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WHY DO GREAT COMPANIES DERAIL?

This talk will explore why great companies derail and delineate some of the underlying reasons. We will look at some of the strategic, organizational, and people issues that may drive these outcomes. We will distill lessons for present-day organizations to avoid derailing and pursue market success.

LEVERAGING A CUSTOMER-FOCUSED STRATEGY TO DRIVE GROWTH

Spurred by visions of the future and haunted by intense competition, companies are rushing to realize the goal of creating a customer-focused organization. Despite the increasing need for a customer-focused strategy in a competitive business environment there are few paradigms of how companies can change their strategy and organization to become customer focused. This session presents a roadmap of the stages through which companies evolve as they embark on this journey towards greater market focus. Through a series of cases about firms in a range of industries that have successfully embarked on some of these changes, we will develop a comprehensive blueprint for the market driven organization. Some of the topics discussed will include:

- What is a customer driven strategy?
- Is a customer driven strategy right for you?
- Obstacles to formulating and implementing a customer driven strategy
- The road to building a customer driven organization

ACHIEVING EFFICIENCY AND GROWTH

To achieve profitable growth in today's volatile economy requires becoming more efficient while also driving ever greater value to your customers. Doing "more with less" necessitates learning how to be maniacal about looking at all your activities through the lens of your customers. Through this it becomes easier to then distill where to devote resources and also where to cut back. We will analyze companies in the present context, discuss case studies, and identify how and where you should make changes to the way you think about strategy and resource decisions. Some of the topics discussed will include:

- Identify and explore the essential foundations for driving growth through competitive advantage
- Examine some of the newest ways to drive greater productivity in a dynamic environment
- Investigate how leading firms in a range of industries use creative growth strategies to build and sustain profitable market positions
- Cultivate an understanding of how to drive profitable growth by simultaneously pursuing greater efficiency and customer-centered growth through case studies

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

We will explore how digital transformation is having a major impact on most industries on both the demand and supply sides of their businesses and will explore each in turn. On the demand side, we will assess how this transformation is reshaping the way organizations engage with their customers and markets not only in what they sell but also how they sell and how they get paid. And on the supply sides, we will examine how it is transforming not only industry supply chains, but also core activities such as R&D and manufacturing. Beyond these two broad arenas, we will also explore how a digital transformation is reshaping firms' architecture that in turn transforms how they organize and coordinate their own activities. Digitization creates new opportunities for organizing that will be explored and discussed. We will conclude with a discussion of how this transformation is reshaping the activities firms do in-house versus working with partners. The rapid increase of partnerships will be examined with an assessment of their benefits and also pitfalls.

OUTSIDE-IN GROWTH STRATEGIES FOR TURBULENT TIMES

To achieve success in today's volatile economy is not an easy undertaking. There are few templates or models for sustained success. In this lecture we will explore a truism-customer centricity- to understand its relevance and

meaning for organizations today. Most organizations embrace the notion that their customers come first, but few companies can actually deliver on that promise.

Those firms seeking to make customer centricity or outside-in thinking into something more than just a catchy corporate slogan, have to confront a number of external and internal challenges. A broad range of hidden obstacles that can limit organizations from achieving their goals will be discussed. Some of these include strategies for bridging internal silos that slow down decision making and foster an internal focus, hiring and developing “T-shaped” managers who can manage both vertically within authority boundaries as well as horizontally across authority boundaries, and overcoming the “knowing-doing gap” whereby we limit our ability to embrace lasting change. .

We will finally elaborate on the importance of a play-to-win mindset for achieving market success through genuine customer centricity. We will not only define what it means but also discuss strategies that winning sports coaches use to get their teams to become winning teams. Lessons that emerge from this with broader application will be discussed.

DRIVING PROFITABLE GROWTH IN TURBULENT MARKETS

To achieve growth in today's volatile economy requires leveraging more than just traditional assets. Intangible assets in the form of customer relationship management, branding, organizational design along with traditional assets like property rights have become important pillars of competitive advantage. In the present context, firms are witnessing dramatic shifts in the competitive landscape with intensified competition and increasing commoditization of offerings. Spurred by visions of a dismal future and haunted by intense competition, companies are rushing to cut costs across the board. At the same time there are others who view this time as opportune to break away from the pack. While others are hunkering down, these few are running forward. How do such organizations deal with the seemingly competing sets of demands of cutting back and investing in the future? What do they do to expand while others contract? What tangible and intangible assets do they leverage to drive profitable growth? How do you break through the inevitable trade-off between driving volume growth or maintaining margin in an increasingly competitive marketplace? In this session, we learn to think more creatively about leveraging your tangible and intangible assets as you develop strategies for growth. We will analyze companies in the present context, discuss case studies, and identify how and where you should make changes to the way you think about strategy and resource decisions. Some of the topics discussed will include:

