Glossary of Terms

Action Plan

The specific steps (tactics) to be executed over time to achieve a Desired Effect by the Timeframe required.

Action Units Ring

The fifth and farthest from the center ring in the Five Ring System that includes those elements in a system that do tactical jobs

- Action Units have latitude in how to do a job, but not whether to do it
- Action Units execute policy but do not have the authority to create it
- Action Units are the instruments of the system
- Action Units are important but are difficult to change and keep changed so the leverage tends to be low for overall system change

Examples include: the sales force, a fighter squadron, the West Coast division, regulatory inspectors (but not a regulatory agency like the FDA that would fall in the leadership ring)

Previously referred to as "Fielded Forces-Military", and "Agents-Business"

Brand

A Organization Key Descriptor that defines whether your organization (as opposed to its products or services) will be broadly recognized in the future. Decide if you want a brand, and if so, for what it will stand, and how widely you intend it to be known.

Business Areas

An Organization Key Descriptor that describes what business areas you want and intend to have in the future. Be as specific as possible without limiting your strategic options. For example, you might say you wanted to be in the fast food business as opposed to the food business in general (because you don't want to be a farmer), but you would not say that you wanted to be in the hot dog business as hot dogs could go out of style tomorrow.

Campaign

An effort of limited duration against one or more specified Centers of Gravity as part of an overall strategic operation.

Campaign Orchestrator

An individual responsible for coordinating all the campaigns, assuring resources are made available, resource and objective conflicts are resolved, and campaign decisions are made fast.

Campaign Team

A group of individuals assigned to a campaign responsible for developing and executing action plans for each center of gravity to realize the Desired Effects associated with each Center of Gravity.

Campaign Team Leader

An individual responsible for directing the efforts of one or more people to realize the desired effects for all the centers of gravity assigned to that campaign. The campaign leader is responsible for achieving the desired effects for the assigned cogs.

Campaign To Win

The third Imperative of the Prometheus Process. It is here that we see the bridge between planning and execution. It is here that the connection between tactics and strategy becomes clear.

Campaigns Map

A systems like map showing all the campaigns and the centers of gravity assigned to them.

Cardinal Rules

Time-tested, easy-to-remember, strategic rules to improve probability of success at all levels of operations for use in planning and in execution.

Center of Gravity

Components of The System (Enemy, Organization, Market) To Be Changed That Are Related To Achieving Your Future Picture

The Leverage Points In The System

Relatively Few In Number When Compared Against All The Possible Points In A System

When Affected, Have A Disproportionate Impact On Their Parent System And On The Future Picture

Energy Against A COG Produces Far More Than Same Energy Applied Against A Non-COG

If You Want To Win and Your Resources Are Limited, You Must Apply Them Against COGs

Collaboration Process

Unless an organization has thoroughly thought out the various roles, responsibilities and authorities necessary to efficiently plan and execute a Prometheus Process Grand Strategy, planning and execution will suffer. The Collaboration Process establishes who can make planning decisions, and who is responsible for specific planning and execution tasks as well as the general orchestration methods of the campaigns.

Complex Consolidated Center of Gravity

A Center of Gravity which represents an aggregated set of related Centers of Gravity with a Strategic Impact Plan that cannot be achieved without further analysis to identify fractal Centers of Gravity for which actionable Strategic Impact Plans can be developed.

Complex Entity Center of Gravity

A Single Center of Gravity with a Strategic Impact Plan that cannot be achieved without further analysis to identify fractal Centers of Gravity for which actionable Strategic Impact Plans can be developed.

Corporate Citizenship

An Organization Key Descriptor--Do you want to take an active role in community or charitable affairs? As a company? As individuals?

Corporate Culture

An Organization Key Descriptor-- The operating environment of an organization that you intend to have in the future. Can range from hierarchical to flat, dictatorial to anarchic.

Design The Future

The first Imperative of the Prometheus Process imperative -- the first imperative—Design the Future--has four steps associated with it: Scope the Environment (including cycles and disruptive technologies); Paint the Future Picture; Engrave the Precepts; and Establish the

Measures of Merit. The basic thrust of the First Imperative (with its four components) is to understand the macro-environment in which you are operating, to decide precisely what tomorrow should look like, to decide on the rules you choose to govern your progress to the future, and the measurements that tell you that you are on track or have arrived. What it is not is equally important: the First Imperative is not the place to decide how you are going to realize your Future Picture. You must assume that there will be a way to do it if you really want it.

