Strategic Reading for the New Year

Amy Zalman, Ph.D., who delivered a Global Webinar on strategic narratives for ASP in September, sent her list of recommended books to read in her year-end newsletter. It got me to thinking that ASP should have a regular dialogue on what our members are reading. So, I’d like to set a New Year’s resolution for ASP to do exactly that, we will start with a few of Amy’s suggestions and three of my own.

Focusing on the theme that perhaps we are near our point of being able to absorb all the advances in technology, Samuel Arbesman in *Overcomplicated: Technology at the Limits of
Comprehension suggests that we should think like a biologist in order to understand the complex system. Amy suggests storytelling is also a good way to understand.

Another recommendation I will definitely look into is Helga Nowotny’s *The Cunning of Uncertainty*. Helga argues that despite “big data” and the attempt to mitigate uncertainty, we can never really eliminate it entirely, hence it’s cunning. She suggests that we embrace “…the dynamic balance between what we know and do and not yet know…” so we can “…open the cracks in the wall to let the new in.”

A third recommendation of Amy’s is Zach Weinersmith’s eBook from 2014, *Polystate*. Weinersmith explores some interesting ideas and collaborates with Dr. Kelly Weinersmith, an adjunct faculty member in biosciences at Rice University. They entertainingly discuss about “ten emerging technologies that’ll improve and/or ruin everything” in their latest collaboration, *Soonish*. Peppered with Zach’s engaging cartoons throughout, you will learn about origami bots that can be programmed to do almost anything. For example, pig intestine researchers at MIT programmed an origami bot to unfold itself in a swallowed capsule that was moved through a simulated stomach by a magnet. The folding and unfolding is possible due to hinges designed on the bot itself and the researchers suggest that with other material you can have a sheet that converts itself into a chair, a table or something else. The Weinersmiths suggest that this takes us a step closer to having a “universal tool” that can be used where requirements for packing efficiently, such as, in outer space or in combat zones is paramount. They go on to discuss other bio-related technology advances including, “bioprinting,” “precision medicine,” and “brain-computer interfaces.” It really is a fun read.

In *Scale* by Geoffrey West, a theoretical physicist, suggests that there are a few general laws that govern, well, everything. *Scale* “…is about a way of thinking, about asking big questions, and suggesting big answers,” just like a strategic planner should do. It is also about some of the major challenges and issues that confront leaders and strategists alike. Such as, rapid urbanization, sustainability, and cancer. West suggests that these thorny problems “…can be addressed in an integrated unifying conceptual framework.” West further suggests that cities, companies, tumors all work in similar ways and that “…each of them represent a variation on a general theme manifesting surprising systematic regularities and similarities in their organization, structure, and dynamics.” I can’t wait to finish this intriguing book by one of the former leaders of the Santa Fe Institute.

The last book I am recommending is an old classic, *The Five Rings*, Miyamoto Musashi’s art of strategy, translated by David K. Groff. The new illustrated edition is glorious from cover to
cover and filled with Musashi's artful words of wisdom. I will have to think hard about this line: "Ordinary people usually take one of four paths in life: that of the farmer, merchant, warrior or artisan." Based on what he writes about each of these paths in the subsequent sections, I might be a combination of all four.

I'll leave you with witticism: "Someone said that "immature strategy is the source of great injuries", and this is absolutely true."

May the New Year bring you great, mature strategy and great results. Happy 2018!

Jim Stockmal
President, ASP

ASP'S 2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Bridging the Strategic Execution Gap

Across sectors of our disrupted economy, there is growing awareness that, as key leaders formulate strategy for their organizations, a gap in understanding performance, and execution often occurs for those charged with implementing the initiatives flowing from the strategy. This gap invariably translates into unwanted costs, lost opportunities and the failure to execute.

Strategic planning and management practitioners, consultants and academicians share a strong interest in mitigating problems that arise when a well-planned strategy fails at execution. In fact, many other professionals share our identical interest. Specific objectives for the conference are to feature a cross-section of professional perspectives, learn from every person who attends the conference, and ultimately report out the insights captured.

Register Now at the Super Early Bird Rate - Available until February 5th!

