

Problems Of Using Modern Strategic Methods In Organizational Management

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Abstract: Contemporary strategic management provides an extensive array of methodologies and instruments, including competitive positioning models, scenario planning, the balanced scorecard, dynamic capabilities, and strategy-as-practice frameworks. The idea behind these methods is that they will help businesses deal with changes in the environment, globalization, and the rise of digital technology. In practice, however, many organizations struggle to use them effectively. Empirical studies consistently show gaps between formal strategic plans and day-to-day decisions, low implementation rates and widespread scepticism about the usefulness of sophisticated strategic frameworks. The purpose of this article is to analyse the main problems of using modern strategic methods in organizational management and to explain why the promise of contemporary strategic frameworks is often only partially realised. The study is based on a narrative review of the literature on strategic planning, competitive strategy, balanced scorecard implementations and the strategy-as-practice perspective. It synthesises findings from classic works by Porter and Mintzberg with more recent research on strategy implementation, dynamic capabilities and performance measurement systems. The results show that problems happen at four levels that are all connected: there is a conceptual mismatch between universal methods and local context, there are organizational and cultural barriers to implementation, there are information and analytical limitations, and there are structural tensions between static tools and dynamic environments. The article concludes that the primary issue is not the obsolescence of contemporary methods, but rather their de-contextualized and ceremonial application, which severs the link between formal strategy and actual managerial practice.

Keywords: Strategic management; strategic methods; strategy implementation; balanced scorecard; competitive strategy; strategy-as-practice.

Introduction: Since the 1980s, strategic management has been enriched by a broad repertoire of analytical and planning methods. Porter's models of industry analysis and generic competitive strategies were very useful for helping businesses find their place in the competitive landscape. They quickly became the most important sources of information for business schools and consultants. The introduction of performance measurement frameworks like the balanced scorecard aimed to convert strategy into a unified collection of financial and non-financial metrics, thereby bridging the perceived discrepancies between strategic objectives and operational outcomes. More recent developments, including dynamic capabilities, blue ocean thinking and the strategy-as-practice

perspective, responded to growing environmental turbulence, digital disruption and the recognition that strategy is as much about everyday activities as about formal plans.

Despite this methodological richness, many organizations still experience dissatisfaction with their strategic processes. Surveys and case studies indicate that a considerable percentage of strategic plans are only partially executed, executives are skeptical about the actual influence of planning cycles, and employees frequently view strategy tools as bureaucratic obligations rather than valuable guidance. Mintzberg's important criticism of strategic planning explained how formal planning systems, which were first thought to be the "one best way" to make strategy, often turned

into rigid, analytical exercises that had nothing to do with learning or new ideas. Research on balanced scorecard initiatives similarly records persistent challenges concerning the delineation of indicators, the establishment of cascading objectives, data acquisition, and the incorporation of the scorecard into managerial practices.

The gap between the theoretical potential of modern strategic methods and their observed use in organizations raises an important problem for both scholars and practitioners. On one hand, the methods themselves have been repeatedly validated as intellectually robust and practically useful when applied with sensitivity to context. On the other hand, repeated implementation failures and ritualistic use suggest that there are structural obstacles to their effective adoption. Public organizations and enterprises in emerging economies encounter additional challenges linked to institutional complexity, resource constraints and rapidly changing environments.

The aim of this article is to explore these problems systematically. The primary research inquiry can be articulated as: what are the principal factors that render contemporary strategic methodologies challenging to implement effectively in organizational management? Managers who want to avoid using trendy tools without thinking about them, consultants who plan strategic interventions, and policymakers who want to get public institutions to do strategic planning all need to answer this question. The article enhances the literature by synthesizing insights from various research domains—competitive strategy, performance measurement, and strategy-as-practice—while emphasizing prevalent challenges that transcend sectors and national contexts.

