

Chapter 1 - Introduction to Strategic Management

Part I : Descriptive Questions

Concept of Strategy

Q1.	<p>Strategy is partly proactive and partly reactive. Discuss. (RTP, May 2018, NA) (SA, Nov 2018, 5 marks) (MTP1, Nov 2019, 5 marks) (RTP, Nov 2020, NA) (MTP1, May 2021, 5 marks) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>"A business organization cannot always plan all their strategies in advance and often need to blend planned strategies with reactive strategies." Do you agree with the statement? Give reasons. (MTP2, May 2022, 5 marks) (RTP, May 2023, NA)</p> <hr/> <p>It is true that strategies are partly proactive and partly reactive. A business organization cannot always plan all their strategies in advance and often need to blend planned strategies with reactive strategies.</p> <p>In proactive strategy, organizations will analyze possible environmental scenarios and create strategic framework after proper planning and set procedures and work on these strategies in a predetermined manner.</p> <p>However, in reality no company can forecast both internal and external environments exactly. Everything cannot be planned in advance. It is not possible to anticipate moves of rival firms, consumer behaviour, evolving technologies and so on. There can be significant deviations between what was visualized and what actually happens.</p> <p>Strategies need to be attuned or modified in the light of possible environmental changes. There can be significant or major strategic changes when the environment demands.</p> <p>Reactive strategy is triggered by the changes in the environment and provides ways and means to cope with the negative factors or take advantage of emerging opportunities.</p>
Q2.	<p>Yummy Foods and Tasty Foods are successfully competing in the business of ready to eat snacks in Patna. Yummy has been pioneer in introducing innovative products. These products will give them good sale. However, Tasty Foods will introduce similar products in reaction to the products introduced by the Yummy Foods taking away the advantage gained by the former. Discuss the strategic approach of the two companies. Which is superior? (RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (MTP1, Nov 2021, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2023, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <hr/> <p>Yummy foods is <u>proactive</u> in its approach. On the other hand Tasty Food is <u>reactive</u>.</p> <p>Proactive strategy is planned strategy whereas reactive strategy is adaptive reaction to changing circumstances.</p> <p>A company's strategy is typically a blend of proactive actions on the part of managers to improve the company's market position and financial performance and reactions to unanticipated developments and fresh market conditions.</p> <p>If organisational resources permit, it is better to be proactive rather than reactive. Being proactive in aspects such as introducing new products will give you advantage in the mind of customers.</p> <p>Crafting strategy combines proactive plans with adaptations to changing circumstances. This aspect can be accomplished by Yummy Foods.</p>
Q3.	<p>Kamal Sweets Corner, a very popular sweets shop in Ranchi, was facing tough competition from branded stores of packaged sweets and imported goods. The owners realised that their business reduced by 50% in the last six months, and this created a stressful business environment for them. To find a solution, they consulted a business consultant to help them develop a strategy to fight competition and sustain their century old family business. The business consultant advised them to innovate a new snack for the public and market it as a traditional snack of the region. The owners liked the idea and developed a new snack called Dahi Samosa, which very quickly became popular amongst the public and it helped regain the lost business of Kamal Sweets Corner.</p>

One of the very crucial importance of strategic management was used by the business consultant to help the owners of Kamal Sweets Corner. Which one could it be? Also, was this strategy Reactive or Proactive? According to you who are more beneficial in general parlance?
(MTP2, May 2021, 5 marks)

The strategy used here was of developing a competitive advantage via product which helped Kamal Sweets Corner regain their lost business. This is also one of the major importance cum advantage of strategic management, that it helps to develop core competencies and competitive advantages to overcome competition.

This strategy was a Reactive strategy. Wherein, the owners saw their business fall to 50% of revenue and then sought a strategic advisory. They did not plan proactively as to when the new shops were already opening. They reacted only when the business started to lose up.

Generally, it is always beneficial to develop strategies proactively, so that the dip in businesses is small and manageable, and even if they are huge, the management has ample time to fix it.

Q4. ALBELA' Foods and 'JustBE' Foods are successfully competing chain of restaurants in India. ALBELA' s are known for their innovative approach, which has resulted in good revenues. On the other hand, JustBE is slow in responding to environmental change. The initial stages of Covid-19 pandemic and the ensuing strict lockdown had an adverse impact on both the companies. Realizing its severity and future consequences. ALBELA, foods immediately chalked out its post lockdown strategies, which include initiatives like:

- (a) Contactless dining
- (b) New category of foods in the menu for boosting immunity
- (c) Improving safety measures and hygiene standards
- (d) Introducing online food delivery app

Seeing the positive buzz around these measures taken by ALBELA Food, JustBE Foods also thinks to introduce these measures.

- (i) Identify the strategic approach taken by 'ALBELA' Foods and 'JustBE' Foods.
- (ii) Discuss these strategic approach.
- (iii) Which strategic approach is better and why?

(SA, July 2021, 5 marks)

(i) 'ALBELA' foods is proactive in its approach. On the other hand, 'JustBE' foods is reactive in its approach.

(ii)

- Proactive strategy is planned strategy. While continuing with the previously initiated business approaches that are working well, the newly launched managerial initiatives aim to strengthen the company's overall position and performance. These are outcomes of management's analysis and strategic thinking about the company's situation and its conclusions about the positioning of the company in the marketplace. If done well, it helps the company to effectively compete for buyer patronage.
- Reactive strategy is an adaptive reaction to changing circumstances. It is not always possible for a company to fully anticipate or plan for changes in the market. There is also a need to adapt strategy as new learnings emerge about which pieces of strategy are working well and which aren't. By itself also, the management may hit upon new ideas for improving the current strategy.

(iii) In reference to the given case, proactive strategy seems to be better because ALBELA foods had been able to utilise available opportunities, reduce adverse impact, enhance the demand for product and is also able to avail the first mover advantage.

Strategic Management

Q5. Define Strategic Management.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

The term 'strategic management' refers to the managerial process of developing a strategic vision, setting objectives, crafting a strategy, implementing and evaluating the strategy, and initiating corrective adjustments where deemed appropriate.

Q6. The presence of strategic management cannot counter all hindrances and always achieve success for an organization. What are the limitations attached to strategic management?
(RTP, May 2018, NA) (MTP1, May 2019, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2021, 5 Marks) (MTP3, May 2022, 5 Marks) (MTP4, May 2022, 5 Marks)

OR

Define Strategic Management. Also discuss the limitations of Strategic Management.
(SA, May 2018, 5 Marks) (RTP, May 2021, NA) (RTP, Nov 2021, NA) (MTP1, Nov 2022, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2024, 5 Marks)

OR

Are there any limitations attached to strategic management in organizations? Discuss.
(RTP, May 2019, NA) (MTP1, May 2020, 5 Marks) (MTP2, Nov 2022, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

'Strategic Management is not a panacea for all the corporate ills, it has its own pitfalls which can't counter all hindrances and always achieve success'. Do you agree with this statement? Discuss.
(SA, May 2019, 5 Marks)

OR

"The strategic management cannot counter all hindrances and always achieve success for an organization". Do you agree with this statement? Give arguments in support of your answer.
(SA, Nov 2022, 5 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2023, NA)

The term 'strategic management' refers to the managerial process of developing a strategic vision, setting objectives, creating a strategy, implementing and evaluating the strategy, and initiating corrective adjustments where needed appropriate.

The presence of strategic management cannot counter all hindrances and always achieve success as there are limitations attached to strategic management. These can be explained in the following lines:

- **Environment is highly complex and turbulent:** It is difficult to understand the complex environment and exactly pinpoint how it will shape-up in future. The organisational estimate about its future shape may awfully go wrong and jeopardise all strategic plans. The environment affects as the organisation has to deal with suppliers, customers, governments and other external factors.
- **Strategic Management is a time-consuming process:** Organisations spend a lot of time in preparing, communicating the strategies that may impede daily operations and negatively impact the routine business.
- **Strategic Management is a costly process:** Strategic management adds a lot of expenses to an organization. Expert strategic planners need to be engaged, efforts are made for analysis of external and internal environments, devise strategies and properly implement. These can be really costly for organisations with limited resources particularly when small and medium organisation create strategies to compete.
- **Uncertainty:** In a competitive scenario, where all organisations are trying to move strategically, it is difficult to clearly estimate the competitive responses to the strategies.

Q7. Briefly explain the importance of strategic management.
(MTP1, May 2018, 5 marks) (RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (MTP2, Nov 2018, 5 marks)

OR

✶ "Each organization must build its competitive advantage keeping in mind the business warfare. This can be done by following the process of strategic management". Considering its statement, explain major benefits of strategic management.
(SA, Dec 2021, 5 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2022, NA)

OR

What benefits accrue by following a strategic approach to managing?
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (MTP1, Nov 2020, 5 Marks) (RTP, May 2023, NA)

OR

Strategic management helps an organization to work through changes in environment to gain competitive advantage. In light of statement discuss its benefits.
(RTP, Nov 2019, NA) (MTP2, Nov 2021, 5 Marks)

OR

What is Strategic Management? What benefits accrue by following a strategic approach to managing?

(ICAI Study Material)

The term 'strategic management' refers to the managerial process of developing a strategic vision, setting objectives, crafting a strategy, implementing and evaluating the strategy, and initiating corrective adjustments where deemed appropriate.

The overall objective of strategic management is two fold.

- To create **competitive advantage**, so that the company can **outperform** the competitors in order to have **dominance** over the market.
- To **guide** the company **successfully** through all changes in the **environment**.

Strategic Management is very important for the survival and growth of business organizations in dynamic business environment. Other major benefits of strategic management are as follows:

- It helps organizations to be more **proactive** rather than reactive in dealing with its future. It facilitates the organisations to **work within vagaries** of environment and remains adaptable with the turbulence or uncertain future. Therefore, they are able to **control** their own **destiny** in a better way.
- It provides **better guidance** to entire organization on the crucial point - [what it is trying to do]. Also provides framework for all **major business** decisions of an enterprise such a decision on **businesses, products, markets, organization structures**, etc.
- It facilitates to prepare the organization to face the future and act as **pathfinder** to various business opportunities. Organizations are able to identify the available **opportunities** and identify ways and means as how to reach them.
- It serves as a **corporate defence mechanism** against mistakes and pitfalls. It helps organizations to avoid costly mistakes in product market choices or investments.
- Over a period of time, strategic management helps organizations to evolve certain **core competencies** and **competitive advantages** that assist in the fight for survival and growth.

Q8. Is strategic management a bundle of tricks and magic? Elucidate the statement.
(MTP2, May 2018, 5 marks)

Strategic management is **not a bundle of tricks and magic**. The term strategic management refers to the managerial process of forming a strategic vision, setting objectives, crafting a strategy, implementing and executing the strategy, and then over a period of time initiating whatever corrective adjustments in the vision, objectives, strategy, and execution are deemed appropriate.

Strategic Management is a deliberate managerial process that involves systematic and analytical thinking. It involves systematic and analytical thinking and action. Although, the success or failure of a strategy is dependent on several extraneous factors, it cannot be stated that a strategy is a trick or magic.

Formation of strategy requires careful planning and requires strong conceptual, analytical, and visionary skills.

Q9. Ramesh Sharma has fifteen stores selling consumer durables in Delhi Region. Four of these stores were opened in last three years. He believes in managing strategically and enjoyed significant sales of refrigerator, televisions, washing machines, air conditioners and like till four years back. With shift to the purchases to online stores, the sales of his stores came down to about seventy per cent in last four years.

Analyse the position of Ramesh Sharma in light of limitations of strategic management.

(RTP, Nov 2019, NA) (RTP, Nov 2020, NA) (ICAI Study Material)

Ramesh Sharma is facing declining sales on account of large scale shift of customers to online stores. While he is using the tools of strategic management, they cannot counter all hindrances and always achieve success. There are limitations attached to strategic management as follows:

- Environment under which strategies are made is **highly complex and turbulent**. Entry of online stores, a new kind of competitor brought a different dimension to selling consumer durables. Online stores with their size power could control the market and offer stiff competition to traditional stores.
- Another limitation of strategic management is that it is **difficult to predict** how things will shape-up in future. Ramesh Sharma, although managing strategically failed to see how online stores will impact the sales.
- Although, strategic management is a **time-consuming process**, he should continue to manage strategically. The challenging times require more efforts on his part.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic management is costly. Ramesh Sharma may consider engaging experts to find out preferences of the customers and attune his strategies to better serve them in a customized manner. Such customized offerings may be difficult to match by the online stores. The stores owned by Ramesh Sharma are much smaller than online stores. It is very difficult for him to visualize how online stores will be moving strategically.
Q10.	<p>Falguni, CFO of Warships Advertisement Agency, stated that strategic management helps the organisation to develop certain core competencies and competitive advantages that facilitate management in the turbulent environment. Do you agree, if yes, then what and how does it facilitate in?</p> <p>(RTP, Nov 2023, NA)</p> <p>Yes, strategic management plays a crucial role in an organization's survival and growth, particularly in a turbulent environment. It provides the framework for developing and leveraging core competencies and competitive advantages that enable the organization to not only withstand challenges but also seize opportunities for expansion and success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survival: In a turbulent environment characterized by rapid changes, uncertainties, and challenges, strategic management helps an organization adapt and respond effectively. By developing core competencies and competitive advantages, an organization becomes better equipped to navigate unexpected disruptions and stay relevant in the market. Growth: Strategic management goes beyond survival. It enables an organization to identify opportunities, innovate, and create value for its customers. By leveraging core competencies and competitive advantages, the organization can capture market share, expand its offerings, and achieve sustained growth.

Strategic Intent (Vision, Mission, Goals, Objectives & Values)

Q11.	<p>Define strategic intent. Briefly explain the elements of strategic intent.</p> <p>(RTP, May 2018, NA)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>What are the elements in strategic intent of organisation?</p> <p>(RTP, May 2019, NA) (RTP, May 2020, NA)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>"Strategic intent provides the framework within which the firm would adopt a predetermined direction and would operate to achieve strategic objectives." In the light of this statement, discuss the elements of strategic intent.</p> <p>(SA, Nov 2022, 5 Marks)</p> <p>Strategic Management is defined as a dynamic process of formulation, implementation, evaluation, and control of strategies to realise the organization's strategic intent. Strategic intent refers to purposes for what organization strives for. Top management must define "what they want to do" and "why they want to do". "Why they want to do" represents strategic intent of the firm. Clarity in strategic intent is extremely important for the future success and growth of the enterprise, irrespective of its nature and size.</p> <p>Strategic intent can be understood as the philosophical base of strategic management. It implies the purposes, which an organization endeavours to achieve. It is a statement that provides a perspective of the means, which will lead the organization, reach its vision in the long run. Strategic intent gives an idea of what the organization desires to attain in future.</p> <p>Strategic intent provides the framework within which the firm would adopt a predetermined direction and would operate to achieve strategic objectives. Strategic intent could be in the form of vision and mission statements for the organisation at the corporate level. It could be expressed as the business definition and business model at the business level of the organisation.</p> <p>Strategic intent is generally stated in broad terms but when stated in precise terms it is an expression of aims to be achieved operationally i.e., goals and objectives.</p> <p>Elements of Strategic Intent:</p> <p>(i) Vision: Vision implies the blueprint of the company's future position. It describes where the organisation wants to land. It depicts the organisation's aspirations and provides a glimpse of what the organization would like to become in future. Every sub system of the organization is required to follow its vision.</p>
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(ii) **Mission:** Mission delineates the firm's business, its goals and ways to reach the goals. It explains the reason for the existence of the firm in the society. It is designed to help potential shareholders and investors understand the purpose of the company. A mission statement helps to identify 'what business the company undertakes'. It defines the **present capabilities, activities, customer focus and role in society.**

(iii) **Goals and objectives:** These are the **base of measurement**. Goals are the end results, that the organization attempts to achieve. On the other hand, objectives are time based measurable targets, which help in the accomplishment of goals. These are the end results which are to be attained with the help of an overall plan, over the particular period. However, in practice no distinction is made between goals and objectives and both terms are used interchangeably.

The vision, mission, business definition, and business model explain the philosophy of the organisation but the goals and objectives represent the results to be achieved in multiple areas of business.

(iv) **Values/ Value System:** Values are the deep-rooted principles which guide an organisation's decisions and actions. Collins and Porras succinctly define core values as **being inherent and sacrosanct**; they can never be compromised, either for convenience or short-term economic gain. Values often reflect the values of the company's founders—Hewlett-Packard's celebrated "HP Way" is an example. They are the **source of a company's distinctiveness** and must be maintained at all costs.

Q12. Distinguish between Vision and Mission.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

OR

Distinguish between vision statement and mission statement.
(MTP2, May 2018, 5 Marks) (MTP1, Nov 2018, 5 Marks)

A Mission statement tells you the fundamental purpose of the organization. It concentrates on the present. It defines the customer and the critical processes. It informs you of the desired level of performance. On the other hand, a Vision statement outlines what the organization wants to be. It concentrates on the future. It is a source of inspiration. It provides clear decision-making criteria.

A mission statement can resemble a vision statement in a few companies, but that can be a grave mistake. It can confuse people. Following are the major differences between vision and mission:

1. The vision describes a future direction, while the mission serves as ongoing intent.
2. The vision statement can galvanize the people to achieve defined objectives, even if they are stretch objectives, provided the vision is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound. A mission statement provides a path to realize the vision in line with its values. These statements have a direct bearing on the bottom line and success of the organization.
3. A vision statement defines the purpose or broader goal for being in existence or in the business and can remain the same for decades if crafted well while a mission statement is more specific in terms of both the future state and the time frame. Mission describes what will be achieved if the organization is successful.

Q13. Write a short note on Essentials of a strategic vision.
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA)

OR

What is strategic vision? Describe the essentials of strategic vision.
(SA, Nov 2020, 5 Marks)

A strategic vision is a **roadmap** of a company's **future** – providing specifics about **technology** and **customer focus**, the **geographic** and **product markets** to be pursued, the **capabilities** it plans to develop, and the **kind of company** that management is trying to create. It helps the company to answer the question "where we are to go" and provides a convincing rationale for why this makes good business sense for the company.

A strategic vision delineates organization's aspirations for the business, providing a panoramic view of the position where the organization is going. A strategic vision points an organization in a particular direction, charts a strategic path for it to follow in preparing for the future, and molds organizational identity.

Essentials of a strategic vision:

- The entrepreneurial challenge in developing a strategic vision is to think creatively about how to prepare a company for the future.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forming a strategic vision is an exercise in intelligent entrepreneurship. A well-articulated strategic vision creates enthusiasm among the members of the organisation The best-worded vision statement clearly illuminates the direction in which organization is headed.
Q14.	<p>'Objectives' and 'Goals' provide meaning and sense of direction to organizational endeavour. Explain. (RTP, Nov 2018, NA)</p> <p>Business organization translates their vision and mission into objectives. Objectives are open-ended attributes that denote the future states or outcomes. Goals are close ended attributes which are precise and expressed in specific terms. Thus, the goals are more specific and translate to objectives to short term perspective.</p> <p>All organizations have objectives. The pursuit of objectives is an unending process such that organizations sustain themselves. They provide meaning and sense of direction to organizational endeavour. Organizational structure and activities are designed and resources are allocated around the objectives to facilitate their achievement. They also act as benchmarks for guiding organizational activity and for evaluating how the organization is performing.</p>
Q15.	<p>What are the characteristics which must be possess by objectives, to be meaningful to serve the intended role? (SA, May 2019, 5 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>What are 'objectives'? What characteristics must it possess to be meaningful? (RTP, May 2021, NA) (RTP, May 2022, NA) (MTP2, May 2023, 5 Marks)</p> <p>Objectives are organizations performance targets – the results and outcomes it wants to achieve. They function as yardstick for tracking an organization's performance and progress.</p> <p>Objectives with strategic focus relate to outcomes that strengthen an organization's overall business position and competitive vitality. Objectives, to be meaningful to serve the intended role, must possess the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives should define the organization's relationship with its environment. <i>Sath chatege...</i> Objectives should be facilitative towards achievement of mission and purpose. <i>Niche se upar</i> Objectives should provide the basis for strategic decision-making. <i>Niche se upar</i> Objectives should provide standards for performance appraisal. <i>Upar</i> Objectives should be understandable. <i>sodhe samjhe - -</i> Objectives should be concrete and specific. <i>khaa khaan</i> Objectives should be related to a time frame. <i>Wast ke sath</i> Objectives should be measurable and controllable. <i>Polke hum</i> Objectives should be challenging. <i>Andhi ho toofan lo</i> Different objectives should correlate with each other. <i>ek durr k song</i> Objectives should be set within constraints. <i>Geri deniya mein rehna hai</i>
Q16.	<p>Mr Raj has been hired as a CEO by XYZ Ltd a FMCG company that has diversified into affordable cosmetics. The company intends to launch Feelgood brand of cosmetics. XYZ wishes to enrich the lives of people with its products that are good for skin and are produced in ecologically beneficial manner using herbal ingredients. Draft vision and mission statement that may be formulated by Raj. (RTP, Nov 2019, NA) (RTP, Nov 2020, NA) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p>Feelgood brand of cosmetics may have following vision and mission:</p> <p>Vision: Vision implies the blueprint of the company's future position. It describes where the organisation wants to land. Mr Raj should aim to position "Feelgood cosmetics" as India's beauty care company. It may have vision to be India's largest beauty care company that improves looks, give extraordinary feeling and bring happiness to people.</p> <p>Mission: Mission delineates the firm's business, its goals and ways to reach the goals. It explains the reason for the existence of the firm in the society. It is designed to help potential shareholders and investors understand the purpose of the company.</p> <p>Mr Raj may identify mission in the following lines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be in the business of cosmetics to enhance the lives of people, give them confidence to lead. To protect skin from harmful elements in environment and sun rays.

- To produce herbal cosmetics using natural ingredients

Q17.

Why an organisation should have a mission? What considerations are to be kept in mind while writing a good mission statement of a company?

(BA, Nov 2019, 5 Marks)

OR

What should be the major components of a good mission statement?

(RTP, Nov 2022, NA)

Mission statements broadly describe an organizations' **present capabilities, customer focus, activities, and business makeup**.

Organization should have a mission on account of the following reasons:

- To ensure **unanimity** of purpose within the organization.
- To develop a basis, or standard, for **allocating** organizational resources.
- To provide a basis for **motivating** the use of the organization's resources.
- To establish a **general tone** or organizational **climate**.
- To serve as a **focal point** for those who can identify with the organization's purpose and direction.
- To facilitate the **translation of objective and goals** into a work structure involving the assignment of tasks to responsible elements within the organization.
- To specify organizational purposes and the translation of these purposes into goals in such a way that cost, time, and performance parameters can be assessed and controlled.

ek khandak
sah mein khatke
sah mil ke khatke
sah mil ke garmaye
ek sang aagay
ek juk
hake kom
khatke
bun

The following points must be considered while writing a good mission statement of a company:

- To establish the **special identity** of the business - one that typically distinct it from other similarly positioned companies.
- Good mission statements should be **unique** to the organisation for which they are developed.
- Needs** which business tries to satisfy, **customer groups** it wishes to target and the **technologies** and **competencies** it uses and the **activities** it performs.
- Technology, competencies** and **activities** are important in defining a company's business because they indicate the **boundaries** on its operation.
- The mission should **not be to make profit**.

Q18.

Mission statement of a company focuses on the question: 'who we are' and 'what we do'. Explain briefly.

(MTP2, May 2021, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2022, 5 Marks) (RTP, May 2023, NA)

A company's mission statement is typically focused on its present business scope - "who we are and what we do"; mission statements broadly describe an organizations **present capabilities, customer focus activities and business makeup**. An organisation's mission states what **customers it serves**, what **need it satisfies**, and what **type of product** it offers. It is an expression of the growth ambition of the organisation. It helps organisation to set its **own special identity**, business emphasis and **path for development**. Mission amplifies what brings the organisation to this business or why it is there, what existence it seeks and what purpose it seeks to achieve as a business organisation.

In other words, the mission serves as a **justification** for the firm's very presence and existence; it legitimizes the firm's presence.

Q19.

Explain briefly the key areas in which the strategic planner should concentrate his mind to achieve desired results.

(RTP, May 2021, NA) (RTP, Nov 2022, NA)

A strategic manager defines the **strategic intent** of the organisation and take it on the path of achieving the organisational **objectives**. There can be a number of areas that a strategic manager should concentrate on to achieve desired results. They commonly establish **long-term objectives** in seven areas as follows:

- **Profitability.**
- **Productivity.**
- **Competitive Position.**
- **Employee Development.**
- **Employee Relations.**

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- Technological Leadership.
- Public Responsibility.

Strategic levels in Organisation

Q20. Define the role of corporate level managers. *Abbu.*
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA)

Corporate-level managers participate in **strategic decision making** within the organization. The role of corporate-level managers is to **oversee the development of strategies** for the whole organization. This role includes defining the **mission** and **goals** of the organization, determining what **businesses** it should be in, **allocating resources** among the different businesses, formulating and implementing **strategies** that span individual businesses, and providing **leadership** for the organization.

Q21. Distinguish between the three levels of strategy formulation.
(MTP1, Nov 2018, 5 marks)

OR

Explain the difference between three levels of strategy formulation.
(RTP, May 2020, NA) (MTP 1, May 2023, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

Distinguish between the following: Corporate and business level.
(RTP, May 2019, NA)

A typical large organization is a **multidivisional organisation** that competes in several different businesses. It has separate self-contained divisions to manage each of these. There are three levels of strategy in management of business - corporate, business, and functional.

