

Strategic Directions

Five Work Groups – the five perspectives

THE MADISON AVENUE CONSORTIUM

Takes the approach of actions of high visibility. The Top of the Line Approach. Rolls Royce – hiring a PR firm to create and run the plan; image campaign, spend money with abandon to get the message out far and wide

THE SYSTEM ACTIVATORS

Takes the approach of actions that work the structures and existing systems. Works within the given organization. (Sure fire – those who slug it out and move through the trenches, lubricate the bureaucratic maze, certain and dependable.

THE QUICK AND DIRTY DOZEN

Take the approach of actions that are rapid. Don't ask how it got done, just be glad it did get done. Adding a PTA flyer to report card envelopes and the letting the school children do the distribution

THE WILD AND CRAZY BUNCH

Take the approach of actions that are innovative. The off the wall squad. Put on a Columbus Fish Fry for state legislators. Colleagues of Mork and Steve Martin.

THE MUSIC MAN BAND

Takes the approach of actions that create lots of involvement by the people. Encouraging broad participation. Everyone can be in a parade. Avalanche, parade marshallers. An every neighborhood coffee klatch with task force members.

Note: ICA colleague Don Bushman is the principal architect of this piece. He used this often at the strategic directions section of the strategic planning workshops. His idea was to have the participants divided into these five groups and each had a different “perspective” in coming up with the actions to address the contradictions. Those perspectives are underlined in the above text. Don used this technique frequently in the 1990s.

And the Five Types of Strategies

The five Strategies we discerned from both Mushashi's Five Rings and the Sun Tzu's Art of War are: Extensive, Intensive, Probe, Flanking and Symbol. But you don't start there, but use it as a "check" for good strategy afterwards. Sometimes a good short course, or example from other organizations can help without naming it as such.

Extensive

Intensive

Probe

Flanking

Symbol

Each of these can mean a many broad area of work. I talked about it by saying these all require energy and there for it has to do with how you are going to use the limited energy you have. So extensive strategies require careful allocation for either long times, or a broad front, getting a lot of people involved, etc. Intensive require focus, high energy, short term, breakthroughs etc. Probe is about experimentation, receptivity, limited risk-perhaps big gain, etc. Flanking is about having others do something, protection, allies, partners, anticipated situations, etc. Symbolic energy is "signs", Story, Image, but must be used carefully and not overused. Fifth City was Symbol, but it cost us a lot of energy and money! (As you know all too well!)