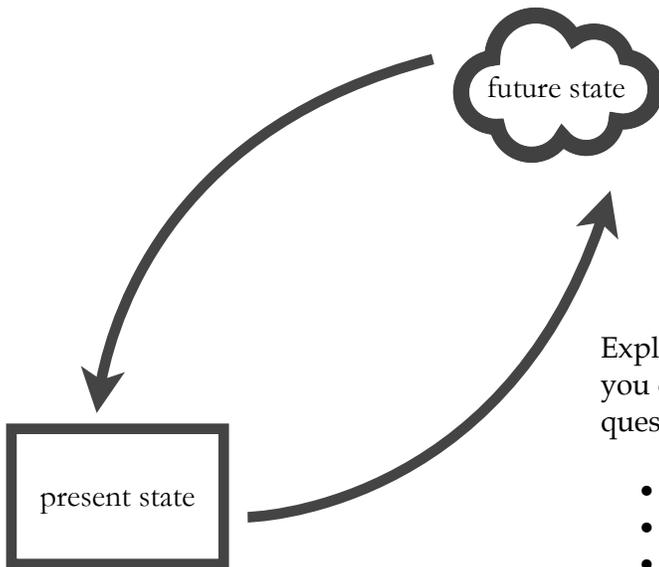


STRATEGY

PROCESS VISUALS & RESOURCES

Process Visuals

Using Richard Rumelt's three components of strategy explained in *Good Strategy/Bad Strategy* and drawing on other strategy tools and our experience, we developed the following process visuals for each component, along with a list of suggested questions to get you and your team focused on the right details and decisions.



DIAGNOSIS

A diagnosis simplifies complexity. By analyzing the present, especially the core challenge you face, and describing your desired future, you determine what to focus on and what to ignore. Ask one big question.

- What if you lead the market, and what if the market leads you?

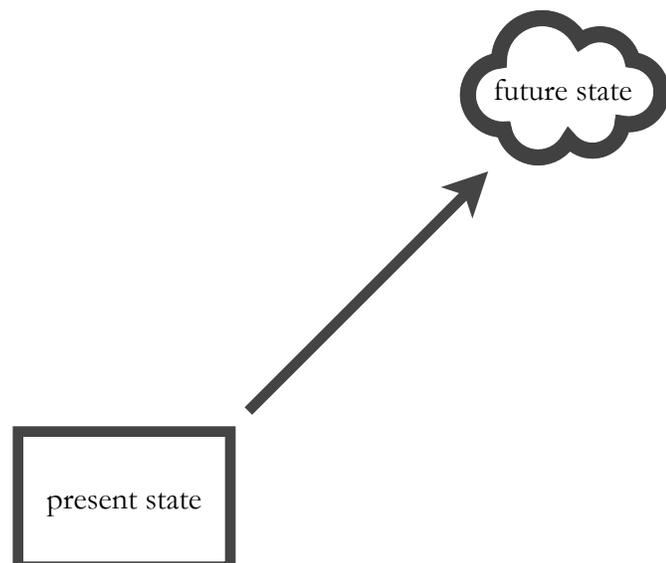
Explore both options, and see where each leads you before you choose one. To help you explore, ask supporting questions.

- Who are the learners we intend to serve (segments)?
- What outcomes are we trying to achieve?
- What are the most compelling opportunities for reaching these learners and achieving these outcomes?
- What are the obstacles that could interfere or prevent us from realizing this opportunity?
- What advantage do we have in overcoming the obstacles?

GUIDING POLICY

A guiding policy is the response to the diagnosis. A guiding policy provides the trajectory, the general path, for how to achieve the ideal future state. Revisit and dig deeper on two questions you asked during the diagnosis to help arrive at a guiding policy.

- What are the obstacles that could interfere or prevent us from reaching our intended learners and achieving our desired outcomes?
- What advantage do we have in overcoming the obstacles?



COHERENT ACTIONS

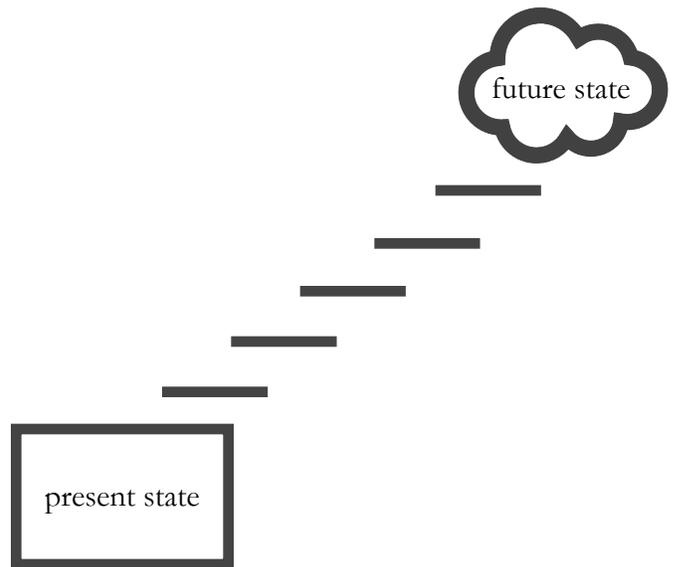
Coherent actions are steps, coordinated with each other, that work together to enact the guiding policy.

Without coordination, you might engage in activities that dilute your efforts or, worse, work at cross-purposes. Coherent actions may deal with resource allocation and decisions around product design, product development, and marketing and selling.

- What key actions will we take to support the guiding policy?

Also explore how you will make sure the actions result in some good news.

- What represents a significant near-term win?



Resources

A huge number of strategy books and tools are available. Here are the ones we've found most useful in our work with organizations in the business of lifelong learning, continuing education, and professional development.

- *Good Strategy/Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why It Matters* by Richard Rumelt

Rumelt believes a good strategy always contains a diagnosis, a guiding policy, and coherent actions. His view that strategy is not completely theoretical and devoid of action resonates well with our own beliefs.

- *Blue Ocean Strategy: How to Create Uncontested Market Space and Make Competition Irrelevant* by Renée Mauborgne and W. Chan Kim

We find the Six Paths and Strategy Canvas tools particularly useful. We've written a blog series on the Six Paths; see <http://www.tagoras.com/2013/02/13/blue-ocean-strategy-1>.

- *Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors* by Michael Porter

The Five Forces tool, explained in the first chapter, is the gold standard for understanding competitive forces shaping the dynamic of any market.

- The Value Ramp by Tagoras

This concise tool helps you spot gaps in your educational offerings, recognize inconsistencies in your value-price story, and identify opportunities for new products and services. See <http://www.tagoras.com/2014/01/21/value-ramp>.



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