Professional Studies

Exemptions

COURSE	DESCRIPTION	TERM	UNIT	GRADE		GP
WBL8001	Workplace-based Learning Plan	S1, 2010	1.0	E	Exemption	N/A
WBL8002	Workplace-based Complementary	S1, 2010	1.0	E	Exemption	N/A
WBL8020	Workplace-based Proj (2 units)	S1, 2010	2.0	E	Exemption	N/A
WBL8030	Workplace-based Proj (3 units)	S1, 2010	3.0	E	Exemption	N/A

COURSE	DESCRIPTION	TERM	UNIT	GRADE		GP
WBL8000	Workplace-based Learning Portf	S3, 2009	1.0	P	Ungraded Pass	0.0
WBL9001	Workplace-base LearnPlan 1unit	S1, 2010	1.0	P	Ungraded Pass	0.0
WBL9002	Workplace-based Proj 2 (1unit)	S2, 2010	1.0	P	Ungraded Pass	0.0
WBL9003	Workplace-based Proj 3 (1unit)	S2, 2010	1.0	P	Ungraded Pass	0.0
WBL9004	Workplace-based Proj 4 (1unit)	S2, 2010	1.0	P	Ungraded Pass	0.0
WBL9005	Workplace-based Proj 5 (1unit)	S2, 2010	1.0	P	Ungraded Pass	0.0
WBL9006	Workplace-based Proj 6 (1unit)	S2, 2010	1.0	P	Ungraded Pass	0.0
WBL9007	Workplace-based Proj 7 (1unit)	S2, 2011	1.0	P	Ungraded Pass	0.0
WBL9008	Workplace-based Proj 8 (1unit)	S2, 2011	1.0	P	Ungraded Pass	0.0
WBL9009	Workplace-based Proj 9 (1unit)	S2, 2011	1.0	IIP	Incomplete In Progress	0.0
WBL9010	Workplace-based Proj 10 (1unit	S2, 2011	1.0	IIP	Incomplete In Progress	0.0
WBL9011	Workplace-based Proj 11 (1unit	S2, 2011	1.0	IIP	Incomplete In Progress	0.0
WBL9012	Workplace-based Proj 12 (1unit	S2, 2011	1.0	IIP	Incomplete In Progress	0.0
WBL9013	Workplace-based Proj 13 (1unit	S2, 2011	1.0	IIP	Incomplete In Progress	0.0
WBL9014	Workplace-based Proj 14 (1unit	S2, 2011	1.0	IIP	Incomplete In Progress	0.0
WBL9015	Workplace-based Proj 15 (1unit	S2, 2012	1.0	#	Currently Enrolled	0.0
WBL9016	Workplace-based Proj 16 (1unit	S2, 2012	1.0	#	Currently Enrolled	0.0

*** This is not an Official Academic Transcript of the University of Southern Queensland ***
**** End of Unofficial Transcript ****

Source: Extract from my account at UConnect website, USQ, 2012

Table A2-2 Composition of DPST course modules

Modules	Code	Units	Status	Description
Learning Portfolio	WBL8000	1	Passed	Learning Portfolio
Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL)	WBL8001 – 1 unit WBL8002 – 1 unit WBL8020 – 2 units WBL8030 – 3 units	7	Exempt	
Learning Plan	WBL9001	1	Passed	Learning Plan
Projects	WBL9002-9008	7	Passed	Strategy Management Project 1: Strategy formulation
	WBL9009-9014	6	Passed	Project 2: Strategy implementation evaluation
Learning summary	WBL9015-9016	2	Submitted	The "thesis" of this program
	Total	24		

Table A2-3 Synopsis of submitted reports prior thesis

Module	Report	Synopsis
Admin	Unofficial Transcript 28_3_2012	Unofficial transcript of Janson's (0061000875) progress obtained from student records through UCONNECT
Learning Portfolio	WBL8000 Learn Portfolio Janson Yap 100313	Final Report submitted on 13 March 2010 on Janson's Learning Portfolio (70 pages). It describes Janson's learning portfolio, past and present career history, learning and developments in his professional, work and academic life. The use of Reflective learning is keenly explored.
RPL		See Transcript for details on 7 units exemption
Learning Plan	Learning Plan JY 100510 v5	Submitted Learning Plan of Janson for DPS dated 10 May 2010. A 53 page report outlining the doctoral learning plan and intended projects. It presents the case on the 3 dimensional learning (professional, work and academic) that can be acquired at doctoral level through the proposed projects because of their complexity, size and interdependencies.
	To Whom It May concern- change in units 110418	A memorandum submitted on 18 April 2011 requesting change to proposed projects and proposed units as per the learning plan. This is based on experience encountered while undertaking Project 1 – Part A. The rationale is presented in this paper.
	CISA certificate	As part of continuous learning and exemplary leadership demonstration, Janson undertook an additional professional certification called CISA. The examination was held in December 2010 when Janson was undertaking Project 1-Part A. To pass this professional examination, he attended several Saturday classes and was involved in months of preparation.
Project 1	P1-PA 110629 Plan v1	Project Plan of Project 1 – Part A submitted on 29 June 2011. This is 34 page plan and outlines the business context, project objectives, scope, approach

