

Carnegie Mellon University
HeinzCollege
STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT
94-811 (Section Z5), MINI-5, SUMMER 2021

"Strategy is not a lengthy action plan. It is the evolution of a central idea through continually changing circumstances."

— Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*

"If you get the objectives right, a lieutenant can write the strategy."

— U.S. General George Marshall

"If you do not look at things on a large scale it will be difficult for you to master strategy."

— Miyamoto Musashi, *Book of Five Rings*

"No plan survives contact with the enemy."

— *Old military axiom*

"To fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence. Supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting."

— Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

"The secret of all victory lies in the organization of the nonobvious."

— Marcus Aurelius

"A strategy delineates a territory in which an organization seeks to be unique."

— Michael Porter, *Harvard professor and strategy guru*

"Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat."

— Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

"However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results."

— Winston Churchill

INSTRUCTOR

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CLASS HOURS

This is an online/video class; course site accessed through Canvas
(<https://canvas.cmu.edu/courses/22975>)

OFFICE HOURS

By appointment.

The “tyranny” of time and distance inherent in video courses (plus the compounding complications from these “interesting” times) makes establishing formal office hours a challenge so I’ll make every effort to accommodate your needs. The best bet is to call or send an e-mail to make an appointment (propose some days and times that work for you).

I also welcome conversations not necessarily related to Strategy Development (e.g., career path, course selection) if you think that my time in the “real world” can provide another dimension to your experience at the Heinz College.

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Haleema Ahmad (hjahmad@andrew.cmu.edu); Haleema took Strategy Development last year and did a great job. You should make good use of this experience, particularly for questions about course content, assignments, and grading. She will also make every effort to be available via both email and interactively, as required.

ABOUT THIS COURSE

Strategy can be thought of as “delineating a territory in which an organization seeks to be unique” and “the evolution of a central idea through continually changing circumstances”. But the very nature of strategy and strategy development—regardless of whether it’s in the private, public, or nonprofit sectors—is changing dramatically. Corporations are increasingly dealing with more viable competitors and emerging market opportunities, often driven by enabling technologies, from all over the world. Demand for government responses to social issues is increasing in an era of acute resource constraints. And social sector organizations are facing a wide array of competitors for smaller, more restricted pools of contributions and other forms of capital. Everybody wants to react faster, take advantage of opportunities sooner, and vanquish competitors more definitively. The notion of rigid 5-year strategic plans is becoming obsolete.

This course simulates the real-world strategy development process from a senior management perspective. A historical overview of the field will be provided and a contemporary process for strategy formulation, along with alternative approaches, will be introduced and demonstrated throughout the course. Activities including situational and environmental analysis, internal capabilities assessment, and appropriate linkage to an organization’s vision, mission, objectives, and historical performance will all be rigorously applied. A combination of theory and practice in

all relevant aspects of strategy development will be emphasized. In addition, although these processes are most often attributed to private sector operations, this course is designed to consider the similarities and differences of strategy and strategy development in government entities and nonprofits as well.

Although strategy and strategic thinking is grounded in a long history (primarily derived to achieve military objectives), corporate strategy and the field's seminal frameworks did not really exist prior to about the mid-20th century. However, the notion of comprehensive strategy development, emanating from academia, consulting firms, and think tanks, has accelerated considerably over the past 50 years and continues to rapidly evolve. As a result, this course will emphasize “currency” with a combination of video lectures, contemporary readings, real-world case examples, and simulations to illustrate key concepts.

Course materials are drawn from a variety of “specialized” publications like the *Harvard Business Review* and *McKinsey Quarterly*, “mainstream” sources such as the *New York Times*, as well as selections from more “academic” resources. Although no textbook is assigned for the course, I’ll attempt to draw from among the best books that I’ve come across related to the field such as *Competitive Strategy* by Michael Porter (considered by many to be the most influential book on corporate strategy ever), *Built to Last* by Collins and Porras, and *Strategy Beyond the Hockey Stick* by a trio of senior McKinsey consultants, as well as “classics” like *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu and the *Book of Five Rings* by Miyamoto Musashi, particularly to provide a perspective on the history of strategy development and execution.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

