

# How to Create the *The Right Strategic Mindset* for Your School

and a strategic plan that gets off the shelf and into action

A dark blue diagonal gradient bar that starts from the bottom left and extends towards the top right, covering the lower half of the slide.

So you want to be more strategic?

Looking for something different, better, or new in strategic planning?

Meet two dominant schools of thought:

*Deliberate  
strategy*

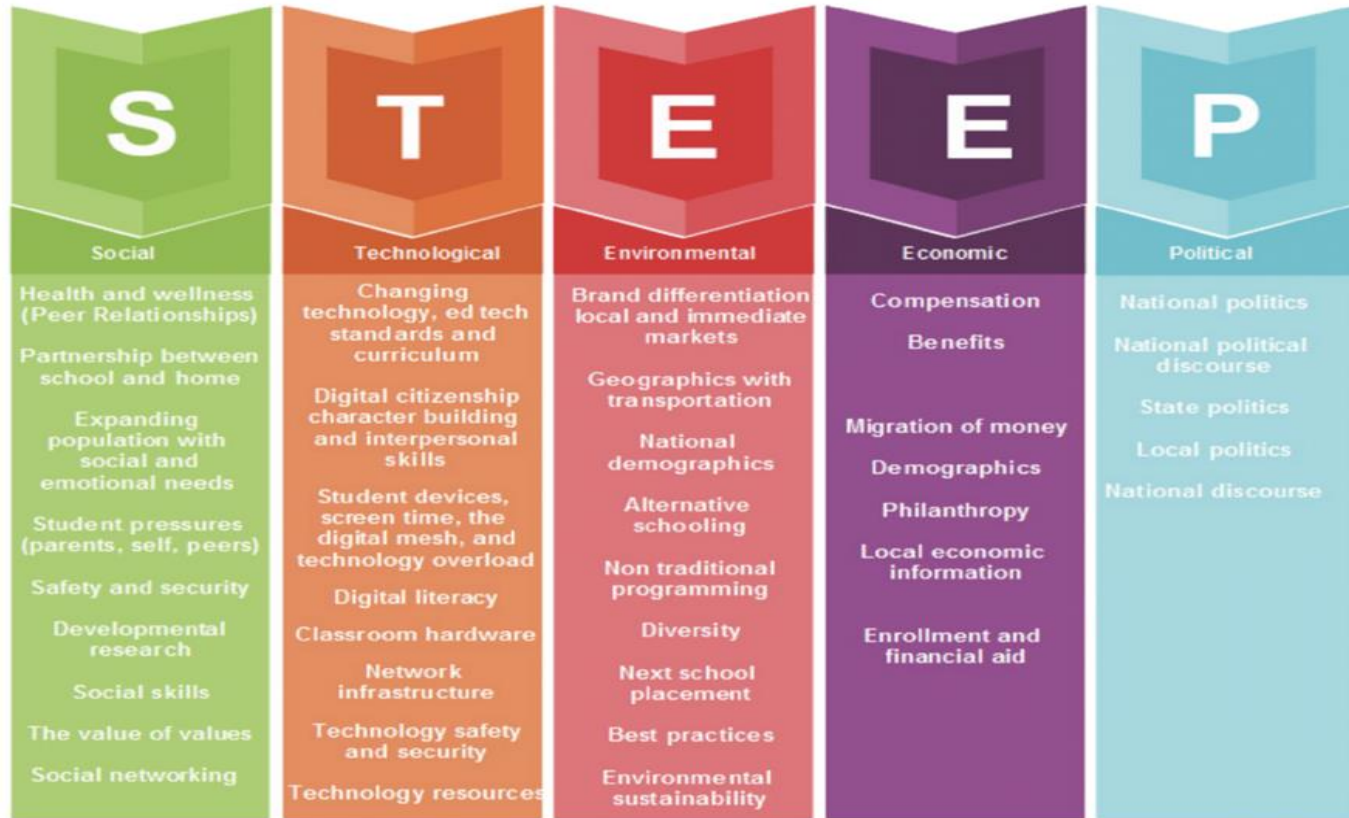
*Not new, but can be different and  
better*