The corporate level of management consists of the **chief executive officer** and **other top level executives**. These individuals occupy the **apex of decision making** within the organization. The role of corporate-level managers is to **oversee the development of strategies** for the whole organization. This role includes defining the **mission** and **goals** of the organization, determining what **businesses** it should be in, **allocating resources** among the different businesses and so on rests at the Corporate Level.

The development of **strategies for individual business** areas is the responsibility of the **general managers** in these different businesses or business level managers. A business unit is a **self-contained division** with its own functions - for example, finance, production, and marketing. The strategic role of business-level manager, head of the division, is to **translate the general statements of direction and intent that come from the corporate level into concrete strategies for individual businesses**.

Functional-level managers are responsible for the **specific business functions**, or operations such as human resources, purchasing, product development, customer service, and so on. Thus, a functional manager's sphere of responsibility is generally confined to **one organizational activity**, whereas general managers **oversee the operation** of a whole company or division.

Q22. List the different strategic levels in an organisation.
(SA, Nov 2018, 2 marks)

There are three main strategic levels in an organisation:

- **Corporate level** – consisting of **CEO, Board of Directors** and other senior executives.
- **Business level** – **Divisional Managers** and staff.
- **Functional level** – **Functional Managers** – Marketing, Finance, Production, Human Resource.

Q23. Enumerate the task to be performed as a strategic manager of a company.
(MTP2, May 2019, 5 marks)

The primary tasks of the strategic manager is conceptualizing, designing and executing company strategies.
For this purpose, his tasks will include:

- Defining the **mission** and **goals** of the organization.
- Determining what **businesses** it should be in.
- **Allocating resources** among the different businesses.

- Formulating strategies.
- Implementing strategies.
- Providing leadership for the organization.

Q24. ABC Limited is in a wide range of businesses which include apparels, lifestyle products, furniture, real estate and electrical products. The company is looking to hire a suitable Chief Executive Officer. Consider yourself as the HR consultant for ABC limited. You have been assigned the task to enlist the activities involved with the role of the Chief Executive Officer. Name the strategic level that this role belongs to and enlist the activities associated with it.
(SA, Jan 2021, 5 marks) (MTP2, Nov 2022, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material) (MTP1, Nov 2023, 5 Marks)

The role of Chief Executive Officer pertains to **Corporate level** /

The corporate level of management consists of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and other top-level executives. These individuals occupy the apex of decision making within the organization.

The role of Chief Executive Officer is to:

1. oversee the development of **strategies** for the whole organization;
2. defining the **mission** and **goals** of the organization;
3. determining what **businesses**, it should be in;
4. **allocating resources** among the different businesses;
5. **formulating**, and **implementing** strategies that span individual businesses;
6. providing **leadership** for the organization;
7. ensuring that the corporate and business level strategies which company pursues are consistent with **maximizing shareholders wealth**; and
8. managing the **divestment and acquisition** process.

Q25. Dharam Singh, the procurement department head of Cyclix, a mountain biking equipment company, was recently promoted to look after sales department along with procurement department. His seniors at the corporate level have always liked his way of leadership and are assures that he would ensure the implementation of policies and strategies to the best of his capacity but have never involved him in decision making for the company.

Do you think this is the right approach? Validate your answer with logical reasoning around management levels and decision making.

(RTP, May 2021, NA) (ICAI Study Material)

Functional managers provide most of the **information** that makes it possible for business and corporate level managers to formulate **realistic** and **attainable strategies**.

This is so because functional managers like Dharam Singh are **closer to the customer** than the **typical general manager** is. A functional manager **may generate important ideas** that **subsequently may become major strategies** for the company. Thus, it is important for general managers to **listen closely to the ideas of their functional managers** and **involve them in decision making**.

An **equally great responsibility** for **managers** at the **operational level** is **strategy implementation**: the execution of corporate and business level plans, and if they are involved in formulation, the **clarity of thoughts while implementation** can benefit too.

Thus, the approach of Cyclix Corporate management is **not right**. They should involve Dharam Singh, as well as other functional managers too in strategic management.

Q26. Mr. Mehta sharing with his friend in an informal discussion that he has to move very cautiously in his organization as the decisions taken by him has organisation wide impact and involves large commitments of resources. He also said that his decisions decide the future of his organisation. Where will you place Mr. Mehta in the organizational hierarchy and explain his role in the organization.

(RTP, Nov 2021, NA)

Mr. Mehta works in an organization at **top level**. He participates in **strategic decision making** within the organization. The role of corporate-level managers is to **oversee the development** of **strategies** for the whole organization. This role includes defining the **mission** and **goals** of the organization, determining what **businesses** it should be in, **allocating resources** among the different businesses, **formulating** and **implementing** strategies that span individual businesses, and providing **leadership** for the organization.

Q27. ABC Ltd. currently sells its product in two major markets - Europe and Asia. While it is a market leader in Europe, ABC Ltd. has struggled to penetrate the more competitive Asian market. ABC Ltd. hired a strategic consultant to analyze the situation and submit his report to them. After the report received from the strategic consultant, it has therefore decided to pull out of Asia

	<p>entirely and focus on its European markets only. This decision relates to which level in ABC Ltd and explain the role of managers at this level in the organization.</p> <p>(RTP, May 2022, NA)</p>
	<p>Corporate level strategy relates to the <u>markets and industries that the organization chooses to operate in, as well as other decisions that affect the organization as a whole</u>. The role of corporate-level managers is to <u>oversee the development of strategies</u> for the whole organization. This role includes defining the <u>mission and goals</u> of the organization, determining what <u>businesses it should be in</u>, <u>allocating resources</u> among the different businesses, <u>formulating and implementing strategies</u> that span individual businesses, and providing <u>leadership</u> for the organization.</p>
Q28.	<p>"Management at all levels develop strategies". Explain the different strategies formulated at different levels of management (SA, May 2023, 5 Marks)</p>
	<p>At different levels of management, various strategies are formulated to align with organizational goals and objectives which are as follows:</p> <p>Corporate-Level Strategies: At the highest level of management, corporate-level strategies are developed. These strategies focus on the overall direction and scope of the entire organization. Major corporate-level strategies include Stability strategies, Growth strategies, Retrenchment strategies and Combination strategies.</p> <p>Business-Level Strategies: Business-level strategies are developed by middle-level management and focus on individual business units or divisions within the organization. These strategies aim to achieve competitive advantage within specific markets. Common business-level strategies include Cost Leadership, Differentiation and Focus strategies.</p> <p>Functional-Level Strategies: Functional-level strategies are formulated by lower-level management or department heads responsible for specific functional areas, such as marketing, finance, operations, or human resources. These strategies align with business-level strategies and focus on achieving functional objectives. These strategies include Marketing strategies, Financial strategies, Operations strategies, Research & Development strategy and Human Resource strategies.</p> <p>In conclusion, management at all levels develops strategies that align with the organization's goals. Corporate-level strategies determine the overall direction, business-level strategies focus on competitive advantage within specific markets, and functional-level strategies aim to achieve functional objectives in support of the broader strategies.</p>

Part II: Correct/Incorrect Questions

Q1.	<p>Strategic management involves huge cost.</p> <p>(RTP, May 2018, NA)</p>
	<p>The statement is correct.</p> <p>Strategic management is a costly process. Strategic management adds a lot of expenses to an organization. Expert strategic planners need to be engaged. Efforts are made for analysis of external and internal environments, devise strategies and properly implement them. These can be really costly for organisations with limited resources particularly when small and medium organisation create strategies to compete.</p>
Q2.	<p>Every strategic move is the result of proactive planning.</p> <p>(MTP1, May 2018, 2 marks)</p>
	<p>The statement is incorrect.</p> <p>In business, things happen that cannot be fully anticipated or planned for. When market and competitive conditions take an unexpected turn or some aspect of a company's strategy hits a stone wall, some kind of strategic reaction or adjustment is required.</p>
Q3.	<p>Control systems run parallel with strategic levels.</p> <p>(RTP, Nov 2018, NA)</p>

	<p>The statement is correct.</p> <p>There are three strategic levels in an organisation – corporate, business and functional. Control systems are required at all the three levels. At the top level, strategic controls are built to check whether the strategy is being implemented as planned and the results produced by the strategy are those intended. Down the hierarchy management controls and operational controls are built in the systems. Operational controls are required for day-to-day management of business.</p>
Q4.	<p>For a small entrepreneur vision and mission are irrelevant. (RTP, Nov 2018, NA)</p> <p>The statement is Incorrect.</p> <p>Entrepreneur, big or small has to function within several influences from external forces. Competition in different form and different degree is present in all kind and sizes of business. Even entrepreneur with small businesses can have complicated environment. To grow and prosper they need to have clear vision and mission.</p>
Q5.	<p>Vision is one of the key elements of Strategic Intent. (SA, Nov 2018, 2 Marks)</p> <p>The statement is Correct.</p> <p>Vision implies the blueprint of the company's future position. It describes where the organisation wants to land. It depicts the organisation's aspirations and provides a glimpse of what the organisation would like to become in future. Every sub system of the organisation is required to follow its vision.</p>

Part III: Multiple Choice Questions

Q1.	<p>Strategy is a game plan used for which of the following?</p> <p>(a) To take market position (b) To attract and satisfy customers (c) To respond to dynamic and hostile environment (d) All of the above</p> <p>(ICAI Study Material)</p> <p>Correct answer: (d) All of the above</p> <p>Explanation:</p> <p>Strategy is the game plan that the management of a business uses to take market position, conduct its operations, attract and satisfy customers, compete successfully, and achieve organizational objectives.</p>
Q2.	<p>Reactive strategy can also be termed as-</p> <p>(a) Planned strategy (b) Adaptive strategy (c) Sound strategy (d) Dynamic strategy</p> <p>(ICAI Study Material)</p> <p>Correct answer: (b) Adaptive strategy</p> <p>Explanation:</p> <p>Reactive strategy is an adaptive reaction to changing circumstances. Therefore, it is also known as adaptive strategy.</p>
Q3.	<p>Read the following three statements:</p> <p>(i) Strategies have short-range implications. (ii) Strategies are action oriented. (iii) Strategies are rigidly defined.</p> <p>From the combinations given below select an alternative that represents statements that are true:</p> <p>(a) (i) and (ii) (b) (i) and (iii) (c) (ii) and (iii)</p>

(i) (ii) and (iii)
(ICAI Study Material)

Correct answer: (a) (i) and (ii)

Explanation: Strategies need to be attuned or modified in the light of possible environmental changes. Therefore, strategies are not rigidly defined

Q4.

Strategic management enables an organization to _____, instead of companies just responding to threats in their business environment.

- (a) be proactive
- (b) determine when the threat will subside
- (c) avoid the threats
- (d) defeat their competitors

(ICAI Study Material)

Correct answer: (a) be proactive

Explanation: Strategic management helps organizations to be more proactive rather than reactive in dealing with its future. Organisations are able to analyse and take actions instead of being mere spectators.

Q5.

Strategic management allows an organization to be more

- (a) Authoritative
- (b) Participative
- (c) Commanding
- (d) Proactive

(ICAI Study Material)

Correct answer: (d) Proactive

Explanation: Strategic management helps organizations to be more proactive rather than reactive in dealing with its future. Organisations are able to analyse and take actions instead of being mere spectators.

Q6.

Formulation of strategies and their implementation in a strategic management process is undertaken by-

- (a) Top level executives
- (b) Middle level executive
- (c) Lower level executives
- (d) All of the above

(ICAI Study Material)

Correct answer: (d) All of the above

Explanation:

Functional managers provide most of the information that makes it possible for business and corporate level managers to formulate realistic and attainable strategies.

Q7.

Which of the following managers' role is to translate the general statements/ strategies into concrete strategies of their individual businesses-

- (a) Supervisor
- (b) Functional Manager
- (c) CEO of the company
- (d) All of the above

(ICAI Study Material)

Correct answer: (b) Functional Manager

Q8.

Which statement should be created first and foremost?

- (a) Strategy
- (b) Vision
- (c) Objectives

(d) Mission
(ICAI Study Material)

Correct answer: (b) Vision

Explanation:

Vision implies the blueprint of the company's future position. It describes where the organisation wants to land. Thereafter, a strategy is created to achieve that vision

Q9. Which of these basic questions should a vision statement answer?

- (a) What is our business?
- (b) Who are our competitors?
- (c) Where we are to go?
- (d) Why do we exist?

(Sample MCQs) (MTP1, May 2019, 1 Mark)

Correct answer: (c) Where we are to go?

Explanation:

Vision implies the blueprint of the company's future position. It describes where the organisation wants to land. It depicts the organisation's aspirations and provides a glimpse of what the organisation would like to become in future.

Q10. Mission:

- (a) is an internally-focused definition of the organization's societal goals.
- (b) is a statement of a firm's unique purpose and scope of operations.
- (c) does not relate to the industry in which the firm intends to compete.
- (d) is developed by a firm before the firm develops its strategic intent.

(RTP, May 2019, NA) (MTP2, May 2019, 1 Mark)

Correct answer: (b) is a statement of a firm's unique purpose and scope of operations.

Explanation:

Mission amplifies what brings the company to this business or why it is there, what purpose it seeks to achieve as a business firm.

Q11. Strategic decision making can take place at three common levels of an organisation as follows:

- (a) Divisional, group and individual.
- (b) Executive, leader and manager.
- (c) Corporate, business and functional.
- (d) Strategic, tactical and operational.

(RTP, May 2019, NA)

Correct answer: (c) Corporate, business and functional

Explanation:

Generally, there are three main levels of management: Corporate level, Business level and Functional level

Q12. Which of the following statement is not true with regards to strategy?

- (a) Strategy reduces uncertainty.
- (b) Strategy is long range blueprint of desired position.
- (c) Strategy relates organisations to the external environment.
- (d) Strategy is perfect and flawless.

(RTP, May 2019, NA)

Correct answer: (d) Strategy is perfect and flawless.

Explanation:

Strategy can never be perfect, flawless and optimal. It should be flexible to take care of sudden emergencies, pressures and avoid failures and frustrations.

Q13. What can be defined as the art and science of formulating, implementing and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its objectives?
 (a) Strategy formulation
 (b) Strategy evaluation
 (c) Strategy implementation
 (d) Strategic management
 (MTP1, May 2019, 1 Mark)

OR

What involves formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its objectives?

- (a) Strategy formulation
 - (b) Strategy evaluation
 - (c) Strategy implementation
 - (d) Strategic management
- (ICAI Study Material)

Correct answer: (d) Strategic management

Explanation:

Strategic management involves developing the company's vision, environmental scanning (both internal and external), strategy formulation, strategy implementation and evaluation and control.

Q14. Strategy helps in:
 (a) Unravelling complexity
 (b) Reduce uncertainty
 (c) Relate the goals with the resources.
 (d) All of Above.
 (MTP2, May 2019, 1 mark)

Correct answer: (d) All of the above

Explanation:

The very injection of the idea of strategy into business organisations is intended to unravel complexity and to reduce uncertainties caused by changes in the environment. Strategy seeks to relate the goals of the organization to the means of achieving them.

Q15. Which of the following statement is not true:
 (a) Strategic environment is complex
 (b) Strategic environment is turbulent.
 (c) High cost of strategy makes them useless for charitable organization.
 (d) Public sector units should implement business strategy.
 (MTP2, May 2019, 1 mark)

Correct answer: (c) High cost of strategy makes them useless for charitable organization.

Explanation:

Though strategic management involves huge cost, it enables to run organisation effectively and efficiently.

Q16. Objectives should be:
 (i) Concrete and specific.
 (ii) Related to time frame.
 (iii) Standards for performance appraisal.

Which of the above statements are true:

- (a) (i) & (ii).
- (b) (ii) & (iii).
- (c) (i) & (iii).
- (d) (i), (ii) and (iii)

(MTP2, May 2019, 1 Mark)

Correct answer: (d) (i), (ii) and (iii)

Explanation:

Objectives must possess following characteristics:

- Objectives should define the organization's relationship with its environment
- Objectives should be facilitative towards achievement of mission and purpose.
- Objectives should provide the basis for strategic decision making.
- Objectives should provide standards for performance appraisal.
- Objectives should be understandable.
- Objectives should be concrete and specific.
- Objectives should be related to a time frame.
- Objectives should be measurable and controllable.
- Objectives should be challenging.
- Different objectives should correlate with each other.
- Objectives should be set within constraints.

Q17. Statement that is typically focused on present business scope and broadly describes an organizations present capabilities, customer focus, activities, and business makeup is:

- (a) Vision
- (b) Mission
- (b) Strategy
- (b) Goals

(RTP, Nov 2019, NA)

Correct answer: (b) Mission

Explanation:

A company's Mission Statement is typically focused on present business scope - 'who we are' and 'what we do'. It broadly describes an organizations present capabilities, customer focus, activities, and business makeup.

Q18. Which of the following statements correctly explain strategic management?

- (i) Strategic management provides framework for major decisions.
- (ii) Strategic management helps to enhance the longevity of the business.
- (iii) Strategic management is an inexpensive process.
- (iv) Strategic management helps organisation to be more reactive than proactive.

- (a) (i) and (ii)
- (b) (i), (ii) and (iii)
- (c) (i), (ii) and (iv)
- (d) (i), (iii) and (iv)

(RTP, Nov 2019, NA)

Correct answer: (a) (i) and (ii)

Explanation:

- Strategic management helps organisations to be more proactive instead of reactive in shaping its future.
- Strategic management provides framework for all the major decisions of an enterprise.
- Strategic Management is a costly process.
- Strategic Management enhances longevity of business.

Q19. Which of the following are responsible for formulating and developing realistic and attainable strategies?

- (a) Corporate level and business level managers
- (b) Corporate level and functional level managers
- (c) Functional level managers and business level managers
- (d) Corporate level managers, business level managers and functional level managers

(MTP1, Nov 2019, 1 mark) (RTP, May 2020, NA) (ICAI Study Material)

Correct answer: (d) Corporate level managers, business level managers and functional level managers

Explanation:

Functional managers provide most of the information that makes it possible for business and corporate level managers to formulate realistic and attainable strategies.

Q20.

Strategy is-

- (a) Proactive in action
- (b) Reactive in action
- (c) A blend of proactive and reactive actions
- (d) None of the above

(RTP, May 2020, NA) (ICAI Study Material)

Correct answer: (c) A blend of proactive and reactive actions.

Explanation:

A company's strategy is typically a blend of:

- Proactive reactions on the part of managers to improve the company's market position and financial performance.
- Reactions to unanticipated developments and fresh market conditions in the dynamic business environment

Q21.

Members of Infinite Care, an NGO, have met and determined that they need to formulate a philosophical basis for their activities. Thereby they have come up with a statement: "Provide children till age 12, living in homeless or low-income situations, with the essential items they need to thrive – at home, at school and at play" Identify the area of strategic intent, which the members have stated?

- (a) Vision
- (b) Business Definition
- (c) Goal and Objective
- (d) Mission

(MTP1, Nov 2020, 2 Marks)

Correct answer: (d) Mission

Explanation:

Mission delineates the firm's business, its goals and ways to reach the goals. It explains the reason for the existence of the firm in the society. It is designed to help potential shareholders and investors understand the purpose of the company. A mission statement helps to identify, 'what business the company undertakes.' It defines the present capabilities, activities, customer focus and business makeup.

Q22.

Which of the following is correct?

- (a) Strategy is always pragmatic and not flexible
- (b) Strategy is not always perfect, flawless and optimal
- (c) Strategy is always perfect, flawless and optimal
- (d) Strategy is always flexible but not pragmatic

(MTP1, May 2021, 2 marks) (ICAI Study Material)

Correct answer: (b) Strategy is not always perfect, flawless and optimal

Explanation:

Strategy can never be perfect, flawless and optimal. It is in the very nature of strategy that it is flexible and pragmatic to take care of sudden emergencies, pressures, and avoid failures and frustrations.

Q23.

An organisation during its strategy planning envisaged entire scenarios and created a strategy framework. But in mean time after implementation, it realised that its framework is not effective in certain unique scenarios. What is the reason for the same?

- (a) Strategy is "partly proactive and Partly reactive"
- (b) Lack of analysis and proper planning.
- (c) Strategy is highly reactive and highly proactive.
- (d) Improper creation of strategic framework

(RTP, Nov 2021, NA)

Chapter 2 - Strategic Analysis : External Environment

Part I : Descriptive Questions

Globalisation

Q1. Why companies should go global? Mention any five reasons.
(SA, Nov 2020, 5 Marks)

There are several reasons why companies go global. These are discussed as follows:

- One reason could be the **rapid shrinking of time and distance** across the globe - thanks to faster communication, speedier transportation, growing financial flows and rapid technological changes.
- It is being realized that the domestic markets are no longer adequate and rich. Companies globalize to take **advantage of opportunities** available elsewhere.
- A new product may gradually get acceptance and grow locally and then globally. This may initially be in form of exports and then later production facilities may begin in other countries.
- Organizations may go global to take advantage of **cheaper raw material and labour costs**.
- Companies often set up overseas plants to **reduce high transportation costs**.
- The motivation to go global in high-tech industries is slightly different. Companies in electronics and telecommunications must spend large sums on research and development for new products and thus may be compelled to seek ways to improve sales volume to support high overhead expenses.
- The companies may also go global to take advantage of **local taxation laws**.
- To form **strategic alliances** to ward off economic and technological threats and leverage their respective comparative and competitive advantages.

Understanding Product and Industry

Q2. ABC Ltd. manufactures and sells air purifier 'Fresh Breath'. The 'Fresh Breath' has seen sales growth of around 1% for the last two years, after strong growth in the previous five years. This is due to new products entering the market in competition with the 'Fresh Breath'. ABC Ltd. is therefore considering cutting its prices to be in line with its major rivals with a hope to maintain the market share. Market research indicates that this will now cause a significant increase in the level of sales, even though in previous years price cuts have had little effect on demand. ABC Ltd. is also planning to launch a promotional campaign to highlight the benefits of the 'Fresh Breath' against its rival products.
Identify and explain the stage of the product life cycle in which 'Fresh Breath' falls.
(RTP, May 2021, NA)

Product Life Cycle is a useful concept for guiding **strategic choice**. PLC is an **S-shaped curve** which exhibits the **relationship of sales with respect of time** for a product that passes through the four successive stages of **introduction** (slow sales growth), **growth** (rapid market acceptance) **maturity** (slowdown in growth rate) and **decline** (sharp downward drift).

The product 'Fresh Breath' of ABC Ltd. falls under the **Maturity stage** of product life cycle. In this stage, the **competition gets tough** and the **market stabilises**. Profit comes down because of stiff competition. At this stage, ABC Ltd. has to work for **maintaining stability** by cutting the prices to be in line with its major rivals with a hope to maintain the market share and by launching a promotional campaign to highlight the benefits of the 'Fresh Breath' against its rival products.

Q3. Write a short note on "Phases and significance of Product Life Cycle".
(MTP2, May 2022, 5 Marks)

OR

Write a short note on Product Life Cycle (PLC) and its significance in portfolio diagnosis.
(ICAI Study Material)

OR

The CEO of ABC Enterprises, Mr. Rasik Mehta, had the idea of creating a fitness shake called Robust, which prompted the company to conduct research and development. The company conducted a market survey and feasibility study, which indicated that the idea was feasible and had potential for profitability. Consequently, the product was manufactured, marketed, and launched, which led to its success. As a result, the production of Robust grew, and it became widely available. However, with time, the demand for the product decreased, leading to its obsolescence. Identify and explain the concept highlighted in the above case?

(MTP2, May 2023, 5 Marks)

The case highlights the concept of **Product Life Cycle (PLC)**, which outlines the various stages a product goes through, including introduction, growth, maturity and decline. Successful business must adapt their strategies to each stage to remain profitable.

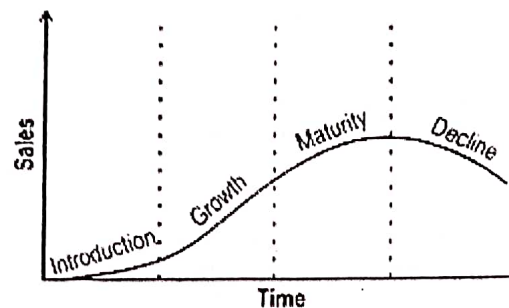
Product Life Cycle is an important concept in **strategic choice** and **S-shaped curve** which exhibits the **relationship of sales with respect of time** for a product that passes through the four successive stages of introduction (slow sales growth), growth (rapid market acceptance), maturity (slowdown in growth rate) and decline (sharp downward drift). If businesses are substituted for product, the concept of PLC could work just as well.

The first stage of PLC is the **introduction stage** in which competition is almost negligible, **prices** are relatively **high** and **markets** are **limited**. The growth in sales is at a lower rate because of lack of knowledge on the part of customers.

The second stage of PLC is the **growth stage**, in which the demand expands rapidly, **prices fall**, competition increases and market expands. The customer has knowledge about the product and shows interest in purchasing it.

The third stage of PLC is the **maturity stage**, where in the **competition gets tough** and **market gets stabilized**. Profit comes down because of stiff competition. At this stage organisations may work for maintaining stability.

The fourth stage is the **declining stage** of PLC, in which the **sales and profits fall** down sharply due to some new product replaces the existing product. So, a combination of strategies can be implemented to stay in the market either by diversification or retrenchment.