Desired Effect

The primary element of a strategic impact plan -- A description of the Center of Gravity after actions are executed against it. (Its End or Future State). What the Center of Gravity must become to play its role in creating the system change needed to realize the Future Picture.

Desired External System Effects

Desired External System Effects are essentially the Future Picture for the External system and are connected directly to your overall Future Picture. As such, there is a set of broad System Descriptors that can be used to organize System Desired Effects of the External System being described.

Disruptor

A disruptive technology or concept displaces or destroys products or services based on existing technologies or concepts

Frequently begins life looking less capable than what it will disrupt

Eventually has overwhelming advantages compared to its predecessor

May originate from a completely different industry or market

For more information, see Clayton Christensen's The Innovator's Dilemma

Entity Context

An element of the Strategic Context: Well Defined Entity Context For Strategy: Corporation, Company, Organization, Division, Branch, Project or Product Service Provided, Other ?? The Entity Context

defines the External (Market) and Internal (Organization, Product, Project, Service) bounds for strategy development.

Execution Start

The specific date on which Campaign Teams are authorized to begin execution of Action Plans aimed at achieving Center of Gravity Strategic Impact Plans and ultimately, the Future Picture.

External System

A five ring system that contains the relevant Centers of Gravity that are outside the organization or entity under consideration (see strategic context). In the Business world, this is also referred to as the Market System.

Financial Position

An organization key descriptor--where do you want to be in financial terms—profitability, equity, debt?

Finish With Finesse

The Fourth Imperative of the Prometheus Process. Typically the most difficult and most overlooked aspect of strategic planning and execution. The concept is simple: everything will end so it is necessary to plan in advance to know when (Exit Points) to move away from a given activity, how it is to be done (Exit Plans), and what will happen following the Exit Plan (Reconstitution Plan).

Five Rings

The Five Rings describe all systems at the first level of analysis. All living systems (a person, a company, a market, a company, a country) have identical elements: Leadership; Processes; Infrastructure; Population; and Action Units. Knowing how systems are organized makes it possible to find Centers of Gravity in any given system.

Fractal

A term adapted from chaos theory to describe the propensity of systems to repeat their patterns from the very large to the very small. The fractal attribute applies to the Prometheus Process in several areas: creation of Future Pictures for subordinate levels of an organization; higher resolution analysis of Centers of Gravity by

breaking a Center of Gravity down into its own Five Ring System; and the use of the process itself at all levels of an organization to deal with opportunities and problems at each level.

Fractal System

A complete five ring system derived from a higher level center of gravity.

Future Picture

A descriptive summary of an organization or other entity as it will be at a specific point in future time (see strategic context). Future Pictures are comprised of statements organized around a group of specific Key Descriptors.

Future Picture Assessment

An assessment of an individual Center of Gravity's relative importance to achieving the Future Picture, as measure on a five-point scale: Extreme, Significant, Moderate, Somewhat, Limited

Future Picture Horizon

Timeframe In Which Strategy Is Executed And Future Picture Realized—This is a specific date in the future at which time you desire to realize your Future Picture. Future Picture Horizon is one element of the Strategic Context..

Guiding Precepts

Guiding precepts align and motivate efforts of everyone in an organization in agreed ways. They tell you in broad terms:

- What you should do—exciting and challenging
- What you can't do—clear and understandable
- How you should do it—why it will benefit
- The core philosophy of your organization including attitude toward risk

Created in an open planning environment, Guiding Precepts are about the nature of what you do, not necessarily about their effectiveness. Their absence leads to dissension, schizophrenia, and wasted effort

Hysterisis Effect

The tendency of any body to return to its close to its original state after a deforming force is put against it. In the Prometheus Process, the term is used to describe the tendency of market and

organization systems as well as groups of individuals and individuals themselves to try to revert to an earlier way of doing something after being shown a new way to do it. To keep the system under attack from reverting back to a prior energy state, it is necessary to break its elastic limit to force it into a new energy state from which return is difficult to impossible.

