

EDITORIAL

Mobile Planning: New Approaches to Strategic Management in Higher Education Institutions

The world evolves and the way of managing organizations also, in fact, the models of strategic direction that guided the institutions have changed, because traditional approaches prevent adjusting to the transformations of the environment. Specifically, a strategic management model is a scheme that gather the main elements that the organization must consider implementing its planning process, a process used by all types of institutions¹ (Cuesta, 2012), and involves certain stages that range from strategic analysis, going through the formulation of the strategies, until finishing with the implementation of the same ones² (Guerras and Navas, 2015). Indeed, some models contemplate a greater or lesser disaggregation, concerning its elements or crucial stages. However, all reaffirm the current paradigm of strategic direction that organizations follow. Likewise, other models preceded this paradigm, such as the direction by control, oriented mainly to the control of the budgets, followed of the model of direction by extrapolation, where the management control gains force, and, at the moment, the dominant model is the address in advance or the model of strategic direction of the organizations. However, the latter is showing signs of being in its final stage, wanting to give way to the model already announced in the area of management, such as rapid and flexible responses. In fact, there are precursor methodologies to the latter, such as prospective methods, the scenario method, the Delfhi method, and the cross-scenario method, however, these don't include all the necessary elements to be considered a new paradigm in the management of institutions, but they have contributed to the transition between both approaches. In short, at present, the changes that occur are increasingly constant and rapid, which encourages institutions to deliver faster and more flexible responses to new demands from users or stakeholders.

In fact, Lucena³ (2014: 106-112) states that organizations seek to provide appropriate responses to economic, political and social changes and, in addition, the university structure requires adapting to the process of change that the current globalized world is experiencing, where they demand faster, more timely methods and the ability to respond to the demands of the environment. Similarly, Rodríguez-Ponce⁴ (2016: 541) reinforces that “the times that appear for the Chilean university system are of greater demands on multiple fronts and dimensions”.

Likewise, the evolution of the models is also due to the fact that organizations have become increasingly complex and dynamic, addressing different spheres of action in various organizational contexts, receiving, in turn, requirements from stakeholders that are related to it, and that due to the speed of innovation and the development of technologies, their minds have become accustomed to demanding faster responses to their requests. Under this scenario, it is normal to ask whether the traditional models that currently guide institutions allow us to respond to these new demands and if these demands are aligned to the current systems and processes that organizations have. It is precisely at this point that

¹ U. Cuesta. “Planificación Estratégica y Creatividad”. ESIC Editorial. 1ª Edición. pp. 35-41. Madrid, España. ISBN: 978-84-7356-863-0. 2012.

² L.A. Guerras-Martín y J.E. Navas-López. “La Dirección Estratégica de la Empresa. Teoría y Aplicaciones”. Civitas. 5ª Edición, pp. 11-25. Madrid, España. ISBN: 9788447053001. 2015.

³ Y.P. Lucena. “Visión analítica de la planificación prospectiva en las universidades públicas venezolanas”. Cuadernos de Administración. Vol. 30 N° 52, pp. 105-114. 2014. ISSN: 0120-4645. DOI: <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=225033236011>.

⁴ E. Rodríguez-Ponce “La relevancia de la perspectiva estratégica en la dirección de las universidades”. Ingeniare. Revista chilena de ingeniería. Vol. 24 N° 4, pp. 538-539. 2016. ISSN: 0718-3305. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0718-33052016000400001>.

there is a challenge for higher education institutions, because, in particular, these institutions are not only the generators of knowledge, becoming the seedbed of the developments that drive the new demands, but also, they are who transfer this knowledge to the new generations, and, therefore, contribute to the demands patterns and the new requirements that the community demands of the organizations. In the same way, aspects of the environment, such as the reform of higher education, laws, and regulations, and, the demands of the environment for training processes more aligned to current times, require a model that is capable of adapting to these new realities and be able to respond with speed before them. It is for this reason that the concept of mobile planning emerges, at the forefront of the nascent model of rapid and flexible responses. In short, mobile planning will be understood as a strategic planning process of a mobile and flexible nature that allows adaptation to the internal and/or external changes that occur in the environment, considering a long-term horizon, the reformulation or strategic adjustments, as well as its follow-up.

In synthesis, and considering the trends of the environment and the trajectory in the planning of institutions of higher education, a challenge for them is to continue advance in the trigger and making this process more flexible, to be able to adapt to the changes that occur.

For this, it is necessary to generate a new modality for the management of the strategic plans, incorporating the concept of mobile strategic planning, which implies making adjustments to the planning, evaluating its compliance and the period, with the purpose of projecting the potential improvements, depending on the new challenges and/or scenarios that the institution has.

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