



Coastal Support Services Ltd.

Strategic Planning – Strategic Alignment Element

Strategic Alignment is intended to create consistency between several aspects of the organization to ensure it can deliver effectively to clients. If the strategic alignment elements are misaligned, challenges in achieving the strategy and goals will result.

There are 4 key logics or driving forces (from a strategic perspective) that create the context for alignment:

Performance (Customer Intimacy): Emphasizes focus, speed, time, action, results, outputs, goals, delivering unique products and services to individual customers typically at a premium

Administration (Operational Excellence): Emphasizes systems, measurement, analysis, control, consistency, accuracy, procedures, incremental adjustment, providing consistent low-cost products and services to customers

Development (Product Leadership/Innovation): Emphasizes quantum change, innovation, flexibility, individuality, R&D, marketing newly created products and services to customers

Intimacy (Relationship Focus): Emphasizes participation, interpersonal skills, consultation, teamwork, consensus, group partnership, creating long term relationships with customers

High performance organizations tend to focus almost exclusively on only one of these four areas and by creating alignment between the preceding elements

In my opinion, Coastal's Vision and Mission seem to focus on the "Intimacy (Relationship Focus)" logic.

There are 5 Key Areas of Alignment for all strategic intents – the notes below are focused on the "Intimacy (Relationship Focus)" logic:

- Strategic Alignment is in place when there is a strong fit between the following elements:
 1. **Operating Environment** (affected by markets, customers, competitors, shareholders, regulators)

For Coastal the following operating environment considerations should apply:

- **Client Service Needs "Understand Me":**
 - Empathy
 - Caring
 - Interaction
 - Spending time with them



- Quality of service/experience emphasis
 - Partners
 - Client loyalty
 - Brand loyalty
 - Concern for the community
- **Client Communication Needs** – Clients want you to spend time with them in face-to-face interactions, showing them that you listen to their needs and understand them
 - Spend time with clients
 - Do not rush them
 - Face-to-face interactions
 - Visits
 - Reassurance
 - Showing genuine concern
 - Being participative and understanding
 - Having a partnership mentality
 - Helping clients to make decisions

2. Business Strategy (how products and services are delivered and how the organization interfaces with its environment)

For Coastal the following strategy considerations should apply:

- Develop more cohesion, participation, and cooperation between service providers (integrated teamwork)
 - Create long term relationships
 - Develop joint venture opportunities with other entities
 - Improvement is created through consultation efforts
 - Low volume but high value adds services
 - Building consensus (policy development)
 - People skills and contributions are a critical success factor
- **Growth for Coastal Support Services**
 - Achieved by the development and sustainment of partnerships and the provision of services and programs that encourage client loyalty.
 - **Strategic Thrust for Coastal Support Services** can focus on:
 - Improving service delivery technologies and systems
 - Building long term service offerings
 - Providing integrated and value-added services
 - Creating client loyalty, and external supplier loyalty where applicable
 - **Service/Market Considerations:**
 - Provide limited, value-added service offerings



- The clients/market is sensitive to value/quality
 - Grow the market by providing extra value-added services
 - **Research and development Considerations:**
 - Emphasis is on providing better services to clients
 - **Service Delivery Considerations:**
 - Low volume of service offerings with high value added
 - Emphasis on improving service delivery
 - **Marketing Considerations**
 - Emphasis is on high value-added services, and continuously improving quality
 - **Distinctive Capabilities – What Coastal does exceptionally well**
 - Emphasis is on delivery of consistent high-quality services
 - Ability to develop long term client relationships
- 3. Culture** (the capabilities of the company: communication, decision making, how rules are applied/enforced, how change is managed, how performance is managed and reinforced)

For Coastal the following culture considerations should apply:

- **What is valued:**
 - Partnership orientation
 - Forging close bonds and loyal, enduring client relationships
 - Consultative behaviours
 - Cohesion and morale building is key to developing the team
 - Outcomes based on consensus
 - Emphasis on people and effective teamwork
 - Internal, collective orientation
 - Loyalty and commitment to the group
- 4. Leadership** (setting the strategic direction and taking action to create and shape the capabilities of the company)

For Coastal the following leadership considerations should apply:

- Leaders need to be revitalisers and integrators
- Shape and impart values
- Model the appropriate interpersonal behaviours
- Manage staff development and their personal growth
- Foster long term relationships with clients



- Manage sudden changes in the market quickly, to remain relevant
- Shared values include cohesion, harmony, participation, doing the right thing
- Individual aptitudes include achieving consensus, enrolling people, obtaining personal commitment and loyalty, managing group dynamics, building an effective team, providing supportive empathetic communication.

5. Taking Action (implementing actions that focus on the critical business issues, goals, measures, action plans and accountabilities)

For Coastal the following action/execution plan considerations should apply:

- Develop a clear description of the market and client base
- Develop a financial summary/outlook
- Validate Vision and Mission statements
- Complete the SWOT analysis and strategic alignment considerations.
- Identify the critical issues that need to be addressed over the next 1-3 years
- Review and revise the proposed goals to ensure alignment and that the key priorities/critical issues are addressed in the goals. Identify an owner for each goal and ensure the performance metrics are updated and reviewed at least quarterly (monthly is best).

Strategic Planning – SWOT Analysis Element



To help focus goal setting and strategic planning, the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis can be a helpful tool in the process, and should align with and reinforce the Vision, Mission, and Goals. There may be many more examples to consider from the list below, and some may or may not apply. The intent of the SWOT Analysis is to have an introspective examination of the business as it currently exists – consider any misalignments in the “strategic alignment” considerations.

Some key considerations for each section:

Internal Strengths:

- What internal organizational aspects provide the organization with a competitive advantage to meet client needs and thrive as a business? Some examples can include:
 - Positive “Brand” in the community
 - Positive “press” releases
 - Strong and committed leadership
 - Skilled, committed, diverse and effective workforce
 - Excellent pay and benefits
 - Excellent training and coaching
 - Diverse set of client services that are not widely available elsewhere
 - Strong client base
 - Effective client management and scheduling of services
 - Acceptable cash flow
 - Consistent funding
 - Streamlined business processes (cost efficient and meet client needs)
 - Effective use of technology to manage all aspects of the business

Internal Weaknesses

- Internal weaknesses create situations where risks to the health of the organization may materialize if not addressed. Many examples of internal weaknesses can be the “negative” of the Internal strengths as well as:
 - Poor safety record
 - High turnover of staff and leaders
 - Lack of training and career development
 - Inflated cost of services/inefficient processes
 - Inconsistent cash flow
 - Inconsistent funding
 - Lack of ability to consistently provide client services as promised
 - High turnover of clients

External Opportunities

- What are the opportunities to sustain and grow the business?
 - Build on positive community image with more positive press (special interest story on TV news), social media, open houses, presentations at various events/conferences (local, provincial, national, international).
 - Deliver services in multi languages to accommodate all clients from diverse backgrounds.
 - Expanding the existing level services to a wider client geographic area
 - Expanding the number of existing services currently offered – new and complimentary
 - Partnering with other established institutions to identify potential clients and service offerings
 - Acquiring funding/grants from both provincial and federal sources

External Threats

- Are there external forces that may affect the health of the organization?
 - Economic downturn
 - Government cutbacks
 - Changing client population base
 - Other organizations that may compete for the same clients by offering similar services that are more cost effective for the client
 - Other competitors that attract existing staff and leaders away from the organization
 - Potential online services that compete for clients