**Setting Your Strategic Target**

**Strategic thinking** is a skill that leaders and managers need to develop in today’s new environment. The last thing we want to do in business is launch a “big campaign” or initiatives before we know what we really want to achieve. When focusing on a **strategic outlook**, it is critical to have a clear target in mind. In order for “optimum” success, a target needs to be well defined and describe what we want the end result to be.

In the 2001 rendition of the movie Oceans Eleven, there is a scene in the movie where the character played by George Clooney and Brad Pitt meet in a coffee shop to discuss their strategy to accomplish a big heist. Clooney begins a conversation by saying “this project is tricky and it has never been done before.” He continues by saying “it needs timing, planning, and a large crew.” Pitt then asks the question “What’s the Target?” Clooney gives the answer – to rob three casinos.

The scene then shifts to an office where the two characters are looking at the architectural plans of the casino vault – the target. Pitt suggests that “this may be the least accessible vault ever designed.” As Pitt begins his own **strategic thinking process** he suggests they will need at least half a dozen people, financial support, and personal enemies of the casino owner to accomplish their **strategy**.

Much like the movie, **strategic thinking** at all levels in a business requires us to strategically scan our targets accurately, look ahead, and anticipate the requirements and effort that will be needed for success. Strategic thinking at the individual level in an organization requires the contributor to constantly evaluate new ways to update, improve, and refine, products, processes, and services to reach our target customers and business goals.

So how do you select the right target? One way is to use CMOE’s criteria for a C.L.E.A.R™ strategic target. These criteria will help to ensure you’re focusing time and effort in the right areas.

* **C**ontrollable – Is it something you can control and within your scope of capabilities
* **L**inked – Is it aligned and linked with the goals and outcomes of the organization, department, or environment you are operating in?
* **E**nergizing – Is it something you want to go after and accomplish? It should be a target that is rewarding, fun, and exciting.
* **A**ctionable – Will you be able to implement your plan of action. Do you have the resources needed?
* **R**esults-Oriented – Will the trade off or investment be a good deal? What does the risk-to-reward ratio look like?

Try this new approach to the age old concept of **strategic planning** and as you implement these criteria for a **strategic target**, you will be better prepared to face future challenges and obstacles that arise. You will begin to **plan strategically**, as George Clooney and Brad Pitt did in Oceans Eleven, thinking beforehand of all possible problems, challenges, and solutions. **Strategic thinkers** think and act proactively instead of reactively. It applies to all industries, people, and walks of life. Strategic thinking will empower you to be in control of your life and your job.

http://www.cmoe.com/blog/setting-your-strategic-target.htm