

THE STRATEGIC VISION IN FIGHTING ORGANIZED CRIME

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Abstract. *This article aims to present theoretical principles of strategic vision, in order to motivate and trigger organisations responsible for fighting organized crime into improving their own visions. Beginning from notions regarding strategic vision, we created a correlation to clarify the necessity of its improvement inside organisations.*

Keywords: strategic vision, organized crime, patterns, global security

Jell code: F59

1. Introduction

Creating a vision regarding the desired future situation is one of the most common methods for planning and introducing the changes in organisation. There is no bigger force that can lead an organisation through excellence, to medium and long term success, but a vision of future considered a mental construction that people have the power to turn into reality.

This construction is based on a set of values which are the essentials of organisational culture. Thus, the vision defines the future state of the organisation. Mainly, the managerial vision represents a direct expression of the managerial culture.

The present article comes with a conceptual suggestion for defining the strategic vision in the field of security and defence.

Exposing the strategic visions and their basic ideas is necessary for the development of organisations involved in the fight against organized crime.

2. The conceptual framework

The vision is the engine of strategic management. Its development and maintenance represents the basic need of an organisation.

A vision established at the highest level of an organisation must be shared with the other members, in order to inspire their actions towards fulfilling their tasks.

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Vision implies the organisation to have a point of view in respect to the future, focusing on ambition, commitment and focus on own intentions.

Vision interlaces with strategic thinking, because the first one implies aspirations, while the thinking generates options to fulfil those aspirations. Vision is the result of thinking a future strategy. Each organisation ought to think and to imagine its future by giving an objective meaning and, also, common for its members.

The mental pattern of an organisation is usually taken over by other surrounding organisations. Many times, the pattern does not correspond to reality, and the organisation begins to confront with real problems. It is obvious that there is a gap between the actual state of the organisation and the pattern to which it should aspire.

The gap from the development of a vision can be covered by a close analysis of the capacities and resources – what should be improved, produced or discharged. Hence, the solution is to change the mental pattern with one in which it can be envisioned real and achievable visions.

In developing a vision is not only necessary a rational planning, but moreover letting go of creativity and intuition.

It is essential for a strategic vision to be dynamic. In order to have dynamism, it must be big, solid and sustainable in time. Therefore, the organisation can easily adapt to any kind of change.

Each successful organisation has a vision, and it is integrated in all leadership programs, but also in training and development of its members. The advantage of this type of organisation comes in the fact that it applies its vision and uses it as a guideline to maintain the strategy.

A vision cannot be used in any situation, but if there is the necessity to choose an option, the decision is easier to make if you weight the options and choose the one closest to the developed vision.

The vision creates a path to success for the organisation. It depends on the organisation how it follows it and which strategies use. Those can bring it closer or alienate it from fulfilling the vision.

The philosophy of a successful organisation states that, if a department is important enough to exist, then it is important enough to have performance objectives and a strategy to fulfil them.

This vision suggests at least two types of processes in setting the objectives: from top to bottom and from bottom to top.

The top-bottom type of process is the most used because it clearly defines what results are aimed and who is responsible for the accomplishment; at the same time, it creates cohesion of actions and decisions made in different parts of the company.

In the bottom-top type of process, the objectives resulting from suggestions of inferior levels may not be consistent from a strategic point of view, and even more, may not correspond with the priorities of top leadership.

3. Errors and failures that affect the strategic vision of an organisation

There is a series of common errors and failures that affects the strategic vision of an organisation, namely:

1. vision is too general and/or too abstract;
2. vision is too detailed: in this case, we are facing strategic and operational elements which are non-hierarchical. Decision makers confront a number of very little used criteria;
3. vision transforms in financial objectives. On the other side, the choices of judicious strategy can be operated only by reporting to technological and/or commercial criteria which constitute the strategic vision;
4. vision is inadequate for the environment's conditions;
5. vision does not exist: it characterises the companies that are stiffened in the operational dimension of the strategic management.

In the most companies, the originality of process enunciation is not that important as the interaction between hierarchic levels, so that the objectives, strategies, budgets and procedures suffer a continuous adjustment process.

4. The strategic vision in fighting against organized crime

Fighting organized crime cannot be limited only to intelligence gathering and field actions.

An overall strategic vision is necessary. Globalization and technological evolution make it indispensable.

The ideas that constitute the base of a strategic vision must be in perfect accordance with specific and general parameters and offer indications regarding the approach and applicability to drive to desired results.

All these ideas express a strategic vision which has only one purpose and one motivation: fighting organized crime.

5. Data regarding the nature of the organized crime

In order to formulate a good strategic vision, data regarding the nature of the organized crime must be known and assessed. These are:

1. type and field of activity of the criminal group;
2. structure of the criminal group: pyramidal or reticular;
3. relationships between criminal groups activating in the same field;
4. identification of leaders, members, contributors and their part in organisation;
5. identification of ways to recruit and train;
6. criminal groups' finance, money laundry, corruption;
7. tasks specific to each member of the group;
8. members' affiliation to one or more criminal groups;
9. national and/or global performance of criminal activities;
10. places where they operate and ways of doing it;
11. identification of new operating methods, communication technologies and encryption.

The correlation of these data leads to a better knowledge of the phenomenon and the factors involved. Thus, a well structured strategic analysis provides the necessary guidelines in formulating a vision.

The creator of the vision must be aware of difficulties and limits, problems, conflict situations, risk factors and also to evaluate consequences. In order for the vision to develop well shaped strategies, an analysis is necessary to find solutions for reducing weaknesses and developing strengths.

Before identifying a criminal group's weaknesses it is ideal to know your own weak points.

Errors in the investigation of a criminal organization lead to the continuation of the activity developed by the group, even to an exacerbation of these activities.

If an organisation is weak, it will not be able to apply the combat strategies, but if it offers professionalism, trust and credibility it can concentrate on the actions for fighting against the worst criminal acts.

For the vision to drive to a favourable result, all members of the organisation must sustain and support the ideas, follow specific and general objectives, formulate evolutionary hypothesis.

For formulating ideas it is also necessary an anticipation of the criminal group's behaviour. They are present in all social structures, even though they do not affect in the same way different levels of population – underage are the most vulnerable group, as for the adults, the biggest impact is on the women.

The vision must also have continuous strategic evaluation and that because of the fact that criminal organization are in permanent development and progress. Evaluating criminal activities offers solutions in designing and formulating the vision.

Conclusions

Vision offers trust in future strategies and, therefore, the approach of preventing and fighting organized crime will change from a reactive action to a proactive one.

A well defined strategic vision will provide answers and will improve the existing strategies. Its enunciation, together with security, legal and diplomatic aspects will open a door to national and global cooperation, translation c ombining efforts to combat organized crime.

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