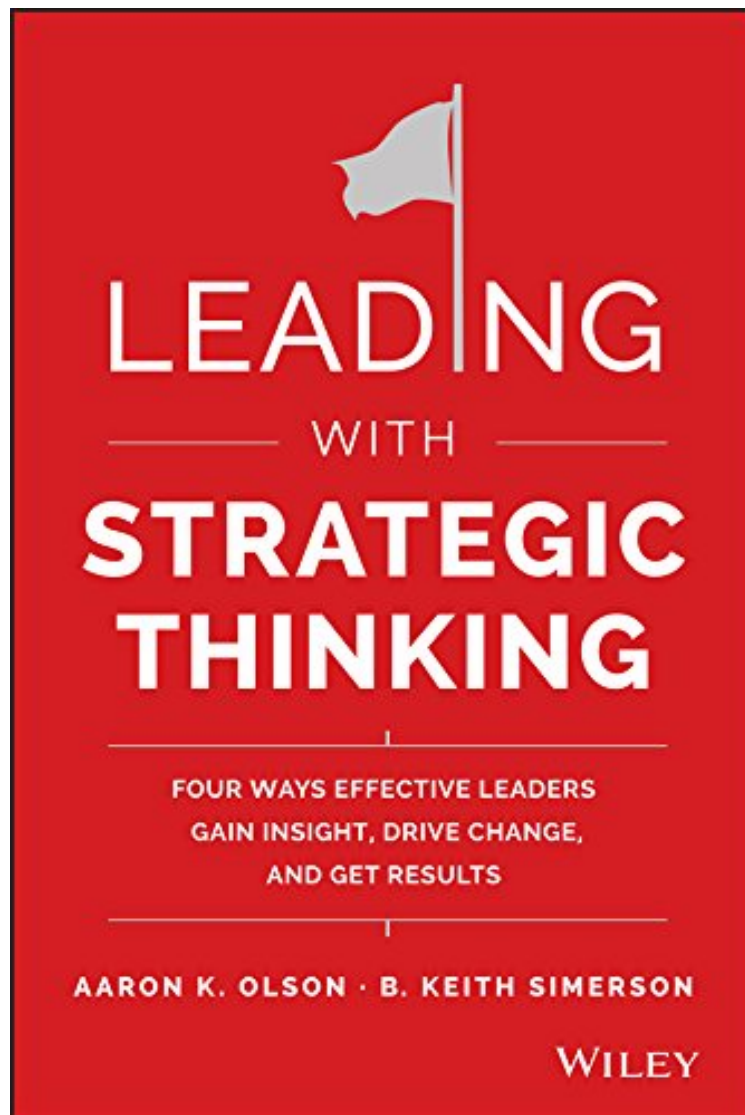


[Library ebook] Leading with Strategic Thinking: Four Ways Effective Leaders Gain Insight, Drive Change, and Get Results

Leading with Strategic Thinking: Four Ways Effective Leaders Gain Insight, Drive Change, and Get Results

Aaron K. Olson, B. Keith Simerson
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Aaron K. Olson, B. Keith Simerson : **Leading with Strategic Thinking: Four Ways Effective Leaders Gain Insight, Drive Change, and Get Results** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Leading with Strategic Thinking: Four Ways Effective Leaders Gain Insight, Drive Change, and Get Results:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. great at creating networksBy jakesmithjrLEADING WITH