Product Life Cycle

Significance of PLC

PLC can be used to **diagnose a portfolio of products** (or businesses) in order to establish the stage at which each of them exists. Particular attention is to be paid on the businesses that are in the declining stage. Depending on the diagnosis, appropriate **strategic choice** can be made.

For instance, **expansion** may be a feasible alternative for businesses in the introductory and growth stages. Mature businesses may be used as sources of cash for investment in other businesses which need resources.

A combination of strategies like **selective harvesting**, **retrenchment**, etc. may be adopted for declining businesses. In this way, a balanced portfolio of businesses may be built up by exercising a strategic choice based on the PLC concept.

Q4. Explain briefly the primary activities that are grouped into five main activities under Value chain analysis.
(MTP2, May 2023, 5 Marks)

The primary activities of the organization are grouped into five main areas: inbound logistics, operations, outbound logistics, marketing and sales, and service.

- **Inbound logistics** are the activities concerned with **receiving, storing and distributing** the inputs to the product/ service. This includes materials handling, stock control, transport etc.
- **Operations** transform these **inputs into the final product** or service: machining, packaging, assembly, testing, etc.
- **Outbound logistics** **collect, store and distribute** the **product to customers**. For tangible products this would be warehousing, materials handling, transport, etc. In the case of services, it may be more concerned with arrangements for bringing customers to the service, if it is a fixed location (e.g., sports events).
- **Marketing and sales** provide the means whereby consumers/users are made **aware** of the product/ service and are able to purchase it. This would include sales administration, advertising, selling and so on. In public services, communication networks which help users' access a particular service are often important.
- **Service** are all those activities, which enhance or **maintain the value** of a **product/ service**, such as installation, repair, training and spares.

- Q5. A company has recently launched a new product in the market. Initially, it faced slow sales growth, limited markets, and high prices. However, over time, the demand for the product expanded rapidly, prices fell, and competition increased. Identify the stages of the product life cycle (PLC) that the company went through. (RTP, Nov 2023, NA)

The company went through the following stages of the product life cycle (PLC):

Introduction stage: Initially, the company faced slow sales growth, limited markets, and high prices, which are characteristic of the introduction stage. During this stage, competition is almost negligible, and customers have limited knowledge about the product.

Growth stage: Over time, the demand for the product expanded rapidly, prices fell, and competition increased. These are typical features of the growth stage in the PLC. In this stage, the product gains market acceptance, and customers become more aware of the product's benefits and show interest in purchasing it.

Porter's five forces model

- Q6. Baby Turtle is a children's clothing brand that has been created a new age demand for washable diapers. The major benefit for the brand has been that not many companies have shown interest in the product, thinking it is not viable, however customers majorly working mothers are loving their product. The core material needed for production is also used in many other water proofing products in various industries. Baby Turtle sources this material from a renowned supplier at comparatively low prices. Which of the five forces of competitive pressure would Baby Turtle experience due to above setup and what are major factors that create such pressure for a product? Do you think Baby Turtle has an advantage in some way to fight off this pressure? (ICAI Study Material)

Baby Turtle would experience, **Bargaining Power of Suppliers**, as a competitive pressure for their washable diaper product. This is because the core material for production is sourced from a single supplier, who is renowned and in a position to create pressure in terms of prices.

Further, other factors that lead to such pressure are:

1. Their products are **crucial** to the buyer and substitutes to the material required for production are not available.
2. Suppliers can **manipulate switching cost** as the brand is in inception stage and making margins are important.

An advantage that Baby Turtle has is even though the material required has **no substitutes** but it used to make many other products and thus there are many other suppliers who can provide that material. It might affect operations in short term but will help to fight off the pressure created by existing supplier.

- Q7. What are the common barriers that are faced by new entrants when an existing firm earns higher profits? (RTP, May 2018, NA) (RTP, May 2023, NA)

OR

Rahul Sharma is Managing Director of a company which is manufacturing trucks. He is worried about the entry of new businesses. What kind of barriers will help Rahul against such a threat? (RTP, May 2019, NA) (ICAI Study Mat)

A firm's profitability tends to be higher when other firms are blocked from entering the industry. New entrants can reduce industry profitability because they add new production capacity leading to increase supply of the product even at a lower price and can substantially erode existing firm's market share. Barriers to entry represent economic forces (or 'hurdles') that slow down or impede entry by other firms. Common barriers to entry include:

- Capital requirements:** When a large amount of capital is required to enter an industry, firms lacking funds are effectively barred from the industry, thus enhancing the profitability of existing firms in the industry.
- Economies of scale:** Many industries are characterized by economic activities driven by economies of scale. Economies of scale refer to the **decline** in the per-unit cost of production (or other activity) as volume grows. A large firm that enjoys economies of scale can produce **high volumes** of goods at successively **lower costs**. This tends to discourage new entrants.
- Product differentiation:** Production differentiation refers to the physical or perceptual differences, or enhancements, that make a product special or **unique** in the eyes of customers. Firms in the personal care products and cosmetics industries actively engage in product differentiation to enhance their products' features. Differentiation works to reinforce entry barriers because the cost of creating genuine product differences may be too high for the new entrants.
- Switching costs:** To succeed in an industry, new entrant must be able to persuade existing customers of other companies to switch to its products. To make a switch, buyers may need to test a new firm's product, negotiate new

- purchase contracts, and train personnel to use the equipment, or modify facilities for product use. Buyers often incur substantial financial (and psychological) costs in switching between firms. When such switching costs are high, buyers are often **reluctant** to change.
- v) **Brand identity:** The brand identity of products or services offered by existing firms can serve as another entry barrier. Brand identity is particularly important for **infrequently** purchased products that carry a high unit cost to the buyer. New entrants often encounter significant difficulties in building up the brand identity, because to do so they must commit substantial resources over a long period.
- vi) **Access to distribution channels:** The unavailability of distribution channels for new entrants poses another significant entry barrier. Despite the growing power of the internet, many firms may continue to rely on their control of physical distribution channels to sustain a barrier to entry to rivals. Often, existing firms have significant influence over the distribution channels and can retard or impede their use by new firms.
- vii) **Possibility of aggressive retaliation:** Sometimes the mere threat of aggressive retaliation by incumbents can deter entry by other firms into an existing industry. For example, introduction of products by a new firm may lead existing firms to reduce their product prices and increase their advertising budgets.

Q8

Explain Porter's five forces model as to how businesses can deal with the competition.

(MTP2, May 2018, 6 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (MTP2, Nov 2018, 6 Marks) (MTP1, May 2019, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

Competitive pressures operate as a composite in five areas of the overall market. Elaborate.
(RTP, May 2021, NA)

Competition makes organizations work harder, however, it is neither a coincidence nor bad luck. All organizations have competition and its benefit are enjoyed by the markets. The customers are able to get better products at lower costs. They get better value for their money because of competition.

To gain a deep understanding of a company's industry and competitive environment, managers do not need to gather all the information they can find and waste a lot of time digesting it. Rather, the task is much more focused. A powerful and widely used tool for systematically diagnosing the significant competitive pressures in a market and assessing the strength and importance of each is the Porter's five-forces model of competition. This model holds that the state of competition in an industry is a **composite of competitive pressures** operating in five areas of the overall market:

- Competitive pressures associated with the **market manoeuvring** and jockeying for buyer patronage that goes on among rival sellers in the industry.
- Competitive pressures associated with the **threat of new entrants** into the market.
- Competitive pressures coming from the attempts of companies in other industries to win buyers over to their own substitute products.
- Competitive pressures stemming from **supplier bargaining power** and **supplier-seller collaboration**.
- Competitive pressures stemming from **buyer bargaining power** and **seller-buyer Collaboration**.

Q9.

Explain briefly the competitive forces in any industry as identified by Michael Porter.

(SA, May 2018, 5 Marks)

OR

What are the five competitive forces in an industry as identified by Michael Porter?

(RTP, May 2022, NA)

Five forces model of Michael Porter is a popular tool for systematically diagnosing the significant competitive pressures in the market and assessing their strength and importance. The model holds that the state of competition in an industry is a composite of competitive pressures operating in five forces as follows:

1. **Threat of new entrants:** New entrants place a limit on prices and affect the **profitability** of existing players. The new capacity and product range the new entrants bring increases competitive pressure. bigger the new entrant, the more severe the competitive effect.
2. **Bargaining power of customers:** The bargaining power of the buyers influences not only the prices that the producer can charge but also influence **costs** and **investments** of the producer. This force will become heavier depending on the possibilities of the buyers forming groups or cartels, particularly in case of industrial products.
3. **Bargaining power of suppliers:** Often suppliers can exercise considerable bargaining power. If the suppliers are also limited in number they stand a still better chance to exhibit their bargaining power. The bargaining power of suppliers determines the **cost of raw materials** and other inputs of the industry and, therefore, can affect industry attractiveness and profitability.

4. **Rivalry among current players:** The rivalry among existing players is quite obvious. This is what is normally understood as competition. The impact is evident more at **functional level** in the prices being charged, advertising, and pressures on costs, product and so on.
5. **Threats from substitutes:** Substitute products are a latent source of competition in an industry. Substitute products offering a **price advantage** and/or performance improvement to the consumer can have significant impact.

The five forces together determine industry attractiveness/profitability. This is so because these forces influence the causes that underlie industry attractiveness/ profitability.

Q10. Buyers can exert considerable pressure on business. Do you agree? Discuss.
(RTP, Nov 2019, NA)

OR

Buyers of an industry's products or services can sometimes exert considerable pressure on the company. In the light of the five forces as propagated by Michael Porter explain this force. Also state as to when this leverage is evident.
(SA, May 2023, 5 Marks)

Bargaining Power of Buyers: This is another force that influences the competitive condition of an industry. This force becomes heavier depending on the possibility of buyers forming groups or cartels. Mostly, this is a phenomenon seen in industrial products. Quite often, users of industrial products come together formally or even informally and exert pressure on the producer. The bargaining power of the buyers influences not only the prices that the producer can charge but also influences costs and investments of the producer. This is because powerful buyers usually bargain for better services which involves more investment on the part of the producer.

Buyers of an industry's products or services can exert considerable pressure on existing firms to secure lower prices or better services. This is evident in situations where buyers enjoy superior position than the seller of product. This leverage is particularly evident when:

- Buyers have **full knowledge** of the sources of products and their substitutes.
- They spend a lot of money on the industry's products, i.e., they are **big buyers**.
- The industry's product is not perceived as critical to the buyer's needs and buyers are **more concentrated** than firms supplying the product. They can easily switch to the substitutes available.

Q11. Discuss in what conditions rivalry among competitors tends to be cut-throat and profitability of the industry goes down.
(SA, Nov 2019, 5 Marks)

OR

What are the factors which determine the nature of rivalry in an industry?
(SA, Nov 2021, 5 Marks)

The intensity of rivalry in an industry is a significant determinant of industry attractiveness and profitability. The intensity of rivalry can influence the costs of suppliers, distribution, and of attracting customers and thus directly affect the profitability. The more intensive the rivalry, the less attractive is the industry. Rivalry among competitors tends to be cutthroat and industry profitability low when

- An industry has **no clear leader**. Therefore, continuous war for leadership.
- Competitors in the industry are **numerous**.
- Competitors operate with **high fixed costs**. Thus, aiming for better Return on Investment with more fierce tactics.
- Competitors face **high exit barriers**, and therefore, continue to fight for market share.
- Competitors have **little opportunity** to differentiate their offerings.
- The industry faces slow or **diminished growth**.

Q12. Eco-carry bags Ltd., a recyclable plastic bags manufacturing and trading company has seen a potential in the ever-growing awareness around hazards of plastics and the positive outlook of the society towards recycling and reusing plastics. A major concern for Eco-carry bags Ltd. are paper bags and old cloth bags. Even though they are costlier than recyclable plastic bags, irrespective, they are being welcomed positively by the consumers. Identify and explain that competition from paper bags and old cloth bags fall under which category of Porter's Five Forces Model for Competitive Analysis?
(RTP, May 2020, NA) (ICAI Study Material)

Eco-carry bags Ltd. faces competition from paper bags and old cloth bags and falls under **Threat of Substitutes** force categories in Porter's Five Forces Model for Competitive Analysis. Paper and cloth bags are substitutes of recyclable plastic bags as they perform the same function as plastic bags. Substitute products are a latent source of competition in an industry. In many cases, they become a major constituent of competition. Substitute products offering a **price advantage** and/or **performance improvement** to the consumer can drastically alter the competitive character of an industry.

- Q13. There are many companies in the market offering COVID vaccine. Analyse the product in terms of threat of new entrants (SA, May 2021, 5 Marks)

There are three companies offering a vaccine for COVID-19 in India and a fourth company is awaiting approval from authorities.

This product involves **huge capital requirements** and hence not every existing pharma company is likely to get into the competition. However, once approved for use, the entire world is the target market. This would lead to **economies of scale** helping the company to recover the investments made. The **product differentiation** is in terms of the low after effect of the vaccine and the effectiveness of the vaccine in controlling COVID-19. **Brand identity** is becoming very important with people preferring international brands compared to a home-grown company. Factors like **switching cost**, **access to distribution channels** and **possibility of aggressive retaliation** do not apply at present because governments across the world are controlling these factors and the vaccine has not entered the phase of free competition.

- Q14. Easy Access is a marketing services company providing consultancy to a range of business clients. Easy Access and its rivals have managed to persuade the Government to require all marketing services companies to complete a time-consuming and bureaucratic registration process and to comply with an industry code of conduct. Do you think that by doing this Easy Access and its rivals has an advantage in some way to fight off competitors? Explain. (RTP, Nov 2021, NA) (RTP, Nov 2023, NA)

Yes, Easy Access and its rivals get advantage by this move. The new bureaucratic process is making it more complicated for organizations to start up and enter in Easy Access market, increasing barriers to entry and thereby reducing the threat of new entrants. **New entrants can reduce an industry's profitability**, because they add new production capacity, leading to increase in supply of the product, sometimes even at a lower price and can substantially erode existing firm's market share position. However, New entrants are always a **powerful source of competition**. The new capacity and product range they bring in throws up a **new competitive pressure**. The bigger the new entrant, the more severe the competitive effect. New entrants also place a **limit on prices** and affect the **profitability of existing players**, which is known as **Price War**.

- Q15. "The bargaining power of suppliers determines an industry's attractiveness and profitability." Discuss. (SA, May 2022, 5 Marks)

Quite often, suppliers too, exercise considerable bargaining power over purchasing companies. The **more specialised** the offering from the supplier, greater may be its clout. Further, when the suppliers are **limited** in number, they may openly exhibit their bargaining power. The bargaining power of suppliers determines the cost of raw materials and other inputs of the industry, and therefore, an industry's attractiveness and profitability. Suppliers can influence the profitability of an industry in a number of ways. Suppliers can command bargaining power over a firm when;

- (i) Their products are **crucial** to the buyer and substitutes are not available.
- (ii) They can erect/ensure **high switching costs**.
- (iii) They are **more concentrated** than their buyers. Less suppliers, more buyers

- Q16. Rajiv Arya is owner of an electrical appliance company that specializes in manufacturing of domestic vacuum cleaners. There are four other manufacturers with similar products and sales volume. Current rival firms also own a number of patents related to the product. The supplier base for procurement of raw material is also very large as there are multiple suppliers. Identify Porter's Five Forces that may be classified as significant for the company? Explain (RTP, Nov 2022, NA) (MTP2, Nov 2023, 5 Marks)

The competitive rivalry will be a significant force in case of company of Rajiv Arya as all the rivals are **similar** in sizes and are manufacturing **similar products**. It is difficult for any single manufacturer to dominate the market. Large number of patents will make it difficult for new entrants to break into the market. Further, as there are a large number of small suppliers the power that suppliers can exert will also be low.

There is no information relating to substitutes and bargaining power of customers in the information given in scenario. However, a domestic vacuum cleaner will directly compete with other options such as house maids. Availability of house maids at low cost can significantly disturb the sales of products.

	<p>Further, as the products are similar customers can easily shift from one company to another. This will only enhance competitive rivalry.</p> <p>The competitive rivalry will be significant in Rajiv Arya's dealing industry as all rivals are similar in sizes and manufacture similar products, making it difficult for anyone manufacturer to dominates the market or gain market share. The large number of patents will make it hard for new entrants to break into the market, while the fact that Rajiv Arya buys from a large number of small suppliers suggests that supplier power is also low. Finally, there is no information relating to substitutes and bargaining power of customers in the information given in scenario.</p>
Q17.	<p>A startup company is thinking of launching of a low cost detergent powder in the market. The market of the said product is already dominated by a big FMCG player.</p> <p>You are advised to put forward your suggestions to the management of the company to deal with the problems of 'Entry Barrier' while launching the low cost detergent powder.</p> <p>(RTP, Nov 2022, NA)</p> <p>There are number of factors that can act as entry barrier for the start-up company. An FMCG, big in size, is already dominating the market space and will act as a strong deterrent for the new start-up. The following will be some suggestions to the management of the start-up to deal with the problem of entry barriers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The company is working on producing low cost detergent. Keeping other expenses also on the lower side the management can create price advantage that is competitive to the existing established players including the large FMCG. 2. The company focussing on single product in comparison to multiple products of an FMCG can develop competencies to produce and sell the low cost detergent that are difficult to deploy by the FMCG by its strategy that addresses needs of multiple products. 3. The start-up needs to have strong financial strength to sustain the onslaught from the dominant FMCG and other players. The start-up can identify sources of capital well in advance and be able to use it judiciously to their advantage. 4. The start-up should identify the customer segments that are likely to switch to the product well in advance so as to target the same and generate the initial hold on the market. Once the product gets some hold and their brands get some identity, the market can be further developed to address other customers. 5. The start-up should identify the environmental factors that go to their advantage. These may include special scheme of the government to encourage entrepreneurs, tax holiday, low interest rates, advantages available to small and medium sized enterprises alike. 6. It has to create an image in the market that its products are qualitative and 'Made in India' to attract a particular segment of customers. 7. They need to have a team of experts and dedicated management professionals who can implement strategies formulated by top management.
Q18.	<p>Pulkit was very confident about cloud kitchen business model, and he bought three real estate spaces in very hideous localities. Later due to government and court orders the cloud kitchens had to be only operated in a well-ventilated space, which made his investment redundant. What aspect of industry competition Pulkit currently faced as a result of this situation?</p> <p>(MTP2, May 2023, 5 Marks) (MTP2, Nov 2023, 5 Marks)</p> <p>Pulkit may be facing exit barriers due to his investment in the real estate spaces. Exit barriers are factors that make it difficult for a company to exit a particular market or industry. In this case, Pulkit's investment in the real estates paces may make it difficult for him to exit the cloud kitchen industry or switch to a different business model. If Pulkit is unable to find new spaces or make the necessary renovations, he may be forced to continue operating in the hideous localities, which may impact his brand image and customer experience. This can create an exit barrier for Pulkit as it may be difficult for him to turn to a different business model or exit the industry entirely.</p> <p>Additionally, Pulkit may have incurred significant sunk costs in the purchase and renovation of the real estate spaces, which can create a further exit barrier. Sunk costs refer to costs that have already been incurred and cannot be recovered. If Pulkit has invested a significant amount of money in the real estate spaces, he may be hesitant to exit the industry or switch to a different business model as it may mean that he has to write off the sunk costs.</p> <p>Therefore, Pulkit may be facing exit barriers due to his investment in the real estate spaces, which may make it difficult for him to adapt to the new requirements or exit the industry entirely.</p>

Experience Curve

- Q19. Explain the concept of the experience curve and highlight its relevance in strategic management.
(RTP, May 2018, NA) (MTP2, Nov 2018, 5 Marks) (MTP1, Nov 2020, 5 marks) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

Write a short note on relevance of experience curve.

(MTP2, May 2018, 4 Marks)

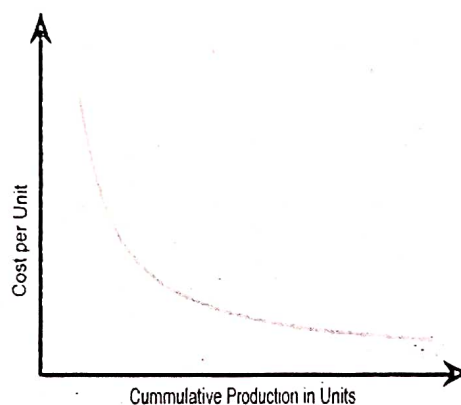
Experience curve is **similar to learning curve** which explains the **efficiency** gained by workers through **repetitive** productive work. Experience curve is based on the commonly observed phenomenon that **unit costs decline** as a firm accumulates experience in terms of a **cumulative volume of production**.

The implication is that **larger firms** in an industry would tend to have **lower unit costs** as compared to those of smaller organizations, thereby **gaining a competitive cost advantage**. Experience curve results from a variety of factors such as **learning effects, economies of scale, product redesign and technological improvements** in production.

Relevance in Strategic Management:

The concept of experience curve is relevant for a number of areas in strategic management. For instance, experience curve is considered a **barrier for new firms** contemplating entry in an industry. It is also used to **build market share and discourage competition**.

A typical experience curve may be depicted as follows:



Competitive Strategy

- Q20. Suresh Singhania is the owner of an agri-based private company in Sangrur, Punjab. His unit is producing puree, ketchups and sauces. While its products have significant market share in the northern part of country, the sales are on decline in last couple of years. He seeks help of a management expert who advises him to first understand the competitive landscape.

Explain the steps to be followed by Suresh Singhania to understand competitive landscape.

(RTP, May 2018, NA) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

Explain the steps to understand the competitive landscape?

(MTP2, May 2018, 5 Marks)

OR

Dinesh Yadav is the owner of a beverage-based private company in Sonapat, Haryana. His unit is producing fruit juices, cold drinks, soda and lime. While its products have significant market share in the northern part of country, the sales are on decline in last couple of years. He seeks help of a management expert who advises him to first understand the competitive landscape. Explain the steps to be followed by Dinesh Yadav to understand competitive landscape.

(MTP1, May 2019, 5 Marks)

OR

What do you understand by 'Competitive Landscape'? What are the steps to understand the competitive landscape?

(SA, May 2019, 5 Marks) (MTP1, Nov 2022, 5 Marks)

OR

"Understanding the competitive landscape is important to build upon a competitive advantage". Explain.

(SA, July 2021, 5 Marks)

Competitive landscape is a business analysis which identifies competitors, either direct or indirect. Competitive landscape is

about identifying and understanding the competitors and at the same time, it permits the comprehension of their vision, mission, core values, niche market, strengths and weaknesses.

An in depth investigation and analysis of a firm's competition allows it to assess the Competitor's strength and weaknesses in the marketplace and helps it to choose and implement effective strategies that will improve its competitive advantage.

Steps to understand the competitive landscape

- Identify the competitor:** The first step to understand the competitive landscape is to identify the competitors in the firm's industry and have actual data about their **respective market share**.
- Understand the competitors:** Once the competitors have been identified, the strategist can use market research report, internet, newspapers, social media, industry reports, and various other sources to **understand the products and services** offered by them in different markets.
- Determine the strengths of the competitors:** What are the strength of the competitors? What do they do well? Do they offer great products? Do they utilize marketing in a way that comparatively reaches out to more consumers. Why do customers give them their business?
- Determine the weaknesses of the competitors:** Weaknesses (and strengths) can be identified by going through consumer reports and reviews appearing in various media. After all, consumers are often willing to give their opinions, especially when the products or services are either great or very poor.
- Put all of the information together:** At this stage, the strategist should put together all information about competitors and draw inference about what they are not offering and what the firm can do to **fill in the gaps**. The strategist can also know the areas which need to be strengthened by the firm.

Q21. Define key success factors (KSFs).
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA)

An industry's key success factors (KSFs) are those things or strategic elements that affect industry members' **ability to prosper** in a market place. For a business organization within an industry, it may include, cost structure, technology, distribution system and so on. It is correct to state that the KSFs help to shape whether a company will be **financially and competitively successful**.

Q22. Examine the significance of KSFs (Key Success Factors) for competitive success.
(SA, Nov 2018, 3 Marks) (MTP1, May 2021, 5 Marks)

An industry's Key Success Factors (KSFs) are those things that most affect industry members' **ability to prosper** in the market place – the particular strategy elements, product attributes, resources, competencies, competitive capabilities and business outcomes that spell the difference between profit & loss and ultimately, between competitive success or failure. KSFs by their very nature are so important that all firms in the industry must pay close attention to them. They are the **prerequisites for industry success**, or, to put it in another way, KSFs are the rules that shape whether a company will be **financially and competitively successful**.

Part II: Correct/Incorrect Questions

Q1. Substitutes can also exert significant competitive pressures.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

The statement is correct.

According to Porter's five forces model, a final force that can influence industry profitability is the **availability of substitutes** for an industry's product. To predict profit pressure from this source, firms must search for **products that perform the same, or nearly the same, function as their existing products**.

Q2. Key success factors determine competitive success.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

The statement is correct.

The purpose of identifying Key Success Factors is to make **judgments** about things that are **more important** to competitive success and the things that are **less important**. To compile a list of every factor that **matters** even a little bit defeats the purpose of concentrating management attention on the factors truly critical to long-term competitive success.

