

The Impacts of Digressional Strategies: A Backward Approach for Business Success

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impacts of digressional strategies as a backward approach for achieving business success. In today's dynamic business environment, organizations constantly face challenges that require innovative and unconventional approaches. The concept of digressional strategies involves stepping back or taking a different path to reach the desired outcome. By examining the effectiveness of such strategies in various business contexts, this research article aims to provide valuable insights into alternative methods for achieving success. Through a combination of theoretical analysis and case studies, the study highlights the potential benefits and risks associated with adopting digressional strategies. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of strategic decision-making processes and offer practical recommendations for organizations seeking to enhance their competitive advantage through unconventional approaches.

KEYWORDS: Digression strategies, backward approach, theoretical analysis, product development, Resistance, diversification, market development, regressive visualization, competitive advantage, Problem-solving, Innovation.

1. INTRODUCTION

This article explores the different types of digressional strategies as a method for innovativeness improvement. Digression is a process of straying from the topic. Digressional strategies then are planned and purposeful uses of digression with the intent of coming back to the original topic with an improved product or idea. The article uses the plot metaphor to explain these concepts not to infer that all digression is a deliberate plotting from point A to point B, but for what occurs in terms of mental progress. This will be explained further in the section on types of digression. This is an essential topic for organizations in today's economy. Businesses today are made to constantly produce new and improved products to remain competitive. A business that has no new ideas will not succeed. But the notion of idea production and creativity is not one that can be switched on like a light bulb and it is often a difficult and complex process. Businesses that understand the nature of the creativity process will have an advantage in idea productivity and successful idea implementation.

Idea creation is only the beginning, and without progress in improved products it is wasted effort. Understanding digressional strategies can help businesses avoid the common frustration of great effort with little result. This paper is intended to guide businesses to the types of digressions that

will be most productive for their idea goals with the least waste of time and mental effort. This is done via our explanation of the types of digressions and how to improve idea retention during a digression. It will also explain how to recognize when a digression is becoming unproductive and what measures are best to find a track back to the original idea. This leads to the final goal of guiding businesses to select the appropriate methods of idea implementation and idea improvement which are formed through the types of digressional strategies (Tilton et al., 2024; Eftekhari et al., 2023).

1.1. Definition of Digressional Strategies

On the positive side, my research and writing are not urgent tasks. With a book in mind to produce, it is an excellent opportunity for pre-training all future research and writing on weightier matters. I have only a basic idea of the things I don't understand in weak inductive logic and theory of probability. I am a good deal ahead at times. I may well delve straight into future searches from past ideas and end up with data on the wrong topic! However, I find it is the best possible way to expose the location of my lack of understanding. This is my plan with an article of II. Probability and probably, have been near to digression and I hope that it will give the best example of what from a propensity the digression with departure from plan talked above.

In simpler words, the expression digression actually means the departure from the central point, at least verbally. As a strategy, digression is often seen as a vice. It may be the case if one is trying to adhere rigorously to a plan and reach a specific predefined end. But very often we undertake tasks with only a very rough plan of how to reach the specific end that we have in mind. In such cases, it may be inappropriate to discuss the conduct that is under consideration in terms of efficiency. But, the task may be low in urgency and high on potential future benefits. In this case, an efficient manner and a decision to be undertaken will hopefully yield rerunning the task at a later date. In the meantime, the decision to carry out task must be remembered for the next time it is attempted. Now taking into account the likelihood of forgetting the original planning of the task and the potential to waste time re-deco ring the task in question, it may be beneficial to depart to an alternate plan. Talk of what is more permanent, drawing general ideas at this point to boost the likelihood of remembering and producing a better result next time round. The translation of the new plan at a later date to the old plan might be best sought by happy accident digression (Alhosani & Alhashmi, 2024; Elkhwesky, 2022; Dolce et al., 2020).

1.2. Importance of Digressional Strategies in Business

With reference to advertising, suppose two firms each have an established loyal customer base, the loss of which would be highly damaging. A price war between the two firms might attract the attention of customers, expecting prices to be lowered, but differing on which firm is liable to best serve their predictions. If the primary objective is to retain inelastic demand, the advertising of a new product may be used as a veiled method of changing prices, without risking the loss of customers who do not acknowledge the price change. This can be seen as a successful digressional maneuver, since it avoids the potentially damaging price war and yields a higher profit in the short and long term. Such a change in product could also be a realignment towards a product differentiation strategy with the intention of gaining a competitive edge. This can be effective in the sense that customers, possibly enticed by a new function of the product, will question whether it is superior to competing products and thus a switch in brand may occur.