		and methodology, academic contributions and expected learning
	RCD Industry Survey Report Final 2011 05 04	Market survey of more than 60 internal (30%) and external (70%) respondents on the Risk consulting industry. The survey is part of the application of the Strategy Formulation Process. The insights and learning is part of assessing the baseline situation of the business and provides meaningful input into the development of the strategies.
	5 Learning Journals (May 2010 – Feb 2011) 4 Progressive Updates (May 2010 – Feb 2011)	2 types of progress reports totalling 9 were written to capture the learning as well as documentation of the progress and status of the project. The Learning Journals documented reflective learning from the period's activities while the progress reports deals with activities, issues and outcomes in that period. This good discipline of project management governance was initiated by Dr. Lim. It became a monthly practice where EASB (school), Advisor (Dr. Lim) and Janson met to discuss the progress of the project. Not only did it foster relationship between the parties, it also kept the momentum of the student's progress in check as well as evidence gathering. The chronological order of these reports provides time stamped insights on experiential learning throughout the project journey.
	Final Report P1-PA 110417_(for submission) v2	This is the final report (127 pages) of the project. It describes the outcomes of the project, learning and academic contributions.
	SMJ Article JY Edited 210112 v2	This article titled "Adapting Porter's Strategy Formulation Process and Generic Strategies Model in Today's Competitive Business Environment" is published in the inaugural volume of Singapore Management Journal Vol.1 No.1, 2012.
Project 2	P1 – Part B 110630 Final	Project Plan of Project 1 – Part B is submitted on 30 June 2011. This is 27 pages plan and outlines the

	Plan	business context, project objectives, scope, approach and methodology, academic contributions and expected learning
	Test analysis of Developed SIEE Model (not attached)	A test is applied to all strategic initiatives in 2010-2011 as part of Project 1 - Part B using the developed evaluation model. The test is complete and results are finalized.
	5 P1-PB Progress Reports (July 2011- April 2012)	Five progress reports are submitted from July 2011 to April 2012. It charts the learning and outcomes covered in each period. This is the continuation of good project management and governance initiated in Project 1-Part A. The skills and experience gained in Project 1-Part A has certainly helped in managing Part B. This frees up time for Janson to focus on researching academic literature and managing both the business and project activities simultaneously.
	SMJ Article 2 SIEE Yap and Lim 280312	This article is on the Strategy and Implementation Effectiveness Evaluation (SIEE) model as researched in the current project. It is submitted for the next volume of Singapore Management Journal (SMJ) and pending acceptance

Appendix 3 – Chronology of employments

The table below describes my consulting and corporate careers in reverse chronological order. It is included for easy reference.

Table A3-1 Professional services career history

Date mm/yy	Company	Highest Grade and Reporting Relationship	Role and Results
01/99 – Present	Deloitte Consulting SEA	Joined as Senior Manager. Promoted to Partner in 2000. Industry Leader for Energy and Resources industry. Practice Leader of Life Sciences and Healthcare in Asia Pacific MD of Deloitte Consulting Thailand	A transaction took place and 80 practitioners from the PwC practice left and joined Deloitte consulting to start the manufacturing industry practice. Joined High Technology industry practice. Developed and increased client footprint and subsequently started 2 industry segments businesses, Energy and Resources (E&R) Industry and Life Sciences and Healthcare (LS&HC) Increased annual revenue by 20% per annum
01/98 – 01/99	Coopers & Lybrand Consulting (SEA) became PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) due to merger	Senior Manager. Reported to Partner	Senior Manager developing High Technology Industry Practice focused on Technology Service Line. Focus is to acquire new clients in this industry segment. Acquired new clients like HP, Agilent as key clients generating multi-million dollars in consulting

			revenue
09/96 – 01/98	Arthur Andersen Business Consulting	Joined as Senior Manager and promoted to Associate Director in 14 months	Assisted Partner in the firm to develop a new service line that is Technology Consulting. Generated USD2.3m job in Year 1

Table A3-2 Corporate career history

Date mm/yy	Company	Highest Grade and Reporting Relationship	Role and Management Objectives
01/91 – 07/96	Monier PGH and then CSR Ltd	Senior Manager (Top 100 Managers in CSR group).	• Managed daily operations of Information Technology department of both the bricks and tiles division • Researched and developed technology enablers to provide company competitive advantages in terms of superior customer service • Participated in the company Quality movement in the days of Total Quality Management
11/87 – 01/91	Estee Lauder Australia	IT Director. Reported to Managing Director	• Managed daily operations and functions of the Information Technology department and supported all the systems for sales, distribution, logistics, finance and manufacturing functions • Implemented state of the art customer friendly systems at cosmetic counters in

			department stores
04/87 - 10/87	Polaroid Australia	Analyst Programmer. Reported to IT Manager	I was a programmer in the IT department
	Migrated to Australia		
01/83 – 01/87	Avon Cosmetics	Data Processing Supervisor and reported to Finance Director	Supervised and managed a team of twelve members in the Information Technology (IT) Department providing IT support to business.