Incentive Philosophy

An Organization Key Descriptor that leads an organization to determine the philosophy (not the mechanics) of how it will reward its members in the future. Choices range from straight salary or hourly wages to complete sharing of risk and reward.

Infrastructure Ring

The Third Ring in the Five Ring System that depicts those elements of a system that are relatively stationary and constant. They may be physical such as a road or a building, or may be conceptual such as an organization structure, a standard, or a protocol.

Innovation

An Organization Key Descriptor-- This Key Descriptor refers to product innovation and to process innovation. It can range from new internal R&D to marginal change (or to no change). If you really don't like the risks and headaches attendant to real innovation and internal research and development, this is the place to say so.

Insider Perception

An Organization Key Descriptor—This Key Descriptor tells you how you expect insiders—the members (executives, stockholders, employees in general) of the organization—to view themselves in the Future (not how they view themselves today). Once decided, you will take actions against Centers of Gravity to make the perception a reality.

Internal System

A five ring system that contains the relevant Centers of Gravity that are inside the organization or entity under consideration (see strategic context). In the Business world, this is also referred to as the Organizational System.

Key Descriptor

The Prometheus Process provides twelve Key Descriptors to help you develop a high-resolution Future Picture: Financial Position; Market Position; Business Areas; Innovation; Insider Perception; Outsider Perception; Workforce Characteristics; Brand; Corporate Culture; Corporate Citizenship; Ownership; and Incentive Philosophy. There should be a clear, compelling statement attached to each Key Descriptor to describe your Future Picture.

Leadership Ring

The First Ring (center ring) containing those elements of a system that try to move it in a particular direction.

Almost Always Several Leadership Elements

Rarely Will They Have Same Motivations

Relatively Autonomous

May Not Have Formal Titles

May Be Individuals Or Entities

Normally Provide Very High Leverage

Examples Include: President, CEO, Board Of Directors, Key Media, Key Financiers, Key Influencers

Market Position

An Organization Key Descriptor that asks where you intend to be in the future with respect to your markets. The choices range from driving the market (like Intel) to passively following the market (like Joe's Commodity Supply Company). You can be successful anywhere on the spectrum but you need to be clear and honest about the place at which you want to operate.

Market System

In the Business world, a five ring system that contains the relevant Centers of Gravity that are outside the organization or entity under consideration (see strategic context). This is also referred to as the External System.

Master Effects Plan

A Series of Phases In Which Specific COG Strategic Impacts Are Achieved

Master Effects Plan Phase

A precise period time (start/end) during which you intend to achieve specific Desired Effects for specific Centers of Gravity. Recall that Centers of Gravity can have more than one Desired Effect with associated timeframes. Likewise, master effects plans may have more than one phase—and probably will.

Measure of Merit (Future Picture)

A Measure of Merit for the Future Picture is a measurement that tells you when you will have realized your Future Picture (or that you are going astray). Each Key Descriptor must have one or more Measures of Merit associated with it.

Each Measure of Merit in the Strategic Measurement Plan will have the following elements:

- Unit of Measure
- May be Boolean, Absolute Numbers, Percentages, Currency, etc.
- Units may be negative or positive
- Measurement Description—The measurement description identifies what is being measured
- The Measurement Description maybe expressed as Absolute, Trends, Ceiling, Floor, Averages (Means, Medians), Assessments (Surveys), etc.
- Frequency of Measurement
- Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly, etc.
- How often is the individual assigned to take the measurement supposed to take the measurement?
- Strategic Success Value
- What is the value that indicates strategic success?
- Measurement Assignment
- An individual within the organization must be assigned the responsibility to collect and analyze the data required to plot and report progress on each Measure of Merit.

Measure of Merit (Strategic Impact Plan)

The second element of an Impact Plan. Each Desired Effect for a Center of Gravity must have one or more measures associated with it. These measurements will indicate progress toward or achievement of a specific desired effect. The Measures should have the characteristics described in Measure of Merit (Future Picture).

Orchestrate Resources

In the campaign phase, many parallel operations are taking place at the same time making it almost impossible to manage in a traditional manner. As part of the strategy planning process, the organization has decided what Centers of Gravity must be affected in specific time frames (see Master Effects Plan). Thus, the organization has the score (as in the sheets for a symphony); all that should be required is to provide the coordination and occasional assistance to

allow those charged with affecting the Centers of Gravity to get the job done.