Digressional strategy, sometimes referred to as resistance strategy, is often seen as a stumbling block to a business and is frowned upon by management. This is because it often appears to be a wasteful activity, taking time and resources away from core activities. It can take many forms, such as planned obsolescence, product improvements, and geographical or occupational mobility. The use of digression as a means of avoiding potential conflict is also well documented. A particularly unattractive type of digression is poaching, where instead of confronting a wage differential, firms attempt to attract rivals' workers with higher wages. Similarly, the use of competitive advertising can be a way of circumventing price wars. Despite the negative connotations of the term, digression is not always damaging to a firm's

prospects and in the long term can actually be highly beneficial. This is particularly true in oligopolistic markets where there are mutual interdependencies between firms. The digressional approach is often a game-theoretic strategy, with firms making decisions based on anticipation of rivals' moves (Sun et al., 2021; Chithambo et al., 2022; Andriani & Cattani, 2024).

1.3. Objectives of the Article

Businessmen usually develop strategic plans for their business. Strategic plans are very important in business to ensure the success of the business. Because the businessmen understand the more planned the action is, the bigger the success that can be reached. Strategic plans that are well-structured and linear may not apply to all types of business. It will be very difficult if implemented in a dynamic and rapidly changing business type. Sometimes to achieve success, even needs a detour. There are several successful companies with digressional strategies like Apple and IBM. Various definitions of digressional strategy, but this article uses the definition of digressional strategy as a strategy that does not take the shortest and linear path to achieve success. A step-by-step strategy with the right does not guarantee success, but time and effort that must be spent not a little. A digressional strategy is a strategy that has a high risk of failure. Failure to get success and learn from failure is what distinguishes it from the failure strategy. Because the failure strategies in haste or at the wrong step usually make the doers themselves feel incapable and give up. A high risk of failure is not desirable by anyone, but now you know that failure is different types and learn to fail to achieve success (Weinstein, 2020; Tengler , 2023).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

It explains why organizations adopt these strategies. It goes on to explain the cost of persistence in contrast to the cost of changing the course of action. It also provides a detailed analysis of cost by using examples of military and other such organizations. The first subtopic provides an overview of different types of business strategies. This is very important because digressional strategies are one of the many types of strategies and cannot be understood in isolation. The understanding of digressional strategy will be further enhanced if the reader has some knowledge about other forms of strategies. So this acts as a foundation for the understanding of digressional strategies.

It deals with the theoretical framework needed to understand the central theme of the article "Impacts of Digressional Strategies". This is divided into three subtopics. These are: 1. Overview of Business Strategies 2. Understanding of Digressional Strategies 3. The Backward Approach

2.1. Overview of Business Strategies

Growth strategies can be divided into a market penetration strategy, a product development strategy, a market development strategy, and a diversification strategy. The first

two strategies are focused on improving the position of the company. The market penetration strategy utilizes existing products within the existing markets, whereas the product development strategy is to develop and sell new products in existing markets. The two other strategies aim to move the company into a better position within the market. The market development strategy moves the company to sell existing products into new markets, and the diversification strategy moves the company into new products and new markets. This four-step sequence embodies the essence of a forward strategy moving in incremental steps. This kind of progression is not entirely consistent with the concept of a trial and error strategy (Matalamäki and Joensuu-Salo 2022; Lan, 2023).