| Learning Objective | How Assessed |
|--|---|
| Provide a broad overview of strategic thinking, strategy development, and tactical execution in a variety of contexts. Introduce foundational concepts and frameworks that are used “in the real world” to craft winning strategies. | Class participation (via Discussion Board); strategy evaluation project; blog submissions |
| Identify and clearly define a problem/issue | Strategy evaluation project |
| Analyze and question data and information in a rigorous manner | Strategy evaluation project |
| Generate and organize qualitative and quantitative evidence to support arguments and recommendations | Blog submissions, strategy evaluation project |
| Listen to, respect and heed the advice and ideas of others | Class participation (via Discussion Board) |

Here’s our challenge for the mini semester: It is possible to get a comprehensive, multi-course concentration in strategy at many graduate schools, particularly business schools, around the world.

There simply won't be enough time to dive deeply into a single topic area. Therefore, this course will act as an overview of the key concepts, contemporary issues, and current direction of strategy directed at future executives and senior public sector officials. My hope is that after this course, at a minimum, you will be "armed" to have an informed perspective about the strategy development process that you can practically apply.

COURSE CONTENT

The course is organized into 6 (+ 1 "bonus") modules:

- ***What Is Strategy?*** introduces the history of strategy, key concepts, definitions, and frameworks to be utilized throughout the course.
- ***The Strategic Planning Process and Evaluating Current Performance***
Part I provides an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of "traditional" strategic planning processes and alternative perspectives reflecting new demands on organizations.
Part II discusses the evaluation of an organization's vision, mission, objectives, and performance at a particular point in time as an integral part of the strategy development and implementation process.
- ***Analyzing the External Strategic Environment and Evaluating Industry Dynamics***
Part I considers the economic, socio-cultural, technological, political, and demographic trends that impact strategy development and the identification of opportunities and threats.
Part II provides ways to understand the structure, evolution, competitive dynamics and positioning of a particular "strategic evaluation space".
- ***Looking in the Mirror—Internal Organizational Analysis*** reviews how to better understand opportunities that organizations have to improve future performance based on factors such as its structure, resources, processes, staffing, and culture.
- ***Developing Strategic Options*** focuses on the variety of strategic directions that organizations can take, how to deal with unique contexts and dimensions, the "innovator's dilemma", and considerations for coordination on a global scale.
- ***Taking Strategy from Development to Implementation*** examines how organizations track, shape, and manage the portfolio of their strategic decisions.
- **[Bonus]** *The Future of Strategy* highlights a cross-section of approaches, trends, and insights that are currently shaping how strategy is defined, developed, and implemented.

PRE-REQUISITES

None.

WEEKLY CLASS STRUCTURE

Due to moving coursework to Zoom throughout 2020-21 and legal restrictions prohibiting those lectures from being used in other courses, the Heinz College is required to use lecture video recordings from a prior in-person course or faculty-only recordings.

Since the latest in-class recordings are from 2019 (a little dated), I've chosen to record new lectures for this class. This is the first time that I've had to do this and hope that, while perhaps not as "dynamic" as recordings from live lectures, they can help to clarify the theme for each week, highlight key parts of required readings, and incorporate supplemental content.

Weekly "modules" will be posted on Fridays and consist of a lecture video(s), Discussion Board question(s), posted readings, and a set of lecture notes. All other required readings (see *Tentative Course Schedule*) are available via links in the syllabus. This curated content is meant to provide depth to specific topics, theories and frameworks to assist in the evaluation of a selected organization's current strategy (the "Group Project"), and fertile ground for the development of blog submissions. The Discussion Board will be prompted and moderated, and can also be used to highlight any student questions, insights, or connections to applicable real-world events. In general, Canvas will act as the course repository for submitted and corrected assignments, grade postings, communications, and other "assets" from our time together.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Since there may be a relatively large number of students in the class, we'll adopt a mix of assignments to provide some flexibility as well as an opportunity to stand out individually:

- One **Group Project** (50%)
- **Team Peer Evaluation** (10%)
- **Individual Weekly Blog Submissions** (20%—5 points for each of 4 submissions)
- **Course Participation (via participation in the Discussion Board)** (20%)

Teams for the group project will be randomly assigned and announced during the 2nd week of class (after the add/drop deadline).