Appendix 4 – Managers' journals on their learning and personal growth

Table A4-1 Summary of managers' journals on their learning and personal growth

Name	Grade	Location	Initiative
A	Manager	Malaysia	Design and implement new service line
B	Senior Manager	Singapore	Evaluate effectiveness of the implementation of Shared Service Centre initiative
C	Partner	Singapore	Design and implement service line portfolio
D	Partner	Philippines	Country leader, responsible for the Risk consulting business in Philippines
E	Director	Singapore	Subject Matter Expert in Life Science & Healthcare initiative

Name : A   Role(s) in Department : <u>Manager</u>

Grade: <u>Manager</u>   Role in project: <u>Contract Risk and Compliance (SEA) Lead</u>
<u>Manager</u>

<u>Reflections on knowledge gained, personal growth and change</u>

Objective: To reflect on whether the professional has "changed" as a result of the knowledge gained and has impacted personal growth

Subject Area: Strategy Formulation

Before:

Describe your understanding and knowledge of the subject area and competency to carry out an assignment

> <u>Business Strategy is an action plan to achieve a specific goal with mission and vision defined. Details studies on the environment must be performed, in concluding whether there is demand or opportunity in the market for this business.</u>

Being part of the action research:

Being involved in the process of developing the process, tools and frameworks on the subject area, describe whether and how you have "changed" as a result of engaging in the development

> <u>It helps me to approach in a more structured way. By answering the questions, whether is the business sustainable and is it the right time, I considered whether is there a market demand for this business now, if not, would there be a market demand in future. Instead of just defining the action plan, I will consider different strategic options and the outcome of all the possible options. After considering all options, selection and fine-tuning is important before recommending the strategy for top management approval.</u>

Outcome:

If you are to undertake another assignment of Strategy Formulation now, how will you approach it differently?

> <u>I will perform a more thorough analysis from both external and internal view. In looking at the macro, I will perform PESTEL or Porter five forces analysis and followed by SWOT analysis. For internal capacity and capability, I will consider the leadership structure and skill and competency matrix.</u>

Reflections

What are some of the limitations of the process, tools and frameworks and how can they be improved?

> <u>Strategy formulation and implementation are very complex assignments. Even with a clear model as guideline, it requires detail understanding of the tools and</u>

frameworks in order to fully utilize it. Experience is still essential in strategy formulation and implementation.

Reflections on your personal growth in general

I find myself grow up tremendously in terms of technicality, maturity and emotionally for the past months. I was being exposed to the regional management meetings, local country management meeting, strategy refresh meetings, and senior management conference which have opened up my view on how the management thinks, how the numbers (performance measurement) mean, how they were translated to opportunity, growth, improvement required. I started to see the practicality side of the tools and frameworks (e.g. SWOT, Porter Five Forces Analyses, and Balance Scorecard) which I used to study in my University textbook. It has grown me from a manager who executes and delivers jobs, to a manager to understand what a business really is, how a business should be monitored and managed, how different types of personality impact on a business. People/resource management is a subject which one can never master by studying, putting the right person to the right task at the right time is always the most challenging thing, but is a skill which I still trying to learn as it is one of the main success factor to a strategy and a business.

Name : A   Role in project: Implementation Manager

Reflections on knowledge gained, personal growth and change

Objective: To reflect on whether the professional has "changed" as a result of the knowledge gained and has impacted personal growth

Subject Area: Strategy and Implementation effectiveness evaluation

Before:

Describe your understanding and knowledge of the subject area and competency to carry out an assignment

> Quantitative measurement will be my main focus for strategy implementation effectiveness evaluation. I will measure the effectiveness based on my actual financial performance against the target or goal.

Being part of the action research:

Being involved in the process of developing the process, tools and frameworks on the subject area, describe whether and how you have "changed" as a result of engaging in the development

> I started to assess more than just financial performance but from various perspectives. For example, stakeholder's reaction, the current and future market trend, the business infrastructure. A qualitative measurement is equally important as quantitative measurement. It provides the complete picture of whether a strategy is effective. Changes of market trends or needs may affect the overall financial performance and the continuous assessment of the 3 A's of business infrastructure supports the strategy.

Outcome:

If you are to undertake another assignment of Strategy and implementation effectiveness evaluation of your initiative, how will you approach it differently?

> I will setup a more regular timeline to ensure continuous evaluation, and I believe data gathering (on qualitative measurement) is not performed only when we are doing an evaluation but continuously. For instance, continuous observation, regular discussion and formal evaluation by stakeholders will help in better understanding of their view. Market trend changes rapidly all the time, staying ahead of time may help us to make sure we can adjust as needed. We may want to change some of the initial direction or decision as we may have known the market even better after being in the market.

Reflections

What are some of the limitations of the process, tools and frameworks and how can they be improved?

> Although it has been clearly defined and with standard rating system, it still requires experience in data gathering and analysis, particularly in concluding whether a strategy is effective. A more customized rating system can be implemented for a business in the respective industry.

Reflections on your personal growth in general

> Due to my assigned regional role, I dealt with people from different regions and different countries. Communication may be simple with the common language but yet difficult when every individual comes from various background, has different agenda and objective. I find myself becoming more mature as I deal with all sorts of people, as it requires strategic and reflective thinking, you may not want to create enemies but yet it is not possible to please everyone. Being calm and not take things emotionally is something I have seen myself improves a lot for the past months and I believe I am still improving now. I was once told "a master is someone who simplifies complicated matters". And, I believe one must be calm and with clear mind in order to simplify difficult condition.

