



The Strategic Product Manager

Strategy, Creativity, and Leadership, LLC

Subtitle:

Having a **Product Strategy** does not necessarily make you a **strategic product manager**.

Ambitious product managers are often told that they need to “get out of the weeds” and become “more strategic” in order to advance their careers.

But what exactly does that *mean*?

The absence of more specific guidance on “being strategic” can both result from and create unhealthy dynamics.

Mutual Frustration Around Strategy and Performance

Aspiring Leader ***"Get More Strategic"***

- Unclear career path
- Variable compensation incentives
- Mixed messages from leadership
- Managing business risk

Existing Leader ***"Drive the Business"***

- Executive misalignment
- Changing priorities
- Culture and Values risk
- Unsatisfactory progress toward Mission

“Nobody really knows what
‘Strategy’ is.”

The Economist, March 1993

Really?

My Definition of Strategy:

the intentional deployment of
particular assets and capabilities to
achieve desired results.

Let's Dig Into Some of the Language

Language	Meaning
Intentional	...as opposed to unconsidered, accidental, or habitual
Deployment	Action-oriented; driven to and measured by execution
Particular	Differentiating vs. non-differentiating
Assets and Capabilities	Attentive to value chains and value creation (customer's view)
Desired Results	Balancing three time horizons

General Strategic Orientation

1. Higher levels of abstraction, e.g. meta-data over data
2. Change over continuity
3. Future rather than present or past



My Practice

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- I began my career as a teacher and thrive in learning environments.
- I have focused my career on matters of strategy when others struggled to find the time and orientation.
- I believe that formulating, communicating, and executing strategy is foundational to scaling leadership in growing organizations.