The grading policy for this course is based on the premise that expectations regarding student performance at the graduate level are high. The mean grade in the class (scaled to overall class performance) will likely be around 3.5 (between A- and B+) although I am more than willing to depart from those guidelines based on extraordinary performance (in either direction) from the class. Grades in the "A-to-A+" range will be reserved for students who perform exceptionally well in all aspects of the course.

Students occasionally request an extension at the end of the mini-semester if they cannot complete their assignments due to unforeseen work commitments, family problems, illness, and so on. An "incomplete" grade will be given only under exceptional circumstances (poor time management is not one of them!), at my discretion, and should be discussed with me before the end of the mini-semester so that appropriate paperwork can be completed.

Finally, you should note that the assigned readings for the course provide only a broad framework for the topics we will discuss. Therefore, in your assignments, you are encouraged to use other research materials, resources, data, and readings.

GROUP PROJECT

The group project provides students with an opportunity to explore, through a comprehensive analysis, the strategy of an organization in the private, public, or social (nonprofit) sector. Teams can search for an organization of interest in a variety of ways, e.g., using the Global Fortune 500 list (<http://fortune.com/global500/list/>) or the Forbes list of the 100 largest charities in the U.S. (<https://www.forbes.com/top-charities/list/#tab:rank>), but the selection should reflect the team's desire to take a "deep dive" into that organization and its strategic environment.

Teams will be expected to provide a comprehensive overview including an evaluation of the organization's historical and current performance, analyses of relevant environmental, industry, and internal factors, and details related to the organization's current strategic direction. Submissions are expected to include a critique of the organization's strategy and make specific recommendations on areas of improvement.

Your ability to work with others in a wide variety of contexts is central to a successful outcome. As a result, a meaningful portion of your final grade will be determined by your teammates and your own self-evaluation. All students will submit a peer evaluation at the end of the semester. Letter grades will be assigned in areas related to teamwork and effectiveness along with an overall grade for all team members and yourself. **The average score (on a 1-4 scale) of your evaluation for all team members cannot exceed 3.67.** Failure to comply with this requirement will result in a reduction of your team peer evaluation grade (by an amount at my discretion). Most of the time, peer evaluations do not result in significant grade changes. However, if there appears to be a consensus that one or more group members did not pull his/her weight (or, alternatively, some group members were crucial to the team's success), I'll adjust an individual's project grade up or down (so please be thoughtful in rating team members).

Submissions for the final project can adopt any format/structure that best presents your findings but it is my expectation that a concise, 15-20-page (double-spaced)¹ write-up² plus appendices and/or exhibits will likely be sufficient.

A brief description of your project is due by noon EST on Wednesday, June 2ND. The final deliverable and Team Peer Evaluations will be due by noon EST on Friday, July 2ND.

The **brief description** should include an overview of your selected organization and industry/sector, and your reasons for selecting it.³

CRITERIA FOR GRADING THE FINAL PROJECT:

Submission is clear, complete and compelling (30%), connected to course concepts and readings (20%), reflects rigorous research (40%), displays creativity and distinctiveness (10%)

¹ Note: The report need not be double-spaced. Use this statement merely as a guideline for report length.

² Exceed these guidelines only if you really need the extra space to say something worthwhile or to graphically illustrate your point; go for quality, not quantity!

³ Two pages double-spaced are probably more than enough at a minimum but note that past teams have benefitted from doing "more" and using this submission as a way to get a head start on the final project.

INDIVIDUAL WEEKLY BLOG SUBMISSIONS

Starting in Week #2 and ending in Week #5, students must post a weekly submission to the course blog site (not to Canvas; this Canvas Assignment has been set up only so that grades can be posted and viewed by students) at: <http://strategyatheinz.blogspot.com/>. Postings (500 words or less should be more than sufficient) are due Wednesdays before noon EST of each week and must be related to the general “theme” (e.g., *Evaluating Industry Dynamics*) reflected in that week’s readings. Good submissions customarily 1). highlight / have a point-of-view about a key takeaway from the week’s readings, 2). identify ways that it could be applied (or where it has been relevant to you in the past), and 3). include additional content like links to other websites, research, individuals, or organizations related to the post.