The study utilizes a narrative literature review, deemed suitable for amalgamating diverse research strands without limiting the analysis to a restrictive methodology or a singular organizational type. This method is commonly employed in strategic management when authors aim to integrate theoretical arguments, conceptual critiques, and empirical findings from various paradigms.

The review was structured into four groups of sources. The first group of books was mostly about competitive strategy and strategic planning. It included Porter's work on industry analysis and competitive advantage and Mintzberg's criticism of formal planning systems. The second group of papers looked at problems with putting strategies into action. This included survey-based studies and case studies of private and public organizations that have trouble turning strategic goals

into changes in how things are done. The third cluster focused on the balanced scorecard and related performance measurement frameworks, with particular attention to publications that analyse barriers, limitations and failure factors. The fourth group looked at work related to the strategy-as-practice movement, which sees strategy as something people do through specific practices rather than something organizations have in the form of documents.

Sources were identified via database searches employing key terms such as "strategy implementation problems," "strategic planning challenges," "balanced scorecard barriers," and "strategy as practice," as well as through citation tracing from extensively referenced articles and books. Conceptual relevance to the problem of using strategic methods in real organizations, rather than statistical representativeness, guided selection. Both private and public sector studies were evaluated, as numerous implementation challenges manifest across sectors.

The analysis was done in two parts. In the initial phase, the author identified the primary challenges reported by each source regarding the utilization of strategic methods, categorizing these challenges as conceptual, organizational, informational, or environmental. During the second stage, the extracted problems were compared across different methods and sectors to find common themes and underlying causes. This interpretive process yielded four overarching categories of problems, which are delineated in the Results section and subsequently examined in the context of current discussions in strategic management.

One significant issue highlighted in the literature is the propensity to embrace contemporary strategic methodologies as universal best practices without adequate customization to the organization's unique context. Competitive strategy frameworks like Porter's five forces and generic strategies were mostly made by looking at industrial markets in developed economies. They assume that industry boundaries are fairly stable, competitors are easy to spot, and market data is reliable. When managers in environments that are very dynamic, technologically unstable, or institutionally fluid try to use these models in a mechanical way, they often find that the boundaries between industries are not clear, the data is not complete, and the frameworks' static assumptions are not true because things are changing too quickly.

There are also similar conceptual gaps in how the balanced scorecard is used. Kaplan and Norton suggested the scorecard as a way to turn strategy into

a balanced set of measures from the points of view of finance, customers, internal processes, and learning. However, research from Scandinavia, the Middle East, and Asia indicates that organizations often find it challenging to formulate coherent strategies that can be effectively broken down into quantifiable objectives, particularly in the public and non-profit sectors where goals are numerous and occasionally unclear. Consequently, indicators are either articulated in excessively broad terms or represent current reporting obligations rather than the strategic objectives of the organization. This turns the scorecard into a collection of performance measures with new names instead of a real strategic management system.

The literature on strategy-as-practice adds another layer to this issue. Case studies of strategy workshops and planning cycles demonstrate that organizations frequently regard strategic methodologies as performative rituals designed to appease external stakeholders or fulfill internal expectations, rather than facilitating authentic strategic contemplation. When managers privately doubt how useful analytical tools and templates are to the real world of the organization, they still fill them out to make documents that stand for reason and control. This symbolic use of modern methods can go along with informal, emergent strategies that really do make decisions. This makes a gap between formal strategic talk and real management practice.

A second large group of problems has to do with the organizational and cultural conditions that make it hard to use strategic methods effectively. Research on strategy implementation in both small and large enterprises reveals a uniform array of challenges, such as inadequate leadership commitment, disjointed communication, insufficient engagement of middle managers and employees, and a lack of alignment between strategy and incentive structures. In these situations, even well-thought-out strategic plans don't lead to coordinated action because people in the organization don't agree on what the most important strategic goals are or don't see them as valid.