Chapter 3 - Strategic Analysis : Internal Environment

Part I : Descriptive Questions

Analysing Industry and Markets - Strategic Group Mapping

Q1	<p>Mr. Banerjee is head of marketing department of a manufacturing company. His company is in direct competition with thirteen companies at national level. He wishes to study the market positions of rival companies by grouping them into like positions.</p> <p>Name the tool that may be used by Mr. Banerjee? Explain the procedure that may be used to implement the technique. (MTP1, May 2018, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>A manufacturing company is in direct competition with fifteen companies at national level. Head of marketing department of this company wishes to study the market position of rival companies by grouping them into like positions. Name the tool that may be used by him/her. Explain the procedure that may be used to implement the techniques. (SA, July 2021, 5 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>What is a Strategic Group? Discuss the procedure for constructing a strategic group map. (RTP, May 2019, NA) (MTP2, May 2021, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2022, 5 Marks)</p>
	<p>A tool to identify the market positions of rival companies by grouping them into like positions is <u>Strategic Group Mapping</u>. A strategic group consists of those rival firms which have <u>similar competitive approaches</u> and positions in the market.</p> <p>The procedure for constructing a strategic group map and deciding which firms belong in which strategic group are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the competitive characteristics that <u>differentiate</u> firms in the industry typical variables that are <u>price/quality range</u> (high, medium, low); <u>geographic coverage</u> (local, regional, national, global); <u>degree of vertical integration</u> (none, partial, full); <u>product-line breadth</u> (wide, narrow); <u>use of distribution channels</u> (one, some, all); and <u>degree of service offered</u> (no-frills, limited, full). 2. Plot the firms on a two-variable map using pairs of these differentiating characteristics. 3. Assign firms that fall in about the same strategy space to the <u>same strategic group</u>. 4. Draw circles around each strategic group making the circles <u>proportional to the size of the group's respective share of total industry sales revenues</u>.

Product/ Services

Q2.	<p>What are the objectives that must be kept in mind while designing a pricing strategy of a new product? (RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (MTP1, Nov 2021, 5 Marks) (RTP, May 2023, NA)</p> <p>For a new product pricing strategies for entering a market needs to be designed. In pricing a really new product at least three objectives must be kept in mind.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Making the product <u>acceptable</u> to the customers. ii) Producing a <u>reasonable margin</u> over cost. iii) Achieving a market that helps in developing <u>market share</u>.
Q3.	<p>Distinguish between social marketing and service marketing. (SA, May 2018, 5 Marks) (MTP1, Nov 2022, 5 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2023, NA)</p> <p>Social marketing and service marketing are marketing strategies primarily with different orientations.</p> <p>Social Marketing refers to the <u>design, implementation, and control</u> of programs seeking to increase the <u>acceptability of a social ideas, cause, or practice</u> among a target group. For instance, the publicity campaign for prohibition of smoking or encouraging girl child, etc.</p>

	On the other hand, service marketing is applying the concepts, tools, and techniques, of marketing to services . Service is any activity or benefit that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and non-perishing . These may be from business to consumer and from business to business .
Q4.	Define Augmented Marketing. Give two examples. (SA, Nov 2018, 2 Marks)
	Augmented Marketing is provision of additional customer services and benefits built around the core and actual products that relate to introduction of hi-tech services like movies on demand, online computer repair services, etc. Such innovative offerings provide a set of benefits that promise to elevate customer service to unprecedented levels.

Core competence

Q5.	Explain the meaning of core competencies. (SA, May 2018, 2 Marks)
	A core competence is a unique strength of an organization which may not be shared by others. It is defined as a combination of skills and techniques rather than individual skill or separate technique. Core competencies are those capabilities that are critical to a business achieving competitive advantage. In order to qualify as a core competence, the competency should differentiate the business from any other similar businesses.
Q6.	<p>'Value for Money' is a leading retail chain, on account of its ability to operate its business at low costs. The retail chain aims to further strengthen its top position in the retail industry. Marshal, the CEO of the retail chain is of the view that to achieve the goals they should focus on lowering the costs of procurement of products. Highlight and explain the core competence of the 'Value for Money' retail chain. (RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>'Speed' is a leading retail chain, on account of its ability to operate its business at low costs. The retail chain aims to further strengthen its top position in the retail industry. The Chief executive of the retail chain is of the view that to achieve the goals they should focus on lowering the costs of procurement of products. Highlight and explain the core competence of the retail chain. (MTP2, May 2019, 5 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2020, NA)</p> <p>A core competence is a unique strength of an organization which may not be shared by others. It is defined as a combination of skills and techniques rather than individual skill or separate technique. Core competencies are those capabilities that are critical to a business achieving competitive advantage. In order to qualify as a core competence, the competency should differentiate the business from any other similar businesses. A core competency for a firm is whatever it does is highly beneficial to the organisation.</p> <p>'Value for Money' is the leader on account of its ability to keep costs low. The cost advantage that 'Value for Money' has created for itself has allowed the retailer to price goods lower than competitors. The core competency in this case is derived from the company's ability to <u>generate large sales volume, allowing the company to remain profitable with low profit margin.</u></p>
Q7.	<p>Rohit Patel is having a small chemist shop in the central part of Ahmedabad. What kind of competencies Rohit can build to gain competitive advantage over online medicine sellers? (RTP, May 2019, NA) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p>Capabilities that are valuable, rare, costly to imitate, and non-substitutable are core competencies. A small chemist shop has a local presence and functions within a limited geographical area. Still it can build its own competencies to gain competitive advantage.</p> <p>Rohit Patel can build competencies in the areas of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Developing personal and cordial relations with the customers. ✓ Providing home delivery with no additional cost. Developing a system of speedy delivery that can be difficult to match by online sellers. Being in central part of city, he can create a network to supply at wider locations in the city. Having extended working hours for convenience of buyers. Providing easy credit or a system of monthly payments to the patients consuming regular medicines.

Q8. Major core competencies are identified in three areas - competitor differentiation, customer value and application to other markets. Discuss.

(RTP, Nov 2019, NA)

OR

Core competencies provide an edge to a business over its competitors.

(RTP, Nov 2021, NA)

OR

Core competencies provide an edge to a business over its competitors. Discuss. Also, briefly state the three areas in which major core competencies are identified.

(SA, Jan 2021, 5 Marks)

A core competence is a **unique strength** of an organization which may not be shared by others. Core competencies are those capabilities that are critical to a business achieving competitive advantage. In order to qualify as a core competence, the competency should **differentiate** the business from any other similar businesses. An organization's combination of technological and managerial know-how, wisdom and experience are a complex set of capabilities and resources that can lead to a competitive advantage compared to a competitor.

According to C.K. Prahalad and Gary Hamel, major core competencies are identified in following three areas:

1. **Competitor differentiation:** The Company can consider having a core competence if the competence is **unique** and it is **difficult for competitors to imitate**. This can provide a company an **edge** compared to competitors. It allows the company to provide better products and services to market with no fear that competitors can copy it.

2. **Customer value:** When purchasing a product or service it has to deliver a **fundamental benefit** for the end customer in order to be a core competence. It will include all the **skills** needed to provide fundamental benefits. The service or the product has to have **real impact** on the customer as the **reason to choose** to purchase them. If customer has chosen the company without this impact, then Competence is not a core competence and it will not affect the company's position.

3. **Application of competencies to other markets:** Core competence **must be applicable** to the **whole organisation**; it **cannot be only one particular skill or specified area of expertise**. Therefore, although some special capability would be essential or crucial for the success of business activity, it will not be considered as Core competence if it is not fundamental from the whole organization's point of view.

Thus, a core competence is a **unique set of skills and expertise**, which will be used **throughout the organisation to open up potential markets to be exploited**.

Q9. Capabilities that are valuable, rare, costly to imitate, and non-substitutable are core competencies. Explain these four specific criteria of sustainable competitive advantage that firms can use to determine those capabilities that are core competencies.

(RTP, May 2020, NA)

OR

There are four specific criteria of sustainable competitive advantage that firms can use to determine those capabilities that are known as core competencies. Explain.

(SA, May 2022, 5 Marks)

Four specific criteria of sustainable competitive advantage that firms can use to determine those capabilities that are core competencies. Capabilities that are valuable, rare, costly to imitate, and non-substitutable are core competencies.

- i) **Valuable:** Valuable capabilities are the ones that allow the firm to **exploit opportunities** or **avert the threats** in its external environment. A firm created value for customers by effectively using capabilities to exploit opportunities. Finance companies build a valuable competence in financial services. In addition, to make such competencies as financial services highly successful require placing the right people in the right jobs. Human capital is important in creating value for customers.
- ii) **Rare:** Core competencies are very rare capabilities and very few of the competitors possess this. Capabilities possessed by many rivals are unlikely to be sources of competitive advantage for any one of them. Competitive advantage results only when firms develop and exploit valuable capabilities that differ from those shared with competitors.
- iii) **Costly to imitate:** Costly to imitate means such capabilities that competing firms are **unable to develop easily**. For example: Intel has enjoyed a first-mover advantage more than once because of its rare fast R&D cycle time capability that brought SRAM and DRAM integrated circuit technology, and brought microprocessors to market well ahead of the competitor. The product could be imitated in due course of time, but it was much more difficult to imitate the R&D

- cycle time capability
- iv) **Non-substitutable:** Capabilities that do not have strategic equivalents are called non-substitutable capabilities. This final criterion for a capability to be a source of competitive advantage is that there must be no strategically equivalent valuable resources that are themselves either not rare or imitable.

Competitive advantage

- Q10. Explain competitive advantage.
(MTP1, May 2018, 2 Marks) (SA, May 2018, 2 Marks) (MTP2, Nov 2018, 3 Marks) (MTP1, May 2020, 5 Marks)

Competitive advantage is the position of a firm to maintain and sustain a **favorable market position** when compared to the competitors. Competitive advantage is ability to offer buyers **something different** and thereby providing more value for the money. It is the result of a **successful strategy**. This position gets translated into **higher market share, higher profits** when compared to those that are obtained by competitors operating in the same industry. Competitive advantage may also be in the form of **low cost relationship** in the industry or being **unique** in the industry along dimensions that are widely valued by the customers in particular and the society at large.

- Q11. Telecom industry is growing at a rapid speed in India. There is a cut throat competition among the service providers in the industry. Identify the capabilities that will best serve as a source of competitive advantage for a firm over its rivals?
(MTP1, Nov 2019, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2022, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Mat)

Core competencies are **capabilities** that serve as a source of competitive advantage for a firm over its rivals. Core competency as the collective learning in the organization, especially **coordinating diverse production skills and integrating multiple streams of technologies**. An organization's combination of **technological and managerial know-how, wisdom and experience** are a complex set of capabilities and resources that can lead to a competitive advantage compared to a competitor.

- Q12. Mohan has joined as the new CEO of XYZ Corporation and aims to make it a dominant technology company in the next five years. He aims to develop competencies for managers for achieving better performance and a competitive advantage for XYZ Corporation. Mohan is well aware of the importance of resources and capabilities in generating competitive advantage. Discuss the four major characteristics of resources and capabilities required by XYZ Corporation to sustain the competitive advantage and its ability to earn profits from it.
(SA, Jan 2021, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

"The sustainability of competitive advantage and a firm's ability to earn profits from its competitive advantage depends on characteristics of resources and capabilities". Explain this statement.
(SA, May 2023, 5 Marks)

XYZ Corporation is aiming to transform into a dominant technology company under the leadership of Mohan, the new CEO. He aims to develop competencies for managers for achieving better performance and a competitive advantage for the corporation. Mohan is also well aware of the importance of resources and capabilities in generating and sustaining the competitive advantage. Therefore he must focus on characteristics of resources and capabilities of the corporation.

The sustainability of competitive advantage and a firm's ability to earn profits from it depends, to a great extent, upon four major characteristics of resources and capabilities which are as follows:

- Durability:** The period over which a competitive advantage is sustained depends in part on the rate at which a firm's **resources and capabilities deteriorate**. In industries where the rate of product innovation is fast, product patents are quite likely to become obsolete. Similarly, capabilities which are the result of the management expertise of the CEO are also vulnerable to his or her retirement or departure. On the other hand, many consumer brand names have a highly durable appeal.
- Transferability:** Even if the resources and capabilities on which a competitive advantage is based are durable, it is likely to be eroded by competition from rivals. The ability of rivals to attack position of competitive advantage relies on their gaining access to the necessary resources and capabilities. The easier it is to **transfer resources and capabilities between companies**, the less sustainable will be the competitive advantage which is based on them.
- Imitability:** If resources and capabilities cannot be purchased by a would-be imitator, then they must be built from scratch. How easily and quickly can the competitors build the resources and capabilities on which a firm's competitive advantage is based? This is the true test of imitability. Where capabilities require networks of organizational routines, whose effectiveness depends on the corporate culture, imitation is difficult.

- iv) **Appropriability:** Appropriability refers to the **ability** of the **firm's owners** to appropriate the **returns on its resource base**. Even where resources and capabilities are capable of offering sustainable advantage, there is an issue as to who receives the returns on these resources.

SWOT analysis

Q13.	<p>Rohit Sodhi runs a charitable organization for promotion of sports in the country. His organization conducts regular free training camps for youths interested in playing cricket, football, hockey, badminton and so on. Many of his trainees have reached national level contests. Rohit noticed that with success of IPL (Cricket) tournament there is an increasing trend to extend similar format in other sports as well. He wishes to know how the development is going help sports and to which industries it will offer opportunities and threats.</p> <p>(ICAI Study Material)</p>
	<p>With the success of IPL, league matches are taking place in other sports as well. These are held in a grandeur manner between several teams. For example, league matches in magnificent manner now take place in Football, Kabaddi and Hockey in India. These events are profit and entertainment driven. These are going to help sports in India by generating interest in sports, making them more popular, increasing quality of competition and bringing money into sports.</p> <p>A number of entities and processes are involved in these events from various industries offering opportunities and threats to them. An opportunity is a favourable condition in the organization's environment which enables it to strengthen its position. On the other hand, a threat is an unfavourable condition in the organization's environment which causes a risk for, or damage to, the organization's position. An opportunity is also a threat in case internal weaknesses do not allow organization to take their advantage in a manner rivals can. It will offer opportunity and threats to the following:</p> <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stadia. • Manufacturers of sports goods. • Media Industry – Sports channels / television, advertisers. • Hotel Industry linking events with their offerings. <p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entertainment industry engaged in TV serials, cinema theatres, Entertainment theme parks as competitors will be fighting for the same viewers/target customers. • Event Management organization engaged in non-sports events.
Q14.	<p>What is an opportunity? (RTP, May 2018, NA)</p>
	<p>An opportunity is a favourable condition in the organization's environment which enables it to consolidate and strengthen its position. An example of opportunity is growing demand for the products or services that are offered by the company</p>
Q15.	<p>Write a short note on SWOT analysis. (SA, May 2018, 3 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (RTP, May 2021, NA) (MTP1, Nov 2023, 5 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Why is it necessary to do a SWOT analysis before selecting a particular strategy for a business organization? (MTP1, Nov 2018, 5 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>What is the purpose of SWOT analysis? Why is it necessary to do a SWOT analysis before selecting a particular strategy for a business organisation? (RTP, May 2020, NA) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p>An important component of strategic thinking requires the generation of a series of strategic alternatives, or choices of future strategies to pursue, given the company's internal strengths and weaknesses and its external opportunities and threats. The comparison of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats is normally referred to as SWOT analysis.</p> <p>(a) Strength: Strength is an inherent capability of the organization which it can use to gain strategic advantage over its competitor.</p> <p>(b) Weakness: A weakness is an inherent limitation or constraint of the organisation which creates strategic disadvantage to it.</p> <p>(c) Opportunity: An opportunity is a favourable condition in the external environment which enables it to strengthen its position.</p>

(d) **Threat:** An unfavourable condition in the external environment which causes a risk for, or damage to the organisation's position.

SWOT analysis helps managers to craft a **business model** (or models) that will allow a company to gain a competitive advantage in its industry (or industries). Competitive advantage leads to increased profitability, and this maximizes a company's chances of surviving in the fast-changing, competitive environment. Key reasons for SWOT analyses are:

- It provides a **logical framework**
- It presents a **comparative account**.
- It guides the strategist in **strategy identification**

Q16. STU's Association with India goes back to 1967, when it played a key role in constructing a very long highway in India spreading over multiple states. Since then, it is contributing in many ways to the country's growth story. Now it is looking at playing an active role in the key projects taken up by the central government. Suggest a few opportunities and Threats that the company should consider.

(SA, Dec 2021, 5 Marks)

Faced with a constantly changing environment, each business unit needs to develop a marketing information system to track trends and developments, which can be categorized as an opportunity or a threat. The company has to review its strength and weakness in the background of environment's opportunities and threat, i.e., an organization's SWOT analysis.

STU is looking at playing an active role in the key projects taken up by the central government. Following are the potential opportunities and threats to STU:

Potential STU's Opportunities:

- Alliances or joint ventures with central government that expand the STU's market coverage or boost its competitive capability.
- Possibilities of working on the **future projects** of central government.
- Serving **additional customer groups** or expanding into new geographic markets.
- Utilizing **existing company skills** or technological know-how to enter new projects.
- Openings to take market share away from rivals.
- Openings to **exploit emerging new technologies**.
- **Integrating forward or backward**

Potential STU's Threats:

- Due to COVID-19 pandemic, companies can have face the lockdown situation.
- **Economic factors** such as recession etc.
- Likely entry of **potent new competitors**.
- **Technological changes/innovations** in construction equipment.
- **Costly new regulatory requirements**.
- **Growing bargaining power of suppliers**.
- **Vulnerability to industry driving forces**.

Michael Porter's Generic Strategies

Q17. Write a short note on Advantages of Cost leadership strategy.
(RTP, May 2018, NA) (MTP1, Nov 2018, 5 Marks)

A cost leadership strategy may help to remain profitable in the presence of rivalry, new entrants, suppliers' power, substitute products, and buyers' power.

- i) **Rivalry** – Competitors are likely to **avoid a price war**, since the low cost firm will continue to earn profits after competitors compete away their profits.
- ii) **Buyers** – Powerful buyers/customers would **not be able to exploit the cost leader firm** and will continue to buy its product.
- iii) **Suppliers** – Cost leaders are able to **absorb greater price increases** before it must raise price to customers.
- iv) **Entrants** – Low cost leaders create **barriers to market entry** through its continuous focus on efficiency and reducing costs.

	v) Substitutes – Low cost leaders are more likely to lower costs to induce customers to stay with their product, invest to develop substitutes, purchase patents.
Q18.	<p>Airlines industry in India is highly competitive with several players. Businesses face severe competition and aggressively market themselves with each other. Luxury Jet is a private Delhi based company with a fleet size of 9 small aircrafts with seating capacity ranging between 6 seats to 9 seats. These aircrafts are chartered by big business houses and high net worth individuals for their personalised use. With customised tourism packages their aircrafts are also often hired by foreigners. Identify and explain the Michael Porter's Generic Strategy followed by Luxury Jet. (RTP, May 2018, NA) (RTP, Nov 2020, NA) (RTP, Nov 2022, NA) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p>The Airlines industry faces stiff competition. However, Luxury Jet has attempted to create a niche market by adopting focused differentiation strategy. A focused differentiation strategy requires offering unique features that fulfil the demands of a narrow market.</p> <p>Luxury Jet compete in the market based on uniqueness and target a narrow market which provides business houses, high net worth individuals to maintain strict schedules. The option of charter flights provided several advantages including, flexibility, privacy, luxury and many a times cost saving. Apart from conveniences, the facility will provide time flexibility. Travelling by private jet is the most comfortable, safe and secure way of flying your company's senior business personnel.</p> <p>Chartered services in airlines can have both business and private use. Personalized tourism packages can be provided to those who can afford it.</p>
Q19.	<p>Distinguish between cost leadership and differentiation strategies. (MTP1, May 2018, 5 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (MTP1, May 2020, 5 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2020, NA) (MTP1, Nov 2020, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Mat)</p> <p>Cost leadership emphasizes producing standardized products at a very low per-unit cost for consumers who are price-sensitive. Differentiation is a strategy aimed at producing products and services considered unique industry wide and directed at consumers who are relatively price - insensitive.</p> <p>A primary reason for pursuing forward, backward, and horizontal integration strategies is to gain cost leadership benefits. But cost leadership generally must be pursued in conjunction with differentiation. Different strategies offer different degrees of differentiation. A differentiation strategy should be pursued only after a careful study of buyers' needs and preferences to determine the feasibility of incorporating one or more differentiating features into a unique product. A successful differentiation strategy allows a firm to charge a higher price for its product and to gain customer loyalty.</p>
Q20.	<p>Discuss differentiation strategy? How is it achieved? (MTP2, May 2018, 3 Marks) (SA, May 2019, 5 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>What do you mean by differentiation strategy? How is it achieved? (MTP1, Nov 2022, 5 Marks)</p> <p>Differentiation strategy is aimed at broad mass market and involves the creation of a product or service that is perceived by the customers as unique. The uniqueness can be associated with product design, brand image, features, technology, dealer network or customer service. Because of differentiation, the business can charge a premium for its product.</p> <p>Differentiation strategy should be pursued only after a careful study of buyers' needs and preferences to determine the feasibility of incorporating one or more differentiating features into a unique product that features the desired attributes.</p> <p>To achieve differentiation, following measures can be adopted by an organization:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer utility for the customers and match the products with their tastes and preferences. 2. Elevate the performance of the product. 3. Offer the promise of high quality product/service for buyer satisfaction. 4. Rapid product innovation. 5. Taking steps for enhancing image and its brand value. 6. Fixing product prices based on the unique features of the product and buying capacity of the customer.
21.	<p>Explain the meaning of cost leadership strategy. (RTP, Nov 2018, NA)</p> <p>A number of cost elements affect the relative attractiveness of generic strategies. A successful cost leadership strategy usually permeates the entire firm, as evidenced by high efficiency, low overhead cost, and waste reduction. The low cost</p>

	leadership should be such that no competitors are able to imitate so that it can result in sustainable competitive advantage to the cost leader firm.
Q22.	<p>Gennex is a company that designs, manufactures and sells computer hardware and software. Gennex is well known for its innovative products that has helped the company to have advantage over its competitors. It also spends on research and development and concerned with innovative softwares. Often the unique features of their product, that are not available with their competitors helps them to gain competitive advantage. Gennex using the strategy is consistently gaining its position in the industry over its competitors.</p> <p>Identify and explain the Porter's generic strategy which Gennex has opted to gain the competitive advantage. (RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (MTP2, May 2019, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p>According to Porter, strategies allow organizations to gain competitive advantage from three different bases: cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. Porter called these base generic strategies.</p> <p>Gennex has opted differentiation strategy. Its products are designed and produced to give the customer value and quality. They are unique and serve specific customer needs that are not met by other companies in the industry. Highly differentiated and unique hardware and software enables Gennex to charge premium prices for its products hence making higher profits and maintain its competitive position in the market.</p> <p>Differentiation strategy is aimed at broad mass market and involves the creation of a product or service that is perceived by the customers as unique. The uniqueness can be associated with product design, brand image, features, technology, dealer network or customer service.</p>
Q23.	<p>Sohan and Ramesh are two friends who are partners in their business of making biscuits. Sohan believe in making profits through selling more volume of products. Hence, he believes in charging lesser price to the customers. Ramesh, however of the opinion that higher price should be charged to create an image of exclusivity and for this, he proposes that the product to undergo some change.</p> <p>Analyse the nature of generic strategy used by Sohan and Ramesh. (SA, Nov 2018, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p>Considering the generic strategies of Porter there are three different bases: cost leadership, differentiation and focus. Sohan and Ramesh are contemplating pricing for their product.</p> <p>Sohan is trying to have a low price and high volume are thereby trying for cost leadership. Cost leadership emphasizes producing standardised products at a very low per unit cost for consumers who are price sensitive.</p> <p>Ramesh desires to create perceived value for the product and charge higher prices. He is trying to adopt differentiation. Differentiation is aimed at producing products and services considered unique industry wide and directed at consumers who are relatively price insensitive.</p>
Q24.	<p>What do you understand by cost leadership? How is it achieved? (RTP, May 2019, NA)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Write a short note on the concept of cost leadership strategy and how to achieve it. (SA, Nov 2019, 5 Marks) (RTP, May 2021, NA)</p> <p>Cost leadership is a low cost competitive strategy that aims at broad mass market. It requires vigorous pursuit of cost reduction in the areas of procurement, production, storage and distribution of product or service and also economies in overhead costs. Because of its lower costs, the cost leader is able to charge a lower price for its products than its competitors and still make satisfactory profits. A primary reason for pursuing forward, backward, and horizontal integration strategies is to gain cost leadership benefits.</p> <p>A successful cost leadership strategy usually permeates the entire firm, as evidenced by high efficiency, low overhead, limited perks, intolerance of waste, intensive screening of budget requests, <u>wide spans of control</u>, rewards linked to cost containment, and broad employee participation in cost control efforts. Some risks of pursuing cost leadership are that competitors may imitate the strategy.</p> <p>To achieve cost leadership, following are the actions that could be taken:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Forecast the demand of a product or service promptly. Optimum utilization of the resources to get cost advantages. Achieving economies of scale leads to lower per unit cost of product/service. Standardisation of products for mass production to yield lower cost per unit. Invest in cost saving technologies and try using advance technology for smart working. Resistance to differentiation till it becomes essential. <p style="color: red; position: absolute; left: 60px; top: 850px; transform: rotate(-90deg);">For Enc</p> <p style="color: red; position: absolute; left: 670px; top: 810px;">WHIRL → limited perks, intolerance of waste</p>

Q25.	<p>Infant care is a successful store chain that caters products for expectant mothers and new moms. They offer everything from nursing classes to strollers, toys, infant clothes, diapers and baby furniture. Due to a one-stop shop for infants, they are charging a premium for its products. Identify and explain how the strategy adopted by infant care.</p> <p>(MTP1, May 2019, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)</p>
	<p>Infant care is opting for differentiation strategy. A one-stop shop is a benefit for this type of customers, seeking convenience in a time. Infant care is catering the products only related to infants that is perceived by the customers as unique. Because of differentiation, the Infant care is charging a premium for its product.</p>
Q26.	<p>A century-old footwear company "Mota Shoes" had an image of being the footwear choice for formal occasions. In an attempt to reinvent its brand, it tied up with a foreign footwear giant "Buffrine" to manufacture and sell its HideseeK brand in the country. Putting its best foot forward, it launched extra soft, casual and relaxed footwear for young. Aiming at a brand and image makeover the "Mota Shoes" decided to price the Hide Seek products at premium. What kind of Michael Porter business level strategy is being used by "Mota Shoe company"? State its advantages.</p> <p>(RTP, Nov 2019, NA) (ICAI Study Material)</p>
	<p>Mota shoes is trying to use differentiation. This strategy is aimed at broad mass market and involves the creation of a product or service that is perceived by the customers as unique. The uniqueness can be associated with product design, brand image, features, technology, dealer network or customer service. Because of differentiation, the business can charge a premium for its product.</p> <p>A differentiation strategy has definite advantages as it may help to remain profitable even with rivalry, new entrants, suppliers' power, substitute products, and buyers' power.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Rivalry: Brand loyalty acts as a safeguard against competitors. It means that customers will be less sensitive to price increases, as long as the firm can satisfy the needs of its customers. ii) Buyers: They do not negotiate for price as they get special features and also they have fewer options in the market. iii) Suppliers: Because differentiators charge a premium price, they can afford to absorb higher costs of supplies and customers are willing to pay extra too. iv) New entrants: Innovative features are expensive to copy. So, new entrants generally avoid these features because it is tough for them to provide the same product with special features at a comparable price. v) Substitutes: Substitute products can't replace differentiated products which have high brand value and enjoy customer loyalty.
Q27.	<p>'Coffee Beans' is a coffeehouse chain that operates across the globe in different countries. 'Coffee Beans' has adopted a strategy to build business by establishing product uniqueness or qualities and gain competitive advantage based on features of its offerings in coffee business. Which type of strategy 'Coffee Beans' has adopted?</p> <p>(MTP1, Nov 2019, 5 Marks)</p>
	<p>Coffee Beans is opting for differentiation strategy. This strategy is aimed at broad mass market and involves the creation of a product or service that is perceived by the customers as unique. The uniqueness can be associated with product design, brand image, features, technology, dealer network or customer service. Because of differentiation, Coffee Beans can charge a premium for its product.</p>
Q28.	<p>A differentiation strategy may help to remain profitable even with rivalry, new entrants, suppliers' power, substitute products, and buyers' power. Explain.</p> <p>(RTP, May 2020, NA)</p>
	<p>A differentiation strategy may help to remain profitable even with: rivalry, new entrants, suppliers' power, substitute products, and buyers' power.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rivalry - Brand loyalty acts as a safeguard against competitors. It means that customers will be less sensitive to price increases, as long as the firm can satisfy the needs of its customers. 2. Buyers - They do not negotiate for price as they get special features and also they have fewer options in the market. 3. Suppliers - Because differentiators charge a premium price, they can afford to absorb higher costs of supplies and customers are willing to pay extra too. 4. Entrants - Innovative features are an expensive offer. So, new entrants generally avoid these features because it is tough for them to provide the same product with special features at a comparable price. 5. Substitutes - Substitute products can't replace differentiated products which have high brand value and enjoy customer loyalty.