Companies use different strategies to reach certain targets, whether it is to boost sales, change the image of the company, or enter a new market. Strategies can be divided into three: growth strategies, competitive strategies, and functional strategies. Growth strategies are designed to increase the size of the business. Competitive strategies are designed to improve the position of the business in the market, while functional strategies are aimed at improving the operation of the business. This proposed model is more suited to competitive strategies but can be applied to all levels of decision-making within the business (Soni et al., 2022; Diaz et al., 2021)

2.2. Understanding Digressional Strategies

While strategy is paramount in the business world, not all strategies are planned and streamlined completely. There are what we describe as tangential, divergent, or digressional strategies. Strategy scholars have traditionally been preoccupied with deliberate strategies. In many organizations, strategies shape reality; they are the primary means through which organizational members constructively relate to their environment. However, from time to time even the most determined of strategies does not eventuate. This can be due to a variety of reasons: unanticipated environmental changes can render a strategy inappropriate; resource limitations can necessitate a change in direction; a negotiated strategy can conflict with another subunit's strategy or with the strategy of a powerful external constituency; and sometimes various forms of resistance can prevent the implementation of a chosen course of action. In such circumstances, the intended strategy will often be abandoned and replaced by some form of an emergent strategy. An emergent strategy is one that people realize they are pursuing after changes occur in the pattern of action, or response to a specific event. Although we have a reasonable understanding of deliberate strategies, there has been little descriptive research on emergent strategies and the conditions that give rise to them (Zhao et al., 2020; Zahoor et al., 2024).

2.3. The Backward Approach in Business

The concept of strategic management is to build a clear and understood scheme and then stick to it, so discipline is

potentially an important underlying attribute of the backward approach. Finally, the idea of improving actual thinking and decision processes in organizations is particularly important to strategies of any type. The logic implicit in causal linkage can have significant implications for both how decisions are made and how it is intended they should be acted upon.

This approach can be seen as a series of causal linkages between stages. It is a powerful tool for analyzing the implications of taking particular courses of action and in helping to identify and implement the best (i.e., the most achievable and desirable) of given alternatives. It involves working backward through the chain of causality from the final outcome to the present. In successive activities, it asks "What must we do for this to happen?" and in so doing helps to define the actions and decisions that are necessary at each. The backward approach holds practical and theoretical implications for implementing strategy. Ansoff (1991) suggests that the best way of making a strategy active is through systematic implementation and that the essence of careful implementation is to attempt to reconstruct the strategy in the mind of those charged with carrying it out. The backward approach can be an effective tool in comprehensive strategic control and in trying to coordinate separate efforts at various organizational levels (Cankurtaran & Beverland, 2020; Panwar et al., 2020).

In this approach, the organization sets an 'end goal' and works its way back to the present from that goal. It consists of defining a clear and achievable future and constructing a path towards the vision that is based on current reality. This approach tends to be more systematic and strategic than the forward approach. It is also more effective as it is easier to identify the steps required to move from the current state to the desired future.

3. BENEFITS OF DIGRESSIONAL STRATEGIES

Digressional strategies allow for an increase in flexibility and adaptability in an organisation. This type of non-linear, flexible journey allows firms to stop and change their path at any time to be more reactive to changes in the external environment. The ability to react quickly to changes is an important factor if firms are to survive in the long term. Businesses are often forced to change strategic direction in view of unexpected circumstances. Companies that can make quick changes and are not constrained by linearity can find it easier to move from one course of action to another without suffering major setbacks. The absence of a set path means change is not only simpler but also less disruptive. This can also be useful in allowing firms to study their environment and the reaction of competitors to strategic changes. If an organisation observes that a particular decision is not meeting its intended objectives, it may be a simple task to reverse the changes and try something different. The British army used this type of strategy in the Gulf War. Various conflicting plans were made to confuse the enemy, and if one course of action was not going to plan, it was abandoned for another.

This approach was most successful in our interview with Major General Graeme Lamb: "It was all about generating a multitude of options and not going down anyone for long, making the enemy unsure as to what they should do." An army that faces problems in the implementation stage of a strategy and persistently tries to make it work despite repeated failure can benefit from the ability to stop and try something different. (Laird, 2020; Blanchard et al., 2023)

3.1. Increased Adaptability and Flexibility

Adaptability and flexibility are terms that have gained substantial attention not only in the business community but also in the organizational development world. In his research, Hamel notes that the last two decades have seen a considerable increase in the level of turbulence and instability in the business environment. This, in turn, has resulted in organizations seeking ways to become more adaptable, with the recognition that survival and success often depend on the capacity to manage change, rather than on achieving a stable state. Keelin has a similar view, suggesting that in today's knowledge economy, there is an increased recognition that the ability to adapt rapidly in an uncertain and unfamiliar environment is critical for organizational survival and success. The work of Bluedorn et al., (1999) suggests that the link between an organization's ability to adapt and its overall effectiveness is well-documented. This is best captured in Pava's finding that higher-performing organizations are more adaptive than lower-performing ones (Bienefeld et al., 2023; Güllich & Barth, 2024).