Criteria for Grading (5 points maximum)—each bullet below can reduce the grade for submissions by .1-.5 points (except for late submissions, which receive 0 points):

- Statements not supported by information in the article or other materials from the week
- Write-up does not stay focused on its core points and/or lacks any particular point of focus
- Response is too short and does not include enough detail, or is excessively long (unnecessarily exceeds the word limit)
- An assertion is made but not defended, elaborated on, or clearly articulated
- Too much article restatement and not enough original thinking
- Writing is unclear, incomplete, and/or poorly written (e.g., excessive poor grammar or spelling, run on sentences)

COURSE PARTICIPATION

Just because our class interactions are “virtual” does not make them any less important. Informed discussions, live or online, are critical to the learning process and contributions to the Discussion Board will make this class much more **interesting** and **fun** for all of us. **Each student is expected to volunteer substantive comments freely. Quality (versus quantity) is important.** Your final grade will be determined by my assessment at the end of the mini-semester of your overall contributions relative to the other students in the class.

Participation does not have to be limited to Discussion Board contributions only. If, for example, you bring a relevant current newspaper or magazine article to my attention, I’ll count this as part of the participation grade as well. Some **criteria for effective class participation** are:

1. Is there a **willingness to participate** and is the participant also a **good (virtual) listener**?
2. Are the points made **relevant** to the discussion and linked to the comments of others? Are comments **well thought out** or just “thrown out”?
3. Do the comments show **evidence of thoughtful logic and analysis**?
4. Is there a willingness to **test new ideas**, or are all comments “safe”? For example, repetition of article facts without analysis and inference is “safe”, but a somewhat off-the-mark comment that leads to creative discussion will be considered valuable.
5. Do the comments **clarify, highlight, and synthesize** important aspects of earlier comments and lead to a clearer statement of the concepts being covered or to new knowledge/insights?

6. Do the comments identify **overlooked points** and points that turn out to be influential in further discussion?

A BRIEF WORD ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM ...

Don't!—no grade is worth sacrificing your personal integrity, particularly at the grad level!

You are responsible to know and adhere to all University policies on academic integrity. The Heinz School provides a booklet on Plagiarism and Cheating and CMU lists all policies on the web at <http://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/academic-integrity.html>. Please acquaint yourself with their contents. Any cheating or plagiarism will result in failure in the course and your case will be referred to the Associate Dean, who may decide to take further action.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE (OUR ACTUAL MILEAGE MAY VARY)

First, a caveat:

This course intends to accommodate a wide variety of student interests and the evolutionary leaps taking place in the field. In addition, I've made some significant revisions to both course content and structure. As a result, there are bound to be some "bumps" along the "journey of discovery" that we're taking together. Suggestions and *constructive* criticism of what works and what doesn't, and generally how to make this course great is very much appreciated.

In addition, I'm always finding new things that apply to the course and I'll likely try to inject other materials as I come across them during the mini-semester. It is possible that, as we "get into" the material, I'll want to make some modifications to the course schedule due to timing and/or content issues. My commitment is to give you enough advanced notice on modifications to sufficiently prepare.

Week 1: *What Is Strategy?*

Article: *What Is Strategy?* (Porter, Harvard Business Review, November-December 1996); http://www.rcmewhu.com/upload/file/20150528/20150528184258_9036.pdf

Week 2: *The Strategic Planning Process and Evaluating Current Performance*

Article: *The Real Value of Strategic Planning* (Kaplan and Beinhocker, MIT Sloan Management Review, Winter 2003); https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235790340_The_Real_Value_of_Strategic_Planning

Article: *Your Strategy Needs a Strategy* (Reeves, Love, and Tillmanns, Harvard Business Review, September 2012); <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2012/your-strategy-needs-a-strategy>

Article: *The Strategic Yardstick You Can't Afford to Ignore* (Bradley, Dawson, and Smit, McKinsey Quarterly, October 2013); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-strategic-yardstick-you-cant-afford-to-ignore>