- Q29. ABC Ltd. is a beverage manufacturing company. It chiefly manufactures soft drinks. The products are priced on the lower side which has made the company a leader in the business. Currently it is holding 35 percent market share. The R & D of company developed a formula for manufacturing sugar free beverages. On successful trial and approval by the competent authorities, company was granted to manufacture sugar free beverages. This company is the pioneer to launch sugar free beverages which are sold at a relatively higher price. This new product has been accepted widely by a class of customers. These products have proved profitable for the company. Identify the strategy employed by the company ABC Ltd. and mention what measures could be adopted by the company to achieve the employed strategy.
(SA, Nov 2020, 5 Marks)

According to Porter, strategies allow organizations to gain competitive advantage from three different bases: cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. Porter called these base generic strategies.

ABC Ltd. has opted **Differentiation Strategy**. The company has invested huge amount in R & D and developed a formula for manufacturing sugar free beverages to give the customer value and quality. They are pioneer and serve specific customer needs that are not met by other companies in the industry. The new product has been accepted by a class of customers. Differentiated and **unique** sugar free beverages enable ABC Ltd. to charge relatively **higher price** for its products hence making higher profits and maintain its competitive position in the market.

Sugar free beverage of ABC Ltd. is being accepted widely by a class of customers. Differentiation strategy is aimed at **broad mass market** and involves the creation of a product or service that is perceived by the customers as unique. The uniqueness can be associated with product design, brand image, features, technology, and dealer network or customer service.

Achieving Differentiation Strategy

To achieve differentiation, following strategies are generally adopted by an organization:

1. Offer **utility** to the customers and match products with their tastes and preferences.
2. **Elevate/Improve performance** of the product.
3. Offer the **high-quality** product/service for buyer satisfaction.
4. Rapid **product innovation** to keep up with dynamic environment.
5. Taking steps for enhancing **brand image** and brand value.
6. Fixing product prices based on the **unique** features of product and buying capacity of the customer.

- Q30. Spacetek Pvt. Ltd. is an IT company. Although there is cut throat competition in the IT sector, Spacetek deals with distinctive niche clients and is generating high efficiencies for serving such niche market. Other rival firms are not attempting to specialize in the same target market. Identify the strategy adopted by Spacetek Pvt. Ltd. and also explain the advantages and disadvantages of that strategy.
(SA, Jan 2021, 5 Marks) (MTP1, Nov 2021, 5 Marks)

Spacetek Pvt. Ltd. company has adopted **Focus strategy** which is one of the Michael Porter's Generic strategies. Focus strategies are most effective when consumers have **distinctive preferences** or **requirements** and when rival firms are not attempting to **specialize in the same target segment**. An organization using a focus strategy may concentrate on a **particular group of customers**, geographic markets, or on **particular product-line segments** in order to serve a **well-defined but narrow market** better than competitors who serve a broader market.

Advantages of Focus Strategy

1. **Premium prices** can be charged by the organizations for their focused product/services.
2. Due to the **tremendous expertise** about the goods and services that organizations following focus strategy offer, rivals and new entrants may find it **difficult to compete**.

Disadvantages of Focus Strategy

1. The firms **lacking in distinctive competencies** may not be able to pursue focus strategy.
2. Due to the **limited demand** of product/services, **costs are high** which can cause problems.
3. In the long run, the **niche could disappear** or be taken over by larger competitors by acquiring the same distinctive competencies.

- Q31. X-Olympus is a gaming software company specializing in developing games for ZBox and GameStation-4. The company is facing stiff competition due to saturation of market and price wars, which has excessively favor and highlight their dependence on gaming console manufacturers. Thereby, the company desires to establish a competitive advantage over industry rivals by enhancing the gaming experience by expanding into Edge-Cloud Gaming Service on a monthly subscription basis. This service offering does not require dedicated gaming consoles yet provide customers game streaming in 4K

	<p>resolution with an ample range of games to select from. This move is expected to insulate X-Olympus from price wars and provide a competitive advantage. Identify and explain the generic strategies adopted by X-Olympus? (MTP1, May 2021, 5 Marks)</p> <p>According to Porter, strategies allow organizations to gain competitive advantage from three different bases: cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. Porter called these base generic strategies.</p> <p>X-Olympus is facing cutthroat competition due to saturation of market and price wars as there is no clear leader out of the numerous competitors. For this, the strategy adopted by X-Olympus is Product Differentiation by introducing a unique product to cater the customer needs at a lesser cost which would insulate it from the fierce competition and never-ending price wars.</p>
Q32.	<p>Explain in brief the various basis of differentiation strategy. (RTP, Nov 2021, NA) (MTP1, May 2023, 5 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2023, NA)</p> <p>There are several basis of differentiation, major being: Product, Pricing and Organization.</p> <p>Product: Innovative products that meet customer needs can be an area where a company has an advantage over competitors. However, the pursuit of a new product offering can be costly research and development, as well as production and marketing costs can all add to the cost of production and distribution. The payoff, however, can be great as customer's flock to be among the first to have the new product.</p> <p>Pricing: It fluctuates based on its supply and demand and may also be influenced by the customer's ideal value for a product. Companies that differentiate based on product price can either determine to offer the lowest price or can attempt to establish superiority through higher prices.</p> <p>Organisation: Organisational differentiation is yet another form of differentiation. Maximizing the power of a brand or using the specific advantages that an organization possesses can be instrumental to a company's success. Location advantage, name recognition and customer loyalty can all provide additional ways for a company differentiate itself from the competition.</p>
Q33.	<p>BHAVNAV is a business which makes and sells laptop computers in France. In recent years it has been struggling to compete with its rivals and has seen a significant fall in its market share. BHAVNAV's managers identify that majority of its products launched by BHAVNAV's rivals were high specification, with good quality materials and many innovative design features. Products with inferior quality, such as those sold by BHAVNAV have not sold well in France. This information led BHAVNAV's management team to decide to select a new business strategy based on Porter's Generic Strategic Model. Identify and suggest the best business strategy BHAVNAV's management has to opt for? (MTP2, Nov 2021, 5 Marks)</p> <p>According to Porter, the three different business strategies are: cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. Porter called these base generic strategies.</p> <p>The information about competitor activities indicates that the market is uninterested in low-cost items, so a cost leadership approach is unlikely to be successful for BHAVNAV. It is suggested to adopt a differentiation strategy and find some way of enabling its laptops to stand out from its rivals.</p> <p>Differentiation strategy is aimed at broad mass market and involves the creation of a product or service that is perceived by the customers as unique. The uniqueness can be associated with product design, brand image, features, technology, dealer network or customer service.</p>
Q34.	<p>Inspite of high commodity inflation, shortage of components and the threat of a third wave of Covid-19 pandemic in India, manufacturers of packaged goods, home appliances and consumer electronics are expecting the business to grow by 12 to 25 percent in the coming months. After one and a half years of disruption, manufacturers are now confident about managing their inventories better, keeping their supply channels well stocked and preparing themselves to minimize the impact of any covid related restrictions even as they gear up for the festive season, which usually accounts for 25 to 30 percent of their yearly sales.</p> <p>The home appliances sector could be an example. After a dismal April-June quarter in the year 2021, producers of air conditioners, refrigerators and washing machines are expecting their business to grow by 15-20 percent in the months to come. All the companies operating in the sector have geared up to grab the opportunities available in the market.</p> <p>A leading company in the home appliances domain, XXP India, is planning to launch various innovative product designs and offer loyalty programmes to lure consumers.</p> <p>With reference to Michael Porter's generic strategies, identify which strategy XXP India has planner for? Explain how this strategy will be advantageous to the company to remain profitable? (SA, Nov 2021, 5 Marks)</p>

According to Michael Porter, strategies allow organizations to gain competitive advantage from three different bases: cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. Porter called these base generic strategies.

XXP India Ltd has planned for **Differentiation Strategy**. The company is planning to launch various innovative product designs and offer loyalty programmes to lure customers.

Differentiation strategy should be pursued only after a careful study of buyers' needs and preferences to determine the feasibility of incorporating one or more **differentiating features** into a **unique** product that features the desired attributes. A successful differentiation strategy allows a firm to charge a **higher price** for its product and to gain customer loyalty, because consumers may become strongly attached to the differentiated features.

Advantages of Differentiation Strategy

A differentiation strategy may help an organisation to remain profitable even with rivalry, new entrants, suppliers' power, substitute products, and buyers' power.

1. **Rivalry - Brand loyalty** acts as a **safeguard** against competitors. It means that customers will be less sensitive to price increases, as long as the firm can satisfy the needs of its customers.
2. **Buyers** - They do not **negotiate for price** as they get special features, and they have fewer options in the market.
3. **Suppliers** - Because differentiators charge a premium price, they can afford to **absorb higher costs of supplies** as the customers are willing to pay extra too.
4. **Entrants** - **Innovative features** are an **expensive** offer. So, **new entrants** generally **avoid** these features because it is tough for them to provide the same product with special features at a comparable price.
5. **Substitutes** - Substitute products can't replace differentiated products which have **high brand value** and **enjoy customer loyalty**.

- Q35. A business consultancy firm specializes in environment management consultancy. It advises client companies on how to set up environmental management accounting systems. For measuring recording and analyzing environmental costs. A large part of its business involves performing environmental audits to check whether companies have achieved an international assurance standard in environmental management; this is something that rival consultancy firms do not do. The firm also carries out other management consultancy projects for client, but these make up only a small proportion of its total annual fee income. Identify the strategy categories by Michael Porter which best describes the strategy of this firm.
(RTP, May 2022, NA)

By concentrating mainly on the 'market' for consultancy services in environmental management, the firm is pursuing a focus strategy. By offering audit services, which rival firms do not, this indicates a differentiation strategy within this chosen market niche. Hence, the firm is following **Focus differentiation strategy**.

A focused differentiation strategy requires offering **unique** features that fulfil the demands of a **narrow** market. Similar to focused low-cost strategy, narrow markets are defined in different ways in different settings. Some firms using a focused differentiation strategy concentrate their efforts on a particular sales channel, such as selling over the internet only. Others target particular demographic groups. Firms that compete based on uniqueness and target a narrow market are following a focused differentiations strategy.

- Q36. A private Moneyload Ltd. Bank that targets high worth individuals. They offer a premium service with many additional and personal services not normally available through other banks. They charge a significant annual fee for these services. The company makes full use of information technology throughout its operations in order to minimize costs. Identify and explain the generic strategy adopted by Moneyload Ltd. Bank?
(MTP1, May 2022, 5 Marks)

According to Porter, strategies allow organizations to gain competitive advantage from three different bases: cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. Porter called these base generic strategies.

Moneyland Ltd. Bank targets a **narrow** segment of the market, offering **unique** and desirable products. The bank will want to keep its costs under control, but it will not reduce costs at the expenses of reducing the quality levels of the customer service it offers. By maintaining high quality levels, it will still be able to charge a premium for its services. Thus, the strategy adopted by Moneyland Ltd. Bank is **Focused Differentiation**.

A focused differentiation strategy requires offering **unique** features that fulfil the demands of a **narrow** market. Some firms using a focused differentiation strategy concentrate their efforts on a particular sales channel, such as selling over the internet only. Others target particular demographic groups. Firms that compete based on uniqueness and target a narrow market are following a focused differentiations strategy.

- Q37. What are the various alternative strategies which the managers need to identify that will create and sustain a competitive advantage in the business? Discuss.
(MTP2, Nov 2022, 5 Marks)

	<p>According to Porter, strategies allow organizations to gain competitive advantage from three different bases: cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. These bases form different generic strategies as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost leadership emphasizes producing standardized products at a very low per-unit cost for consumers who are price-sensitive. It frequently results from productivity increases and aggressive pursuit of cost reduction throughout the development, production, marketing, and distribution processes. It allows a firm to earn higher profits than its competitors. • Differentiation is a strategy aimed at producing products and services considered unique industry wide and directed at consumers who are relatively price-insensitive. It concerns with distinguishing a product/service from that of its competitors through unique design features, technological leadership, unique uses of products and attributes like quality, environmental impact and customer service. • Focus means producing products and services that fulfill the specific needs of small groups of consumers. It involves selecting or focusing a market or customer segment in which to operate.
Q38.	<p>Quick N Sturdy Inc., a multinational company, is undergoing feasibility study to introduce new luxury and sports car for specific group of customers. The product is meant for customers with distinctive preferences and special requirements. The product is not a standard one and as such the target market is also narrow. Company knows that demand for the product is large enough to be profitable for the company, but small enough to be ignored by other major industry players. The company wants to position itself in the niche market with the prime consideration to offer unique features in the product for the target market.</p> <p>In the given situation, identify the generic strategy as suggested by Michael Porter. Also state the advantages and disadvantages of such strategy. (SA, Nov 2022, 5 Marks)</p> <p>Quick N Sturdy Inc company has adopted Focused Differentiation Strategy which is one of the Michael Porter's Generic strategies. A focused differentiation strategy requires offering unique features that fulfil the demands of a narrow market. Some firms using a focused differentiation strategy concentrate their efforts on a particular sales channel, such as selling over the internet only. Others target particular demographic groups. Firms that compete based on uniqueness and target a narrow market are following a focused differentiations strategy.</p> <p>Advantages of Focus Strategy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Premium prices can be charged by the organizations for their focused product/services. 2. Due to the tremendous expertise about the goods and services that organizations following focus strategy offer, rivals and new entrants may find it difficult to compete. <p>Disadvantages of Focus Strategy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The firms lacking in distinctive competencies may not be able to pursue focus strategy. 2. Due to the limited demand of product/services, costs are high which can cause problems. 3. In the long run, the niche could disappear or be taken over by larger competitors by acquiring the same distinctive competencies.
Q39.	<p>What is cost leadership strategy? Under what circumstances an organization can gain competitive advantages from cost leadership strategy? Is there any risk in pursuing cost leadership strategy? (SA, Nov 2022, 5 Marks)</p> <p>Cost leadership strategy emphasizes producing standardized products at a very low per-unit cost for consumers who are price-sensitive. It frequently results from productivity increases and aggressive pursuit of cost reduction throughout the development, production, marketing, and distribution processes. It allows a firm to earn higher profits than its competitors.</p> <p>The circumstances in which an organization can gain competitive advantages from cost leadership strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when the market is composed of many price-sensitive buyers. • when there are few ways to achieve product differentiation. • when buyers do not care much about differences from brand to brand. • when there are a large number of buyers with significant bargaining power. <p>The basic idea is to underprice competitors and thereby gain market share driving some of the competitors out of the market.</p> <p>Some risks of pursuing cost leadership are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that competitors may imitate the strategy, therefore driving overall industry profits down • that technological breakthroughs in the industry may make the strategy ineffective; • that buyer interests may swing to other differentiating features besides price.
Q40.	<p>BudgetSmart Retailers, a renowned supermarket chain, faced fierce competition in the grocery retail sector due to escalating operational expenses. Rising costs from rent, labor, and inventory management challenged their profitability amidst the</p>

emergence of discount stores and online competitors. To counter this, BudgetSmart Retailers optimized their supply chain through bulk procurement, revamped store layouts for cost efficiency and customer experience, embraced lean operational practices to minimize waste, and conducted comprehensive staff training to boost productivity and customer service efficiency.

Identify and explain the strategy adopted by BudgetSmart Retailers to enhance the profitability.
(MTP1, Nov 2023, 5 Marks)

Budget Smart Retailers adopted a **cost leadership strategy** to enhance profitability in the fiercely competitive grocery retail sector. It is a low-cost competitive strategy that aims at broad mass market. It requires vigorous pursuit of cost reduction in the areas of procurement, production, storage and distribution of product or service and also economies in overhead costs. Because of its lower costs, the cost leader is able to charge a lower price for its products than most of its competitors and still earn satisfactory profits.

By negotiating bulk procurement deals with suppliers, BudgetSmart Retailers lowered their cost of goods, allowing them to offer competitive prices to customers. The revamping of store layouts aimed to maximize space utilization and product placement, reducing operational costs and improving the overall shopping experience. Embracing lean principles minimized waste in the supply chain, reducing unnecessary expenses and improving efficiency. Comprehensive staff training boosted employee productivity and customer service efficiency, contributing to cost reduction and enhanced customer satisfaction.

Best Cost Provider Strategy

Q41. Explain Best-cost provider strategy.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

Best-cost provider strategy involves providing customers **more value for the money** by emphasizing **low cost** and **better quality difference**. It can be done:

- through offering products at **lower price** than what is being offered by rivals for products with comparable quality and features or
- charging **similar price** as by the rivals for products with much **higher quality** and better features.

Q42. Domolo is a premium cycles and cycling equipments brand which targets high spending customer with a liking for quality and brand name. Their cycles range from rupees fifteen thousand to rupees one lac. The recent trend of fitness through cycling has created humongous demand for cycles and peripherals like helmets, lights, braking systems, fitness applications, etc. The customer base has grown 150% in the last three months. Mr. Vijay, who is an investor wants to tap in this industry and bring about cheaper options to people who cannot spend so much. Which business level strategy would best suit for Mr. Vijay's idea and what are the major substrategies that can be implemented to capture maximum market?
(MTP2, May 2021, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2022, 5 Marks) (RTP, May 2023, NA)

The **Best Cost Provider strategy** would ensure a better reach to the not so affluent customers and provide them with good quality cycles and equipments, thus tapping in on the increasing trend of cycling.

Two sub-strategies that can be implemented are:

- Offering **lower prices** than rivals for the same quality of products
- Charging same prices for **better quality** of products

The idea of Mr. Vijay is to provide almost same quality of products in terms of functionality if not so in terms of branding, to customer who do not have huge sums of money to pay. Thus, sub- strategy number one, offering lower prices for almost same quality should be implemented to become the best cost provider of cycles and related equipments in the market.

Part II: Correct/Incorrect Questions

Q1. Competitive strategy is designed to help firms achieve competitive advantage.
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA)

The statement is correct.

Competitive strategy is designed to help firms achieve competitive advantage. Having a competitive advantage is necessary for a firm to **compete** in the market. Competitive advantage comes from a firm's ability to perform activities more **effectively** than its rivals.

Chapter 4 - Strategic Choices

Part I : Descriptive Questions

Corporate Strategy

Q1. Explain the meaning of Directional Strategy.
(SA, May 2018, 2 Marks)

Directional strategies, also called **grand strategies**, provide **basic directions** for strategic actions towards achieving strategic goals. Such strategies are formulated at the **corporate level** so are also known as corporate strategies. The corporate strategies a firm can adopt have been classified into four broad categories: **stability, expansion, retrenchment, and combination**.

Q2. ABC Ltd. intends to grow its business. Its top management argues that its 'Corporate Strategy' will ensure the growth of the firm. Do you agree with the top management's argument? Give reasons.
(MTP2, May 2023, 5 Marks) (MTP2, Nov 2023, 5 Marks)

Yes, agreeing with the top management's argument. Corporate strategy is basically the growth design of the firm; it spells out the growth objective- the direction, pace and timing of the firm's growth. It also spells out the strategy for achieving growth. Corporate strategy ensures the growth of the firm because of the following arguments:

- It ensures the **correct alignment** of the firm with its environment. It also serves as the design for filling the strategic planning gap.
- It gives importance to the combination, sequence, timing, direction and depth of various **moves and action initiatives** taken by managers to handle environmental uncertainties and complexities.
- It helps **build the relevant competitive advantages** for the firm. Masterminding and working out the right fit between the firm and its external environment.
- It is to **harness the opportunities available** in the environment, **countering the threats** embedded therein.

Stability

Q3. What is stability strategy? What are the reasons to pursue stability strategy?
(RTP, Nov 2019, NA) (RTP, Nov 2023, NA)

One of the important goals of a business enterprise is stability to **safeguard its existing interests and strengths**, to pursue well established and tested objectives, to continue in the chosen business path, to **maintain operational efficiency** on a sustained basis, to consolidate the commanding position already reached, and to optimise returns on the resources committed in the business. A stability strategy is pursued by a firm when:

- It continues to serve in the **same or similar markets** and deals in **same or similar products and services**.
- The strategic decisions focus on **incremental improvement** of functional performance.

Major reasons for stability strategy are as follows:

- A product has reached the **maturity stage** of the product life cycle.
- It is **less risky** as it involves less changes and the staff feels comfortable with things as they are.
- The environment faced is relatively **stable**.
- Expansion may be perceived as being threatening.
- Consolidation is sought through stabilizing after a period of rapid expansion.

Q4. Justify the statement "Stability strategy is opposite of Expansion strategy".
(RTP, May 2021, NA) (MTP 1, May 2021, 5 Marks)

Stability Strategies, as name suggests, are intended to **safeguard the existing interests and strengths** of business. It involves organisations to pursue established and tested objectives, continue on the chosen path, **maintain operational efficiency** and so on. A stability strategy is pursued when a firm continues to serve in the **same or similar markets** and deals in **same products and services**. In stability strategy, few functional changes are made in the products or markets, however, it is **not a 'do nothing' strategy**. This strategy is typical for **mature** business organizations. Some small organizations also frequently use stability as a strategic focus to maintain comfortable market or profit position.