*Emergent  
strategy*

*Newer*

# Common Elements

Vision  
Mission  
& Values



Making sense of your environment is essential in determining your strategic agenda

# Board Responsibilities



1. Ensure a continuous cycle of planning.
2. Set strategic direction.
3. Give strategic focus.
4. Develop an accompanying financial strategic plan.
5. Ensure implementation.
6. Agree on evaluation measures.

# Head of School Responsibilities

"Leadership is the capacity to  
translate vision into reality"



*Warren Bennis*

1. Ensure a right strategic mindset: deliberate or emergent?  
Some of both?
2. Engage in an inclusive strategic process.
3. Distribute leadership for implementation beyond the head's office.
4. Ensure a system to prioritize, track, monitor, evaluate, report, and adjust.
5. Encourage ongoing strategic thinking.



# Three things to know, either way you go:

Strategy making is continuous.

Strategies must be flexible.

Vision matters.



# 10 Deliberate Strategy Hallmarks

Motto:

“Plan the work and  
work the plan.”

Traditional approach...

1. Leadership driven
2. Historical data-driven
3. Limited participation
4. Enshrined goals
5. The plan is the main thing
6. Strategy by intention
7. Point of view is the school's goals
8. Investment is mainly in preserving and exploiting the brand because this is what a deliberate strategy mindset believes will ensure sustainability
9. Strategy is formulated to support a culture of achievement

10. Planning is a process, not a product

# A system



# Why is deliberate strategy so common in schools?

1. It's hierarchical.
2. It's familiar.
3. It's predictable.
4. It's worked before.
5. It's goal-driven with measurable outcomes.
6. The internal environment drives strategy.
7. It's school-centric.
8. It's based on cause and effect from experience:  
*If...then...*

# 14 steps to a *new and improved* deliberate strategic process: here's what matters today and why

1. Getting the right people on the bus
2. Doing the core work first
3. Going deep on what's relevant
4. Prioritizing and framing the issues
5. Drafting assumptions
6. Engaging the entire community in building the strategic framework
7. Using a version of grand strategies
8. Creating a launch portfolio of priority initiatives
9. Creating a launch portfolio of priority initiatives
10. Developing a written implementation plan that distributes leadership & ownership
11. Ensuring an accompanying financial strategic plan
12. Revisiting strategies every year and adjusting as necessary
13. Conducting a mid-plan recalibration
14. Using the final year of a five-year plan to

# Emergent Strategy in Practice:

Unexpected outcomes of  
experiments that result in  
innovations that become  
mainstream or widely adopted

Those wings, tho...

Invented when a  
vendor brought wings  
instead of chicken  
breasts to the Anchor  
Bar owner in \_\_\_\_\_  
(guess where?)





Started out as blood  
pressure medicine...



Injection to fix crossed  
eyes came with  
surprising benefits



What does an enterprising chef do when a customer complains his fries are too thick and mushy?



Necessity is the  
mother of invention.

World's Fair ice cream  
vendor runs out of  
dishes. There  
happened to be a  
waffle maker next to  
him, and well, you can  
guess the rest...



Here's what happened when the owner of the Toll House Inn ran out of baker's chocolate and chopped up a block of Nestle's semi-sweet chocolate for her chocolate cookies instead.

The chopped morsels didn't melt as expected and the first known batch



Not so sticky.

A failure for the 3M scientist charged with making a strong adhesive. A huge win for the rest of us.