STRATEGIC THINKING BOOK REVIEW: Strategic thinking is not the same as strategic planning. Knowing the difference makes the difference in organizations that become culture shaping movements, and organizations that simply survive. This book not only helps define the difference, it serves as a guide to get you there. In my view the most helpful insights gleaned from *Leading with Strategic Thinking* is presented early in the book. In chapter two Olson and Simerson list four types of strategic leaders. They are: 1. The Visionary Type ndash; Charismatic and sometimes controversial who lead with personal insight. Passion is an important dynamic this type displays. 2. The Incubating Type ndash; Empowering and developmental approach to both projects and people, great at creating networks. 3. The Directive Type ndash; Observational and intuitive, evaluates from altitude to consider solutions to constantly changing environments, and bring guidance. 4. The Collaborative Type ndash; Draw creative energy from teams, gain momentum from cocreation, and great at forming partnerships. The reason the distinction between strategic leaders matters is because there is not one right way to be a leader. There are many approaches to strategic leadership, and there is probably a primary one that is most intuitive to you. Learning your wiring and leaning into your natural leadership gifting is a powerful approach to your work, whatever your responsibility may be. I highly recommend *Leading with Strategic Thinking* as it is formative and applicable across multifarious leadership contexts.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One of the greatest contributions of their work is the clear connection they ... By Collin Outerbridge Olson and Simerson's *Leading with Strategic Thinking* is an exhaustive work capturing the essentials to leading organizations well. They develop their research and work by addressing the felt need many feel when challenged by people up and down the organizational chart to be more strategic. By providing clear pathways and next steps that differ from the old perspectives of simply reproducing what has been modeled, *Leading with Strategic Thinking* provides another way forward by dismantling old perspectives and reigniting a robust conversation around what it truly means to be "strategic" and a "leader" in today's rapidly changing, constantly dynamic globalized economy. One of the greatest contributions of their work is the clear connection they draw between strategic thought and leadership. The authors conclude that these two are intrinsically linked. Applying multiple disciplines such as cognitive psychology, systems thinking, and game theory, the writers go through painstaking detail to tease out the unique contributions strategic thinking can bring to the nine leadership roles they have discovered through their study. In the end, Olson and Simerson conclude that strategic leadership is best expressed through two different componentsndash;strategy formation and execution. The rest of the book zeros in on the ways in which four strategies of strategic leadershipndash;personal vision, structured process, collaboration, and empowermentndash;can be effectively implemented based on the needs, season, and dynamics of an organization. Providing broad examples from IndieGoGo to Google, *Leading with Strategic Thinking* provides a number of helpful anecdotes that help develop their thesis, while demonstrating the skills and behaviors that are essential for individuals to grow as strategic leaders. Perhaps their greatest contribution to the conversation on strategic leadership is in the distilled content they provide around the core competencies of strategic leadership. Their argument that leaders who are systems thinkers, decision makers, and risk managers employ the skill sets that lead to stronger organizations and more dynamic leaders finds strong quantitative and qualitative analysis throughout the chapter. While Olson and Simerson make compelling arguments for the value and implementation of strategic thinking, there is a flaw in their argument that they fail to address. They posit that strategic thinking is something that any leader can do and it is simply a matter of practice. While this seems to be a positive notion, there is very little argumentation to prove the point, and in fact, it seems as if their research would infer the opposite case. This contention falls flat when the core competencies of leadership, as explained by the authors, seem to be complex skill sets that take a mixture of both natural talent and practiced experience. In the end, I highly recommend this read for anyone who is leading an organization or wishes to improve their ability to make sharp, strategic decisions in a corporate context. The insights will prove to be helpful in clarifying reality, identifying next steps, and leading change.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. *Leading with Strategic Thinking* By Darren Whitehead The authors, Olson and Simerson begin *Leading with Strategic Thinking: Four ways effective leaders gain insight, drive change and get results*, with an insightful question: "You need to be more strategic" When someone receives this kind of feedback, what does it mean? We often talk about strategic thinking and how important it is, but few people can actually identify how it works. The authors help us get clarity on just that. They deconstruct what strategic thinking is, and then they explain the different kinds of strategic leadership. The authors are careful to point out that strategic thinking is not the same as strategic planning. They highlight three activities in strategic thinking: assessing situations, recognizing patterns and making decisions. They identify three knowledge sets that underpin strategic thinking: systems thinking, cognitive psychology and game theory. Cognitive psychology is about how people perceive, solve problems, remember, make decisions and become motivated. Systems Thinking is an approach to understanding how systems behave, interact with their environment, and influence each other. Game Theory is the study of decision making when the decision involves two or more parties. Specifically, game theory is based on the assumptions that interests among multiple stakeholder groups may differ and that others involved typically have alternatives available to them. After carefully explaining the three activities of strategic thinking, the authors focus on leadership. They describe a "strategic leader" as the individual whomndash; regardless of role, position, or titlendash; intentionally takes advantage of

opportunities to think strategically, influence others toward a chosen course of action, and garner needed buy-in, commitment, and advocacy.” Olson and Simerson then suggest there are four styles of strategic leadership: 1. Visionary Type: These leaders are inspiring and charismatic 2. Incubating Type: These leaders are nurturing, encouraging and effective facilitators 3. Directive Type: These leaders are decisive, driven and manage performance 4. Collaborative Type: These leaders cooperate in partnerships and teams Not only does the book provide helpful insights into the type of leader you are, but it also gives many useful next steps to take immediate action to implement these practices. The authors also offer intriguing insight into the way your superiors, peers and subordinates may perceive your actions and suggest ways in which you can change your behavior to improve those perceptions. My only critique of this book is that rarely does strategic leadership fit simply into one of the four categories. We tend to change leadership styles depending on the complexity of the respective situation. However, these categories are illuminating and provide a helpful lens of evaluation. Olson and Simerson do point out that *Leading with Strategic Thinking* can easily be used as a reference manual to refer to in specific leadership situations. This is, in my opinion, the greatest value of this book. It will sit on my (virtual) shelf as a reference guide to refresh my thinking for when my strategic leadership styles need to adapt to the complexities of my organizational season.