	<p>On the other hand, expansion strategy is aggressive strategy as it involves redefining the business by adding the scope of business substantially, increasing efforts of the current business. In this sense, it becomes the opposite of a stability strategy. Expansion is a promising and popular strategy that tends to be equated with dynamism, vigor, promise and success. Expansion also includes diversifying, acquiring and merging businesses. This strategy may take the enterprise along relatively unknown and risky paths, full of promises and pitfalls.</p>
Q5.	<p>ABC Steel Industries finds out that its products have reached at maturity stage and already has <i>overcapacity</i>. Therefore, it concentrates on maintaining operational efficiency of its plants. Identify the strategy implemented by ABC Steel Industries along with reasons. (SA, May 2022, 5 Marks)</p> <p>ABC Steel Industries has opted to implement Stability strategy. Stability strategies are intended to safeguard the existing interests and strengths of business. It involves organisations to pursue established and tested objectives, continue on the chosen path, maintain operational efficiency and so on. A stability strategy is pursued when a firm continues to serve in the same or similar markets and deals in same products and services. In stability strategy, few functional changes are made in the products or markets, however, it is not a 'do nothing' strategy. This strategy is typical for mature business organizations. Some small organizations also frequently use stability as a strategic focus to maintain comfortable market or profit position. Major reasons for Stability strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A product has reached the maturity stage of the product life cycle. • The staff feels comfortable with the status quo as it involves less changes and less risks. • It is opted when the environment in which an organisation is operating is relatively stable. • Where it is not advisable to expand as it may be perceived as threatening. • After rapid expansion, a firm might want to stabilize and consolidate itself

Expansion

Q6.	<p>Distinguish between Mergers and acquisitions (RTP, May 2018, NA)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Write short note on expansion through acquisitions and mergers. (RTP, May 2020, NA) (MTP1, Nov 2020, 5 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Explain the term Merger and Acquisition as a growth strategy. Differentiate between both of them. State the situations in which such strategies are considered by any organization. (RTP, Nov 2021, NA)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Write a short note on Merger and Acquisition strategy. (RTP, Nov 2022, NA)</p> <p>Acquisition or merger with an existing concern is an instant means of achieving expansion. It is an attractive and tempting proposition in the sense that it circumvents the time, risks and skills involved in screening internal growth opportunities, seizing them and building up the necessary resource base required to materialise growth.</p> <p>Apart from the urge to grow, acquisitions and mergers are resorted to for purposes of achieving a measure of synergy between the parent and the acquired enterprises. Synergy may result from such bases as physical facilities, technical and managerial skills, distribution channels, general administration, research and development and so on.</p> <p>Many organizations in order to achieve quick growth, expand or diversify with the use of mergers and acquisitions strategies. Merger and acquisition in simple words are defined as a process of combining two or more organizations together. There is a thin line of difference between the two terms but the impact of combination is completely different in both the cases.</p> <p>Merger is considered to be a process when two or more organizations join together to expand their business operations. In such a case the deal gets finalized on friendly terms. Owners of pre-merged entities have right over the profits of new entity. In a merger two organizations combine to increase their strength and financial gains.</p> <p>While, when one organization takes over the other organization and controls all its business operations, it is known as acquisition. In the process of acquisition, one financially strong organization overpowers the weaker one. Acquisitions often happen during economic recession or during declining profit margins. In this process, one that is financially stronger and bigger establishes its power. The combined operations then run under the name of the powerful entity. A deal in case of an acquisition is often done in an unfriendly manner, it is more or less a forced association.</p>
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Q7. Swift Insurance is a company engaged in the business of providing medical insurance maintaining a market share of 25 to 30 per cent in last five years. Recently, the company decided to enter into the business of auto insurance by having foreign collaboration. Identify the strategy being followed by the Swift Insurance with its advantages.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

Overall Swift Insurance is following **growth or expansion strategy** as it is **redefining** the business and enlarging its scope. The step will also substantially **increase investment** in the business.

The new business is related and at the same time caters to a different segment and accordingly can be termed as related diversification. The new business falls within the scope of general insurance and horizontally related to the existing business.

In the process of expansion, the company will be able to exploit:

- Its brand name.
- The marketing skills available.
- The existing sales and distribution infrastructure.
- Research and development.
- Economies of scale

Q8. Strategic alliances are formed if they provide an advantage to all the parties in the alliance. Do you agree? Explain in brief the advantages of a strategic alliance.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

OR

What are the advantages of a strategic alliance?

(MTP2, Nov 2021, 5 Marks)

OR

GWA, a leading Japan based automobile company decides to make India a hub for the company's 250 cc motor cycle to be manufactured in collaboration with the TPR Group, a leading Indian motorcycle manufacturer. The production is to be exported to the company's home market as well as to other African countries.

What is this growth strategy called? Point out the most important advantages both the companies expect from such strategy/collaboration.

(SA, Dec 2021, 5 Marks)

OR

Jeff Inc., a leading USA based Mobile company decides to make India a hub for the company's Android Mobile having largest storage memory to be manufactured in collaboration with the Desi Group, a leading Indian mobile manufacturer. The production is to be exported to the company's home market as well as to other European countries. What is this growth strategy called? Point out the most important advantages both the companies expect from such strategy/collaboration.

(MTP1, May 2023, 5 Marks)

A strategic alliance is a **relationship** between two or more businesses that enables each to **achieve certain strategic objectives** which neither would be able to achieve on its own. The strategic partners maintain their status as **independent and separate entities**, share the benefits and control over the partnership, and continue to make contributions to the alliance **until it is terminated**. Strategic alliances are formed if they provide an advantage to all the parties in the alliance. These advantages can be broadly categorised as follows:

- i) **Organizational:** Strategic alliances may be formed to **learn necessary skills** and obtain certain capabilities from the strategic partner. Strategic partners may also help to enhance productive capacity, provide a distribution system, or extend supply chain. A strategic partner may provide a good or service that complements each other, thereby creating a synergy. If one partner is relatively new or untried in a certain industry, having a strategic partner who is well-known and respected will help add legitimacy and credibility to the venture.
- ii) **Economic:** Alliances can reduce costs and risks by distributing them across the members of the alliance. Partners can obtain **greater economies of scale** in an alliance, as production volume increase, causing the **cost per unit to decline**. Finally, partners can take advantage of **co-specialization**, where specializations are bundled together, creating additional value.
- iii) **Strategic:** Organizations may join to **cooperate instead of compete**. Alliances may also create vertical integration where partners are part of supply chain. Strategic alliances may also be useful to create a competitive advantage by the pooling of resources and skills. This may also help with future business opportunities and the development of joint research and development.
- iv) **Political:** Sometimes there is need to form a strategic alliance with a local foreign business to gain **entry into a foreign market** either because of local prejudices or legal barriers to entry. Forming strategic alliances with politically-influential partners may also help improve overall influence and position.

Q9.	<p>What do you understand by co-generic merger? (MTP1, May 2018, 2 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Describe the term 'Co-generic merger'. (SA, May 2018, 2 Marks)</p> <p>In co-generic merger two or more merging organizations are associated in some way or the other related to the production processes, business markets, or basic required technologies. Such merger include the extension of the product line or acquiring components that are required in the daily operations. It offers great opportunities to business to diversify around a common set of resources and strategic requirements.</p>
Q10.	<p>Shoaib and Salim, two brothers are the owners of a cloth manufacturing unit located in Lucknow. They are doing well and have substantial surplus funds available within the business. Shoaib is interested in acquiring another industrial unit located in Lucknow manufacturing tableware such as dinner sets, cups and saucers, bowls, etc. On the other hand, Salim desires to start another unit to produce readymade garments. Discuss the nature of corporate strategies being suggested by two brothers. Which one is better? (MTP2, May 2018, 5 Marks)</p> <p>Shoaib wishes to diversify in a business that is not related to their existing line of product and can be termed as conglomerate diversification. He is interested in acquiring another industrial unit located in Lucknow manufacturing tableware such as dinner sets, cups and saucers, bowls, which is not related to their existing product. In conglomerate diversification, the new businesses/ products are disjointed from the existing businesses/products in every way; it is a totally unrelated diversification. In process/ technology/ function, there is no connection between the new products and the existing ones. Conglomerate diversification has no common thread at all with the firm's present position.</p> <p>On the other hand, Salim seeks to move forward in the chain of existing product by adopting vertically integrated diversification. The cloth being manufactured by the existing processes can be used as raw material of garments manufacturing business. In such diversification, firms opt to engage in businesses that are related to the existing business of the firm. The firm remains vertically within the same process and moves forward or backward in the chain. It enters specific product/process steps with the intention of making them into new businesses for the firm. The characteristic feature of vertically integrated diversification is that here, the firm does not jump outside the vertically linked product-process chain.</p> <p>Both types of diversifications have their own benefits. While vertically integrated diversification brings synergy, a conglomerate diversification helps in diversifying the risk. It is possible that a downturn in one business is offset by upswing in other business. In the vertically integrated diversification firms can take advantage of their existing competence that in turn will improve chances of success.</p>
Q11.	<p>Write short note on Conglomerate merger. (MTP2, May 2018, 3 Marks)</p> <p>Merger is considered to be a process when two or more companies come together to expand their business operations. In such a case the deal gets finalized on friendly terms and both the organizations share profits in the newly created entity.</p> <p>Conglomerate merger happens in case of organizations that are unrelated to each other combine together. There are no linkages with respect to customer groups, customer functions and technologies being used. There are no important common factors between the organizations in production, marketing, research and development and technology. In practice, however, there is some degree of overlap in one or more of these factors.</p>
Q12.	<p>Distinguish between the Forward integration and backward integration. (RTP, Nov 2018, NA)</p> <p>Forward and backward integration form part of vertically integrated diversification. In vertically integrated diversification, firms opt to engage in businesses that are vertically related to the existing business of the firm. The firm remains vertically within the same process. While diversifying, firms opt to engage in businesses that are linked forward or backward in the chain and enters specific product/process steps with the intention of making them into new businesses for the firm.</p> <p>Backward integration is a step towards creation of effective supply by entering business of input providers. Strategy employed to expand profits and gain greater control over production of a product whereby a company will purchase or build a business that will increase its own supply capability or lower its cost of production. On the other hand, forward integration is moving forward in the value chain and entering business lines that use existing products. Forward integration will also take place where organisations enter into businesses of distribution channels.</p>

- Q13. Vastralok Ltd., was started as a textile company to manufacture cloth. Currently, they are in the manufacturing of silk cloth. The top management desires to expand the business in the cloth manufacturing. To expand they decided to purchase more machines to manufacture cotton cloth.
Identify and explain the strategy opted by the top management of Vastralok Ltd.
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA)

Vastralok Ltd. is currently manufacturing silk cloth and its top management has decided to expand its business by manufacturing cotton cloth. Both the products are similar in nature within the same industry. The strategic diversification that the top management of Vastralok Ltd. has opted is concentric in nature. They were in business of manufacturing silk and now they will manufacture cotton as well. They will be able to use existing infrastructure and distribution channel. **Concentric diversification** amounts to **related** diversification.

In concentric diversification, the new business is **linked** to the existing businesses through process, technology or marketing. The new product is a **spin-off** from the existing facilities and products/processes. This means that in concentric diversification too, there are benefits of synergy with the current operations.

- Q14. Leatherite Ltd., was started as a leather company to manufacture footwear. Currently, they are in the manufacturing of footwears for males and females. The top management desires to expand the business in the leather manufacturing goods. To expand they decided to purchase more machines to manufacture leather bags for males and females. Identify and explain the strategy opted by the top management of Leatherite Ltd.
(MTP1, May 2019, 5 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2021, NA)

Leatherite Ltd. is currently manufacturing footwears for males and females and its top management has decided to expand its business by manufacturing leather bags for males and females. Both the products are similar in nature within the same industry. The strategic diversification that the top management of Leatherite Ltd. has opted is concentric in nature. They were in business of manufacturing leather footwears and now they will manufacture leather bags as well. They will be able to use existing infrastructure and distribution channel. **Concentric diversification** amounts to **related** diversification.

In concentric diversification, the new business is **linked** to the existing businesses through process, technology or marketing. The new product is a **spin-off** from the existing facilities and products/processes. This means that in concentric diversification too, there are benefits of synergy with the current operations.

- Q15. Gautam and Siddhartha two brothers are the owners of a cloth manufacturing unit located in Faridabad. They are doing well and have substantial surplus funds available within the business. They have different approaches regarding corporate strategies to be followed to be more competitive and profitable in future.
Gautam is interested in acquiring another industrial unit located in Faridabad manufacturing stationery items such as permanent markers, notebooks, pencils and pencil sharpeners, envelopes and other office supplies. On the other hand, Siddhartha desires to start another unit to produce readymade garments.
Discuss the nature of corporate strategies being suggested by two brothers and risks involved in it.
(SA, May 2019, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

Gautam wishes to diversify in a business that is not related to their existing line of product and can be termed as conglomerate diversification. He is interested in acquiring another industrial unit located in Faridabad manufacturing stationery items such as permanent markers, notebooks, pencils and pencil sharpeners, envelopes and other office supplies, which is not related to their existing product. In **conglomerate diversification**, the new businesses/ products are **disjointed** from the existing businesses/products in every way; it is a **unrelated** diversification. In process/ technology/ function, there is no connection between the new products and the existing ones. Conglomerate diversification has **no common thread** at all with the firm's present position.

On the other hand, Siddhartha seeks to move forward in the chain of existing product by adopting **vertically integrated diversification/ forward integration**. The cloth being manufactured by the existing processes can be used as raw material of garments manufacturing business. In such diversification, firms opt to engage in businesses that are **related** to the existing business of the firm. The firm remains vertically within the **same process** and moves forward or backward in the chain. It enters specific product/process steps with the intention of making them into new businesses for the firm. The characteristic feature of vertically integrated diversification is that here, the firm does not jump outside the vertically linked product-process chain.

Both types of diversifications have their own risks. In conglomerate diversification, there are no linkages with customer group, customer marketing functions and technology used, which is a risk. In the case of vertical integrated diversification, there is a risk of lack of continued focus on the original business.

Q16. Organo is a large supermarket chain. It is considering the purchase of a number of farms that provides Organo with a significant amount of its fresh produce. Organo feels that by purchasing the farms, it will have greater control over its supply chain. Identify and explain the type of diversification opted by Organo?

(RTP, May 2020, NA) (ICAI Study Material)

Organo is a large supermarket chain. By opting **backward integration** and purchase a number of farms, it will have greater control over its supply chain. Backward integration is a step towards, **creation of effective supply** by entering business of input providers. Strategy employed to expand profits and gain greater control over production of a product whereby a company will purchase or build a business that will increase its **own supply capability** or lessen its cost of production.

Q17. Diversification endeavours can be categorized into four broad classifications. State the basis for this classification and name the four categories. How is concentric diversification different from vertically diversification? Explain.

(RTP, May 2022, NA) (MTP2, Nov 2022, 5 Marks)

Diversification strategy involves expansion into new businesses that are outside the current business and markets of an organisation. Based on the nature and extent of their relationship to existing businesses, diversification can be classified into four broad categories:

- 1) **Vertically integrated** diversification
- 2) **Horizontally integrated** diversification
- 3) **Concentric** diversification
- 4) **Conglomerate** diversification

Concentric diversification takes place when the products are **related**. The new product is a **spin-off** from the existing facilities and products/processes. This means that in concentric diversification too, there are benefits of synergy with the current operations. However, concentric diversification differs from vertically integrated diversification in the **nature** of the **linkage** the **new product** has with the existing ones.

In **vertically integrated diversification**, firms opt to engage in businesses that are **related** to the existing business of the firm. The firm remains vertically within the **same process**. Sequence moves forward or backward in the chain and enters specific product/process steps with the intention of making them into new businesses for the firm. The new product fall within the **firm's current process product chain**.

In concentric diversification, there is a departure from this vertical linkage, a new related product is added to the existing business. The new product is only connected in a **loop-like manner** at one or more points in the firm's existing process/technology/ product chain.

Q18. There has been fierce demand for both Gecko and FlyBee for the last 3 years. Gecko makes mass consumption pens while FlyBee is a notebook and diary brand - both being complementary goods of each other. But to grow further, FlyBee decided to take up competition with Gecko in pens segment and thereby launched, FlyPens. Identify and explain the growth strategy opted by FlyBee?

(MTP1, May 2022, 5 Marks)

FlyBee is a notebook and diary brand. But to grow further, FlyBee decided to take up competition with Gecko in pens segment and thereby launched, FlyPens. FlyBee that is hitherto not into producing pens starts producing them and other similar products is following **concentric diversification** which is basically **related** diversification.

In this form of diversification, the new business is linked to the existing businesses through existing systems such as processes, technology or marketing. The new product is a **spin-off** from the existing facilities and products/processes. There are benefits of synergy with the current operations. The most common reasons for pursuing a concentric diversification are that opportunities in **existing line of business** are available.

Q19. What do you understand by diversification? Distinguish between concentric and conglomerate diversification.

(SA, May 2022, 5 Marks)

Diversification is defined as entry into **new products** or product lines, new services or **new markets**, involving substantially different skills, technology and knowledge. Diversification endeavours can be related or unrelated to existing businesses of the firm. Following are the differences between the concentric diversification and conglomerate diversifications:

Basis of Difference	Concentric Diversification	Conglomerate Diversification
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Meaning	It occurs when a firm adds related products or markets.	It occurs when a firm diversifies into areas that are unrelated to its current line of business.
Linkage	The new business is linked to the existing businesses through process, technology or marketing.	Here no such linkages exist; the new business/product is disjointed from the existing businesses/products.
Reasons for pursuing	The most common reason for pursuing a concentric diversification is that opportunities in a firm's existing line of business are available .	The common reason for pursuing a conglomerate growth strategy is that opportunities in a firm's current line of business are limited or opportunities outside are highly lucrative.

- Q20. Jynklo Ltd. is an established online children gaming company in Japan. They are performing good in the gaming industry. The management of Jynklo Ltd. has decided to expand its business. They decided to start a premium sports drink named JynX for athletes. Identify and explain the growth strategy adopted by Jynklo Ltd.?
(MTP1, Nov 2022, 5 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2023, NA)

Currently Jynklo Ltd. is performing in the children gaming industry. But now its management has decided to expand their business by starting a premium sports drink named JynX for athletes. As there are **no linkages** in both products with respect to customer groups, customer functions, or the technologies being used, so Jynklo Ltd. have opted **Conglomerate diversification**.

Jynklo Ltd. diversify in a business that is not related to their existing line of product and can be termed as conglomerate diversification. In conglomerate diversification, the new businesses/ products are **disjointed** from the existing businesses/products in every way; it is a unrelated diversification. In process/ technology/ function, there is no connection between the new products and the existing ones. Conglomerate diversification has **no common thread** at all with the firm's present position.

- Q21. Health Pharma Pvt. Ltd. (HPPL) a one person company with limited liability is manufacturing generic and medicinal drugs in India.
Hygiene Laboratories Plc. (HLP) a multinational company with its strong financial position is one of the major players in pharmaceutical sector.
Individually, each company has its own core competencies. However, additional focus by the state on generic medicine with renewed regulatory requirements are posing challenges in fierce competitive environment.
Considering benefits of synergies, both the companies are considering to join hands for better growth opportunities. Earlier, they tried to go for joint venture or strategic alliance but the arrangement could not materialize.
In view of the facts given above:
- If HPPL and HLP join hands and make new entity named Health N Hygiene Pharma Ltd., what type of growth strategy will this strategic development be?
 - In case, HLP is sold out to HPPL and HLP ceased to exist, what type of growth strategy will this strategic deal be?
 - What are the differences between the above two identified growth strategies?
- (SA, May 2023, 5 Marks)

- If HPPL and HLP join hands and form a new entity named Health N Hygiene Pharma Ltd., this strategic development would be considered a Merger growth strategy. A merger is a combination of two or more companies to form a new entity with shared ownership and control.
- If HLP is sold out to HPPL and HLP ceases to exist, this strategic deal would be categorized as an Acquisition growth strategy. An acquisition occurs when one company purchases another, resulting in the acquiring company gaining control over the acquired company's assets, operations, and intellectual property.
- Many organizations in order to achieve quick growth, expand or diversify with the use of mergers and acquisitions strategies. Merger and acquisition in simple words are defined as a process of combining two or more organizations together. There is a thin line of difference between the two terms, but the impact of combination is completely different in both the cases.

Merger is considered to be a process when two or more organizations join together to expand their business operations. In such a case **the deal gets finalized on friendly terms. Owners of pre-merged entities have right over the profits of new entity. In a merger two organizations combine to increase their strength and financial gains.**

While, when one organization takes over the other organization and controls all its business operations, it is known as acquisition. In the process of acquisition, **one financially strong organization overpowers the weaker one.** Acquisitions often

happen during economic recession or during declining profit margins. In this process, one that is financially stronger and bigger establishes its power. **The combined operations then run under the name of the powerful entity.** A deal in case of an acquisition is often done in an unfriendly manner; it is more or less a forced association.

Retrenchment

Q22. XYZ Ltd. is a multi-product company, suffering from continuous losses since last few years and has accumulated heavy losses which have eroded its net worth.
What strategic option is available to the management of this sick company? Advise with reasons.
(SA, May 2018, 5 Marks)

XYZ Ltd. is a sick company with accumulated losses that have eroded its net worth. The multi-product company may analyse its various products to take decisions on the viability of each. The company **may consider retrenchment strategy**. Retrenchment becomes necessary for coping with hostile and adverse situations in the environment and when any other strategy is likely to be suicidal.

Retrenchment strategy is adopted because of continuous losses and unviability and stability can be ensured by reallocation of resources from unprofitable to profitable businesses.

Retrenchment strategy is followed when an organization substantially **reduces the scope of its activity**. This is done through an attempt to find out the problem areas and diagnose the causes of the problems. Next, steps are taken to solve the problems. These steps result in different kinds of retrenchment strategies as follows:

Turnaround strategy: If the organization chooses to transform itself into a leaner structure and focuses on ways and means to **reverse the process of decline**, it adopts a turnaround strategy. It may try to reduce costs, eliminate unprofitable outputs, generate revenue, improve coordination, better control, and so on.

Divestment Strategy: Divestment strategy involves the sale or liquidation of a portion of business, or a major division, profit centre or SBU. Divestment is usually a part of **rehabilitation or restructuring** plan and is adopted when a turnaround has been attempted but has proved to be unsuccessful.

Liquidation Strategy: In the retrenchment strategy, the **most extreme and unattractive** is liquidation strategy. It involves closing down a firm and selling its assets. It is considered as the **last resort** because it leads to serious **consequences** such as **loss of employment** for workers and other employees, **termination of opportunities** where a firm could pursue any future activities, and the **stigma of failure**.

The management of multiproduct sick company manufacturing various items need to understand pros and cons of each strategic option. The decision will depend upon the specific circumstances of each product and management goals of the company.

Q23. What is Divestment strategy? When is it adopted?
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (RTP, Nov 2020, NA)

Divestment strategy involves the **sale or liquidation** of a **portion of business**, or a **major division, profit centre or SBU**. For a multiple product company, divestment could be a part of **rehabilitating or restructuring** plan called turnaround.

A divestment strategy may be adopted due to various reasons:

- When a **turnaround** has been attempted but has proved to be **unsuccessful**.
- A business that had been acquired proves to be a **mismatch** and cannot be integrated within the company.
- Persistent **negative cash flows** from a particular business create financial problems for the whole company.
- **Severity of competition** and the inability of a firm to cope with it.
- **Technological upgradation** is required if the business is to survive but where it is not possible for the firm to invest in it.
- A **better alternative** may be available for investment.

Q24. Why a Turnaround Strategy is required for a business?
(MTP2, Nov 2018, 5 Marks)

OR

Write a short note on need for turnaround strategy.
(MTP1, Nov 2019, 5 Marks)

Turnaround is needed when an enterprise's performance deteriorates to a point that it needs a **radical change of direction** in strategy, and possibly in structure and culture as well. It is a highly - targeted effort to return an organization to profitability.

and increase positive cash flows to a sufficient level. It is used when both threats and weaknesses adversely affect the health of an organization so much that its basic survival is difficult.

The overall goal of turnaround strategy is to transform an underperforming or distressed company to **normalcy** in terms of acceptable levels of profitability, solvency, liquidity and cash flow. To achieve its objectives, turnaround strategy must **reverse** causes of distress, resolve the financial crisis, achieve a rapid improvement in financial performance, regain stakeholder support, and overcome internal constraints and unfavourable industry characteristics.

- Q25. With the global economic recession Soft Cloth Ltd. incurred significant losses in all its previous five financial years. Currently, they are into manufacturing of cloth made of cotton, silk, polyester, rayon, lycra and blends. Competition is also intense on account of cheap imports. The company is facing cash crunch and has not been able to pay the salaries to its employees in the current month.

Suggest a grand strategy that can be opted by Soft Cloth Ltd.

(RTP, May 2019, NA) (ICAI Study Material)

Soft Cloth Ltd. is facing internal as well as external challenges. The external environment is in economic recession and the organization is facing cash crunch. The company needs to work on a **retrenchment / turnaround strategy**. The strategy is suitable in case of issues such as:

- Persistent **negative cash flow**.
- **Uncompetitive** products or services
- **Declining market share**
- **Deterioration in physical facilities**
- **Overstaffing, high turnover of employees, and low morale**
- **Mismanagement**

The company may consider to substantially **reduce the scope of its activity**. This is done through an attempt to find out the problem areas and diagnose the causes of the problems. Next, steps are taken to solve the problems.

These steps result in different kinds of retrenchment strategies. If the organization chooses to focus on ways and means to **reverse the process of decline**, it adopts a **turnaround strategy**. If it **cuts off the loss-making units**, divisions, or SBUs, curtails its product line, or reduces the functions performed, it adopts a **divestment strategy**. If **none of these actions work**, then it may choose to abandon the activities totally, resulting in a **liquidation strategy**.

- Q26. Arena Ltd. manufactures computers that are of low in production cost, competitive price, and quality to their competitor's product. Profits and market share are declining day by day. Shreekanth, a senior executive realizes that drastic strategies have to be created for the survival of a company. After SWOT analysis by assessing the strengths and weaknesses, they come up with the conclusion that they cannot compete in the computers with the competitors. The management directs Shreekanth to act quick and develop a suitable strategic plan.

Discuss the strategy which can be opted by Shreekanth.

