

Syrian Arab Republic	 الجامعة الافتراضية السورية SYRIAN VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY	الجمهورية العربية السورية
Ministry of Higher Education		وزارة التعليم العالي
Syrian Virtual University		الجامعة الافتراضية السورية

Strategy Concepts and Cases

Full Module Title	Strategy: Concepts and Cases
Module Code	MBA_ST106_F16/2017
Module Level	Master
Department	Business Administration
Length	One semester
Module Director	Dr. Majd Sakkour (Email:t_msakkour@svuonline.org) (majdsakor@yahoo.com)
Host Course	MBA
University	SVU
Site	Damascus, Syria.

1.1 Introduction

1. This module concentrates on strategy and the strategic management process. Building on the material presented in the core modules, this module integrates relevant theories and concepts and presents students with the models and frameworks required to develop competitive strategies capable of delivering business success in the global economy. Variety of strategy topics covered such as introducing strategy concepts, mission and objectives, strategic analyses of the

internal and external environment, identifying attractive business opportunities, direction and method of strategic options, strategic evaluation and implementation.

1.2 MODULE AIMS

This module aims to:

1. Develop a critical understanding of the major issues of strategy and problems associated with developing competitive strategies within the local and international environment.
2. Equip students with the tools and mental discipline to analyse complex business situations and craft appropriate strategies capable of delivering business success.
3. Enable participants to develop a clearly articulated and practical strategy as a means to ensure a successful sustainable social organisation.

1.3 LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this module the student will be able to:

I. Knowledge and Understanding

2. Demonstrate his/her understanding of strategic principles by reference to relevant current business practice
3. Show a critical awareness of the nature of the changing business environment
4. Describe the nature and relevance of business strategy with respect to attaining and sustaining competitive advantage
5. Identify the main stages in the strategic development and implementation process
6. Apply the knowledge of strategic principles acquired in this module to his/her study of other modules

ii. Skills

By the end of the module students should have developed skills in:

1. Communication and literacy: assignment, exam and seminars will deploy range of communication skills. E.g. report writing.

2. Independent Learning and Working: assignment will require student to carry out in-depth research on an organisation.
3. Information and Communication Technology: use of Internet to conduct research, limited use of spreadsheets.
4. Specific vocational skills: The module introduces students to the realities of determining policy within organisations.

1.4 INDICATIVE SYLLABUS CONTENT

Lecture Number	Lecture Topic	Lecture Contents	Lecture Type
Lecture 1	Introducing the Strategy Module	1.1 Introduction 1.2 Module Aims 1.3 Learning Outcomes 1.4 Indicative Syllabus content 1.5 Assessment Criteria 1.6 Teaching and Learning Methods 1.7 Assessment Methods and Weightings 1.8 Instructions	Lecture
Lecture 2	Understanding Strategy	2.1 What is strategy? 2.2 Levels of Strategy 2.3 Schools of Strategy 2.4 Goals, objectives and Mission Statements	Lecture
Lecture 3	The Strategic Management Process	3.1 The Major Elements of the Strategic Management Process 3.2 Identification of Stakeholders 3.3 Decision Making Process 3.4 Strategic Leadership	Lecture
Lecture 4	Empirical Session	4.1 Some Concepts and Considerations in Research Methodology 4.2 Steps for Conducting A Case Study 4.3 Research Design	Case Studies

		4.4 Data Collection Methods 4.5 Data Testing 4.6 Case Studies Presentation	
Lecture 5	External Analysis	5.1 PESTEL Analysis 5.2 Porter's 5 Forces model 5.3 Porter's Diamond 5.4 Michael Porter's key books	Lecture
Lecture 6	Internal Analysis	6.1 Firm's Resources and Capabilities 6.2 SWOT Analysis 6.3 Value Chain Analysis 6.4 Case Studies 6.5 Benchmarking	Lecture and Mini Cases Studies
Lecture 7	Understanding Business-Level Strategy (Part One)	7.1 Introducing Business strategy 7.2 Generic business strategies 7.3 Critical Success Factor 7.4 Core Competency	Lecture
Lecture 8	Understanding Business-Level Strategy (Part Two)	8.1 Industry Life Cycle 8.2 The Growth-Share Matrix and Portfolio Analysis (the BCG Matrix) 8.3 The Product/Market Expansion Grid (The Ansoff Matrix) 8.4 References for Further Reading	Lecture With Mini Cases
Lecture 9	Empirical Cases	9.1 Mini-Cases about industry life cycle 9.2 How to Use The Growth-Share Matrix and Portfolio Analysis (the BCG Matrix) 9.3 How to Use the Product/Market Expansion Grid (the Ansoff Matrix) 9.4 Case Study: Experian "Entering a new market with a new product"	Case Studies
		10.1 What is Corporate Strategy 10.2 Strategic Group	