Be a more effective leader with strategic thinking *Leading with Strategic Thinking* reveals what effective leaders do differently. Eschewing the one-size-fits-all leadership model, this helpful guide outlines four general leadership types and demonstrates how each type achieves success — whether through personal vision, structured process, collaboration, or by empowering others. The authors identify the actions and skills that distinguish strategic leadership, drawn from interviews and focus groups with over three hundred leaders from around the world. Examples and case studies illustrate these concepts in action, and the provided reference materials steer readers toward more advanced information on this important topic. The disruptive forces of technology and globalization raise new challenges for leaders. This book is a manual that will help executives and aspiring leaders harness these forces and address the two central questions of strategic leadership: How do the best leaders develop their strategy? How do effective leaders drive strategic change? Becoming a strategic leader isn’t about mimicking an icon. The most effective leaders seize opportunity in a way that consciously integrates environmental requirements, stakeholder expectations, and personal ability. *Leading with Strategic Thinking* shows what these leaders do, and gives anyone the tools to be a more strategic leader.

“Leading with strategic thinking is a fantastic place to start if you have an interest in bettering the way you behave and think (and strategize) as a leader, if you are looking for inspiration for bringing psychological or behavioural ideas to your business, or simply if you’re keen to understand more about yourself and where your actions might take you” (B2B Marketing, February 2016) From the Inside Flap There are countless books on strategic thinking, and even more on leadership. But so far none have effectively integrated these two topics into a practical guide for leaders who want to promote strategic thinking within their organizations. *Leading with Strategic Thinking* fills this gap with a focus on taking action. This book also redefines strategy, bringing together insights from cognitive psychology, systems theory, and other fields to show that the importance of strategic thought transcends planning and permeates every aspect and every level of business. Too often, leaders think of strategy as one item on a long list of tasks they must attend to. Developing strategic plans is important, but long-term value creation does not and cannot end there. Instead, strategy is a frame of mind. And it is becoming all the more important in our era of technological and social disruptions. These changes in the status quo create massive opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and advancement. *Leading with Strategic Thinking* will show you how to recognize these opportunities daily, and how to achieve strategic buy-in among line managers and employees. By assimilating strategy into the every day, leaders have the potential to vastly improve organization-wide outcomes. Effective leaders understand that, as circumstances evolve, so do the roles of executives and upper management. Thankfully, *Leading with Strategic Thinking* does not promote a one-size-fits all leadership approach. Instead, the authors describe four types of strategic leadership, each one of which can be adapted to particular situations. Examples and case studies show how real leaders have used these techniques to improve results. The authors’ insightful discussion will help you identify your own personal leadership strengths and use these to drive the right change at the right time. Applying strategic thought to dynamic environments requires an understanding of how to drive strategy by utilizing skills that are appropriate to the moment. The authors of *Leading with Strategic Thinking* distinguish between core competencies and applied competencies—a distinction that leaders will find enormously helpful as they respond to the demands of their specific environments. With the help of the tools and resources in this book, you can begin applying this strategic leadership framework right away. Whether embarking on a new project or seeking to improve overall performance, *Leading with Strategic Thinking* should inspire you to have a greater impact, today and into the future. From the Back Cover PRAISE FOR LEADING WITH STRATEGIC THINKING “This is an essential guide to understanding how to think and lead strategically. Olson and Simerson do a great job describing what distinguishes strategic leaders and companies.” —Greg Case, CEO, Aon plc “There are many books that focus on strategy, and other

books that focus on various components of leadership. However, *Leading with Strategic Thinking* is the first time I have seen strategy and leadership come together in a clear, compelling way. I learned a lot by reading this insightful book. This is an important read for all leaders that truly want to make a difference in their organizations.”

—Harry M. Jansen Kraemer, Jr., Former Chairman and CEO of Baxter International; Professor of Management at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management; and author of *From Values To Action* and *Becoming the Best*

“From Nelson Mandela to GE, this book uses a diverse range of real-life stories to show that strategic leadership can be emergent or planned, and can emanate from the top or the grassroots of organizations. As such, strategic leadership is applicable in any job or setting. The world needs strategic leadership now more than ever, and Olson and Simerson make the topic both practical and clear.”

—Carolyn Woo, CEO, Catholic Relief Services

“Thinking and acting strategically should be at the core of everybody's leadership, and Aaron Olson and BK Simerson have prepared a first-rate guidebook for doing so. Drawing on extensive contact with executives and companies known for their exceptional leadership, *Leading with Strategic Thinking* is an invaluable resource for all those seeking to strengthen strategic leadership in themselves and their enterprises.”

—Michael Useem, Professor of Management and Director of the Center for Leadership and Change at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

“This is an important book for all who want to be great at gleaning strategic insight and executing strategic change. The authors provide powerful examples of the tradeoffs associated with different strategic leadership styles and offer tested advice on how to develop your strategic skills.”

—Linda A. Hill, Wallace Brett Donham Professor of Business Administration, Harvard Business School; and author of *Collective Genius: The Art and Practice of Leading Innovation*