(MTP1, May 2018, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2019, 5 Marks)

OR

ABC Inc. a successful company in the healthcare industry, was facing a decline due to outdated technology and lack of innovation. The company was losing market share and struggling to retain customers. In an effort to reverse the trend, the management decided to implement a strategy. They hired new talent, invested in research and development, and streamlined their operations to increase efficiency. Through these efforts, ABC Inc. was able to introduce new products and services, reposition themselves in the market, and eventually regain their competitive edge. The company's revenue and profits increased, and they were once again on the path to success.

Discuss the strategy which has been implemented by the management of ABC Inc.

(RTP, May 2023, NA)

In the given case, the company can opt for **turnaround strategy** which is a highly-targeted effort to return the company to profitability and increase positive cash flows to a sufficient level. Organizations those have faced a **significant crisis** that has negatively affected operations require turnaround strategy. Once turnaround is successful the organization may turn to focus on growth.

Conditions for turnaround strategies

When firms are losing their grips over market, profits due to several internal and external factors, and if they have to survive under the competitive environment they have to identify **danger signals** as early as possible and undertake rectification steps immediately. These conditions may be, inter alia **cash flow problems, lower profit margins, high employee turnover and**

	<p>decline in market share, capacity underutilization, low morale of employees, recessionary conditions, mismanagement, raw material supply problems and so on.</p> <p>Action plan for turnaround strategy</p> <p>Stage One – Assessment of current problems</p> <p>Stage Two – Analyze the situation and develop a strategic plan</p> <p>Stage Three – Implementing an emergency action plan</p> <p>Stage Four – Restructuring the business</p> <p>Stage Five – Returning to normal</p>
Q27.	<p>Pizza Galleria was India's first pizza delivery chain enjoying monopoly for several years. However, after entry of Modino and Uncle Jack it is struggling to compete. Both Modino and Uncle Jack have opened several eateries and priced the product aggressively. In last four years the chain has suffered significant losses. The chain wishes to know whether they should go for turnaround strategy. List out components of action plan for turnaround strategy.</p> <p>(RTP, Nov 2019, NA)</p> <p>Pizza Chain may choose to have turnaround strategy if there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent negative cash flow from business. • Uncompetitive products or services. • Declining market share. • Deterioration in physical facilities. • Over-staffing, high turnover of employees, and low morale. • Mismanagement. <p>For turnaround strategies to be successful, it is imperative to focus on the short and long-term financing needs as well as on strategic issues. The chain may attempt to leverage the potential Indian market by engaging a new logistics partner. It may bring innovation in food items, as well as quality and improvements in the overall dine-in and delivery experience. During the turnaround, the "product mix" may be changed, requiring the organization to do some repositioning.</p> <p>A workable action plan for turnaround would involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage One – Assessment of current problems: The first step is to assess the current problems and get to the root causes and the extent of damage the problem has caused. • Stage Two – Analyze the situation and develop a strategic plan: Before making any major changes; determine the chances of the business's survival. Identify appropriate strategies and develop a preliminary action plan. • Stage Three – Implementing an emergency action plan: If the organization is in a critical stage, an appropriate action plan must be developed to stop the bleeding and enable the organization to survive. A positive operating cash flow must be established as quickly as possible and enough funds to implement the turnaround strategies must be raised. • Stage Four – Restructuring the business: The financial state of the organization's core business is particularly important. If the core business is irreparably damaged, then the outlook for the entire organization may be bleak. Efforts to be made to position the organization for rapid improvement. • Stage Five – Returning to normal: In the final stage of turnaround strategy process, the organization should begin to show signs of profitability, return on investments and enhancing economic value-added. Emphasis is placed on a number of strategic efforts such as carefully adding new products and improving customer service, creating alliances with other organizations, increasing the market share, etc.
Q28.	<p>Differentiate between divestment and liquidation strategy.</p> <p>(MTP1, Nov 2019, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2021, 5 Marks) (MTP2, Nov 2021, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2022, 5 Marks)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Briefly describe the meaning of divestment and liquidation strategy and establish differences between the two.</p> <p>(SA, Nov 2020, 5 Marks)</p> <p>Divestment strategy involves the sale or liquidation of a portion of business, or a major division, profit centre or SBU. Divestment is usually a part of rehabilitation or restructuring plan and is adopted when a turnaround has been attempted but has proved to be unsuccessful.</p> <p>Liquidation strategy is a retrenchment strategy considered the most extreme and unattractive strategy, which involves closing down a firm and selling its assets.</p>

Difference between Divestment strategy and Liquidation strategy:		
Basis of Difference	Divestment Strategy	Liquidation Strategy
Meaning	Divestment strategy involves sale or liquidation of a portion of business .	Liquidation strategy involves closing down a firm and selling its business.
Policy option	Divestment is usually a part of rehabilitation or restructuring plan and is adopted when a turnaround has been attempted but has proved to be unsuccessful. Option of a turnaround may even be ignored if it is obvious that divestment is the only answer.	Liquidation becomes only option in case of severe and critical conditions where either turnaround or divestment are not seen as solution or have been attempted but failed.
Purpose	Efforts are made for survival of the organization.	Liquidation as a form of retrenchment strategy is unattractive and considered as the last resort .
Consequences	Survival of organization helps in retaining personnel , at least to some extent.	There is loss of employment and opportunities with stigma of failure .

- Q29. An XYZ Company is facing continuous losses. There is decline in sales and product market share. The products of the company became uncompetitive and there is persistent negative cash flow. The physical facilities are deteriorating and employees have low morale. At the board meeting, the board members decided that they should continue the organization and adopt such measures that the company functions properly. The board has decided to hire young executive Shayamli for improving the functions of the organization. What corporate strategy should Shayamli adopt for this company and what steps to be taken to implement the corporate strategy adopted by Shayamli?
(SA, Nov 2019, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

XYZ Company is facing continuous losses, decline in sales and product market share, persistent negative cash flow, uncompetitive products, declining market share, deterioration in physical facilities, low morale of employees. In such a scenario, Shayamli may choose a **turnaround strategy** as this strategy attempts to **reverse the process of decline** and bring improvement in organizational health. This is also important as Board has decided to continue the company and adopt measures for its proper functioning.

For success, Shayamli needs to focus on the short and long-term financing needs as well as on strategic issues. During the turnaround, the **"product mix" may be changed**, requiring the organization to do some repositioning. A workable action plan for turnaround would involve:

- **Stage One – Assessment of current problems:** In the first step, assess the current problems and get to the **root causes** and the extent of damage.
- **Stage Two – Analyze the situation and develop a strategic plan:** Identify major problems and opportunities, develop a strategic plan with specific goals and detailed functional actions.
- **Stage Three – Implementing an emergency action plan:** If the organization is in a critical stage, an appropriate **action plan** must be developed to stop the bleeding and enable the organization to survive.
- **Stage Four – Restructuring the business:** If the core business is irreparably damaged, then the outlook for the entire organization may be bleak. Efforts to be made to position the organization for **rapid improvement**.
- **Stage Five – Returning to normal:** In the final stage of turnaround strategy process, the organization should begin to show signs of **profitability, return on investments** and enhancing economic value-added.

- Q30. Explain in brief the reasons to adopt turnaround strategy.
(MTP1, May 2020, 5 Marks)

Reasons to adopt Turnaround Strategy:

1. Turnaround is needed when an enterprise's performance deteriorates to a point that it needs a **radical change** of direction in strategy, and possibly in structure and culture as well.
2. It is a highly targeted effort to **return** an organization to profitability and increase positive cash flows to a **sufficient level**.

	<p>3. It is used when both threats and weaknesses adversely affect the health of an organization so much that its basic survival is difficult.</p> <p>4. The overall goal of turnaround strategy is to return an underperforming or distressed company to normalcy in terms of acceptable levels of profitability, solvency, liquidity and cash flow.</p> <p>5. To achieve its objectives, turnaround strategy must reverse causes of distress, resolve the financial crisis, achieve a rapid improvement in financial performance, regain stakeholder support, and overcome internal constraints and unfavourable industry characteristics.</p>
Q31.	<p>General public is discerning from buying air conditioning units based on the Health Ministry guidelines regarding emergence of a contagious viral pandemic. Consequently, Nebula Pvt. Ltd, a manufacturer of evaporation coils used in air conditioning units has faced significant loss in working capital due to sharp fall in demand. The company conducted financial assessment and developed a workable action plan based on short and long term financial needs. But for immediate needs, an emergency plan has been implemented. It includes selling scrap, asset liquidation and overheads cost reduction. Further, to avoid any such untoward event in future, they plan to diversify into newer business areas along with its core business. Identify and explain the strategy opted by M/s. Nebula Pvt. Ltd.?</p> <p>(RTP, Nov 2020, NA)</p> <p>M/s. Nebula Pvt Ltd has opted Turnaround Strategy as the company while facing serious working capital crunch persistently conducted an assessment of current problem and developed a workable action plan based on short and long term financial needs and strategic issues. A workable action plan for turnaround would involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage One – Assessment of current problems: In the first step, assess the current problems and get to the root causes and the extent of damage. • Stage Two – Analyze the situation and develop a strategic plan: Identify major problems and opportunities, develop a strategic plan with specific goals and detailed functional actions. • Stage Three – Implementing an emergency action plan: If the organization is in a critical stage, an appropriate action plan must be developed to stop the bleeding and enable the organization to survive. • Stage Four – Restructuring the business: If the core business is irreparably damaged, then the outlook for the entire organization may be bleak. Efforts to be made to position the organization for rapid improvement. • Stage Five – Returning to normal: In the final stage of turnaround strategy process, the organization should begin to show signs of profitability, return on investments and enhancing economic value-added.
Q32.	<p>X Pvt. Ltd. had recently ventured into the business of co-working spaces when the global pandemic struck. This has resulted in the business line becoming unprofitable and unviable, and a failure of the existing strategy. However, the other businesses of X Pvt. Ltd. are relatively less affected by the pandemic as compared to the recent co-working spaces. Suggest a strategy for X Pvt. Ltd. with reasons to justify your answer.</p> <p>(SA, Jan 2021, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p>It is advisable that divestment strategy should be adopted by X Pvt. Ltd. In the given situation where the business of co-working spaces became unprofitable and unviable due to Global pandemic, the best option for the company is to divest the loss making business.</p> <p>Retrenchment may be done either internally or externally. Turnaround strategy is adopted in case of internal retrenchment where emphasis is laid on improving internal efficiency of the organization, while divestment strategy is adopted when a business turns unprofitable and unviable due to some external factors. In view of the above, the company should go for divestment strategy.</p> <p>Further, divestment helps address issues like:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Persistent cash flows from loss making segment could affect other profit-making segments, which is the case in the given scenario. 2. Inability to cope from the losses, which again is uncertain due to pandemic. 3. Better investment opportunity, which could be the case if X Pvt. Ltd. can invest the money it generates from divestment.
Q33.	<p>Mini theatre Ltd. was a startup venture of three young IIM graduates. They developed an application to watch web-based content like web series, TV Shows, theatre shows, etc. after purchasing their exclusive rights. They were successful in getting many consumers enrolled with them. After a certain span of time, the company realized that some regional content like 'bangla movies', 'Gujarati shows' etc. were having high cost and less viewership. The leadership team of Mini theatre Ltd. decided to sell the rights and curtail any further content development in these areas.</p> <p>Identify and explain the corporate strategy adopted by the leadership team of Mini theatre Ltd.</p> <p>(RTP, May 2021, NA)</p>

The leadership team of Mini theatre Ltd. decided to cut off the loss-making units, reduces the functions performed that some of regional content like 'Bangla movies', 'Gujarati shows' etc. were having high cost and less viewership, it adopts a divestment strategy. The leadership team of Mini theatre Ltd. decided to sell the rights and curtail any further content development in these areas.

Divestment strategy involves the sale or liquidation of a portion of business, or a major division, profit centre or SBU. Divestment is usually a part of **rehabilitation or restructuring** plan and is adopted when a **turnaround** has been attempted but has proved to be **unsuccessful**. The option of a turnaround may even be ignored if it is obvious that divestment is the only answer.

Q34. The CEO of a textile mill is convinced that his loss making company can be turned around. Suggest an action plan for a turnaround to the CEO.
(SA, July 2021, 5 Marks)

A workable action plan for turnaround of the textile mill would involve:

- **Stage One - Assessment of current problems:** In the first step, assess the current problems and get to the root causes and the extent of damage.
- **Stage Two - Analyze the situation and develop a strategic plan:** Identify major problems and opportunities, develop a strategic plan with specific goals and detailed functional actions after analyzing strengths and weaknesses in the areas of competitive position.
- **Stage Three - Implementing an emergency action plan:** If the organization is in a critical stage, an appropriate action plan must be developed to stop the bleeding and enable the organization to survive.
- **Stage Four - Restructuring the business:** If the core business is irreparably damaged, then the outlook for the entire organization may be bleak. Efforts to be made to position the organization for **rapid improvement**.
- **Stage Five - Returning to normal:** In the final stage of turnaround strategy process, the organization should begin to show signs of **profitability, return on investments** and enhancing economic value-added.

Q35. "There are certain conditions or indicators which point out that a turnaround is needed if the company has to survive." Discuss
(SA, Dec 2021, 5 Marks)

Rising competition, business cycles and economic volatility have created a climate where no business can take viability for granted. Turnaround strategy is a highly targeted effort to return an organization to profitability and increase positive cash flows to a sufficient level. Organizations that have faced a significant crisis that has negatively affected operations requires turnaround strategy. Turnaround strategy is used when both threats and weaknesses adversely affect the health of an organization so much that its **basic survival is a question**. When organization is facing both internal and external pressures making things difficult then it has to find something which is entirely new, innovative and different. Being organization's first objective is to survive and then grow in the market; turnaround strategy is used when organization's survival is under threat. Once turnaround is successful the organization may turn to focus on growth.

Conditions for turnaround strategies: When firms are losing their grips over market, profits due to several internal and external factors, and if they have to survive under the competitive environment, they have to identify danger signals as early as possible and undertake rectification steps immediately. These are certain conditions or indicators which point out that a turnaround is needed if the company has to survive. These **danger signals** are:

- **Persistent negative cash flow** from business.
- **Uncompetitive products or services.**
- **Declining market share.**
- **Deterioration in physical facilities.**
- **Over-staffing, high turnover of employees, and low morale.**
- **Mismanagement.**

Q36. Racers Ltd. manufactures bicycles. Until recently it has adopted a differentiation strategy, offering high quality bicycles which Racers Ltd. sells at a high profit margin. In recent years, Racers Ltd. has entered a period of decline due to the market becoming flooded with cheaper, high quality bicycles from abroad, where labour costs are lower. Racers Ltd. has therefore decided to adjust its strategy and adopt a focus approach, targeting its bicycles towards professional athletes. This will allow Racers Ltd. to continue earning high margins, though the size of its potential market will likely fall. Identify and explain the need of adopting this strategy by Racers Ltd. to manage decline?
(RTP, May 2022, NA)

	<p>Racers Ltd. has adopted Turnaround strategy. This involves Racers Ltd. repositioning itself in the market in an attempt to once again gain competitive advantage.</p> <p>Turnaround is needed when an enterprise's performance deteriorates to a point that it needs a radical change of direction in strategy, and possibly in structure and culture as well. It is a highly targeted effort to return an organization to profitability and increase positive cash flows to a sufficient level. It is used when both threats and weaknesses adversely affect the health of an organization so much that its basic survival is difficult.</p> <p>The overall goal of turnaround strategy is to return an underperforming or distressed company to normalcy in terms of acceptable levels of profitability, solvency, liquidity and cash flow. To achieve its objectives, turnaround strategy aims to reverse causes of distress, resolve the financial crisis, achieve a rapid improvement in financial performance, regain stakeholder support, and overcome internal constraints and unfavourable industry characteristics.</p>
Q37.	<p>A company started its operation in 2015 with Product Alpha. In early 2021, with intent to have its better presence in the market, the company diversifies by acquiring a company with product Beta. After sometime, it was observed that product Beta is not faring well. Aggressive competition was therein market for the product. It was also revealed that though customers are not price sensitive, but product was not keeping pace with the fast changing unique features as expected by its customers. Company has tried one of the retrenchment strategies by putting efforts to improve its internal efficiency, but could not get desired results. In the situation, company is of a considered view to remain and grow in product alpha and to decouple with product Beta from its portfolio.</p> <p>As a strategist, suggest the retrenchment strategy to be adopted by the company. Also delineate reasons why a company should adopt such strategy?</p> <p>(SA, Nov 2022, 5 Marks)</p> <p>As per the facts of the case, company had tried to improve its internal efficiency. In other words, had tried turnaround strategy but could not get the desired results. Company does not want to go for complete close down of business. Rather it wants to continue and grow in its original business i.e. product Alpha. As a strategist, it is advisable that the company should adopt divestment strategy. In the given situation where the business of product Beta is not faring well and became unprofitable and unviable due to aggressive competition in the market, the best option for the company is to divest the product Beta which is loss-making business. Retrenchment may be done either internally or externally. Turnaround strategy is adopted in case of internal retrenchment where emphasis is laid on improving internal efficiency of the organization, while divestment strategy is adopted when a business turns unprofitable and unviable due to some external factors. In view of the above, the company should go for divestment strategy.</p> <p>A divestment strategy may be adopted due to various reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a turnaround has been attempted but has proved to be unsuccessful. • A business that had been acquired proves to be a mismatch and cannot be integrated within the company. • Persistent negative cash flows from a particular business create financial problems for the whole company. • Severity of competition and the inability of a firm to cope with it. • Technological upgradation is required if the business is to survive but where it is not possible for the firm to invest in it. • A better alternative may be available for investment, causing a firm to divest a part of its unprofitable business.
Q38.	<p>Redefinition of business is involved in both "Expansion" and "Retrenchment" strategy, however, method involved in their execution is completely different. Explain.</p> <p>(RTP, May 2023, NA) (MTP1, Nov 2023, 5 Marks)</p> <p>Expansion strategy is implemented by redefining the business by adding the scope of business substantially, including the efforts of the current business. On the other hand, Retrenchment strategy involves redefinition of business by divesting a major product line or market.</p> <p>Expansion is a promising and popular strategy that tends to be equated with dynamism, vigour, promise and success. Retrenchment or retreat becomes necessary or expedient for copng with particularly hostile and adverse situations in the environment and when any other strategy is likely to be suicidal.</p> <p>Expansion may take the enterprise along relatively unknown and risky paths, full of promises and pitfalls. Retrenchment involves regrouping and recouping of the resources.</p>
Combination	
Q39.	<p>Explain the meaning of the Combination strategies.</p> <p>(RTP, May 2018, NA) (RTP, Nov 2018, NA)</p>

Combination Strategies refer to a **mix** of different strategies like stability; expansion, diversification or retrenchment to suit particular situations that an enterprise is facing. For instance, a strategy of diversification/acquisition may call for retrenchment in some obsolete product lines.

Strategic Options

- Q40. In the context of Ansoff's Product-Market Growth Matrix, identify with reasons, the type of growth strategies followed in the following cases:
- A leading producer of tooth paste, advises its customers to brush teeth twice a day to keep breath fresh.
 - A business giant in hotel industry decides to enter into dairy business.
 - One of India's premier utility vehicles manufacturing company ventures to foray into foreign markets.
 - A renowned auto manufacturing company launches ungeared scooters in the market.
- (ICAI Study Material)

The Ansoff's product market growth matrix (proposed by Igor Ansoff) is an useful tool that helps businesses decide their **product** and **market growth strategy**. This matrix further helps to analyse different strategic directions. According to Ansoff there are four strategies that organization might follow.

- Market Penetration:** A leading producer of toothpaste, advises its customers to brush teeth twice a day to keep breath fresh. It refers to a growth strategy where the business focuses on selling **existing products into existing markets**.
- Diversification:** A business giant in hotel industry decides to enter into dairy business. It refers to a growth strategy where a business markets **new product in new markets**.
- Market Development:** One of India's premier utility vehicles manufacturing company ventures to foray into foreign markets. It refers to a growth strategy where the business seeks to sell its **existing products into new markets**.
- Product Development:** A renowned auto manufacturing company launches ungeared scooters in the market. It refers to a growth strategy where business aims to introduce **new products into existing markets**.

- Q41. Describe the construction of BCG matrix and discuss its utility in strategic management.
- (ICAI Study Material)

Companies that are large enough to be organized into strategic business units face the challenge of allocating resources among those units. In the early 1970's the Boston Consulting Group developed a model for managing portfolio of different business units or major product lines. The BCG growth-share matrix facilitates portfolio analysis of a company having invested in diverse businesses with varying scope of profits and growth.

The BCG matrix can be used to determine what priorities should be given in the product portfolio of a business unit. Using the BCG approach, a company classifies its different businesses on a **two-dimensional growth share matrix**. Two dimensions are market share and market growth rate. In the matrix:

- The **vertical axis** represents **market growth rate** and provides a measure of market attractiveness.
- The **horizontal axis** represents **relative market share** and serves as a measure of company's strength in the market.

Thus, the BCG matrix depicts quadrants as shown in the following table:

		Relative Market Share	
		High	Low
Market Growth Rate	High	Stars	Question Marks
	Low	Cash Cows	Dogs

BCG Matrix

Different types of business represented by either products or SBUs can be classified for portfolio analyses through BCG matrix. They have been depicted by meaningful metaphors, namely:

- Stars** are products or SBUs that are growing rapidly. They also need **heavy investment** to maintain their position and finance their rapid growth potential. They represent **best opportunities** for expansion.

- b) **Cash Cows** are low-growth, **high market share** businesses or products. They generate cash and have low costs. They are established, successful, and need **less investment** to maintain their market share. In long run when the growth rate slows down, stars become cash cows.
- c) **Question Marks**, sometimes called problem children or wildcats, are **low market share business** in high growth markets. They require a lot of cash to hold their share. They need **heavy investments** with low potential to generate cash. Question marks if left unattended are capable of becoming cash traps. Since growth rate is high, increasing it should be relatively easier. It is for business organizations to turn them stars and then to cash cows when the growth rate reduces.
- d) **Dogs** are **low-growth, low-share** businesses and products. They may generate enough cash to maintain themselves, but do not have much future. Sometimes they may need cash to survive. Dogs should be **minimized by means of divestment or liquidation**.

The BCG matrix is useful for classification of products, SBUs, or businesses, and for selecting appropriate strategies for each type as follows.

- Build** with the aim for long-term growth and strong future.
- Hold** or preserve the existing market share.
- Harvest** or maximize short-term cash flows.
- Divest**, sell or liquidate and ensure better utilization of resources elsewhere.

Thus, BCG matrix is a powerful tool for strategic planning analysis and choice.

Q42. An industry comprises of only two firms-Soorya Ltd. and Chandra Ltd. From the following information relating to Soorya Ltd., prepare BCG Matrix:

Product	Revenues (in Rs.)	Percent Revenues	Profits (in Rs)	Percent profits	% Market share	% Industry Growth rate
A	6 crores	48	120 lakhs	48	80	+ 15
B	4 crores	32	50 lakhs	20	40	+10
C	2 crores	16	75 lakhs	30	60	-20
D	50 Lakhs	4	5 lakhs	2	5	-10
Total	12.5 crores	100	250 lakhs	100	100	

(ICAI Study Material)

Using the BCG approach, a company classifies its different businesses on a two-dimensional growth-share matrix. In the matrix, the **vertical axis** represents **market growth rate** and provides a **measure of market attractiveness**. The **horizontal axis** represents **relative market share** and serves as a **measure of company strength** in the market. With the given data on market share and industry growth rate of Soorya Ltd, its four products are placed in the BCG matrix as follows:

		Retain Market Share	
		High	Low
Market Growth Rate	High	Product A [90% Market Share + 15% Growth Rate] Stars	Product B [40% Market Share + 10% Growth Rate] Question Marks
	Low	Product C [60% Market Share - 20% Growth Rate] Cash Cows	Product D [05% Market Share - 10% Growth Rate] Dogs

Product A is in best position as it has a **high relative market share** and a high industry growth rate.

Product B has a **low relative market share**, yet competes in a high growth industry.

Product C has a **high relative market share**, but competes in an industry with negative growth rate. The company should take advantage of its present position that may be difficult to sustain in long run.

Product D is in the worst position as it has a **low relative market share**, and competes in an industry with negative growth rate.

Q43. How Ansoff's Product-Market Growth Matrix is a useful tool for business organizations?
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (MTP2, May 2019, 5 Marks) (MTP1, Nov 2021, 5 Marks)

The Ansoff's product market growth matrix (proposed by Igor Ansoff) is a useful tool that helps businesses decide their **product and market growth strategy**. With the use of this matrix a business can get a fair idea about how its growth depends in new or existing products in both new and existing markets.

Companies should always be looking to the future. Businesses that use the Ansoff matrix can determine the **best strategy**. The matrix can help them to decide how to do this by demonstrating their options clearly, breaking them down into four strategies, viz., **Market Penetration, Market Development, Product Development, Diversification**. Determining which of these is best for their business will depend on a number of variables including **available resources, infrastructure, market position, location and budget**.

