**Strategic Thinking vs Tactical Thinking**

**Strategy** – plan of action or policy in business or politics etc.
**Tactics** – procedure to achieve end

A strategic thinker is a far more productive thinker. It is always better to be able to look beyond the valley than just looking in it. Strategy comes from the military- the formulation and result of plans by generals, officers, kings, training of men and development of maneuvers to generate victory. Essentially “Strategic Thinking” is a style of systems structure, management and production of either man and or machine over time. The art of generalship. The word “strategy” comes from the Greek word *strategos* meaning “leader of army”. The word now is commonly used and associated with both the civilian and military world.

Strategic thinking is the ability to determine the mission structure, approach, and the mission critical in order to accomplish the objective desired. In other words asking, “what do I need to do, as well as the things I need to obtain in the short, mid, and long term, to produce success. A strategist looks at the strategic, tactical operational arenas as one (long term, short term, immediate) most times. A seamless blend, a self-supporting system that carries momentum of a plan from beginning to end. The strategic practitioner understands that the loss, or alteration of a mission critical or criticals, could change the dynamic of the desired outcome in totality or in part.

Tactics within the context of the total awareness picture, means the procedure and employment of mission criticals (example, intellectual capital, logistics, personnel etc.) to reach an end. Maximizing those criticals, to the fullest capacity or as a situation permits, squeezing out as much attrition out of the equation overall, insuring a greater efficiency to complete the mission objective. High productivity of mission criticals, stands as the second most important thing after the acquisition of. It’s from this perspective that one, then approaches the operation or operations, with an eye towards consistency that is only sustained by perceptual application of the total efficiency concept, which means to mark progress hour by hour, day by day and monitor the quantifiable kinetic momentum created that directly impacts the overall tactical application of mission criticals; and either upsets or confirms prior strategic trajectory of a mission goal.

If the performance in the operations sector is weak, and short term implementation of a plan is lackluster, it will effect the tactical factors, and it’s direction. Within the realm of strategic thinking there is a broadened perspective to decision making; flexibility in the wake of new and incoming information; peering thru obstacles and miscalculations in implementation of plans. Timely decision making, taking advantage of opportunities presented, as well as a proper system of feedback with evaluative and analytical components in place. An easy way to think about strategic positioning and thinking is:

strategic/long term = plans;

tactical/short, mid, long = details;

operations/daily, weekly, monthly = implementation.

Tactical thinking produces short sightedness, and is essentially an approach to decision making that doesn’t create momentum towards the long term in any uniformed or organized way. Tactical thinking can bring about the mindset that tends to embrace the concept of short term gain for long term loss. In effect one adopts a posture of “no matter how minimal regardless of cost, once producing progress”, even when it conflicts with the grand strategic goal/objectives. A strategic thinker looks at things from the long term view first (loss/win) being ready to accept short term loss, for long term gain. A tactical thinker separates himself from the total picture. This denies the true economy of resources. For a tactical thinker the cost for outweighs the benefit over time, essentially making a person a victim of the here and now. Any maximization of mental capital calls for the removal of such thinking. This mode of thought (tactical) is the antithesis to leadership. It shrinks the total awareness picture, creating gaps allowing Murphy’s Law (what can go wrong will go wrong) to fester in neglect, in turn making a person more reactive then proactive.

No true leader can adopt and maintain this type of posture and properly lead overtime. Victory with any long term implications cannot be achieved in this way (tactical). Good men have fallen, legacies plundered, dreams never truly given a chance to take flight because of tactical thinking. Fight to become a strategic thinking.