



COMPETING FOR THE FUTURE

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The book 'Competing for the Future' is a thread in a tapestry of new perspectives on strategy and competition. In fact this book is about strategy, "how to think" & has been drawn heavily on the experience of companies around the world that have managed to overcome resource disadvantages and build positions of global leadership. It devotes more attention on those companies that have managed to escape the curse of success and have shown their penchant to rebuild industry leadership, a second and third time. The authors believe that there is no single company which embodies the approach to strategy, competition, and organization perfectly, though some companies are closer than others. They also believe that there is plenty of upside potential for every corporate entity having desire to commit to the action agenda laid out.

In real terms this book is not for dilettantes nor merely for people having intellectual taste, but is for those who are not content to follow the longstanding concepts & strategies but love to reframe the strategies and are more concerned to make a difference than making profits only and absolutely committed to stake out the future first!

About the Book: The book is divided into 12 chapters covering different aspects commencing from getting off the treadmill to vibration of new shape & form of competition in the future, the way to craft strategic architecture, use of strategy as a gearing device, building gateways to the future with focus on core

competence perspective and mantra to secure your compartment in the busy train of the future and ultimately ends with the suggestion to 'Think Differently'.

The book had a profound impact on how companies think and prepare for their future in a universal set up. The book presents a radical approach of thinking about strategy and competition. As per the preface of the book both the authors met in 1977 in University of Michigan as a teacher and taught. Gary was a doctoral student in International business and C. K. Prahalad was an associate professor of Strategy. As per book, as they remember that the afternoon quickly turned into an extraordinary pointed, took-no-prisoners debate between the two of them. Each of them was determined to deliver an unequivocal intellectual coup de grace.

The author felt that since existing theories of strategy and organization, while providing a solid base for discovery did not answer adequately to few important like:

- How could competitors with such apparently meager resources manage to successfully challenge corporate giants?
- What prevented industry leaders from turning aside the challenge of impertinent new comers?

Moreover they saw this pattern of incumbents failing to adequately defend itself against smaller, resource- limited

challenges (again and again) time and again, and wanted to unfold this question that **How could we square what we were observing with the prevailing theory about the market power of incumbents and the advantages of market share?**

Though, they agree upon that while the existing theories of strategy and organization help us understand the structure of an industry, they provide little insight into what it takes to fundamentally, reshape an industry to one's own benefit. While they illuminate the attributes of a transformational leader, they say little about what it takes for a leadership team to develop a prescient, well-grounded point of view about the future, it. In nut shell the existing theories provided a scorecard for keeping track of relative competitive advantage, they fail to capture the dynamics of competence building.

So, to bridge up this gap between the theory and observation, this book was written at a time when companies were disbanding corporate strategy departments, when consulting firms were engaged more often to improve operating efficiency than to plot strategy and when many companies were rushing to downsize rather than to create the markets and industries of tomorrow.

This book seeks to rehabilitate strategy by virtually reinventing its practice and is destined for place alongside. It offers a master blueprint for what a company must be doing today if it has to occupy the competitive high ground of tomorrow.

In the modern era of competition where cataclysmic upheavals in competition have become a common thing, any organization can not expect a secure future without systematic effort to develop core competence and a unique approach to handle the problems. The key to the future as per this book, for future industry leadership, is to develop independent point of view about future opportunities and build capabilities which can exploit them. In fact the entirely new definition of developing competing is to be **Strategic - and Successful.**

Chapter wise Gauntlets: The first chapter suggests the companies having an ambition to compete for the future to look around the company, issues preoccupying senior management, criteria and benchmarks which

measure the progress and also keep into the future and ponder one's company's ability to shape that future and regenerate success again and again in the years and decades to come.

The book clearly opines that only reengineering is not sufficed in the tough competitive environment of 21st century. Beyond reengineering, strategy discloses that though managers often try to make a virtue out of imitation, dressing it up in the fashionable colors of "adaptive ness", what they are adapting to all too often be the preemptive strategies of more imaginative competitors. Moreover the chapter focuses on the quest for competitiveness as a formula pertaining to different quest in the subheads of smaller better and different each calling for transformation form organizational level to industry level and also presents the new strategy paradigms which disseminates the knowledge about major gaps on the part of competitive challenge. Finding the future and mobilizing it to reach to a situation which enables organization to get the future first.

