

# **33 DAYS OF STRATEGY**

**MY 33 BEST INSIGHTS TO BUILD A STRATEGIC CULTURE**

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# **INSIGHT 1**

**Just because you have a strategic plan doesn't mean you have a strategy.**

- **The word is not the thing.**
- **The menu is not the food.**
- **The territory is not the map.**

# **INSIGHT 2**

**Choose your strategy or it will choose you.**

# **INSIGHT 3**

**Everything except core values and mission is strategic in nature and therefore negotiable and up for change.**

# **INSIGHT 4**

**If you're serious about being a thought leader, you first need to boldly lead your school into the uncharted territory of disruption and risk-taking.**

# INSIGHT 5

**All strategy should lead to vision. Before thinking about strategy, decide where you want to go and why.**

# **INSIGHT 6**

**There are limited strategy decisions that require governance.**

# INSIGHT 7

**Exception to Insight 6: Any disruptive strategies that require excessive risk-taking and radical experimentation should be made collaboratively.**

# **INSIGHT 8**

**If you're not heading in the direction of adopting an emergent strategy mindset, you're probably not going to be around in 15 years.**

# **INSIGHT 9**

**A transformational way to think about strategy is from the point of view of the problem you want to solve for the people you want to serve.**

# **INSIGHT 10**

**You will not prevail with strategies alone. In order to thrive, strategies require incubation in a congruent culture.**

# **INSIGHT 11**

**One of the most powerful ways to explore strategy is to change the conversation from what's not working to what is.**

# **INSIGHT 12**

**Prioritization and tradeoffs are the heart and soul of strategy.**

# **INSIGHT 13**

**Transformation strategies require courage.  
Build a courageous culture before trying a  
transformational strategy.**

# **IINSIGHT 14**

**Culture change requires 8-10 years. If your strategy is linked to culture, give it time to work before abandoning it.**

**If you don't have time, choose strategies with more immediate payoffs.**

# **INSIGHT 15**

**There are over-arching Grand Strategies that are core to organizational decision-making. You should know what they are and how to apply them.**

# INSIGHT 16

**Strategy can come from where you least expect it. Everyone can be a strategist and you need everyone to be a strategist.**

# INSIGHT 17

**Strategy requires tactics, but it's not tactical.**

# **INSIGHT 18**

**Assumptions play a critical role in change. Without assumptions, you won't know when it's time to change a strategy.**

# INSIGHT 19

**There are seven areas of your enterprise that require strategy. If you don't have at least one that's working and one that you're testing in each area, you're missing big opportunities.**

# **INSIGHT 20**

**You can simultaneously hold contrary strategies of exploitation and exploration if you're ambidextrous.**

# **INSIGHT 21**

**There are many constructs for strategy making. Pick one. Or two. But be intentional.**

# **INSIGHT 22**

**Metrics matter. Decide in advance how you will know if your strategy is working.**

## **INSIGHT 23**

**To be sustainable, you need both marketing and market growth strategies. They are not the same thing.**

# **INSIGHT 24**

**Without a playbook, you have no strategy.**

## **INSIGHT 25**

**Abandonment is an underused strategy. Planning your exit from unproductive practices, partnerships, and products or services is one of the hardest yet potentially most transformational strategies you can pursue.**

## **INSIGHT 26**

**Strategies will save you from yourself.  
When things go off the rails, strategic  
realignment can level set.**

# **INSIGHT 27**

**Strategies are ways to demonstrate ethical integrity when the going gets tough.**

# **INSIGHT 28**

**You can regenerate a life cycle to avoid or delay decline. There are specific strategies to extend a mature market.**

# **INSIGHT 29**

**Schools need cultures of transformation more than innovation.**

# **INSIGHT 30**

**Continuous improvement is not innovation.  
It's table stakes.**

# **INSIGHT 31**

**Strategic preparation will facilitate mergers, acquisitions, and planned departures.**

## **INSIGHT 32**

**It's a leadership issue. Transformation takes time. Culture change requires enough transformational leaders to change the status quo. Start hiring them or be them.**

## **INSIGHT 33**

**Organizational decline isn't inevitable. If you're in decline, it needn't continue. Focus on organizational development and leadership are two strategies for preventing decline and reducing its effects.**

# THANK YOU!

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