Name : B

Role in project: Project Manager, Financial and Cost Management

Reflections on knowledge gained, personal growth and change

Objective: To reflect on whether the professional has "changed" as a result of the knowledge gained and has impacted personal growth

Subject Area: Strategy and Implementation effectiveness evaluation

Before:

Describe your understanding and knowledge of the subject area and competency to carry out an assignment

Role is to support the risk function in project management, financial governance and reporting at the Southeast Asia level. Msc (Mgt) and PMP certified.

Previously used to be more focused in a few key financial metrics. The typical hind side is that numbers crunching tends to overlook the testing of the project relevance back to the overall business strategy

Being part of the action research:

Being involved in the process of developing the process, tools and frameworks on the subject area, describe whether and how you have "changed" as a result of engaging in the development

The model is helpful in guiding the project team to ask a set of critical questions when evaluating our project. It serves to provide a holistic outcome whether the implementation is effective within the organization and linking back to the overall business objectives.

It allows the testing of the various key criteria as proposed in the model. By looking at the project from various perspectives allow the team to assess the feasibility and manage risk more effectively.
> Is the strategy/project suitable and relevant to support the business objective?
> Are the internal and external environment supporting the implementation?
> What are the appropriate measurements to evaluate the performance of the project?
> What are the resource capabilities and budget needed for execution?

The model also highlights the importance of change management whether there is leadership and stakeholder buy-in to ensure long-term sustainability of the project.

Outcome:

If you are to undertake another assignment of Strategy and implementation effectiveness evaluation of your initiative, how will you approach it differently?

The SIEE reinforced my mindset that **Strategy leads Implementation, and effective Execution depends on whether we have a sound Strategy**.

The need to continuously communicate with project sponsor and stakeholders to review business objectives, stakeholder acceptability and manage project risk. The SIEE will be beneficial as a useful tool in this aspect.

Reflections

What are some of the limitations of the process, tools and frameworks and how can they be improved?

The evaluation matrix could be conducted more periodically (eg. quarterly) during the implementation phase to assess and compare the change of state of the project over time.

It may be useful to allow the user to provide weightage to different criteria to better reflect the nature of different projects. For instance, while I was completing the evaluation matrix for cost management, I have excluded the factors and suitability criteria as they are already part of the financial management in the firm. An overall scoring system may also be useful to quantify the effectiveness of the strategy/project by adding up the scores in each criteria.

Reflections on your personal growth in general

The model further strengthened my project discipline and the critical need to test the acceptability of strategy with the key stakeholders before commissioning the project team to implement the project. This ensures that the project team receives the necessary top leadership and resource support during the entire project cycle (not just the beginning when interest is highest) and for the project to be successfully implemented.

Name : C
portfolio

Role(s) in Department : Manage service line

Grade: Partner

Role in project: Develop and implement strategy for service line

Reflections on knowledge gained, personal growth and change

Objective: To reflect on whether the professional has "changed" as a result of the knowledge gained and has impacted personal growth

Subject Area: Strategy Formulation

Before:

Describe your understanding and knowledge of the subject area and competency to carry out an assignment

Being part of the action research:

Being involved in the process of developing the process, tools and frameworks on the subject area, describe whether and how you have "changed" as a result of engaging in the development

Became more aware of the dynamics of cross-border collaboration. There is more than meets the eye.

Share commitment even when signed off by all parties does not automatically ensures success when the level of commitment differs with self interest.

Outcome:

If you are to undertake another assignment of Strategy Formulation now, how will you approach it differently?

Understand the constraints better before allocating resources.

Agree KPIs with the stakeholders

Communicate with the key stakeholders more regularly; and

Revisit, revise, and agree on the plan at regular intervals.

Reflections

What are some of the limitations of the process, tools and frameworks and how can they be improved?

Communications tools, channels, methods could be further improved.

Incorporate objectivity measurements.

Reflections on your personal growth in general

Improvements / growth in the area of communication.

Name : C   Role in project: Implement Service line
strategy

<u>Reflections on knowledge gained, personal growth and change</u>

Objective: To reflect on whether the professional has "changed" as a result of the
knowledge gained and has impacted personal growth

Subject Area: Strategy and Implementation effectiveness evaluation

Before:

Describe your understanding and knowledge of the subject area and competency to carry
out an assignment

<u>For a particular initiative the understanding was clear but the ability to visualize the end
result was not.</u>

Being part of the action research:

Being involved in the process of developing the process, tools and frameworks on the
subject area, describe whether and how you have "changed" as a result of engaging in
the development

<u>Do not think that the process has changed me as an individual.</u>

<u>It has given clarity to a number of issues as well as clarity to the behavior of individuals.</u>

Outcome:

If you are to undertake another assignment of Strategy and implementation effectiveness
evaluation of your initiative, how will you approach it differently?

<u>For some assignments it may be useful to define the success or failure parameters in a
more definite manner both in qualitative and quantitative manner.</u>

<u>Encourage "freedom" to explore within defined boundaries with the boundaries defined
prior to execution and agreed with the participants.</u>

Reflections

What are some of the limitations of the process, tools and frameworks and how can they be improved?

Conflicting performance requirement – challenging due to the multi-faceted role that each of the participants are given.

Risk & Reward – improved the articulation and the definition of the risk and reward system to further ensure success of the strategy.

Feedback loop - enhance the feedback loop to ensure regular two way feedback.