Article: *Eight Shifts That Will Take Your Strategy Into High Gear* (Bradley, Smit, and Hirt, McKinsey Strategy Blog, April 2018); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/eight-shifts-that-will-take-your-strategy-into-high-gear>

Article: *How Biases, Politics, and Egos Trump Good Strategy* (Bradley, McKinsey Strategy Blog, January 2018); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-strategy-and-corporate-finance-blog/how-biases-politics-and-egos-derail-business-decisions>

Article: *When Doing Strategy, Make Yourself an Outsider* (Bradley, McKinsey Strategy Blog, January 2018); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-strategy-and-corporate-finance-blog/when-doing-strategy-make-yourself-an-outsider>

Article: *Hockey Stick Dreams, Hairy Back Reality* (Bradley, McKinsey Strategy Blog, January 2017); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-strategy-and-corporate-finance-blog/hockey-stick-dreams-hairy-back-reality>

Article: *Building Your Company's Vision* (Collins and Porras, Harvard Business Review, September-October 1996);

<https://www.cin.ufpe.br/~if275/material/artigos/BuildingYourCompanysVision.pdf>

PROJECT TEAM ASSIGNMENTS ANNOUNCED ON FRIDAY, MAY 28TH
BLOG SUBMISSION #1 DUE BY NOON EST ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2ND
PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS DUE BY NOON EST ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2ND

Week 3: Analyzing the External Strategic Environment and Evaluating Industry Dynamics

Article: *Why the Trends You Ride Are the Biggest Choices in Strategy* (Bradley, LinkedIn Pulse, March 2018); <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-trends-you-ride-biggest-choices-strategy-chris-bradley/>

Article: *The Four Global Forces Breaking All the Trends* (Dobbs, Manyika, and Woetzel, McKinsey Global Institute, April 2015); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-four-global-forces-breaking-all-the-trends>

Article: *The Global Forces Inspiring a New Narrative of Progress* (Greenberg, Hirt, and Smit, McKinsey Quarterly, April 2017); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-global-forces-inspiring-a-new-narrative-of-progress>

Article: *The Great Acceleration* (Bradley, Hirt, Hudson, Northcote, and Smit, McKinsey Strategy Blog, July 2020); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-great-acceleration>

Article: *The Next Normal Arrives: Trends That Will Define 2021—and Beyond* (Sneader and Singhal, McKinsey Quarterly, January 2021); <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/leadership/the-next-normal-arrives-trends-that-will-define-2021-and-beyond>

Web Resource: *Competitor Analysis* (Czepiel (NYU-Stern) and Kerin (SMU-Cox)); <http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~jczepiel/Publications/CompetitorAnalysis.pdf>

Article: *The Five Competitive Forces That Shape Strategy* (Porter, Harvard Business Review, January 2008); https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/faculty/hall/EAGL/Strategy_readings/Five_Forces_Update.pdf

BLOG SUBMISSION #2 DUE BY NOON EST ON JUNE 9TH

Week 4: Internal Organizational Analysis and Developing Strategic Options (Part I)

Article: *The Coherence Premium* (Leinwand and Mainardi, Harvard Business Review, June 2010); <https://www.strategyand.pwc.com/gx/en/insights/2002-2013/coherence-premium/hbr-coherence-premium.pdf>

Article: *The Ten-Session Strategy Reboot* (Smit, McKinsey Strategy Blog, February 2019); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-strategy-and-corporate-finance-blog/the-ten-session-strategy-reboot>

Article: *Seeing Your Way to a Better Strategy* (Laczkowski, Rehm, and Warner, McKinsey Strategy Blog, November 2018); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/seeing-your-way-to-better-strategy>

Article: *How to Create a Real Hockey Stick Strategy* (Hirt, LinkedIn Pulse, February 2018); <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-create-real-hockey-stick-strategy-martin-hirt/>

Article: *Strategy to Beat the Odds* (Bradley, Hirt, and Smit, McKinsey Quarterly, February 2018); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/strategy-to-beat-the-odds>

BLOG SUBMISSION #3 DUE BY NOON EST ON JUNE 16TH

Week 5: Developing Strategic Options (Part II)

