Presentation by Lucy Kiruthu
The Role of the Strategic Leader
A Literature Review

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Structure of the Presentation

1. An Introduction
2. Discussions / Findings
3. Conclusions, Recommendations and areas of Future Research
The Introduction

1. Understanding Leadership
   - Leadership “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2013 p. 5)

2. Link between leadership and business success
   - Rothschild (1996) argues that “business units and product lines have failed all because they had the wrong kind of leader” (p. 17).
   - Bass & Bass (2008) remarks that leadership is considered by many as the single most critical factor in the success or failure of organizations
3. What is Strategy?

- The determination of the long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals. (Chandler, 1962)

- A state of mind; the way in which a corporation endeavours to differentiate itself positively from its competitors, using its relative corporate strengths to better satisfy customer needs. (Ohmae, 1982)

- The essence of strategy is having a unique position that is difficult to match (Porter, 1996)

- Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel, (1998) argue that there is no simple definition of strategy and define it using the 5ps namely plan, pattern, position, perspective, and ploy.
The Introduction

4. The link between Leadership and Strategy

- Leadership is the starting point of strategy (Allio, 2006; Hsieh and Yik, 2005).
- Top executives play a key role in determining organizational outcomes (Hambrick, 2007)
4. The link between Leadership and Strategy cont


- Organizations are in need of strategic leaders who must be able to influence in an environment that is Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (Johansen, 2012; Hughes, Beatty and Dinwoodie, 2014).
The Introduction

5. What is Strategic Leadership?

- Adair (2010) states that Peter Drucker was the first to introduce the word strategic leadership to the business world in the early 1970s

- Rowe and Nejad (2009) argue that strategic Leadership is about combining managerial and visionary leadership skills

- Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2013) look at strategic leadership as “the leader’s ability to anticipate, envision, and maintain flexibility and to empower others to create strategic change as necessary” (p. 375)
1. Strategic Thinking

- Mintzberg (1991) looks at strategic thinking as seeing ahead, behind, above, below, beside, beyond and more importantly seeing through but asks what is the use of doing all this seeing if nothing is done?

- Bonn (2005) points out strategic thinking as an important precursor to strategic decision-making.

- Goldman and Casey (2010) point out that lack of strategic thinking at the top management level results to poor organizational performance.
Discussions / Findings

- Strategic thinking “doesn't come naturally”
- “Strategic thinking skills have to be learned, cultivated, practiced, and applied”.

(Kazmia & Naaranojab, 2015, P 45)
Discussions/ Findings

2. The Role of the Strategic Leader

The Strategic leader:-

i. Establishes and communicates the strategic direction
ii. Fosters strategic alignment
iii. Leads change
iv. Supports strategy execution
v. Aids in acquiring, developing and managing key resources
vi. Shapes the organizational culture
vii. Accentuates ethical practices
viii. Establishes organizational controls

(Jooste & Fourie, 2009; Rowe and Nejad, 2009; Adair, 2010; Pearson and Robinson 2011; Ireland, Hoskisson and Hitt, 2013; Browning, 2013)
Discussions / Findings

3. Characters / Skills / Practices of the Strategic Leader

Vision / ability to anticipate, eloquence, consistency, articulation of the business model, commitment, being well informed / ability to learn, willingness to delegate and empower / ability to challenge, astute use of power, emotional intelligence, ability to decide, honesty, trustworthy, ability to interpret and align

(Hill & Jones, 2010; Schoemaker, Krupp & Howland, 2013; Kabacoff, 2014)
Conclusions

1. Strategic thinking is core to strategic leadership
2. Strategic leaders are rare (Rowe, 2001)
3. Strategic leaders understand both effective leadership and strategic management
4. Strategic leaders are at the centre of business success, they are therefore the best kind of leaders to lead businesses
5. Strategic leadership can be learned (Kazmia & Naaranojab, 2015)
Conclusions

5. Strategic leaders embrace different leadership styles

6. Strategic leaders outperform other kinds of leaders, they are able to keep the organization focused on key business objectives

➢ Businesses are in need of a strategic leader; a leader able to balance the short term and long term goals of the business.
Recommendations

1. Businesses need to be more deliberate about identifying and developing strategic leaders.

2. Every business that plans to survive in the ever-changing business environment needs a strategic leader at the top.

3. Business leaders need to learn to be strategic and to practice strategic leadership.
Areas for Future Research

1. Explore why Strategic Leaders are rare

2. Determine what motivates strategic thinking and what motivates strategic leaders to act

3. Find out what can be done to develop more strategic leaders in Kenya


References


References

THANK YOU