Reflections on your personal growth in general

Understanding that a "system" must always be defined within the context and that feedback is critical for success regardless of the type of strategy being implemented.

Name : D   Role(s) in Department : Country leader for Risk

Consulting business in Philippines

Grade: Partner, ERS   Role in project: Develop strategy for business in Ph

Reflections on knowledge gained, personal growth and change

Objective: To reflect on whether the professional has "changed" as a result of the knowledge gained and has impacted personal growth

Subject Area: Strategy Formulation

Before:

Describe your understanding and knowledge of the subject area and competency to carry out an assignment

> *Strategy is formulated based on organization's vision, objectives and specific goals. The strategy formulation process includes a study of both internal and external environments, SWOT analysis, and analysis of past performance. Based on the information coming up from the foregoing steps, strategic actions are then drawn up and agreed with all involved.*

> *Some competencies present to carry out an assignment if given the process, tools and framework.*

Being part of the action research:

Being involved in the process of developing the process, tools and frameworks on the subject area, describe whether and how you have "changed" as a result of engaging in the development

> *Involvement in the process made me more aware about the strategies that were formulated and reasons behind them; as well as the importance of implementing such strategies in deciding and making actions towards the achievement of objectives/goals.*

Outcome:

If you are to undertake another assignment of Strategy Formulation now, how will you approach it differently?

> *Will put more effort in analyzing both the internal and external environments, and do better in obtaining more reliable information, especially on external environment (including competitors and target clients). Consult colleagues and get their thoughts/insights on the strategies formulated for consideration in improving the strategies.*

Reflections

What are some of the limitations of the process, tools and frameworks and how can they be improved?

> *There should be more detailed information about the external environment, i.e. prospective customers and competitors.*

Reflections on your personal growth in general

> *As in a business organization, I think it is good to also define our respective missions and visions as part of personal growth, and then formulate and implement strategies that will guide actions for achieving objectives. Without clear objectives/goals, achieving personal growth will be a real challenge.*

Name : D   Role in project: Implement strategy in Ph

<u>Reflections on knowledge gained, personal growth and change</u>

Objective: To reflect on whether the professional has "changed" as a result of the knowledge gained and has impacted personal growth

Subject Area: Strategy and Implementation effectiveness evaluation

Before:

Describe your understanding and knowledge of the subject area and competency to carry out an assignment

> *Strategy is like a direction or roadmap to the desired state or to meet objectives of the organization; or a bridge between where we are currently and where we want to go. Strategy is an action or collection of actions that we take in order to achieve our goals in the organization.*
>
> *Implementation effectiveness evaluation is the process of checking or measuring the effectiveness of the way a strategy was implemented. The evaluation process involves comparing actual performance versus benchmarks or goals, and then analyzing the variance and making corrective action as appropriate.*
>
> *Little competency on the subject area. While actual results were monitored monthly compared to goals, revisiting the strategy implementation effectiveness based on such performance was not yet performed in PH.*

Being part of the action research:

Being involved in the process of developing the process, tools and frameworks on the subject area, describe whether and how you have "changed" as a result of engaging in the development

> *I realized that it is something more than just comparing actual performance figures vs plans - that is analyzing the variance and going back to assess whether the way the strategies were implemented was effective – and then make changes as appropriate.*

Outcome:

If you are to undertake another assignment of Strategy and implementation effectiveness evaluation of your initiative, how will you approach it differently?

> *In reviewing performance results, there should be an analysis of what went well/wrong with the strategy and the manner in which they were implemented, and take the necessary corrective action in a timely manner. This evaluation process will serve as good input in the next planning session.*

Reflections

What are some of the limitations of the process, tools and frameworks and how can they be improved?

> *Too much focus on the numbers. Performance review should include an assessment of whether strategies remain appropriate and supportive of the achievement of company goals considering the changing business environment.*

Reflections on your personal growth in general

> *Strategy, implementation of such, and evaluating effectiveness of implementation collectively, is key to the achievement of objectives/goals, whether organizational or personal. For me to improve my business and achieve personal growth, I should be more serious and focused on this subject area.*

Name : E Role(s) in Department : SEA ERS Healthcare Lead

Grade: ERS Director Role in project: LSHC Subject Matter Expert / COE

Reflections on knowledge gained, personal growth and change

Objective: To reflect on whether the professional has "changed" as a result of the knowledge gained and has impacted personal growth

Subject Area: Strategy Formulation

Before:

Describe your understanding and knowledge of the subject area and competency to carry out an assignment

Subject area competency (healthcare) originates from clinical practice, hospital management and health insurance operations background / work experience.

Being part of the action research:

Being involved in the process of developing the process, tools and frameworks on the subject area, describe whether and how you have "changed" as a result of engaging in the development

Currently more aware of the deliberate and stepwise process involved in the task of a strategy formulation exercise together with the available tools and methodology.

Outcome:

If you are to undertake another assignment of Strategy Formulation now, how will you approach it differently?

Emphasis will be place not only on the formulation part of the targeted strategy but also in the probability of success in terms of the forward implementation of the strategy.

Reflections

What are some of the limitations of the process, tools and frameworks and how can they be improved?

Certain variables are difficult to specify / determine at the beginning of the formulation process. Method should allow easy revision of plan when new information / variables are taken into consideration.