3.2. Enhanced Problem-Solving Abilities

Digressiveness is the process of top-down strategy, often involving trial and error to find a solution good enough that another attempt does not need to be made. Often digression can force someone to change from degressive to regressive mode as the new ideas generated are tried out. Although it may be more difficult than it seems to determine the success

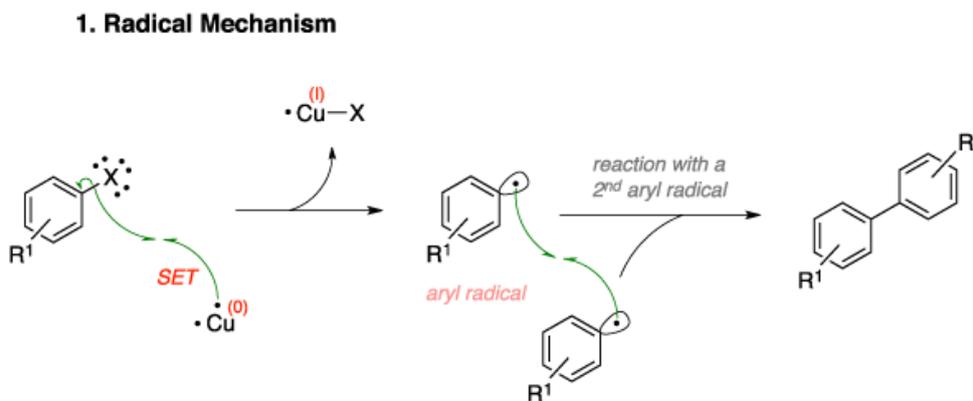
of digressional strategies on problem-solving, there are methods whereby the effects can be measured. Amidon describes a study where subjects were instructed to solve simple block construction problems and results were compared using different types of instructions.

A deeper understanding of digressive thinking can benefit problem-solving by knowing what types of problems digression is most effective for and also when to stop digressing and return to the problem. Task orientation theory proposes that time spent planning how to solve a problem can be saved overall depending on the type of problem. By considering a strategy to be a plan to achieve a certain goal from a certain starting point, many problems can be classified by the amount and type of underlying constraints. Studies has shown that problems containing constraints are best solved using a top-down strategy, constantly checking partial solutions to make sure there is no violation of constraints (Abid et al., 2022)

Problem-solving is complex, and there is no simple recipe for the solution of problems. The variety and complexity of business problems require a structured approach if they are to be solved efficiently. Digressive strategies allow problem-solvers to look at problems with a different perspective, often by forcing them to break out of normal thought patterns. In doing so, new connections are made in the brain and generate new ideas and solutions. Digression has been known to be a superior resource for some steps of problem-solving but it also is possible to digress too much and hinder the solving process, perhaps to the point of giving up on the problem.

3.3. Improved Decision-Making Processes

A model for decision-making is presented relating to Sconce and Ullmann's theory (1957) of strategic decision-making. It is suggested that decision-making can be viewed as the outcome of a process such as the radical mechanism.



Source: Sconce and Ullmann's theory (1957)

Decision makers consider the problem, assess the situation by matching the problem against their image of the organization and its environment, and then choose a decision field for a

solution, which will produce the desired changes to the problem situation. I used a Decision Tree to demonstrate how golf appropriates a problem, reaches a decision, and then

evaluates the decision outcome. In doing so, I then applied a theory by the same authors that suggests a decision process can be broken down into adaptive operations that end in either success or failure.

A decision rule is a theory that suggests decision styles will differ between individuals largely due to a difference in education and/or experience. I use the example from my father's decision to migrate from a native Ghana to South Africa and how one of his mentors offered bad advice to which he explains his failure to evaluate the decision outcome. This factor leads to the suggestion that a decision may be made for illogical or biased reasons and thus a poor decision. At all levels of a decision in a digression, any decision can be regarded as an evaluation of several potential choices and thus a problem. Simulation is an extension from evaluation and begins with an equation of the present situation or current state to which various potential changes represent different ad options that would lead to success or object failure – a simulation terminates (Eriksen et al., 2021).