AGENDA   REGISTER

Accommodation

The 2018 ASP Annual Conference will be held at the Chicago Marriott O'Hare in Rosemont, Chicago.

HOTEL INFORMATION

ASP Conference Attendees will enjoy a special rate of $185 USD plus applicable taxes per night.
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GLOBAL WEBINARS - FREE FOR MEMBERS!
Is Strategic Planning Dead?

Date: January 30, 2018  Time: 1:00 - 2:00 PM ET
Presented by Jitu Marwaha, Senior Director, Corporate Strategy for Western Digital

Is the world changing too fast for Strategic Planning to be useful? In fact, is traditional Strategic Planning part of the problem? An annual ritual that maintains the status quo as opposed to helping the company anticipate, respond to and benefit from rapid change. This Webinar will explore this issue and help you,

- Understand the different approaches to strategy development and when to apply them.
- Learn how to complement traditional Strategic Planning with Scenario Planning to better anticipate and navigate change.
- Get more value from your annual strategic planning process.

Register >

If you would like to host a webinar, please reach out to jennie@strategyassociation.org, we would love to hear from you!

Missed a webinar? Click here to view our recorded archives.
CHAPTER EVENTS & WEBINARS

NCA Chapter Presents CDR Eric C. Popiel (United States Coast Guard)

Date: January 17, 2018
Time: 6:00 - 7:30 PM (ET)

Register >

Welcome Webinar for New ASP Members

Date: January 23, 2018
Time: 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Register >

ASP Colorado Presents "Competition and Cooperation"

Date: January 25, 2018
Time: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM (MT)

Register >

Global Webinars Presents: Is Strategic Planning Dead?

Date: January 30, 2018
Time: 1:00 - 2:00 PM (ET)

Register >

NPCE Presents Strategic Foresight: Navigating Uncertainty with Purpose

Date: February 5, 2018
Time: 4:00 - 5:00 PM (ET)
ARTICLES FROM MEMBERS

ASP NorCal hosts 2nd Annual Non-Profit Challenge
By Martina Doleshal, ASP NorCal President

In December 2017, ASP NorCal partnered with SVODN (Silicon Valley Organization Development Network) to co-sponsor the second Non-Profit Challenge, an innovative volunteering event, this year in San Jose, CA. The Non-Profit Challenge is a one-day, hands-on, interactive and collaborative event, that brings together strategists and creative thinkers from diverse fields and local community organizations that need help and advice. This article outlines details of our planning and execution for other chapters that might want to offer a similar event.

Click here to read more.

The Three Roadblocks to Startup Businesses
By Marty Scoles (MBA) Dennis Kater (MBA) and Jon Wiley (MBA)

Several years ago, during an MBA Capstone course, our class had the opportunity to help a local brewery create an expansion strategy. That experience changed us. A fellow student and I vowed that someday we would be able to give back to the small business community by providing strategic guidance. This year that dream was realized. As we worked with several startup businesses, we have found that most startups have three roadblocks. First, they have not been able to assemble their entrepreneurial thoughts into a cohesive whole. Second, they are juggling so many things that they struggle to identify what to focus on right now. Finally, they do not realize that they need to test their business assumptions.

Click here to read more.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

ASP Nonprofit Center for Excellence *First Mondays* Series
Date & Time: February 5, 2018 4:00-5:00 PM (ET)
Discussion Topic: Strategic Foresight: Navigating Uncertainty with Purpose

Today’s environment of uncertainty and disruption demands a new approach to strategy. We must future-hack our linear methods and push past reactive, short-term plans. With Strategic Foresight, we can create agile and resilient strategy while staying laser-focused on a clear destination.

Strategic foresight can be defined as the practice of exploring multiple alternative futures that cover a range of probable, possible, provocative, and preferred outcomes. It helps us to pull the future into the present, so instead of just reacting to disruption, we are leading from a place of transformative change.

Adding the insights of strategic thinking to existing strategic planning processes is valuable, but it’s not enough in an environment of exponential change. Put another way – if strategic planning is the “what” of an organization’s strategy process, and strategic thinking is the “how,” then strategic foresight is the “why”. It forms the foundation of a resilient strategy process – the kind that makes you the disruptor, instead of the disrupted.