Reflections on your personal growth in general

Improve strategic thinking skill and increase awareness of accountability towards the success of the strategic initiative.

Name : E   Role in project: LSHC Subject Matter Expert / COE

Reflections on knowledge gained, personal growth and change

Objective: To reflect on whether the professional has "changed" as a result of the knowledge gained and has impacted personal growth

Subject Area: Strategy and Implementation effectiveness evaluation

Before:

Describe your understanding and knowledge of the subject area and competency to carry out an assignment

Somewhat Limited exposure to methodical strategy formulation exercise from previous work experiences.

Being part of the action research:

Being involved in the process of developing the process, tools and frameworks on the subject area, describe whether and how you have "changed" as a result of engaging in the development

Involvement in the process has made me more accountable to the successful outcome of the strategy formulated at the end of the process.

Outcome:

If you are to undertake another assignment of Strategy and implementation effectiveness evaluation of your initiative, how will you approach it differently?

To apply described methodology and approach from the described strategy formulation exercise.

Reflections

What are some of the limitations of the process, tools and frameworks and how can they be improved?

Referring to the experience with the exercise; more details on the process, tools and frameworks can be explained with more detail for easier understanding.

Reflections on your personal growth in general

A valuable learning experience.

Appendix 5 – Financial year 2010 result

Figure A5-1 Reproduced financial report on RCD (ERS) business for financial year ending 2010

	Actual	Plan	Variance	Prior	Growth
Revenue ('000s)	15,496	28,558	-45.7%	22,695	-31.7%
CSS					
Gross Margin					
Overhead					
Earnings	(293)				
Partner headcount	11	11	-2.8%	10	2.6%
CS headcount	339	401	-15.4%	327	3.8%
Billable hours	315,277	462,083	-31.8%	368,972	-14.6%
Hours per person	930	1,152	-19.3%	1,129	-17.7%
Utilization					
Rev / hour					
Rev / fee earner					
Rev / partner					
Earnings / partner					
Gross Margin %					
Net Margin %	-1.9%				

Note: The earning loss of USD293,000 was revalued at USD344,000 in the 2011 records for comparison purposes.

Source: internal Deloitte communication, 2012

Appendix 6 – Project One - Summary of SWOT Analysis

The SWOT Analysis clearly identifies significant performance gaps in RCD SEA.

Table A6-1 SWOT analysis of Project 1

Factor	Sub factor	Description	S	W	O	T
Financial		3 of the bigger markets (account for 80% of revenue) underperformed due to management weaknesses. Over dependence on Singapore (60%) is risky		Y	Y	Y
Market and customers	General economy	SEA Macro-economic environment is favorable for demand generation	Y		Y	
	Competition	Winning work amongst Big 4. Can leverage on the global brand. Tier 2 firms applying pressure on rates improvement	Y		Y	Y
	Competitive strategies	Lack of clear and precise go-to-market strategies		Y	Y	
	Key Accounts	Key Accounts concept and implementation		Y	Y	
	Services Footprint	Limited Services Footprint and ready for growth		Y	Y	
	Innovation	Services are "Me-Too" and lack of differentiation. Leverage global investments on new and extended service lines			Y	
Organisation	Management Structure	Ineffective structures, unclear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. If structure did exist, not fully engaged or operational		Y	Y	
Culture	Management KPI	Unbalanced KPI leading to rogue behavior		Y		Y
	Management Morale	Staff attrition is high.		Y	Y	Y
	Mindset	Most senior practitioners embrace Task		Y	Y	

		culture. A" Do-ers" mentality.				
	Attitude	Willing Learners	Y		Y	
Processes	Strategic	Exists but not institutionalized		Y	Y	
	Operational	Front end are well designed and executed	Y		Y	
		Backend processes like scheduling are not optimized and therefore inefficient. Poor backend processes can also end up in staff attrition			Y	Y
	Quality	Quality embedded in the way things are done	Y		Y	
			5	9	15	5

Appendix 7 - SIEE Framework: Four stage evaluation details

Stage 1 - Plan

Plan Stage	Activities in each evaluation stage	Activity carried out	Proposed Improvement
SIEE Model	Revisit Strategy & its rationale. Define evaluation criteria as per model	Review Strategic Initiatives and choose the initiative which is of importance to business	No change
Performance Indicators	Research & Describe performance indicators relevant to strategy	Define the criteria, success factors and performance indicators of I&CA service line	Research & Describe criteria, success factors and KPI relevant to strategy
Enabling Methodology & Tools	Research and prescribe methodology & tools to assess business outcomes as measures of SIEE	Predominant use of spreadsheets. The business environment scan did use PESTEL or SWOT analysis methods	No change
Analysis & Interpretation	Plan the analysis steps	It might surface that the evaluation success factors need to be changed to better reflect the evaluation	Pilot the evaluation and reflect on success factors and KPI appropriateness
Learning for Effectiveness Improvement	Describe learning outcomes	Proposed learning is to check that the framework and details are accurate and usable. Review the business outcomes against strategy objectives and check if objectives are being met	Outline proposed Learning Objectives