3.4. Accelerated Innovation and Creativity

Reasoning is a common method of solving problems used by many people. The term 'reason' is known to stem from a French word meaning 'to arrange'. In the context of problem-solving and decision-making, reasoning can be seen as arranging information or ideas in a manageable way to reach a conclusion. The conclusion often results in the choice between several ideas or solutions picked from earlier comparisons or derived there and then. The reasoning process and the methods of decision-making using ideas are similar to methods in planning aforementioned and it is often hard to separate them. The decision is made to follow the best idea of several, a single-track method, and it is hoped the idea will work without later problems or having to revert back to a previous stage. Ideas and information arranged using reasoning can be regressed it is easy to reform ideas derived by reasoning and decisions can be evaluated by comparing the results to predictions (Huang & Chang, 2022; Yao et al., 2022).

The process of digression and regressive visualization, as illustrated above, provides the basis for an unorthodox approach to solving problems through the consideration of alternative solutions without conventional incrementation of forward progression. This is conducive to innovation by providing a mental atmosphere conducive to free thinking and minimization of assumptions induced by the constraints of forward-thinking techniques. Forward-thinking is geared to step-by-step reformation and progression of currently available ideas. Techniques are built on current knowledge and progress is considered only in relation to that knowledge. There is reluctance to discard irrelevant ideas due to the sunk costs associated with the ideas in their development, regardless of whether such ideas remain useful and widely acknowledged that only the best idea is continued at each stage. This may lead to premature convergence upon single

ideas and solutions without proper exploration and comparison with other ideas, due to the perceived inefficiency of working on several ideas at once. Such convergence eliminates the possibility of later comparison and may inhibit abandoning ideas later found to be inferior. The above process of regression can simulate the extra time and resources required for pursuing inferior results in the hope of comparing them to others, and bringing to light their relative utility. This may be done by imagining the alternative ideas were the actual results and comparing the actual results to what would have been the alternative results. The “new direction model” can continually reassess whether an idea is the best idea by looking at the direction of the idea in relation to new or currently available information. Change in the idea may be implemented by running some of the later steps of the idea taking into consideration the probability increased data.

4. CASE STUDIES- A HYPOTHESIS

The "costly to locate and fix" errors in the old software were often the target of mirage induction. In one notable case an incorrect application of a mirage cost the software its GUI front. "The most harbour and" provide an elusive place to sit down""HA!"The most error he has ever made!"^_^("failed to recreate that said mirage of swordsman. This is an example of mirage induction at its best!"(client log quote). (McNutt and Chugh2023).

Company A: Implementing Digressional Strategies- The first company, referred to as Company A, made use of digressional strategies at the very beginning of an IT upgrade. Hired to deliver a simple database with a web interface, they eventually used a wide variety of strategies including time-consuming non-imperative decision making to completely redefine the project. Mitarai et al., (1999) explain that many software engineering tasks are lexicographically reversible and have only a loose coupling with the problem's essential construct. In such cases, it may well be more efficient to quickly build a prototype and use it to manipulate the problem into something more ideal. Although this situation did not involve a prototype per se, the fact that the project was later defined as a contract to deliver new software, which provided the same service as the old, to aid further manipulation of the client's business procedure shows a similar level of efficiency. Rather than consider a prototype, the team used the constraint of the current software as a framework to steer the problem into something more ideal. This often involved a technique known as atoning which involves flipping the third and second last letters of two consecutive words e.g. exchanging the pattern. In doing so errors that are quite costly to locate and fix become immediately apparent. Whilst such pattern exchanges were a highly roundabout way of manipulating the client's current procedure it did move the client into a new comfort zone as the error correction was usually fast and described. This was again efficient as it lead to several different ideal re-definitions, each with its own

cost-benefit analysis (Wainaina et al., 2023; Chatterjee et al., 2020; Kim, 2023)

In this section, case studies will be used to illustrate the dynamics of the proposed backward approach in a business environment. The essential difference between inductive and deductive thinking, and the theoretical framework on which the backward approach is based, will become clear in their examination of digressional strategies. This empirical evidence will serve to validate the proposal made by this essay that a temporally omnidirectional approach is a more efficient and effective way to accomplish any task.