To My interpretation as each artist spawns a host of imitators likewise art, in business too, the ability to uniquely imagine what could be, is the only factor which distinguishes leaders from laggards and of course its greatness from mediocrity.

Second Chapter: As is vivid from the chapter name, it pictures the face & look of the future which can be understood from the lines that 'we are standing on the verge and for same it will be the precipice of a revolution as profound as that which gave birth to modern industry. It will be the environmental revolution or revolution on the part of materials, digitalization, genetic and of course information. Entirely new industries as of then in their gestation phase, will soon be born (and such prenatal industries consists macrobotics miniature robots built from atomic particles that could among other things unclog sclerotic arteries, machine translation and digital highways.) It visualizes a glorious future having the bioremediation and virtual meeting rooms which will save people from wear and tear of air travel.

It presents a comparison between competition for today and tomorrow, market share and opportunity share, business unit and corporate

competencies stand alone and instigated systems speed and perseverance and structured versus unstructured arenas moreover it present an eye opening fact from the corridors of future about multistage competition rather single stage.

Ultimately chapter clears that we believe that managers are spending too much time in managing the present and not enough creating the future but the realm is that to create the future a company must be able to forget some of its past primarily.

Chapter Three - Learning to Forget: The chapter dominantly prescribes that a sense of possibilities is just as important as a sense of foreboding in inducing a company to escape its past. Though unappealing a company's current helm of affairs, it is unlikely to abandon the past for the future unless it has created an alluring vista of future opportunities for itself, which can present a compelling alternative to usually relive past victories. To give up the bird in the hand, a company must become just as vivid and real as the present and the past. *For this top management should necessarily help the organization in building an intellectually compelling and emotionally enticing view of the future. The entire practical learning have been taught in the heads of The Need for Genetic Diversity, enlarging the managerial frame unlearning the past and ultimately need to rebuild.*

Chapter four comes up with a different taste of industry foresight in the name of "Competent for industry foresight" and puts the very unique definition of the same that *it is essentially competes to establish one's company, as the intellectual leader having barometric position in terms of influence over the direction and shape of industry transformation. Industry foresight, in fact, informs corporate direction and permits a company to control the evolution of its industry and thereby its own destiny. The trick is too see the future before it has arrived.*

In continuance the fifth Chapter discusses the formula to craft strategic architecture and unfolds the question why do great companies fail, i.e. either inability to escape the past or to invent the future. Finally the author accepts that emotional and intellectual energy of employees provides the fuel for the journey. Sixth and seventh chapter discusses different dimensions of strategy as stretch and leverage.

Eighth chapter suggests that a finely crafted strategic architecture is worth little without an ability to turn intellectual leadership into market leadership, and to do it ahead of rivals. It lets us know the benefits of getting to the future first in the form of virtual monopoly in a particular new product category as Chrysler did in the Minivans and Sony did in the Portable Audio Products.

Chapter Nine & Ten suggest the way out to build gateways to the future. Authors argued at the point that key challenge in competing for the future is to preemptively build the competencies which provide gateway to tomorrow's opportunities as well as in finding novel applications of current core-competencies. Moving further they urged that any company having desire to capture a disproportionate share of profits from the future markets, should build the competencies which can make a disproportionate contribution to future customer value. Mean while the book also advocates to protect and defend the core competencies and says that having safeguarded the firm's existing competencies, escaped the myopia of existing served markets and built a forward-looking competence agenda, a company can move on to the final tasks in managing the migration path to the future.

Last two chapters advocate for securing the future and thinking differently in a formulistic manner and discuss the real life efforts of successful MNCs like P&G, Chrysler, Glaxo, AT&T, Northern Telecom, and Fujitsu from the developed countries like U S, Japan, Germany etc.

After studying the book I opine that the Book captures the true spirit of author's point of view about Competition, Strategy, Organizations and the Value Additions which are requisite to compete for the future. It contains stimulating concepts and fresh ideas based on the real life examples, which provide a new and thought-provoking look at strategy formulation for large corporations which are aspiring to emerge as global Entrepreneurs having core-competence in the related area of expertise. Exactly, it equips aspiring revolutionaries of the future with the tools and concepts which will enable them to challenge the protectors of the Past.