Organizational System

In the Business world, a five ring system that contains the relevant Centers of Gravity that are inside the organization or entity under consideration (see strategic context). This is also referred to as the Internal System.

Outsider Perception

An Organization Key Descriptor that depicts how the organization plans to be seen by those not part of the organization, such as its customers, bankers, financial analysts, suppliers, and perhaps the general public.

Ownership

An Organization Key Descriptor that explains how the organization will be owned in the future. Choices range from private to publicly owned with many possible variations in between.

Parallel Attack

A process of affecting many centers of gravity as nearly simultaneously as possible in order to causing significant, hard-to-reverse or oppose system change. Affecting centers of gravity in parallel creates a greater overall probability of success than would serial attack against the same centers of gravity.

Population Ring

The fourth ring from the center that includes the demographic groups who are part of a system.

Demographic groups tend to respond to similar stimuli (publications, messages, rewards)

In the population ring, you address groups, not individuals. For example: doctors in general, not Doctor Smith

The individuals in the population ring demographic groups may show up as individuals in other rings. For example, Doctor Smith may be the hospital CEO in the Leadership Ring

Prime Directive

A Prime Directive is the highest form of Guiding Precepts. They include injunctions or behavioral norms to be followed at almost any cost.

Processes Ring

The Processes Ring is the second ring from the center in the Five Ring System methodology. The Process Rings includes those elements of a system that convert energy from one form to another. This ring offers great leverage for system change because a change in this ring will affect many other parts of the system.

Examples include: internal and external communication, innovation, recruiting, training, financing, and production

Prometheus

Prometheus was a lesser god in the ancient Greek Pantheon. According to the legend, he gave man the ability to think ahead (foresight, or in other words, strategy) and he gave man fire. Thinking and fire put man far beyond all the other animals.

Prometheus Process

A future oriented, "architectural" approach to developing and executing winning strategies that covers the life-cycle of a product, phase, concept, or entity. It is intended for those who want to create a better tomorrow for themselves and their organizations. It consists of Four Strategic Imperatives and a set of Cardinal Rules (vid). It helps an organization differentiate itself by thinking strategically

Integrates large scale planning and execution; it aligns from boardroom to back room; and it accelerates the actions necessary for success.

Promethic Laws

The Promethic Laws are the laws of human action--the relationship between actions and the future, the environment in which actions take place, the nature of environments, the prerequisites for successful environmental change, and relationship between actions and termination. They provide the theoretical base for the Prometheus Process.

- Every action affects the future
- Specific actions create a specific future
- Every thing and every action happens in a system

- All systems have inertia and resist change
- All systems have centers of gravity
- Systems change when their centers
- of gravity change
- The extent and probability of system change is proportional to the number of centers of gravity affected and the speed at which they are affected
- All known systems and things have a beginning and an end
- Specific actions produce specific ends

Red Team

A Red Team is a group of people who aggressively look for flaws in a plan. It is important to subject all the plans put together using the Prometheus Process to a Red Team review. The Red Team can be a group of people who were not involved in the planning or it can be the planning team itself that figuratively (or literally) puts on their Red Hats and then proceeds to attack everything they have agreed to the point of their Red Team exercise. Everything they find must be addressed, and if it cannot be solved, some degree of additional planning must be done—even to the point of starting from the beginning. The Red Team concept improves the quality of the plan, speeds development because planners know there will be an opportunity to re-look at questionable areas, and it improves confidence in the plan and the planning process.

Rule of Engagement

A Rule of Engagement is a second level Guiding Precept. Rules of engagement are subordinate to Prime Directives, may exist at each level of an organization, may be situational, and may change over time.

Scope The Environment

Scope the Environment is the first step in Imperative I: Design the Future. The purpose of this step is to understand the macro changes that are taking place in the world, to evaluate the possibility of disruptors, and to understand the assumptions about the future held by members of the planning group.

Serial Attack

A process of affecting Centers of Gravity one at a time with some measurable interval between actions against Centers of Gravity. All systems tend to resist change and systems can generally manage serial attacks without too much trouble; thus, the probability of

success in serial operations is always much lower than with parallel attack against the same Centers of Gravity.