For our first session of 2018, the Nonprofit Center for Excellence *First Mondays* discussion will focus on Strategic Foresight as a critical component of Strategic Planning in the 21st Century. Our discussion will cover the following questions:

- How does Strategic Foresight differ from traditional forecasting methods?
- What is the Push and Pull of the Future and how does it make our organizations more adaptive, resilient and transformative?
- What are the characteristics of a good futurist?
- How can organizations include Strategic Foresight in their planning processes?
- What are the elements of a comprehensive Strategic Foresight practice?
- How do the different scenario planning methods stack up?
How does Strategic Foresight help with disruption?

The discussion will be moderated by Frank Spencer and Yvette Montero Salvatico. Frank and Yvette are Principals at the foresight, innovation and strategic design firm, Kedge, and founders of The Futures School.

Participation in First Mondays is free but registration is required to participate. We anticipate a large crowd for this discussion so we encourage you to reserve your seat quickly. Registrants will receive an email with connection information on the day of the discussion.

Register >

Volunteer Opportunities

Looking for a new challenge or volunteer position? ASP is dedicated to help provide opportunities for all our members to meet and exceed their professional goals. Please see current opportunities below and click the position for more details:

- SPS Membership Conversion
- ASP Content Evaluator
- Video Script Writer
- ASP Membership Conversion

* Please note you must be signed into your membership to access the volunteer pages.

ASP's 2017 Annual Conference
Presentations Now Available
ASP is pleased to provide the 2017 conference materials free for all members! Please note you must be signed into your membership to access the presentations.

Click here to access all 2017 conference presentations.

ASP Wants to Hear from You!

Want to get published in the Strategic Edge newsletter? If so, we would love to hear from you! ASP members are encouraged to submit strategy-related news, articles and content for publishing. If you have any content to share for our next issue, please email it to Jennie at jennie@strategyassociation.org.

Next submission deadline is Thursday, January 25, 2018.

Members At Work

It is always interesting to hear from members and their activities. Let us know what moves you are making, articles you are writing, and presentations you are giving in the area of strategy and strategic planning.

To send us an update for "Members at Work", please contact membership@strategyassociation.org.

CERTIFICATION CORNER
Make Certification Part of Your New Year's Resolution

Get ahead of the curve and become an ASP Certified Professional today!

Becoming a certified professional brings value to your organization and will give you more confidence in strategic planning. Submit an application today!

Upcoming 2018 deadlines are:

**Spring 2018**

Period 18-1: Exam Dates: May 5 through May 19, 2018

Qualifying Certification Application Deadline(s):
Friday, February 2, 2018   Applicants outside of the US and Canada
Friday, February 23, 2018  Applicants in US and Canada

Testing Center Application Deadline(s):
Friday, March 2, 2018   Candidates testing outside of the US or Canada
Friday, March 23, 2018  Candidates testing in US and Canada

**Fall 2018**

Period 18-2: November 3 through November 17, 2018

Qualifying Certification Application Deadline(s):
Friday, July 6, 2018   Applicants outside of the US and Canada
Friday, July 27, 2018  Applicants in US and Canada

Testing Center Application Deadline(s):
Friday, August 3, 2018   Candidates testing outside of the US or Canada
Friday, August 24, 2018  Candidates testing in US and Canada

For more information, please visit our website here [www.strategyassociation.org/certification](http://www.strategyassociation.org/certification) or contact us at certification@strategyassociation.org.
MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Welcome to new members who joined in December 2017!

Boston Chapter

- Mario Morales, Innovare

Chicago Chapter

- Elizabeth Sparks, Executive Agenda

Colorado Chapter

- Yohanna Sullivan

Members at Large

- Eric Kapono, Advancement Services for Native Nonprofits
- Ellen Kelly
- Lisa Weaver, Community Health Centers of Arkanas, Inc.
- Nicholas Strocchia, USAF
- George Miller
- Kirsten McKinnon Lennon
- Dr. Mythili Kolluru, College of Banking and Financial Studies
- Eddy Abou Chakara, Vanguards Consulting
- Sondra Davis, Region Of Peel
- Tony Gigliotti

National Capital Area Chapter

- Michelle Gregory, Fairfax County Governement
- Lina Marinova, Town of Oakville

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