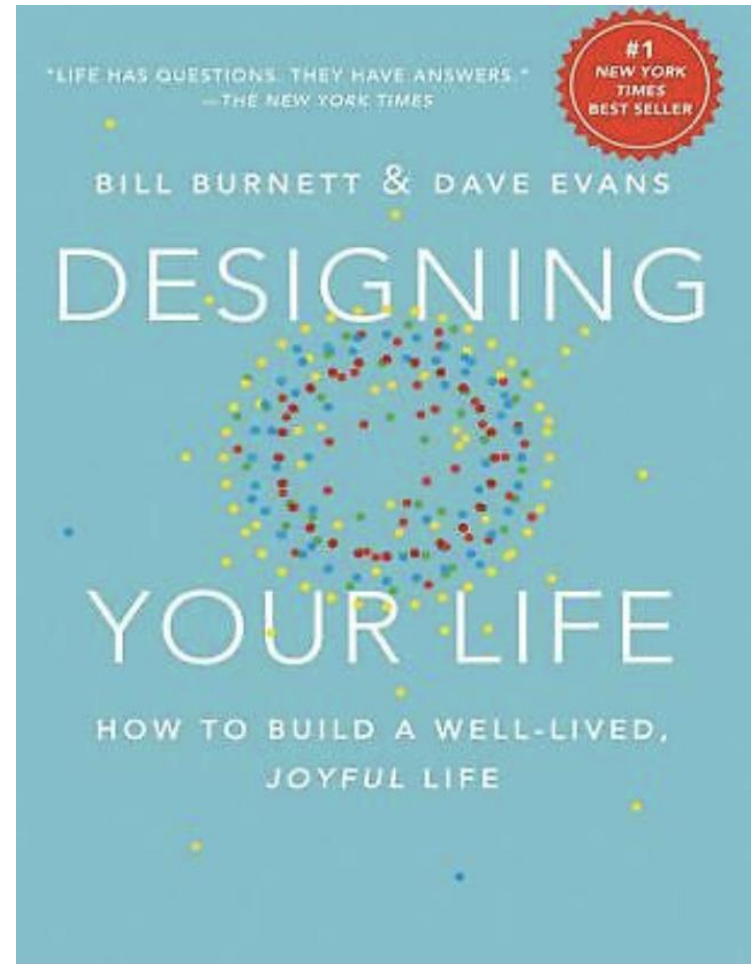
Facebook's beginnings as a rating/dating site for elite college students evolved into the largest social media app in the world.



Mark Zuckerberg created [Facebook](#) in his [Harvard](#) dorm room

Learning how to apply innovation methodology to life has become one of the most popular courses at Stanford's d.school.

Based on the question “What do I want to learn” instead of “What do I want to do?” It's career





Experiments all...  
with one thing in  
common:

Someone knew a  
good thing when they  
saw it and was able to  
take it to the next  
level.

Emergent strategy  
is learning by doing  
and then applying  
the results to make  
widespread change.

.

# Emergent Strategy Hallmarks

# Motto

“Experimentation is the new planning.”

“Strategy emerges over time as intentions collide with and accommodate a changing reality.” - Henry Mintzberg

1. Grassroots-driven in an open structure
2. Experiment-driven
3. Everyone's a strategist
4. Flexible goals
5. Exploration is the main thing
6. Strategy by discovery: learning what works in practice
7. Point of view is the consumer's goals
8. Investment is mostly in exploration and innovation because this is what this mindset believes will ensure sustainability
9. Strategy is formulated to develop a culture of innovation
10. Strategy is iterative

# Why is emergent strategy so uncommon in schools?

1. It's loose and adaptive.
  2. It's new.
  3. It's risky and failure is an option.
  4. It's unpredictable.
  5. It's messy.
  6. It's innovation driven with no guaranteed outcomes.
  7. It's often externally focused.
  8. It's consumer-centric.
  9. It's based on creative thinking.
- What if...?

