Hacking Strategy

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Background: Strategy development is in stagnation. The current paradigm and related understanding of making strategy do not pace the rhythm of modern world complexity. Senior Leadership and related education are critical parts of strategy making. Titled 'Hacking Strategy' as one module inside Theory and Practice of Strategy, the 2023 SVN General Staff program used flipped classroom model, radical candor, Mission Model Canvas, Beneficiaries Development, and Agile Engineering to examine different approaches for strategy making, named "Hacking Strategy".

Methods: Extensive literature review was employed to find out the proper tools as part of the overall methodology for the practical part of strategy development. The curriculum allows participants to respond to major strategic challenges. Developing parallel Defense and Military strategy participants were divided into two groups, three students in each group. "Hacking strategy" class was designed to analyze in group format challenges in the contemporary security environment related to Mission Model Canvas areas[1]. For sharpening the Mission model or making Mission/Strategy Fit Value Proposition Canvas was used. Participants were forced to go out of class/office to check the validity of statements with the goal to find out the pivot for each strategy if any. This "get out of the building" approach is called Beneficiaries Discovery or Development. Was a six-week course that required participants every week to change Mission Model and confirm or reject or adopt a hypothesis. The Mission Model Canvas was used to frame hypotheses. Beneficiary Development to test those hypotheses in front of the customers and beneficiaries. Agile Engineering – to build Minimum Viable Products and to maximize learning. The foundation was evidence-based development. Rather than engaging in months of writing strategy and research, students accepted that all they have on day one was a series of untested hypotheses. Instead of creating intricate strategy documents, students summarize their hypotheses in a Mission Model Canvas. Successful strategy development is driven by the realization that there are no facts "inside the building". It is imperative to get outside, ask, and learn.

Results: Draft Mission models for Defense and Military Strategy were produced at the beginning using an extensive literature review, previous strategy examples, and drafts officially produced strategies by MOD or General Staff. Vibrant and diverse ecosystems where government, military school, and the general staff was created and partnership build around defense and military strategy. Students responding to problems and finding that input allows them to arrive at a not-yet thought-of solution. Educators learned new methods of teaching and were exposed to government and military problems that expanded their research agendas. "Hacking Strategy" students were not built draft government or military strategy during the class: they tested the hypothesis of a strategy as a problem and information they learn from beneficiaries (those who either experience and/or benefit from the military or defense strategy).

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[1] Key Partners, Key Activities, Key Resources, Value Proposition, By in & Support, Deployment, Beneficiaries, Mission Budget (or cost), Mission Achievement (or "fulfillment" or "impact") factors (or criteria).

Minimum Viable Product (MVP) in the form of a Defense Strategy Model and Military Strategy Model as solutions that need further work by the Ministry of Defense and General Staff officials. MVPs were accompanied by a one – to two-page write-up of the Model. Strategy model prototypes make a concept come to life as a sketch, concept storyboards, short video, and 10 slides project outcomes presentation

Value Proposition Canvas (VPC) summarized the entire relationship (pros and cons) that beneficiaries have with strategies. These two components were used for sharpening Strategy Models.

Mission Model Canvas, one version per week per group, and the final one were developed as evidence-based strategy development. *Record of Interviews*, students were required to keep a record of everyone they interviewed.

Influence map, a one-page charting the decision–makers, gatekeepers, supporters, and saboteurs around the problem was produced as a combined team effort.

Conclusions: Participants were divided into two groups to challenge the legacy system of strategy-making. They believe that the Lean StartUp method and Mission Model Canvas are much better or more comprehensive tools for the strategic environment we are living in. Guided by two main questions;
What pain points does your solution solve? What gains does your solution provide? Allowed focused development work.

The class trying to give students models, heuristics, and experience they can apply when they graduate. The class is about what they learn on the journey. *Introduction of new teaching methods* (e.g. flipped classroom model, radical candor, Mission Model Canvas,..); so, methods and concepts which motivate students with final output in use. The curriculum allowed students to fall safely and consequently learn from mistakes only to allow them to learn faster in the open environment.

Relevance: The research address disconnect between an outdated process of strategy-making in practice and professional military education and aligns paradigm and contemporary war and social realities with new approaches which more copy current real-life practice.

Large organizations' size and culture make disruptive innovation extremely difficult. One of the things strategy-making is lacking is a way to develop it. Processes have been treated as if they are producing other organizational or government documents. We now know that strategy should be a repeatable and scalable mission model. Our mission model was unknown – that was just a set of untested hypotheses – the project team searched for a repeatable Mission model. Search vs Execute is what differentiates strategy-making and daily strategy implementation.