Article: *How to Confront Uncertainty in Your Strategy* (Bradley, Hirt, and Smit, McKinsey Strategy Blog, March 2018); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/how-to-confront-uncertainty-in-your-strategy>

Check Out: *Eight Shifts Survey*, (McKinsey Diagnostic); <https://estrategy-diagnostic.com/wix/89/p51923118.aspx>

Book Excerpt: *Why Good Companies Fail to Thrive in Fast Moving Industries* (POSTED TO CANVAS) and *Discovering New and Emerging Markets* (Christensen, Introduction to and Chapter 7 of *The Innovator's Dilemma*, 1997); http://cscd.osaka-u.ac.jp/user/rosaldo/07-Chistensen_ID_Eng-7.pdf

Strategic Innovation Simulation—OPTIONAL: *Back Bay Battery* (v3) (Christensen and Shih, 2019); <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/827245>

BLOG SUBMISSION #4 DUE BY NOON EST ON JUNE 23RD

Week 6: Taking Strategy from Development to Implementation

Article: *Have You Tested Your Strategy Lately?* (Bradley, Hirt, and Smit, McKinsey Quarterly, January 2011); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/have-you-tested-your-strategy-lately>

Article: *Good Strategy Execution Requires Balancing Four Tensions* (Horan and Connerty, Harvard Business Review, November 2017); <https://hbr.org/2017/11/good-strategy-execution-requires-balancing-4-tensions>

Article: *Bridging the Gap Between a Company's Strategy and Operating Model* (Atmar, Becdach, Kleinman, and Rieckhoff, McKinsey Quarterly, May 2019); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/bridging-the-gap-between-a-companys-strategy-and-operating-model>

Article: *Can You Say What Your Strategy Is?* (Collis and Rukstad, Harvard Business Review, April 2008); <https://hbr.org/2008/04/can-you-say-what-your-strategy-is>

FINAL PROJECTS AND TEAM PEER EVALUATIONS DUE BY NOON EST ON FRIDAY, JULY 2ND

[Bonus Lecture]: *The Future of Strategy*

Article: *A Friedman Doctrine—The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits* (Friedman, The New York Times, September 1970); <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/09/13/archives/a-friedman-doctrine-the-social-responsibility-of-business-is-to.html>

Blog Post: *Milton Friedman on Corporate Social Responsibility* (Prevos and Watson, Lucid Manager Blog, July 2009); <https://lucidmanager.org/management/milton-friedman-corporate-social-responsibility/>

Article: *Creating Shared Value* (Porter and Kramer, Harvard Business Review, January-February 2011)—POSTED TO CANVAS

Article: *The Strategy-Analytics Revolution* (Mulligan, Northcote, Roder, and Vesuvala, McKinsey Strategy Blog, April 2021); <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-strategy-analytics-revolution>

Instructions for Back Bay Battery (Pre-Simulation)

1. At a minimum, please read the article *Why Good Companies Fail to Thrive in Fast Moving Industries* by the late legendary Harvard Business School professor and co-creator of the simulation, Clayton Christensen.
2. When you log into the simulation, you will be provided with background information to better understand the situation and operation.
3. If for some reason the simulation is not running correctly, I recommend that you reboot your computer or try it on another computer before contacting me or HBS Publishing. Another trick is to clear your browser's browsing history: I once had an issue with the simulation using Google Chrome, so I cleared my browser's history from "the beginning of time", rebooted my computer, and the simulation worked. You will probably have the most luck contacting HBS Publishing first. However, don't hesitate to get in touch if you are truly stuck.
4. I will monitor the results in the days that follow and increase the simulation's complexity level every couple of days to keep it interesting.
5. Try not to get fired.

Post-Simulation

- What did you learn during the simulation?
- What was difficult about playing the simulation?
- What did you struggle with most as you thought about how you would allocate your R&D investment dollars?
- What specific information did you concentrate on during each decision-making round?
- What do you think it takes to win, i.e., what comprises a winning strategy in this simulation?
- Have you worked for an organization facing a disruptive innovation? What happened?
- Can you envision a disruptive innovation impacting an organization you have worked for? What could happen?