	Activities in each evaluation stage	Activity carried out	Proposed Improvement
SIEE Model	Perform evaluation using the SIEE model and maturity matrix	Continuous monitoring Business Outcomes such as results and stakeholder reaction during informal and formal channels	Continuously track business outcomes and Stakeholder reaction
Performance Indicators	Apply, test and validate the appropriateness of indicators	Experienced difficulty in applying some success factors and KPIs to judge business outcomes	Apply success factors and KPIs to judge business outcomes
Enabling Methodology & Tools	Apply the methodology & tools to evaluate Strategy & Implementation	Predominant use of spreadsheets and official business reports	No change
Analysis & Interpretation	Perform the tests and reflect on the results	Question is also whether it is the right KPI and is stakeholder reaction responding to the appropriate KPI	Perform the evaluation against Criteria and Business Outcomes
Learning for Effectiveness Improvement	Develop Risk Mitigation Plan Adjust Strategy	Risk Review conducted to ensure quality of implementation	Perform Risk Review and develop mitigation plan on strategy and implementation

	Activities in each evaluation stage	Activity carried out	Proposed Improvement
SIEE Model	Revisit environment, suitability, feasibility and acceptability criteria	Adjust the mix of evaluation criteria to determine if the evaluation matrix was holistic	Revisit Suitability, Environment, Feasibility and Acceptability Evaluation Criteria
Performance Indicators	Due diligence on KPI and adjust as necessary	Reflected on the success factors and KPIs.	Due diligence on success factors and KPI
Enabling Methodology & Tools	Review appropriateness and completeness of methodologies and tools	Little use of tools and methodology to evaluate. Tools are kept to a minimum	Research and Adjust on use of methodology and tools
Analysis & Interpretation	Reflect on strategy and implementation effectiveness	Bulk of the work is in this activity. Evaluate the Strategy & Implementation progress	Reflect Strategy & Implementation Effectiveness
Learning for Effectiveness Improvement	Demonstrate Leadership, take remedial actions	Management takes accountability of the evaluation	No change

Stage 4 – Refine

	Activities in each evaluation stage	Activity carried out	Proposed Improvement
SIEE Model	Adjust Strategy & Implementation details	Act on the feedback as per this activity which is adjusting the framework and model	Adjust SIEE model elements if needed
Performance Indicators	Adjust KPI and thresholds if needed	Review the benchmarks set for KPIs	Adjust KPIs thresholds if needed
Enabling Methodology & Tools	Adjust the methodology & Tools as appropriate	No changes noted during the execution of this stage	No change
Analysis & Interpretation	Revisit strategy objectives and re-plan if need	Framework and actual strategy adjusted including business case	No change
Learning for Effectiveness Improvement	Communicate success & failures. Motivate stakeholders	Introduce more change management activities like field visits by staff to increase staff involvement after survey suggested that staff did not understand the process changes even with multiple channels of communication	Communicate success & failures. Monitor and Motivate stakeholders

Appendix 8 – Evaluation rating of 14 initiatives

	Strategic Initiative	Type	pOEI	cOEI	cOEI vs pOEI	Comments
A	Improve practitioners utilisation	S	2.0	2.6	0.6	Increasing utilisation increases productivity of practitioners
B	Integrate TH FS and ERS	S	1.5	1.9	0.4	Leverage two subscale complementary businesses
C	Deploy cost management	S	2.5	2.8	0.3	Operational excellence strategy
D	Increase learning	S	2.0	2.4	0.4	Increase organisation skills
E	Increase standard rates	O	3.0	3.0	Same	Focus on right client segments who appreciate value.
F	Implement Talent strategy	S	1.5	1.4	-0.1	Same as Initiative D
G	Change service delivery model to improve productivity	S	2.0	2.5	0.5	Operational excellence strategy
H	Introduce Centralized Support to increase efficiency	S	1.5	1.8	0.3	Operational excellence strategy
I	Differentiate through centre of excellence COE(LSHC)	S	3.0	2.7	-0.3	Market differentiation strategy
J	Increase market eminence	S	3.0	2.1	-0.9	Improve branding
K	Govern ERS Philippines more effectively to improve performance	O	2.0	2.0	Same	Structure follows strategy. Implement governance
L	Quality as a focused initiative	O	2.5	2.6	0.1	Operational excellence strategy
M	Increase governance in Business unit -ERS TH	O	2.0	2.2	0.2	Structure follows strategy. Implement governance
N	Increase Business	S	2.0	2.4	0.4	Part of go-to-market

	Development capabilities					strategy
	Average		**2.2**	**2.3**		

Legend

S= Subjective

O = Objective

Appendix 9 – Financial Year 2011 result

Figure A9-1 Financial report 2011

US$ 000's	Actual	Plan	Variance	Prior	Growth
Revenue	19,091	22,433	–15%	16,060	19%
CS Salaries					0%
Gross Margin					73%
Overhead					15%
Earnings					
Partner FTE HC					23%
CS FTE HC					–6%
Billable Hours					9%
Hours per FTE					15%
Utilization					690 bps
Revenue/Hour					9%
Revenue/FTE					26%
Revenue/FTE Prtnr					–4%
Earnings/FTE Prtnr					
Gross Margin %					1170 bps
Net Margin %					1260 bps

*Shows local or USD depending on selection.