Research on the public sector highlights additional obstacles, including entrenched professional cultures, politicized decision-making, and administrative procedures that limit managerial autonomy. Leskaj's examination of strategic management in public entities reveals that planning documents frequently lack integration with budgetary procedures and human resource policies, thereby hindering strategic approaches from shaping resource distribution and daily conduct. When ministries and agencies use balanced scorecards, they run into similar problems. Hierarchical structures and strict procedures make

feedback loops slower and make it harder to use performance data for strategic learning.

The culture of the organization is also very important. Contemporary strategic methodologies rely on the premises of transparency, the readiness to confront uncomfortable information, and the openness to experiment with innovative approaches. But in companies where blame is common, trust is low, or power distance is high, status and avoiding risk may take over strategic discussions. In these situations, the use of advanced methods can even make defensive behaviors worse, as managers use planning rituals and quantitative indicators to protect themselves instead of openly looking at strategic options.

Modern strategic methods require a lot of information. To do competitive analysis, you need a lot of information about your competitors, customers, suppliers, and technology trends. Balanced scorecard systems need dependable, up-to-date metrics for many different aspects of performance. Scenario planning needs a lot of both qualitative and quantitative information about what might happen in the future. In reality, a lot of businesses, especially small and medium-sized ones and public organizations in developing countries, don't have the data infrastructure, analytical skills, or information governance systems they need to use these methods.

Even when data is available, it can be hard to understand and combine it. The literature on implementing a balanced scorecard says that it is often hard to figure out how indicators in different perspectives are related to each other and how to tell the difference between strategic and operational metrics. In a lot of cases, scorecards have too many indicators, which makes it hard for managers to keep their focus on strategy. Similar issues arise in the utilization of big data and business analytics tools for strategic objectives; organizations amass extensive data yet lack the capacity to transform it into actionable strategic insights.

Mintzberg's critique of strategic planning highlighted that excessive dependence on formalized analysis can inhibit intuitive judgment and experiential knowledge, which are crucial for identifying weak signals and emerging opportunities. When modern methods are seen as just technical steps, managers might spend more time working with spreadsheets and models than talking to employees, customers, or partners on the front lines. The outcome creates a false sense of rationality that hides the real uncertainty and complexity.

A last group of problems has to do with the fact that many strategic methods are relatively static, while

modern environments are always changing. Initially, competitive strategy models and multi-year planning frameworks were created for situations where industry structures evolved gradually and technological advancements were fairly foreseeable. Digital platforms, globalization, and changes in regulations are constantly changing the lines of competition in many industries today. In these situations, long planning cycles and strict strategic frameworks can get in the way instead of helping.

Research on strategy-as-practice shows that strategy is made more and more through small, ongoing activities like project meetings, negotiations, and experiments, rather than through one-time planning events. Organizations that rely too much on formal documents might not see the value in these new processes and not change their strategic methods to fit. Case studies of universities and public agencies show how expensive, detailed strategic plans can quickly become useless when political or financial conditions change. This makes people question the purpose and value of the planning process itself.

When people try to modernize old methods, they can sometimes make things worse. Adding complementary products or ecosystems to Porter's five forces to make six-force models shows how competition is changing, but it also makes the ideas more complicated. If analytical skills and organizational learning don't keep up with the development of more advanced tools, they could just make things more confusing. Advanced balanced scorecard variants that incorporate risk management, sustainability, and digital transformation necessitate significant coordination across units and functions; failure to achieve this coordination may result in an exacerbated disparity between the sophistication of methodologies and practical realities.

The review's findings indicate that the principal challenges associated with the implementation of contemporary strategic methodologies in organizational management stem not from intrinsic flaws within the methodologies, but from their interaction with the social, informational, and institutional contexts of organizations. Modern frameworks like competitive strategy, the balanced scorecard, and strategy-as-practice have all given us useful ideas and worked well in the real world. Nonetheless, when embraced uncritically as universal remedies, executed in inflexible, hierarchical manners, or utilized in data-scarce, politically intricate contexts, their efficacy is constrained.