# 10 steps to engage in an *emergent strategy-making process*:

1. Doing the core work
2. Establishing shared vision and goals, but keep strategy open
3. Promoting everyone to strategist
4. Valuing continuous learning as much as or more than goal achievement
5. Building a culture of innovation where it's okay to try and fail
6. Making no assumptions and being open
7. Starting with a problem you want to solve rather than a goal you want to reach
8. Creating dedicated maker space for faculty and staff where ideation and iteration can be nurtured
9. Building and managing an *innovation portfolio* of small, medium, and large projects
10. Revisiting vision and goals routinely and

What are the takeaways?

Eight things you can do to  
get the best from your  
deliberate strategy process

or ...

to begin experimenting with  
an emergent strategy

pr



1. Loosen your grip on the strategic plan.
2. Challenge the culture of performance based on goal achievement.
3. Increase the appetite for risk.
4. Democratize innovation.
5. Be flexible in goal setting and strategy making.
6. Empathize, ideate, prioritize, prototype, iterate, implement. Repeat.
7. Take someone else's point of view.
8. Get your board onboard with



St. Stephen's senior Jenna Rogge first went to the school's Project Idea and Realization Lab (PIRL) with an interest in prostheses and a desire to build a prosthetic hand.

## Senior Jenna Rogge Earns Maker Badge for Prosthetic Limb

Earning a production badge means that Jenna is now able to search through case files and identify a child in need of a prosthetic limb, 3-D print and assemble the hand, and then send it off to its new owner. She's now approved to make prosthetic limbs for children in need across the world.

