

JDEtips *Journal*

Unlocking the Value of Your JD Edwards® World® and EnterpriseOne® Investment

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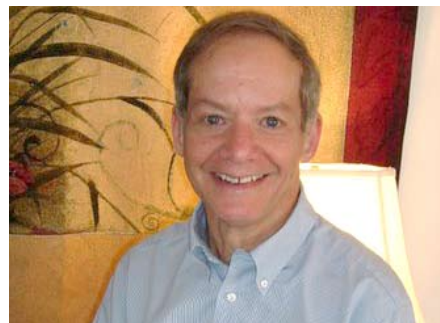
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From The Publisher *Harvard Business School*

I just returned from three weeks at the Harvard Business School, where I am in the second year of a three-year Executive Education program for business owners. Both this year and last year, we studied core business areas—strategy, leadership, marketing, innovation, finance, control, negotiation, and global markets. As was the case last year,

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Klee Associates, Inc.

JDEtips ONLINE

Be sure to visit the JDEtips Document Library to download these new white papers.

E1

ON TECHNICAL / SECURITY Row Security Overview by Andy Vanspranghe

Row security might not be your first choice for data restriction, but there may be times when it is the best option—such as when proprietary or confidential information is involved and locking out an entire application is not a practical solution. In this article, Andy Vanspranghe discusses the security benefits vs. the system performance gotchas associated with row security in EnterpriseOne®.

E1

ON TECHNICAL / CNC Menu Filtering by User ID by Carlos Sebaaly

So, you have users with similar roles, but maybe not all the same permissions. While Fine Cut and Menu Filtering are great for assigning roles, what about individual users who may need minor changes? Carlos Sebaaly demonstrates an alternative menu filtering method using the Security Workbench that provides flexibility to assign tasks to both roles and users.

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the area I am most interested in applying to my business is strategy.

In between my two visits to Harvard, the economic landscape shifted with tectonic impact. Has your company's strategy evolved in view of the changed economy? And I mean more than slapping on a "Save \$ here" label on everything your firm sells.

Here are my top strategy points gleaned from reading cases, class discussions, and most importantly, interactions with a fantastic teacher, Cynthia Montgomery. At the end, I'll share some ideas on what you can do while the people at the top are working on corporate strategy:

- 1. Industry profitability determines much of your firm's profitability. If you were in the airline industry for the last 15 years, chances are your firm did poorly. If you were in the software industry or pharmaceuticals, chances are you did well. If you are in a historically unprofitable industry, can your firm carve out a niche where you can be more profitable than the industry as a whole?*
- 2. Firm profitability—to rise above the industry you are in, you must be able to differentiate your firm from the competition. For example, Wal-Mart has succeeded by being the low cost/low price provider. Other firms, such as IMG, have succeeded by being a high cost/highly differentiated firm in their industry. And there's a continuum of other valid positions on the cost/differentiation curve—each of which can be profitable. A distinctly unhealthy position is the one that Sears held for many years—low prices, without low costs.*
- 3. Strategy requires tradeoffs between providing every product and service you can to a wide audience, and making more tightly focused choices. Edward Jones is a great example of a company that has been successful by defining what they*

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weren't going to do—compete with the big financial services firms with large downtown offices.

4. "Consider the world with (your) firm versus the world without it. The difference (if there is one) is the firm's unique added value—what would be lost to the world if the firm disappeared?" Can you identify your firm's "economic difference that matters"?
5. Can you (or your top management) respond to these questions: If your company were shuttered, to whom would it matter and why? Which of your customers would miss you and why? How long would it take for another firm to step into that void?
6. "Purpose should be at the heart of strategy. It should give direction to every part of the firm—from the corporate office to the loading dock—and define the nature of the work that must be done."
7. For many years, the goal of corporate strategy has been to create "a sustainable long-term competitive advantage". Cynthia challenges this view, saying that competitive advantage is "only part of a bigger story". We risk believing that if we've nailed our competitive advantage, our job as a corporate strategist is complete. In the meantime, seismic shifts in the economic environment (as we are seeing today) occur, leaving us as the only ones who perceive our value.
8. Strategy is an evolving process, not "do it once and we're done". "Guiding this never-ending process, bringing perspective to the midst of action and purpose to the flow—not solving the strategy puzzle once—is the crowning responsibility of the CEO."

All of the quotes above are from "Putting Leadership Back Into Strategy" by Cynthia A. Montgomery. (Available at www.hbrreprints.org for \$6.50—Reprint R0801C.)

Most of you are either in your firm's IT department or you are a key business user in one of your company's functional areas (Finance, Distribution, Manufacturing, HR, etc.). Everyone should be keeping their eye on the ball – but what ball is that exactly? If your company has a clearly articulated purpose and strategy (beyond surviving the next few years), that's the place to start. If not, then I suggest you send your CEO a copy of Cynthia's article and hope that he or she appreciates your initiative. On the other hand, there's that chain of command thing, so maybe you should give it to your manager and hope it percolates upwards.

While you are waiting for the people at the top (and hopefully they are already hard at work on re-evaluating corporate strategy), here are a few ideas on what you can do at the department level to increase your firm's ability to compete today:

1. Rethink every project your department is involved with. Is it critically important? Can expenses be

trimmed without sacrificing your department's responsibilities? Are there metrics established to help drive positive results? Focus on customer benefits. Make sure these are benefits your customers perceive, not just benefits you want them to see.

2. Stress innovation. Innovation keeps your company competitive. There are lots of good ideas on the Web on how to create an atmosphere where innovation occurs.
3. Stop the silos. Work in cross-departmental teams to address business process optimization, and to increase profitability.
4. Keep a positive attitude. Okay, that's usually easier to say than do. Affirmations help. So does an atmosphere of mutual respect and support. Help each other. If someone has been laid off, do what you can to help him or her land a new job.

So, how does all this apply to Klee Associates? Our management team spent four days working on corporate strategy in September 2008. We struggled with our company purpose statement, and developed our strategy to increase our leadership role in JD Edwards training, and become a major player in SAP training. Even four full days wasn't enough time to fully answer all the questions about strategy—it is an ongoing process that requires constant attention.

It was only a few weeks later that the global economic crisis emerged—resulting in our revisiting all our assumptions and short term objectives.

In the meantime, we are living the four final bullets mentioned above. We're keeping our focus on what our customers need, and how we can best deliver our services in today's economy. Just like most of your companies, we've had to make difficult choices about cutting costs in some areas. Through it all, I believe we are growing closer as a team and learning lessons that will help us be successful now and later when the economy improves.

Sincerely,

Andy

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