4.1. Company A: Implementing Digressional Strategies

There are 2 types of digression that they are trying to apply to their management. The first is tangential, considered a short-term strategy application that explains a span between two topics. In this case, the company is trying to compare existing products with their potential sales. It is expected that through this comparison, the company can see the slight differences between the products in terms of quality and how they can further improve it. This will be a good chance to rebuild the product and create a fresh new idea. The next digression type is preservational. This is a continuous strategy for advancement to maintain and prevent the regression between two topics. The sales from the comparison must be preserved and improved. This can only be successful if the comparison resources are not too costly. By tightly comparing the sales and resources, any increase in profit margin can be relocated to promote more sales or even produce a new product.

Implication of the company's situation, its environment, and the management style has led the company to integrate digressional strategies into its business plan for future success. As stated by “Alex, the Vice President of the company”, he created a new written plan known as the recipe of success to stabilize and generate more income from their business. He stated clear objectives and well-planned strategies so that they can be understood by every division in the company. This planning is a platform to introduce digression, where the plan will move from one stage to another. As the plan is separated into several divisions, this sheet will guide the management on how to apply digression and measure the strategy's outcome. It is divided into 2 sets of strategy plans for the duration of 1 year. The first quarter of the year will focus on enhancing the customer base and improving the quality of products, while the second set is a continuous improvement based on feedback from customers and sales.

4.2. Company B: Failure to Adopt Digressional Strategies

The tactic of engaging in strategic changes to the company's product line is a digressional strategy. The case of an established electronics firm which acted without considering the long-term consequences of the new idea, falls under the category of aimless change. The company was successful in the past and had little reason to change products, but due to a new marketing manager, the decision was made to create a

new division aimed at a new customer base. The new line was a series of products designed to be trendy and appeal to a younger customer base. These products were insulated coolers that could plug into a car lighter and keep beverages and food warm or cold. This was a temporal move as it was just a new way of selling the same product to the same customer base. However, the company would soon take a spiraling downturn. The idea was unsuccessful and was sold off to another company. At the same time, a new product was designed, which was essentially a portable oven also made to appeal to the same customer base. This was a drastic change from the product lines of the past and was also a failure which cost the company millions in comparison to the old way of executing the same new and unsound idea. This product was soon scrapped and the company went back to making what it had made in the past, a case of failed digression with yet another similar temporal.

5. PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF DIGRESSIONAL STRATEGIES

In order to implement digressional strategies, the first step lies within deciding what issues or barriers that a business is trying to avoid. This will provide targets for a strategy to move away from these issues and create a better environment. It is imperative to state that avoiding a certain scenario is often easier, more predictive, and morally correct than attempting to head towards a specific objective. However, they warn managers to not set avoidance as a primary objective because in doing so may neglect the importance of reaching a worthwhile or attractive goal.

Avoidance can be seen as a short-term situational strategy to steer away from a specific set of circumstances. It must be noted that a strategy to avoid something is not a digressional strategy and does not necessarily lead to successful change, rather it needs to avert to changing the context in order to make a change lasting. For example, changing eradicating health and safety deficiencies to reduce the number of workplace accidents is a situational strategy. This instance was used to improve a scenario so the strategy would be effective were it changed to increase workplace safety by improving workplaces (changing context). A digressional strategy is an intervention designed to improve a system that is underpinned by the belief that a particular problem or area of concern can be removed or alleviated by improving the context in which the problem occurs. The logic is that anything that causes a particular result when acting in the same manner can cause that result to be improved by changing it to act a different way. This is a powerful philosophy that is leading to change.

5.1. Steps to Integrate Digressional Strategies into Business Operations

A key insight in leading change to activities that affect higher-level system behavior is knowing where those activities draw their constraints and resources. Often current

system behavior or 'the way things work around here' is not the result of explicit decisions to operate in that manner. By addressing prohibitive constraints and uneconomic resource usage, new activities can be made to serve higher-level system objectives, and it is possible to cause an incremental change in the system without the need for direct actions on the system itself. Cause of system change is a primary goal in many business improvement initiatives, and it is highly cost-effective if it can be achieved without incurring extra system change costs (Busch & Barkema, 2021; Errida and Lotfi 2021).