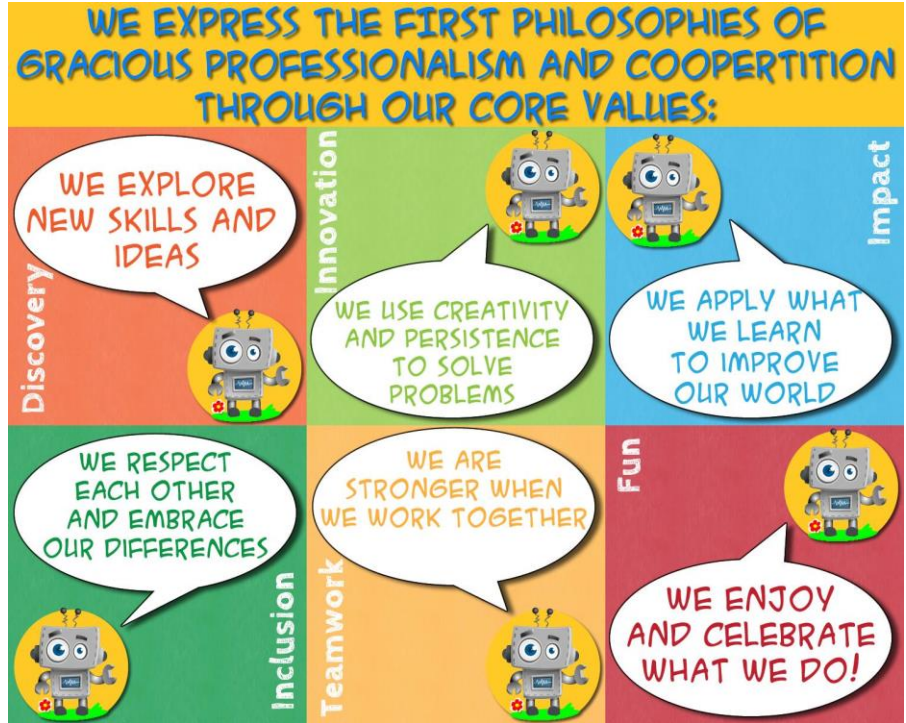


# Personal Vision of a Strategic School

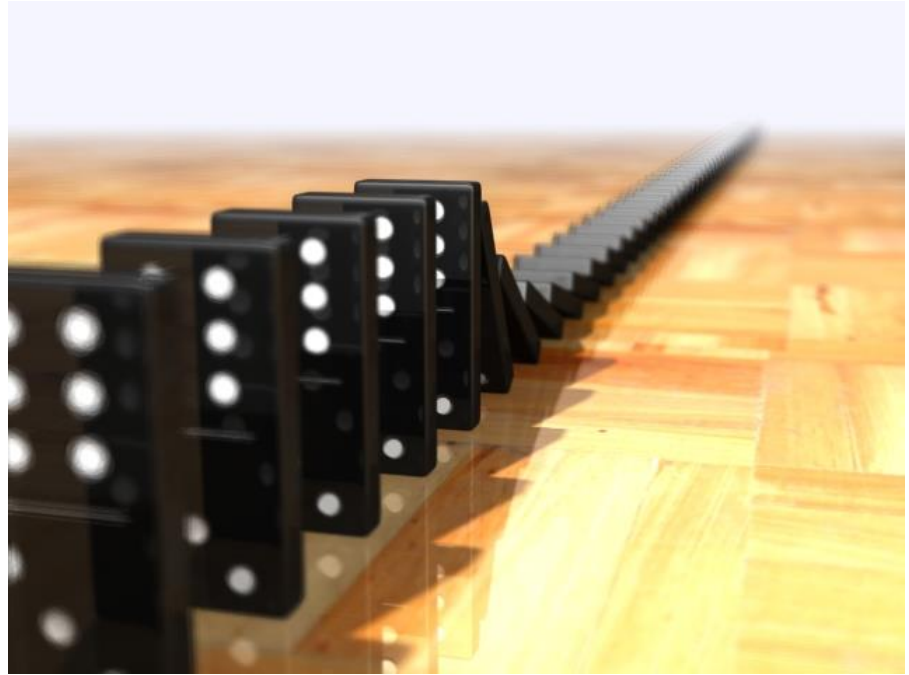
by *Christina Drouin*

A place where the only things that are a given are core values and mission.

Everything else is up for grabs.



A place where the  
strategic process is  
continuous, not  
episodic.



A place where  
everyone's a  
strategist.



A safe place to try  
and fail where leaders  
value invention more  
than perfection.



A place that dedicates  
adult maker-space.





A place where  
trustees support and  
invest in exploitation  
and exploration.



A place that builds strategy based on another's point of view.



David Yoo 31/12/2019 **Jobs to Be Done** Notes by Yingying

Understanding the **"WHY"** in Product Management

Why would customers value your product?

**THEY**

**THE PRODUCT IS THE BRAND** - It's what ~~you~~ say it is

↑ A person's gut feeling when experiencing it



**JOBS-TO-BE-DONE** ← **JOB + EXPERIENCE = DIFFERENCE**

- Why are we doing this? What do your customers **say** that you solve?  
★ What jobs can you solve better than others?
  - What's the experience?
  - How does it work? When does it ship?
- "Save time for busy professionals"  
It's not about features, it's about solutions.  
GND





A place that is willing  
to fail forward for the  
sake of its future.



**ONLY THOSE WHO RISK  
GOING TOO FAR CAN  
POSSIBLY FIND OUT  
HOW FAR THEY  
CAN GO...**

(T.S. ELIOT)

For more ideas on  
strategy, go to:

w:  
[christinadrouin.com](http://christinadrouin.com)

e:  
[christina@christinadrouin.com](mailto:christina@christinadrouin.com)



# Example: Northeast girls' boarding school

## Strategic driver

- Excel in Educating a Diverse Generation of Women in an Era of Pedagogical Paradigm Shifts and High Anxiety

## Leverage Assets

- Continue to invest in building an internationally diverse community
- Continue to invest in personal attention to students
- Continue to invest in the effectiveness of WISE

## Build capacity for change

- Increase understanding of how girls learn
- Invest more in global girls' leadership/ women's studies
- Integrate social emotional learning into the school curriculum

## Innovate solutions

- Initiate wise pedagogical paradigm shifts
- Engage in design thinking across the curriculum
- Adopt a culture of inclusion and belonging
- Explore local and global partnerships