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# Learning Objectives

The initial reason computers were created was to assist humanity in the calculation of data. The idea was simple: computers will perform these tasks with greater certainty and speed than a human being. A computer do

You will begin your **Introduction to Computer Science** by looking at the most basic concept of computing: data. Interp

# Unit 1 – What Is Strategy?

**Study Goals**

On completion of this unit, you will be able to …

… define strategy.

… decide what is important when making strategic decisions.

… identify which organizational level is responsible for which strategic decisions.

… apply information to develop a solid strategic plan.

# 1. What is Strategy?

## Case Study/Introduction

The German-based company Alfred is a medical equipment manufacturer. The equipment Alfred manufactures consists of various components. One component is Alfred’s core technology for which Alfred is the market leader. However, in order to make this core component applicable for medic

## 1.1 Using Sources from Other Authors in Academic Writing

The academic scholar is now inundated with potential sources that can be used in the research and development of pieces of academic work. None of these sources is immune from the potential for plagiarism and so need to be cited and referenced appropriately. Academic sources includ

### Challenges of Reliability and Credibility in Source Materials

With the wealth of information available online, the student has a significant challenge to establish the reliability and credibility of any internet-sourced materials before they use them in their academic writing. A searc

**How did you find the source?**

Did you use a credible search engine to find this source material? As mentioned, Google is programmed with algorithms to return search results that are influenced by previous searches; the credibility of the results returned cannot be guaranteed. Using academic **metasearch** engines (found in the library) such as EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS) ensures that the search eng

**Metasearch**

This search aggregates the results from a number of other searches.

Furthermore, it may require them to implement use cases and develop mathematical algorithms (which can be as simple as y = m + n). Or these algorithms can be more challenging, such as

The three leading corporate strategists, Alfred Chandler, Michael Porter, and Henry Mintzberg, define strategy as follows. And while we are using mathphrase, here is a free example of code.

### Developing a Strategy

Depending on the size of the organization, there are various levels of strategic development. These various levels all contribute to the strategic planning process.

Strategic Levels (Maier, 2005. CC 2.0)



The upper level of strategic planning is the corporate level. Decisions regarding the overall purpose and the development of the organization are made at this level. This level defines the vision and the mission, as well as the purpose of the organization. The corporate level analyses the **strategic business units (SBUs**) in terms of their growth potential in the future and decisions are made acc

**Strategic business unit**

A strategic business unit is a unit that could act independently of the other units in the market place.

## 1.2 What Capabilities Does the Company Have?

As a next step, an organization has to understand its own capabilities and resources. The SWOT analysis is a tool in the evaluation of a company or a specific project.

### SWOT

The SWOT analysis requests a thorough analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and the opportunities and threats in the environment. The organization carries out this analysis internally.

Internal resources include the following:

* **Physical resources** such as machines, equipment, buildings, raw materials, patents, computers, etc., that determine the efficiency, productivity, and flexibility of the organization.
* **Financial resources** such as the balance sheet, **cash flow**, and financial support that determine the financial management of the organization and whether financial support is available (i.e., from banks).

**Cash flow**

The cash flow looks at the liquidity that an organization has in a specific period of time.

* **Human resources** such as employees, managers, partners, etc., that determine whether an organization has the right people, what training is required, or how the organization can motivate its employees.

The analysis of all these factors provides an understanding of the capabilities of the organization and what strategic possibilities are available for and compatible with the organization. The SWOT matrix can

### Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a method that enables specific comparisons between companies and selects the best one as a **reference** in order to optimize the company’s performance. These comparisons may help a

**Reference**

To “reference” means to relate the company to another organization.

#### Standard process for benchmarking

The process of a benchmarking project can be divided into the following phases and steps:

1. Goal-setting/preparation phase
* definition of the problem and internal analysis
* selecting the benchmarking partners and appointing the benchmarking team
1. Comparison phase (quantitative benchmarking)
* definition of the figures and numbers and indicators to be investigated
* data generation
* data analysis
* ranking
* selection of “best performers”

 It is vital that the features or processes important to the customer are accurately identified in order to select the most relevant competitors and benchmarking partners for comparis

Summary

The academic community across the world is bound together by a code of conduct by which all participants are expected to behave and which is encapsulated in the term “academic integrity.” Academic integrity i

# Unit 2 –

**Study Goals**

On completion of this unit, you will be able to …

… define strategy.

… decide what is import

# Appendix 1 – References

Alphabetical order

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# Appendix 2 – List of Tables and Figures

**Different Scales of Change According to Their Span, Scale, and Timing**

Source: [Author’s first and last name], based on [source] (year).

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**Fortune 500 Survival Rates**

Source: [Source] (year). Used with permission.

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**Fortune 10 Termination Rates**

Source: [Source] (year). [CC BY].

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**All other tables and figures**

Source: [Author’s first and last name], (year).

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