So, using familiar processes and systems models, the aim is to provide 'feeds' to business monitoring and control points so that current activities can be regulated to serve higher-level business objectives. This will involve changing various specific business activities. In taking the 'feed-forward' example, where the inventory level is currently monitored using an IT information stock control system, an activity pattern would be found in the way the stock level data is used to occasionally reorder stock. This is regulated by defining a rule between desired stock level and invocation of reordering. The strategy could be to delay reordering and change the rule to better utilize stored stock, thus reducing stock holding costs.

Clearly, any strategic approach to implementing change in organizational processes and systems will be aiming to take those processes forward to meet business objectives. The approach to introducing digressional strategies as defined in the previous section follows a backward path. The concept of 'backward momentum' is fundamental to the whole approach and implies a top-down implementation process. In other words, change is initiated at the operational level, but in order for that change to facilitate reaching higher-level objectives, it has to be led back up to those higher levels.

5.2. Overcoming Challenges and Barriers

Combining support from management and the notion of relative autonomy, an incremental approach can be used in an attempt to control and contain the damage done by several of the identified barriers to success. Trials of digression can be isolated to smaller teams or individual workers, keeping the focus specific and the changes of limited scope. This will prevent any large-scale detrimental effects on productivity and enable a clear comparison between the relative success of the digressive and traditional approaches in concurrent operations.

The autonomy given to the workers involved will ensure that they have the freedom to revert to the conventional approach should they feel that the digression is not working for them. This is crucial because forcing workers to stick with the new approach against their will is a catalyst for the development of a negative culture and the increased resistance that comes with it. Any cases of relative success or failure can be identified using a comparison technique and measured anew as a retrospective analysis is considered in 5.3. The vital early

involvement of positive results in making a case for digressive initiatives, as discussed in 3.1.3, will serve to prevent early termination of the strategy due to skepticism and negative sentiment. (Li et al., 2021; Roberts et al., 2024). It is anticipated that the forward approach required by the implementation of digressional strategies will arouse negative sentiment among those in the business environment who incline towards traditionalist thinking. In particular, the skeptics and those who are overly risk averse are likely to perceive the strategy as counter-productive. The removal of workers from their conventional roles and the dispersal of the hierarchy is likely to cause resistance. The very nature of digression threatens structure and organization, so those who are high up the ladder will look to regain a foothold on their previous positioning. Also, there is a high probability that the strategy will be terminated prematurely and labeled as a failure due to the fact that a digressive initiative will often not bear fruit until the process has been completed. The productivity of the workers will generally fall due to the unfamiliarity of their new role and the lax limitations and expectations that have been set. These potential barriers to success are all very real and if left unmanaged will ultimately lead to the demise of the digressive initiative.

5.3. Measuring the Success of Digressional Strategies

Quantitative indicators, which are tangible and easily measurable, will be the key to determining the success of digression. It is first necessary to establish a baseline value, that is the current situation. The baseline will act as a point of comparison for the future. For cost, time, or resource digressions, the change in these variables can be directly compared to the baseline values. A return to the baseline indicates that the strategy was not successful, while conditions better than those in the baseline indicate success. For qualitative variables such as the improvement of employee knowledge, judgment will have to be used. This type of indicator is however often problematic as it is reliant on memory and perceptions which can be unreliable. An ideal method for measuring the success of knowledge digression would be the application of knowledge tests before and after the digression.

Unfortunately, the same conditions can rarely be reproduced, and the tests may not cover the same content. Comparing the difference between existent digressional methods and traditional problem-solving in similar situations will allow a measure of the relative success of digressional strategy. It would be an expectation that decision regret would decrease with a greater use of alternative consequences and decision confidence would increase with better information gathering. If the circumstances generated by the alternative solution are better than the original and acceptable solution, success is indicated by decision utility. (Chin et al., 2021; Lyon et al., 2021; Heinzl, 2022)

6. CONCLUSION

Additionally, rarely is it recognized how substantially wrong strategic management can be. It is eventually the entrepreneur who is largely responsible for the strategy of an entire organization, and it is well known that small businesses' strategies are usually the personal strategies of the owner executed. If digression is the result of fluctuating mental conditions, then the decision-making and ultimately the strategy of the business will reflect this. A small business owner's personal circumstances such as his personal financial situation, health and marital status will have a great impact on the way the business operates. It is rare in such situations that the owner will consider external factors which do not affect him personally in his decision-making. If for instance, the business owner's personal financial situation is not good, then ultimately he will aim to use the business to better his financial status, even if it involves taking risks. This is no different to a business in distress aiming to turn around its financial position, however, if the aim is not reached, the consequences can be dire.