Lecture 10	Understanding Corporate Strategy	10.3 Vertical Integration 10.4 Vertical Expansion 10.5 Related Diversification or Unrelated Diversification 10.6 Strategic Alliances	Lecture
Lecture 11	Evaluating Strategy	11.1 Introduction? 11.2 The Process of Strategy Evaluation 11.3 Evaluation Approaches, Purposes, Methods and Designs 11.4 Strategy Evaluation Criteria 11.5 An Evaluation Case	Lecture
Lecture 12	Globalization Strategies	12.1 Introduction 12.2 What Is Different about International Marketing 12.3 Objectives of Market Entry 12.4 Modes of Market Entry	Lecture
Lecture 13	Society and Businesses	13.1 The impact of business activity on society 13.2 Corporate Governance 13.3 Social Responsibility 13.4 Business Ethics	Lecture
Lecture 14	Assignment Presentation	To be identified	Presentation
References for Further Reading			

1.5 TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

1. The module will be delivered through lectures, case studies, class debates and discussions.
2. Class participation is critical to learning and demonstrating proficiency in strategic management. Therefore, students are expected to contribute to class discussion by sharing their viewpoint, comments and questions. Active student

involvement in the learning process is an integral and essential part of the teaching pedagogy.

3. The case method will be used extensively in the course. Students are expected to prepare the case by reading, answering the study questions and researching additional sources such as the annual report, and companies' websites. More importantly, students are required to evaluate company strategies and provide options and recommendations.

1.6 ASSESSMENT METHODS AND WEIGHTINGS

There will be three assessments with the following aims:

Assessment 1: Individual/pair assignment 40% of grade (Assignment/Standard: 1000 words).

An individual assignment based on a "real-time" business strategy cases and designed to assess the students' ability to analyse a complex, volatile business environment and to craft strategies to successfully respond to both the environment and the actions of competitors using the finite resources of their "company".

Assessment 2: Final Exam - 60% of grade.

It will test students' knowledge and their ability to generate, synthesise and evaluate strategies and to critically appraise the actions of companies.

1.7 ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES

Students will be assessed on:

1. Their depth of knowledge and systematic, theoretically informed, understanding of complex strategic issues affecting organisations and their competitors, using appropriate theoretical frameworks.
2. Their capacity to apply this knowledge and understanding to the critical analysis of problems and to select appropriate strategies.

3. Their ability to write clearly, economically and persuasively in presenting the background to and nature of a problem, the alternative explanations of and perspectives on that problem, the evaluation of alternative solutions and the articulation of a preferred solution and its implications.

1.8 INSTRUCTIONS

1. Outcome Assessment Rational:

Outcome assessment is continuous and formative. It occurs through weekly presentations by periodical written reports and group discussion; giving students the opportunity to demonstrate the extent to which they have developed a critical, theoretically-informed understanding of the subject matter; through students' participation and performance in the strategic marketing simulation; and through their individual critical review of their performance. A final case study analysis is the basis of a more formative assessment whilst still providing a further opportunity to reinforce the learning that has already taken place.

2. Linkage

Students will have attained very good strategy and business skills, the ability to assess the impact of the business environment, strategic options and their implementation. It should also give them a very good understanding of their role in the overall business issues, a valuable asset as they hopefully progress through the various levels of management in their careers.

3. Electronic Resources

Students are expected to carry out a lot of background reading and require appropriate library skills to source relevant books and specialized electronic journals. For example:

www.sciencedirect.com, www.jstor.com, www.businessweek.com

4. Strategy Reading Source

1. Lectures' note and handouts

2. Further reading for greater depth:

The following items are recommended as the most valuable in current scholarship:

De Wit, B., Meyer, R, 2004, *Strategy: Process, Content, Context: An International Perspective*, Third Edition, Thomson Learning: London.

Finally, P., 2000, *Strategic Management: An Introduction to Business and Corporate Strategy*, FT Prentice Hall: London

Johnson, G., Scholes, K., 2002, *Exploring Corporate Strategy: Text and Cases*” Sixth Edition: FT Prentice Hall, London.

Mintzberg, H., 1994, *The Rise and fall of Strategic Planning*, Prentice Hall: London.

Goold, M., Campbell, A., Alexander, M, 1994, *Corporate-Level Strategy*, John Wiley: London.

Porter, M., 1980, *Competitive Strategy*, Free Press: New York.

Porter, M., 1985, *Competitive Advantage*, Free Press: New York.

Porter, M., 1998, *On Competition*, Harvard Business School Press: Boston.

Web references, journals and other:

Learners are encouraged to scan in journals for good-quality articles relevant to their post-module assignment. For example:

- Strategic Management Journal
- British Journal of Management
- Sloan Management Review
- Long Range Planning