Source: internal Deloitte published material, 2011

Appendix 10 – Financial Year 2012 result

Figure A10-1 Email to communicate 2012 result

From: Yap, Janson TH (SG - Singapore)
Sent: Sunday, 15 July, 2012 8:57 PM
To: SEA ERS Partners
Subject: FY12 report

Partners,

I extract this section of the FY12 report as distributed on Friday. A great outcome.

ERS ended the year with a strong 15% Revenue growth of $3M, led by double digits growth in both Technology Risk (25%) and Business Risk (23%) service lines. Business Risk grew marginally above Plan. Furthermore, CSS growth was flat, and Overhead costs reduced significantly from Prior Year. As a result, Net Margin grew dramatically over Prior Year and exceeded the original Plan.

Regards

Yap Janson TH, CISA

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Please consider the environment before printing.

Appendix 11 – CISA Examination Result

Figure A11-1 Extract of email on CISA examination notification

Dear Mr. Janson Teow Hiong Yap:

RE: CISA Exam Result Notification -- Exam ID: 10654321

At your request (per your exam registration authorization), this email is being sent to notify you of your December 2010 CISA exam result.

We are pleased to inform you that you successfully PASSED the exam with a total scaled score of 500. A scaled score of 450 or higher is required to pass, which represents the minimum consistent standard of knowledge as established by ISACA's CISA Certification Committee.

PLEASE NOTE: Additional information is NOT available within your ISACA online profile. In the next few days, your official score letter will be sent by postal mail to your Preferred Mailing address (BUSINESS). If you need to change this preference, please update your profile by going to www.isaca.org. You may access your profile by clicking on myISACA > myProfile > Account-Certification CPE-Demographic Info. Click the Edit button at the bottom of the page to submit your changes.Again, congratulations on passing the CISA exam, we look forward to having you join the more than 80,000 professionals worldwide who have earned the CISA credential. We wish you all the best in your professional pursuits.

Best Regards,

CISA Certification Committee

ISACA: Trust in, and value from, information systems

# Appendix 12 – Chosen Archetype of Leaders and followers for RCD

Figure A12-1 General & Soldiers archetype chosen for RCD in 2011

Organisational Archetype :As One – General & Soldiers

"The most successful generals are able to not only visualise strategic opportunities, but also to use their key soldiers to execute more tactical and detailed missions" (Baghai & Quigley, 2011)

This As One archetype for ERS has paid off because:

- Coordinated activities across large groups of people that cannot communicate with each other directly

- Full confidence that our strategy is ready to be implemented

- Place a premium on high efficiency and fast deployment
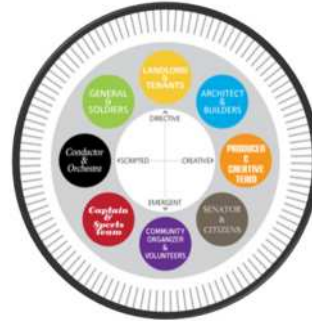
Source: SEA Partners 2011 Meeting – ERS session

Figure A12-2 Migrating to Architect & Builders archetype

The shifting of the archetype to Architect & Builders

From General & Soldiers to :

As One – Architect & Builders

" Architects have a crystal clear idea of what the future could be and their insatiable drive to achieve it.

To be successful, builders must work across new boundaries and take on new challenges as a team" (Baghai & Quigley, 2011)

This As One archetype for ERS has paid off because:

- A dream of building a USD50m business

- Want to do something that's never been done before

- A concept that needs to be refined by local experts to make it fit for expansion

- Have a model of continuous innovation that requires people to push beyond normal boundaries

Source: The Straits Times, May 19, 2012

Appendix 13 – Deloitte Singapore RCD receives three awards

Figure A13-1First Award in 2012

Computer Associates Partner Award 2012

Awarded to Deloitte Singapore RCD

DBS Security Project

Source: Internal communication, 2012

Figure A13-2 Second Award in 2012

Symantec Partner Award 2012

Awarded to Deloitte Singapore RCD

Symantec Top Consulting Award

Source: Internal communication, 2012

Figure A13-3 Third Award in 2012

Deloitte Green Dot Award 2012

Awarded to Deloitte SEA RCD

Life Sciences and Healthcare Industry Best Branding Initiative

Source: Internal communication, 2012

Appendix 14 – Extract of email on Inter-department Games

Figure A14-1 Extract of internal email on Inter-Dependent Games

From: Yap, Janson TH (SG - Singapore)
Sent: Thursday, 23 August, 2012 8:59 AM
To: Wong, Christopher (SG - Singapore); SG ERS Group; SG Clients & Markets; SG IT; SG Petroleum Services Group; SG Finance; SG HR; SG PMO/PAO; SG Learning
Subject: IDG - TEAM BLEUS!!! - A winning alliance

Team,

I learnt an important management lesson yesterday – the power of the right strategic alliance. The ERS and Internal Services team have the right spirit, chemistry and skills to secure an important winning position at the IDG which concluded yesterday. I was told we achieved the prestigious 2nd place at the league table. This is a great finish. ERS could not have accomplish this success without this strategic alliance.

Our SG ERS Partners are very grateful to the Internal Services team led by James and company for their effort and contributions. Equally important are our various ERS teams led by the various games captains and overall captain- in-charge, Christopher Wong. The cheering squad including the partners and directors was just great.

To all of you, well done. Please take a moment to reflect on this momentous win.

Regards

Yap Janson TH, CISA

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