The small business owner in his endeavors to better his financial situation may take actions such as increasing profitability by any means, cutting executive bonuses, or increasing worker productivity, the very same actions that a business in distress would take to turn around its financial situation. This could result in a small business owner deciding to implement cost leadership strategies, not realizing that it could be detrimental to a business not yet in distress. Understanding a strategy where he can better his own understanding in how the situation affects strategy, will help the entrepreneur to understand that it would be more suitable to change to the latter strategy at a more appropriate time. Here it can be seen that all types of businesses can benefit from developing an accurate comprehension of their present situation, yet without understanding how the situation affects strategy, they are likely to implement strategies unsuitable for their situation, often mirroring those with like conditions but with intentions to emulate success. With the implementation of unsuitable strategies, there is a high risk that it can lead to the ultimate failure of the business.

6.1. Recap of the Impacts of Digressional Strategies

Digressional strategies can lead to increased understanding from a rival firm or individual about executed plans or expectations. This level of understanding can lead to collaborative reactions and a reformation of expectations to avoid conflict. By revealing classified information about a scheduled process, a firm or individual may be aware of potential conflict but be wary of informing the rival about why they think there may be conflict. This was the case with Lila and her roommate over the release date of a domain name. Lila's roommate had a prior claim for a school project and considered it to be crucial in securing future job opportunities. Lila was not aware of the importance her roommates project and declined to change her plans. At an

attempt to avoid conflict Lila's roommate chose not to say why she thought there may be conflict and this ultimately led to a long term avoidance and the ruin of their working relationship. This roommate had used what Lila calls defensive strategies which are a subset of digressional strategies that are employed when an individual or firm is aware that there is conflicting interest about an expectation but does not want to provoke a direct confrontation.

Defensive strategies involve creating an excuse to change the conflicting expectation and are often just a pretense, a person who is using a defensive strategy will claim to forget and act as if the change was an accident. In the above scenario, Lila's roommate had registered the domain name with the intent to only inform Lila about the release date and change the plans if Lila had also registered the domain name. This attempt to covertly confirm an expectation resulted in a feigned display of ignorance by the roommate who then put off changing her plans until the domain name had been released. This indirect progression led to increased tension as the two had conflicting expectations about the release date and both sides were unwilling to inform the other if it would cause conflict. (Saleem et al., 2023; Ployhart, 2021).

6.2. Recommendations for Business Leaders

This would require a multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary approach. As today's world is one of knowledge workers and information technology, the ease of digression is too great. An individual may start with a plan in mind, yet find themselves hours later having conducted research, acquiring information related to the original task, yet not entirely relevant. The next step may be into reflection and analysis, compared to the original task. As is the case with many kinds of digression, it is easy to say that enough valuable information has been gathered to justify a change of plans.

Yet more often than not, the most valuable strategy and the best plan is to continue with the original task – for it was the original task that spawned the objective in the first place. This is the sort of behavior which a leader must attempt to avoid from the beginning. High self-monitoring is a valuable tool for a leader, and good communication with the task team or employees regarding varied versions of the plan and objective are also essential.

The concept of the contingency plan is by no means dead, yet an alternative induced by digression may leave the team or group having to justify the continuation of an objective with the very lack of necessity which caused the adoption of a new one. In today's fast-paced information society, decisions made at all levels have a greater potential to be impulsive and spur of the moment. The knowledge of the availability of alternate decisions and digressed plans can leave an original plan seeming not concrete and subject to change. In knowing this, today's leaders must ensure decisiveness from themselves and their employees on all tasks and objectives. This is not to say that changeability is not an asset, for adaptability to changing situations is something every plan

and every organization must have. However, there is a fine line between adaptability and changeableness, and having many alternate plans can often lead to confusion and ambiguity regarding the objective on which the success of the task is based.

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