Simple Center of Gravity

A Center of Gravity with a Strategic Impact Plan that can be achieved directly through a series of related actions.

Strategic Assessment Milestone

Strategic Assessment Milestones are established to identify specific points in time over the course of executing a Grand Strategy where the Senior Management Group will assess overall strategic progress and make strategic decisions to continue, change or abandon current strategy. The establishment of a Strategic Assessment Milestone is a commitment to assess strategic progress consistent with the agreed guidelines:

Strategic Context

The Strategic Context sets the boundaries for any Strategy effort using the Prometheus Process and contains the following elements:

- Well Defined Entity Context For Strategy: Corporation, Company, Organization, Division, Branch, Project or Product Service Provided, Other ?? The Entity Context defines the External (Market) and Internal (Organization, Product, Project, Service) bounds for strategy development.
- Future Picture Horizon: Timeframe In Which Strategy Is Executed And Future Picture Realized— This is a specific date in the future at which time you desire to realize your Future Picture. The Future Picture Horizon establishes the period of time in which you have to execute your Grand Strategy.
- Execution Start: The specific date on which Campaign Teams are authorized to begin execution of Action Plans aimed at achieving Center of Gravity Strategic Impact Plans and ultimately, the Future Picture. Execution Start is a baseline date from which all Strategic Impact Plan timeframes and Master Effects Plan phases are established.

Strategic Impact Plan

Centers of Gravity to be affected must have Impact Plans associated with them to guide those responsible for affecting them. An Impact Plan has two parts, the Strategic and the Tactical. The former describes what the Center of Gravity must become (the Desired Effect), how you will know when it reaches its Desired Effect (Measures of Merit), and the Timeframe in which the Desired Effect must be realized. The strategic part of the Impact Plan should be developed by as many people as possible including the senior officials of the organization. In any event, the most senior officials must approve the strategic part of the Impact Plans before they are handed over to campaign teams.

Strategic Measurement Plan

The Strategic Measurement Plan is a collection of Measures of Merit associated with each of the Future Picture Key Descriptor Statements. These Measures of Merit are strategic measures of success—achievement or partial achievement of the Future as described in each Key Descriptor Statement.

The Strategic Measurement Plan is created by the Senior Management Group in Open Planning after each Key Descriptor Statement is drafted and concurred on by the group.

Good Strategic Measurement Plans have the following characteristics:

- Measure from start to finish and connect tactics to strategy
- Contain Absolute Measurements (such as Six Sigma)
- Not comparative (such as "best in our industry)
- Externally derived or derivable (such as stock price for a publicly traded company)
- Carefully conceived to avoid encouragement of non-strategic actions
- Aligned with strategy, well-crafted, and clearly understood
- Useable in the real world
- Are a reasonable consequence of the thing being measured
- Have clearly assigned responsibility for implementation

Each Campaign has Strategic Measurement Plan associated with the Center of Gravity Strategic Impact Plans assigned to the Campaign.

Strategy

Strategy is the game plan to create the future—to win—even in the face of resource constraints or hostile environments Strategy

Maximizes reward, minimizes risk

Leverages resources

Leads to long-term success

Provides context, meaning, value, direction, and alignment for every tactical action

Provides Context, Meaning, Value, Direction, And Alignment For Every Tactical Action

System

A system is a collection of disparate elements that interact with each other. Systems exhibit a number of characteristics

- Have information flow
- Have energy
- Resist change
- Exhibit the hysteresis effect

- Have similar patterns of organization (the Five Rings)

It is necessary to think in system terms whenever you do anything because everything you do takes place in the context of a system.

System Descriptors

A set of categories to describe System Desired Effects for an External Market System

System Map

A Five Rings Map showing the relevant centers of gravity within each system ring.

Tactics

Tactics are the basic actions of any organization—flying, shooting, selling, making, serving. Good tactics (execution) is very important, gut even superior tactics don't guarantee success, and success doesn't require superior tactics.

Timeframe

The timeframe in a Strategic Impact Plan is the specific date by which a Desired Effect on a Center of Gravity must be realized.

Workforce Characteristics

An Organization Key Descriptor that describes the major characteristics of the future workforce.