The findings substantiate Mintzberg's assertion that formal strategic methodologies ought not to replace strategic cognition. Methods offer languages and

perspectives, rather than solutions. Organizations that use them as checklists to show that they are rational run the risk of losing the flexibility and learning ability that strategy is supposed to improve. To avoid this, managers need to look at strategic tools in light of their own situation and be open to changing or combining them when they need to. In turbulent environments, it may be more suitable to employ Porter's frameworks as preliminary heuristics for identifying forces and stakeholders, while utilizing iterative experimentation and real-time feedback to refine strategies.

Organizational and cultural barriers highlight the significance of strategic capabilities over mere strategic tools. For modern methods to work well, there must be a commitment to leadership, open communication, collaboration across departments, and a psychologically safe environment. In the absence of these conditions, even sophisticated frameworks devolve into mere symbolic artifacts. This finding is consistent with research on dynamic capabilities, which underscores that the ability to perceive opportunities and threats, act promptly to capitalize on them, and reorganize resources is more essential than the particular analytical tools employed.

The limitations of information and analysis show that we should have realistic expectations about what methods can do with the data and expertise we have. For example, the balanced scorecard literature shows that scorecards can be less useful if the indicators are poorly designed, the data quality is low, or the cause-and-effect relationships are not well understood. So, organizations should not give in to the urge to put in place complicated frameworks before they have set up basic data governance, analytical capacity, and learning routines. In certain situations, straightforward strategic approaches coupled with high-quality dialogue may prove more effective than complex systems that surpass the organization's capacities.

The structural tension between static tools and dynamic environments indicates that strategic methodologies must be integrated into continuous practice rather than limited to intermittent planning cycles. The strategy-as-practice approach helps by moving the focus from papers to actions, people, and tools. From this point of view, the problem is not only to make better strategic frameworks, but also to make sure that managers and employees use them in their daily work through workshops, routines, digital platforms, and casual conversations. Strategic methods are effective when they influence individuals' perceptions of situations, decision-making, and action coordination, rather than merely being present in reports.

When you put all of these ideas together, they suggest that managers need to be both strategically literate and reflexive, just as much as they need to choose the right methods. Managers must comprehend the epistemological assumptions and constraints of various frameworks to critically assess their alignment with the organization's context and to explore hybrid methodologies that integrate analytical rigor with iterative learning. They must also be aware of the danger of ritualization, which happens when strategic methods become ends in themselves instead of ways to make better decisions and do better work. Recognizing these kinds of patterns can help businesses change their strategic processes to focus more on conversation, experimentation, and flexibility.

Modern strategic methods have greatly increased the number of analytical and practical tools that managers can use. Competitive strategy, performance measurement systems, dynamic capabilities, and practice-based perspectives provide significant insights into how organizations can effectively operate within complex environments. Nonetheless, the literature examined in this article illustrates that significant challenges emerge when these methods are implemented in organizational practice. Conceptual misalignment, organizational and cultural barriers, informational and analytical constraints, and structural tensions within dynamic environments often diminish the efficacy of modern strategic frameworks.

The analysis indicates that addressing these issues necessitates a transformation in the relationship between managers, organizations, and strategic methodologies. Instead of looking for one-size-fits-all recipes, organizations should see methods as tools that are specific to each situation and strategic languages that need to be understood and changed. Investing in strategic skills, especially in leadership, data literacy, and collaborative learning, is very important. Incorporating strategic tools into daily routines and utilizing them to promote dialogue and experimentation instead of generating static documents can connect formal strategy with actual managerial action.

The findings underscore the necessity for additional empirical research regarding the implementation of strategic methods across various institutional and cultural contexts, particularly in emerging economies and the public sector. The primary message for practitioners is that the principal issue is not the obsolescence of contemporary strategic methods, but rather their frequent application in a manner that disregards context, culture, and practice. When businesses see methods as living frameworks that change over time instead of as strict rules, the promise

of modern strategic management is more likely to come true.

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