- Identify and explore the essential foundations for driving growth through competitive advantage
- Examine some of the newest organizational structures and strategies to continually modify those that work best in a dynamic environment
- Investigate how leading firms in a range of industries use creative growth strategies to build and sustain profitable market positions
- Cultivate an understanding of how to drive growth through case studies
- Ranked as one of the top ten most cited scholars in Economics and Business over a decade by ISI-Incite
- Listed among the top handful of business school scholars whose work is most relevant to management practice by The Economist, Financial Times, and the Economist Intelligence Unit
- Has advised numerous F1000 companies around the world focusing on helping leadership teams enhance the growth trajectory of their businesses

REDEFINING INNOVATION

To achieve success in today's volatile economy many firms look to innovation as the secret sauce for their success. However, in the present context, firms are witnessing dramatic shifts in the competitive landscape with intensified competition and increasing commoditization of offerings leading to diminishing returns from innovation. Spurred by visions of a dismal future and haunted by intense competition, companies are rushing to find ways to make their R & D investments more productive. We will analyze companies in the present context, discuss case studies, and identify how and where you should make changes to the way you lead and make resource decisions. Some of the topics discussed will include:

- Identify and explore the essential foundations for the shift from products to services to solutions
- Investigate how firms in a range of industries use platform innovation to build and sustain profitable market positions with top and bottom line growth in difficult markets
- Cultivate an understanding of how some firms leverage open innovation to tap into a dispersed resource base

STRATEGIC THINKING FOR TURBULENT MARKETS: BUILDING A BREAKAWAY STRATEGY

To achieve success in today's volatile economy is viewed by many as simply looking for avenues for survival. In the present context, firms are witnessing dramatic shifts in the competitive landscape with intensified competition and increasing commoditization of offerings. Spurred by visions of a dismal future and haunted by intense competition, companies are rushing to cut costs across the board. At the same time there are others who view this time as opportune to break away from the pack. While others are hunkering down, these few are running forward. How do such organizations deal with the seemingly competing sets of demands of cutting back and investing in the future? What do they do to expand while others contract? What tangible and intangible assets do they leverage to create advantage? We will analyze companies in the present context, discuss case studies, and identify how and where you should make changes to the way you lead and make resource decisions. Some of the topics discussed will include:

- Identify and explore the essential foundations for building competitive advantage in turbulent markets
- Investigate how firms in a range of industries use creative strategies to build and sustain profitable market positions with top and bottom line growth in difficult markets
- Cultivate an understanding of how these firms actually implement some of these changes to ensure success

EXECUTING ON THE PROMISE OF CUSTOMER FOCUS

Companies looking to grow in commoditizing markets like to say that they offer customer solutions—products and services bundled into packages that are hard to copy and can command a premium price. But few companies can actually deliver on that promise. Most companies are organized into product-focused business units that allow them to develop deep knowledge and expertise, but that obscure a holistic picture of customers and their needs. Building on my recent research into the challenges of top- and bottom-line growth, I have found that creating customer solutions can be a powerful way to stimulate growth—but only if companies are able to transcend their organizational silos to marshal all of their resources, including new technologies, toward delivering customer-focused solutions. For marketers, making this shift will involve a rethinking of their roles, the development of new skills, and in some cases, and creative agreements with external partners to both keep costs in line and enhance the appeal of solutions.

Using case examples of b-2-b and b-2-c companies, this lecture vividly demonstrates how marketers can creatively develop higher value customer solutions. Some of the topics discussed will include:

- Strategic dilemmas in commodity markets
- Rationale for the rise of customer solutions
- Market impediments to solutions as a key differentiator
- Internal siloes as roadblocks to customer centric solutions

BUILDING STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE IN TURBULENT MARKETS

To achieve success in today's volatile economy requires leveraging more than just traditional assets. Intangible assets in the form of customer relationship management, branding, organizational design and property rights have become important off balance sheet pillars of competitive advantage. In this session, we learn to think more creatively about leveraging your tangible and intangible assets as you develop strategies for building a sustainable competitive advantage. We will analyze companies in the present context, discuss case studies, and identify how and where you should make changes to the way you think about strategy and resource decisions. Some of the topics discussed will include:

- Identify and explore the essential foundations for building competitive advantage
- Examine some of the newest organizational structures and strategies to continually modify those that work best in a dynamic environment
- Investigate how leading firms in a range of industries use creative strategies to build and sustain profitable market positions

FROM PRODUCTS TO SOLUTIONS: WHEN, WHY, AND HOW?

A new mantra for many organizations today is to become a solution-centered organization. For some firms it is about enhancing the service content associated with their products and for others it is about extending their reach from selling products to selling experiences. While there is much talk of moving away from the old product-centric form to a new solution-centric organization, there is limited understanding of what this precisely means and how to go about it. In this session we will discuss the multiple facets of effective solutions. Using several recent case studies, we will examine some of the key enablers that allow firms to architect, sell, and implement solutions. Some of the topics discussed will include:

- What is a solution?
- Key facets of an effective solution
- Pricing and selling solutions
- Building solution driven organizations

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