Q44. Atrix Ltd. is a company engaged in the designing, manufacturing, and marketing of mechanical instruments like speed meters, oil pressure gauges, and so on. Their products are fitted into two and four wheelers. During the last couple of years, the company has been observing a fall in the market share. This is on account of shift to the new range of electronic instruments. The customers are switching away mechanical instruments that have been the backbone of Atrix Ltd. As a CEO of Atrix Ltd., what can be the strategic options available with you.
(MTP1, Nov 2018, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

Woodworld Ltd. is a company manufactures a variety of household furniture items. They offered traditional designs, low cost furniture items to low income group customers. During the last couple of years, the company has been observing a fall in the market share. This is due to the change in the taste and preferences, designing, better quality, increase in purchasing power of buyers towards the household furniture. The customers are switching away traditional designs and material that have been the backbone of Woodworld Ltd. As a CEO of Woodworld Ltd., what can be the strategic options available with you.
(RTP, Nov 2022, NA)

Atrix is having a product portfolio that is evidently in the **decline stage**. The product is being replaced with the technologically superior product. Strategically the company should minimize their dependence on the existing products and identify other avenues for the survival and growth. As a CEO of Atrix Ltd., following can be the strategic options available with the CEO:

- Invest in **new product development** and **switchover to the new technology**. Atrix Ltd. also need time to invest in emerging new technology.
- They can **acquire or takeover** a competitor provided they have or are able to generate enough financial resources.
- They may also consider **unrelated growth** and identify other areas for expansion. This will enable Atrix Ltd. to spread their risks.
- In longer run, they should **divest the existing products**. However, they may continue with the existing products in a limited manner for such time there is demand for the product.

Q45 Write a short note on the role of ADL Matrix in assessing competitive position of a firm
(RTP, May 2020, NA) (RTP, May 2022, NA)

The ADL matrix has derived its name from Arthur D. Little which is a portfolio analysis method based on **product life cycle**. The approach forms a **two dimensional matrix** based on stage of industry maturity and the firm's competitive position, environmental assessment and business strength assessment.

The role of ADL matrix is to assess the competitive position of a firm based on an assessment of the following criteria:

- **Dominant** This is a comparatively **rare position** and in many cases is attributable either to a **monopoly** or a strong and protected technological leadership.
- **Strong** By virtue of this position, the firm has a considerable degree of **freedom** over its choice of strategies and is often able to act without its market position being unduly threatened by its competitors.
- **Favourable** This position, which generally comes about when the **industry is fragmented** and no one competitor stand out clearly, results in the market leaders a reasonable degree of freedom.
- **Tenable** Although the firms within this category are able to perform **satisfactorily** and can justify staying in the industry, they are generally **vulnerable** in the face of increased competition from stronger and more proactive companies in the market.
- **Weak** The performance of firms in this category is generally **unsatisfactory** although the opportunities for improvement do exist.

Q46 Distinguish between Market Development and Product Development under Ansoff's Product Market Growth Matrix.
(MTP1, May 2021, 5 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2022, NA) (MTP2, May 2023, 5 Marks) (MTP2, Nov 2023, 5 Marks)

Following are the differences between the market development and product development:

Basis of Difference	Market Development	Product Development
Meaning	It refers to a growth strategy where the business seeks to sell its existing products into new markets . It is a strategy for company growth by identifying and developing new markets for current company products.	It refers to a growth strategy where business aims to introduce new products into existing markets . It is a strategy for company growth by offering modified or new products to current markets.
Strategy Application	It may be achieved through new geographical markets , new product dimensions or packaging , new distribution channels or different pricing policies to attract different customers or create new market segments.	It is for company's growth and requires the development of new competencies and the business to develop modified products which can appeal to existing markets.

Q47. Ajanta & Sons Limited are manufacturers of domestic household security alarms for high-income group homeowners in India. The company is currently reviewing two strategic options.

Option 1: Selling the same alarms although with different coverings to smaller and low-income group households at a lower price.

Option 2: Development of new, more sophisticated alarms and a wide range of security services (guards and surveillance) for sale to industrial clients for higher prices.

The senior management team of Ajanta & Sons Limited are keen to analyse the two options using Ansoff's Matrix.
(RTP, Nov 2021, NA)

Selling the same alarms with different coverings to smaller and low income group households at a lower price represents Market Development as the same products are being sold into a new market.

Market development refers to a growth strategy where the business seeks to sell its **existing products** into **new markets**. It is a strategy for company growth by identifying and developing new markets for the existing products of the Company.

While the development of new and more sophisticated alarms and a wide range of security services (guards and surveillance) for sale to industrial clients for higher prices is classified as Diversification because it involves a new product, being sold in a new market. Diversification refers to a growth strategy where a business markets **new products** in **new markets**. It is a strategy by starting up or acquiring businesses outside the company's current products and markets.

Q48. Explain the strategic implications of each of the following types of business in a corporate portfolio:

- (a) Stars
- (b) Question Marks
- (c) Cash Cows
- (d) Dogs

(RTP, May 2022, NA)

In the BCG growth-share matrix portfolio of investments are represented in two dimensional space. The vertical axis represents market growth rate, and the horizontal axis represents relative market share. The strategic implications for various business types under BCG in the corporate portfolio are:

Stars are products or businesses that are growing rapidly and are the **best opportunity for expansion**. Stars may follow a **build** strategy. They need **heavy investments** to maintain their position and finance their rapid growth potential.

Cash Cows are low-growth, high market share businesses or products. They generate cash and have low costs. They are established, successful, and need **less investment** to maintain their market share. Strategic alternative advocated for cash cows is **harvest**.

Question Marks are low market share business in high-growth markets. Strategic option for them is **hold** for which they need **heavy investments**. Question marks if left unattended are capable of becoming cash traps.

Dogs are low-growth, low-share businesses and products. Relevant strategy is **divest**. Dogs may generate enough cash to maintain themselves, but do not have much future. Dogs should be minimized by means of **divestment or liquidation**.

Q49. Sky chemical industry intends to grow its business. Advise the company on the available options using Ansoff's product market growth matrix.

(MTP1, May 2022, 5 Marks) (MTP2, Nov 2022, 5 Marks) (RTP, May 2023, NA)

OR

Aurobindo, the pharmaceutical company wants to grow its business. Draw Ansoff's Product Market Growth Matrix to advise them of the available options.

(ICAI Study Material)

The Ansoff's product market growth matrix (proposed by Igor Ansoff) is a useful tool that helps businesses decide their **product** and **market growth strategy**. With the use of this matrix, a business can get a fair idea about how its growth depends upon its markets in new or existing products in both new and existing markets.

The Ansoff's product market growth matrix is as follows:

	Existing Products	New Products
Existing Markets	Market Penetration	Product Development
New Markets	Market Development	Diversification

Ansoff's Product Market Growth Matrix

Sky chemical industry can adopt market penetration, product development, market development or diversification simultaneously for its different products.

Market penetration refers to a growth strategy where the business focuses on selling **existing products** into **existing markets**. It is achieved by making more sales to present customers without changing products in any major way.

Market development refers to a growth strategy where the business seeks to sell its **existing products** into **new markets**. It is a strategy for company growth by identifying and developing new markets for the existing products of the company.

Product development refers to a growth strategy where business aims to introduce **new products** into **existing markets**. It is a

strategy for company growth by offering modified or new products to current markets

Diversification refers to a growth strategy where a business markets **new products in new markets**. It is a strategy by starting up or acquiring businesses outside the company's current products and markets.

As market conditions change overtime, a company may shift product-market growth strategies. For example, when its present market is fully saturated a company may have no choice other than to pursue new market.

- Q50. ABC Corporation is a conglomerate with a diverse portfolio of businesses. One of its businesses is a well-established division in a mature and stable market. The division has maintained a high market share over the years but is experiencing slow growth due to market saturation. The management team is contemplating the best course of action for this division. How should ABC Corporation approach this division according to the BCG growth-share matrix, and what would be the rationale behind it?

(RTP, Nov 2023, NA)

According to the BCG growth-share matrix, the division in a mature and stable market falls into the "Cash Cows" category. "Cash Cows" are low-growth, high market share businesses that generate cash with low costs. The recommended approach for ABC Corporation would be to adopt the "Hold" strategy. This means the company should preserve the market share of the division and continue generating cash with low costs. Since the market is mature and growth opportunities are limited, the division's focus should be on maintaining profitability and using the generated cash to support other high-potential businesses within the conglomerate. By holding onto the "Cash Cow" division, ABC can leverage its stability and cash flow to invest strategically in other areas of the business for future growth and innovation.

	Existing Products	New Products
Existing Markets	Market Penetration	Product Development
New Markets	Market Development	Diversification

Ansoff's Product Market Growth Matrix

Sky chemical industry can adopt market penetration, product development, market development or diversification simultaneously for its different products.

Market penetration refers to a growth strategy where the business focuses on selling **existing products into existing markets**. It is achieved by making more sales to present customers without changing products in any major way.

Market development refers to a growth strategy where the business seeks to sell its **existing products into new markets**. It is a strategy for company growth by identifying and developing new markets for the existing products of the company.

Product development refers to a growth strategy where business aims to introduce **new products into existing markets**. It is a strategy for company growth by offering modified or new products to current markets.

Diversification refers to a growth strategy where a business markets **new products in new markets**. It is a strategy by starting up or acquiring businesses outside the company's current products and markets.

As market conditions change overtime, a company may shift product-market growth strategies. For example, when its present market is fully saturated a company may have no choice other than to pursue new market.

Part II: Correct/Incorrect Questions

- Q1. Turnaround should succeed liquidation strategy.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

The statement is Incorrect.

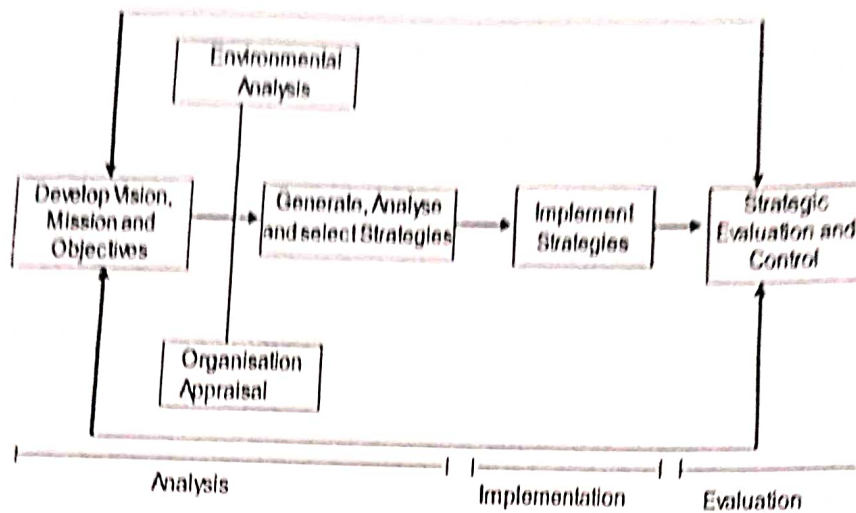
Chapter 5 - Strategy Implementation and Evaluation

Part I : Descriptive Questions

Strategic Management Model

Q1	<p>Describe the principal aspects of strategy execution process, which are included in most situations. (SA, May 2018, 5 Marks) (MTP1, Nov 2020, 5 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>To convert strategic plans into actions and results, a manager must be able to direct organizational change, motivate people, build and strengthen company competencies and competitive capabilities, create a strategy supportive work climate, and meet or beat performance targets.</p> <p>Explain the principal aspects of strategy execution process. (RTR Nov 2018, NA) (MTP1, May 2019, 5 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Strategy execution is an operations-oriented activity which involves a good fit between strategy and organizational capabilities, structure, climate & culture. Enumerate the principal aspects of strategy execution process which are used in most of the situations. (SA, Jan 2021, 5 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Explain the principal aspects of the strategy-execution process. (RTR Nov 2021, NA)</p> <hr/> <p>Implementation or execution is an operations-oriented activity aimed at shaping the performance of core business activities in a strategy-supportive manner. To convert strategic plans into actions and results, a manager must be able to direct organizational change, motivate people, build and strengthen company's competencies and competitive capabilities, create a strategy-supportive work culture, and meet or beat performance targets. Good strategy execution involves creating strong "fits" between strategy and organizational capabilities, structure, climate & culture.</p> <p>In most situations, strategy-execution process includes the following principal aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing budgets that steer ample resources into those activities that are critical to strategic success. • Staffing the organization with the needed skills and expertise, consciously building and strengthening strategy-supportive competencies and competitive capabilities, and organizing the work effort. • Ensuring that policies and operating procedures facilitate rather than impede effective execution. • Using the best-known practices to perform core business activities and pushing for continuous improvement. • Installing information and operating systems that enable company personnel to better carry out their strategic roles day in and day out. • Motivating people to pursue the target objectives energetically. • Creating culture and climate conducive to successful strategy implementation and execution. • Exerting the internal leadership needed to drive implementation forward and keep improving strategy execution. When the organization encounters stumbling blocks or weaknesses, management has to see that they are addressed and rectified quickly.
Q2	<p>Present a diagrammatic representation of a Strategic Management model. (SA, Nov 2018, 2 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>With the help of a model explain strategic management process. (RTR Nov 2019, NA)</p> <hr/> <p>Identifying an organization's vision, mission, goals and objectives, is the starting point for strategic management process. The strategic management process is dynamic and continuous. A change in any one of the major components in the model can necessitate a change in any or all of the other components.</p> <p>Therefore, strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation activities should be performed on a continual basis, not just at the end of the year or semi-annually.</p>

Formulating, implementing, and evaluating strategies are the major components of the strategic management that are represented in the following model



The strategic management process is not as cleanly divided and neatly performed in practice. Strategists do not go through the process in lockstep fashion. Generally, there is give-and-take among hierarchical levels of an organization. Many organizations conduct formal meetings semi-annually to discuss and update the firm's vision/mission, opportunities/threats, strengths/weaknesses, strategies, objectives, policies, and performance. Creativity from participants is encouraged in meeting. Good communication and **feedback** are needed throughout the strategic management process.

Strategic Planning

- Q3. How a company can deal with strategic uncertainty?
(RTP, May 2018, NA) (MTP 1, Nov 2018, 3 Marks)

Strategic uncertainty denotes the **uncertainty** that has crucial implications for the organisation. An approach to deal with strategic uncertainty is by **grouping** them into **logical clusters** or themes. It is then useful to **assess** the **importance** of each **cluster** in order to set priorities with respect to **Information gathering** and **analysis**.

- Q4. Differentiate between Strategic Planning and Operational Planning.
(RTP, May 2022, NA) (MTP2, Nov 2023, NA)

Difference between Strategic Planning and Operational Planning:

Strategic Planning	Operational planning
Strategic planning shapes the organisation and its resources .	Operational planning deals with current deployment of resources.
Strategic planning assesses the impact of environmental variables .	Operational planning develops tactics rather than strategy .
Strategic planning takes a holistic view of the organisation.	Operational planning projects current operations into the future.
Strategic planning develops overall objectives and strategies .	Operational planning makes modifications to the business functions but not fundamental changes .
Strategic planning is concerned with the long-term success	Operational planning is concerned with the short-term

of the organization	Definition of the organization
Strategic planning is a senior management responsibility	Responsibility is given to the responsibility of senior management

Strategic planning is an important responsibility of senior management in the light of the same reason the meaning of strategic planning also carries the responsibility of strategic planning.

(SA, May 2019, 5 Marks)

Yes, strategic planning is an important responsibility of senior management. It is a process of determining organizational strategy. It gives directions to the organization and involves making decisions and allocating resources to pursue the strategy. It is the future blueprint of future action of an organization.

Strategic plans are made by the senior management for the entire organization that carry out the organization's strategy and objectives in the light of opportunities and threats in the external environment. They involve structure and allocation of resources for the achievement of organizational objectives.

Strategic planning deals with the following questions:

- What are we doing?
- For whom are we doing?
- How is it going and what?

Following are the characteristics of strategic planning:

- Strategic planning shapes the organization and its resources.
- Strategic planning assesses the impact of environmental variables.
- Strategic planning takes a holistic view of the organization.
- Strategic planning defines critical objectives and strategies.
- Strategic planning is consistent with the long-term success of the organization.
- Strategic planning is a senior management responsibility.

Strategy Formulation and Implementation

Q6 HQ is a service company. Two years back the company hired a reputed management consultant to formulate its strategy. The consultant recommended an aggressive expansion plan. Now in an internal review meeting the company finds that many of the suggestions are not even fully considered.

Which part of strategic management process is missing in HQ?

(RTP, May 2019, IIA) (IATP2, May 2019, 5 Marks)

Strategy implementation is missing in HQ. Implementation is the managerial exercise of putting a chosen strategy into action. It deals with the managerial exercise of supervising the ongoing pursuit of strategy, making it work, improving the competence with which it is executed and showing measurable progress in achieving the targeted results.

Strategic implementation is concerned with translating a strategic decision into action, which presupposes that the decision itself (i.e., the strategic choice) was made with some thought being given to feasibility and acceptability. The allocation of resources to new courses of action will need to be undertaken, and there may be a need for adapting the organization's structure to handle new activities as well as training personnel and devising appropriate systems.

It is crucial to realize the difference between the formulation and implementation because they both require very different skills. Also, a company will be successful only when the strategy formulation is sound and implementation is excellent.

Q7 Distinguish between Strategy Formulation and Strategy Implementation.

(SA, May 2019, 3 Marks) (IATP1, May 2021, 5 Marks) (IATP1, Nov 2021, 5 Marks) (IATP1, May 2023, 5 Marks)

Strategy Formulation <i>→ time</i>	Strategy Implementation <i>→ quality</i>
Strategy formulation focuses on effectiveness .	Strategy implementation focuses on efficiency .
Strategy formulation is primarily an intellectual process.	Strategy implementation is primarily an operational process.
Strategy formulation requires conceptual intuitive and analytical skills	Strategy implementation requires motivation and leadership skills.
Strategy formulation requires coordination among the executives at the top level.	Strategy implementation requires coordination among the executives at the middle and lower levels.

Q8

"Strategy formulation and strategy implementation are intertwined and linked with each other." Elucidate this statement with suitable arguments.

(SA, May 2022, 5 Marks)

The strategy formulation and strategy implementation are intertwined and linked with each other. Two types of linkages exist between these two phases of strategic management. The forward linkages deal with the impact of **strategy formulation on strategy implementation** while the backward linkages are concerned with the impact in the opposite direction.

Forward Linkages: The different elements in strategy formulation starting with objective setting through environmental and organizational appraisal, strategic alternatives and choice to the strategic plan determine the course that an organization adopts for itself. With the formulation of new strategies, or reformulation of existing strategies, many changes have to be affected within the organization. For instance, the organizational structure has to undergo a change in the light of the requirements of the modified or new strategy. The style of leadership has to be adapted to the needs of the modified or new strategies. In this way, the formulation of strategies has forward linkages with their implementation.

Backward Linkages: Just as implementation is determined by the formulation of strategies, the formulation process is also affected by factors related with implementation. While dealing with strategic choice, remember that past strategic actions also determine the choice of strategy. Organizations tend to adopt those strategies which can be implemented with the help of the present structure of resources combined with some additional efforts. Such incremental changes, over a period of time, take the organization from where it is to where it wishes to be. It is to be noted that while strategy formulation is primarily an **entrepreneurial activity**, based on strategic decision-making, the implementation of strategy is mainly an **administrative task** based on strategic as well as operational decision-making.

- Q9. ABC Ltd. is a shoe manufacturing company. The strategic manager of ABC Ltd. is Ms. Suman. Ms. Suman hired the best designers she could find online for her ethnic shoe brand but later she found that the designers were better at leather designs. Identify and explain linkage in the given situation as she had to change her strategy basis the actual resources she had?
(MTP1, Nov 2022, 5 Marks) (RTP, Nov 2023, NA)

The strategy formulation and strategy implementation are intertwined and linked with each other. Two types of linkages exist between these two phases of strategic management. The forward linkages deal with the impact of **strategy formulation on strategy implementation** while the backward linkages are concerned with the impact in the opposite direction.

In the given situation Ms. Suman has to follow **Backward Linkages** as she had to change her strategy basis the actual resources she had. While dealing with strategic choice, remember that past strategic actions also determine the choice of strategy. Organizations tend to adopt those strategies which can be implemented with the help of the present structure of resources combined with some additional efforts. Such incremental changes, over a period of time, take the organization from where it is to where it wishes to be.

Strategic Change

- Q10. Define Refreezing in Kurt Lewin's change process.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

	<p>Kurt Lewin proposed three phases of the change process – Unfreezing, changing and then refreezing. Refreezing occurs when the new behaviour becomes a normal way of life. The new behaviour must replace the former behaviour completely for successful and permanent change to take place. It may be achieved through continuous reinforcement.</p>
Q11.	<p>Define strategic change. Explain the various stages/phases of change process as propounded by Kurt Lewin. (MTP1, May 2018, 7 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Write a short note on strategic change and explain the process of strategic change. (SA, Nov 2018, 7 Marks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>What is strategic change. Explain the change process proposed by Kurt Lewin that can be useful in implementing strategies. (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p>The changes in the environmental forces often require businesses to make modifications in their existing strategies and bring out new strategies. Strategic change is a complex process that involves a corporate strategy focused on new markets, products, services and new ways of doing business.</p> <p>Three steps for initiating strategic change are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the need for change – The first step is to diagnose which facets of the present corporate culture are strategy supportive and which are not. Create a shared vision to manage change – Objectives of both individuals and organisation should coincide. There should be no conflict between them. This is possible only if the management and the organisation members follow a shared vision. Institutionalise the change – This is an action stage which requires the implementation of the changed strategy. Creating and sustaining a different attitude towards change is essential to ensure that the firm does not slip back into old ways of doing things. <p>Kurt Lewin proposed three phases of the change process for moving the organization from the present to the future.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Unfreezing the situation – The process of unfreezing makes the individuals or organisations aware of the necessity for change and prepares them for it. The change should not come as a surprise to the members of the organisation. Sudden and unannounced change would be socially destructive and morale lowering. Changing to new situation – once unfreezing is complete and members of the organisation recognize the need for change, then their behaviour patterns need to be redefined as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance– enforcing reward and punishment strategy for good or bad behaviour Identification–members are psychologically impressed to identify themselves with some given role models whose behaviour they would like to adopt. Internalisation - involves some internal changing of the individual's thought process. They are given the freedom to learn and adopt new behaviour. Refreezing – occurs when the new behaviour becomes a normal way of life. The new behaviour must replace the former behaviour completely for successful and permanent change. This can be achieved by continuously reinforcing the newly acquired behaviour. <p>Change process is not a one-time application but a continuous process due to dynamism and ever-changing environment.</p>
Q12.	<p>Dr. Raman has been running a nursing home for about twenty two years now, and has gained enormous name for his benevolence in Baram district of Chhattisgarh. Recently, his daughter, Dr. Radhika completed her medicine degree from the United States of America and returned to her hometown to be a part of her father's practice. She has been given the baton to promote modern medicine and retain the local skilled youth in their practice. However, their nursing home's skilled youth has been more inclined to <u>E-Commerce employment opportunities</u>. Dr. Radhika has taken it as a challenge to imbibe the very essence of <u>service</u> in them, by being employed as <u>nurses</u> and <u>caretakers</u> of the ill. This shall be very crucial in growing the practice as <u>desired</u>. Which of the following phases of Kurt Lewin's Model of Change will be most challenging for Dr. Radhika to strategically positioning her father's nursing home? (MTP1, May 2020, 5 Marks)</p> <p>Kurt Lewin's Model of Change proposes three phases of change process to make the change lasting.</p> <p>They are <u>Compliance</u>, <u>Identification</u> and <u>Internalization</u>.</p>

For Dr. Radhika, Compliance and Identification will not a big challenge, as her father has been one of the most sort after personalities serving the ill in their district. And her return from the USA to serve her country, especially her district, will help the workforce identify her as a role model and there would actually be no need for compliance, i.e. Reward and Punishment for bringing about a change.

However, the new lucrative E-Commerce employment opportunities will have to be fought through Internalization, i.e. internal changing of the individual's **thought process**, to give them **freedom to learn and succeed**. Thus, Internalization will be the most challenging phase.

Q13

Discuss three methods for reassigning new patterns of behavior as proposed by H.C. Kellman.
(RTP, Nov 2020, NA)

H.C. Kellman has proposed three methods for reassigning new patterns of behaviour. These are compliance, identification and internalisation.

- **Compliance:** It is achieved by strictly enforcing the **reward and punishment** strategy for good or bad behaviour. Fear of punishment, actual punishment or actual reward seems to change behaviour for the better.
- **Identification:** Identification occurs when members are **psychologically impressed** upon to identify themselves with some given role models whose behaviour they would like to adopt and try to become like them.
- **Internalization:** Internalization involves some internal changing of the individual's **thought processes** in order to adjust to a new environment. They have given **freedom to learn and adopt** new behaviour in order to succeed in the new set of circumstances.

Q14.

Connect Group was one of the leading makers of the mobile handsets till a few years ago and which went at the bottom of the heap. Connect Group didn't adapt to the current market trends which eventually lead to its downfall. Which would have helped Connect Group to change, adapt and survive? Explain the steps to initiate the change.

(RTP, Nov 2021, NA)

OR

Explain the steps for initiating strategic change.

(MTP1, May 2022, 5 Marks)

OR

Changes in environmental forces often require businesses to make modifications in their existing strategies. In view of the same explain the areas to be focused while considering concept of strategic change. Also explain the steps to initiate strategic change process.

(SA, May 2023, 5 Marks)

Connect Group has to do strategic change for its survival. The changes in the environmental forces often require businesses to make **modifications** in their existing strategies and bring out new strategies. Strategic change is a **complex** process that involves a corporate strategy focused on new markets, products, services and new ways of doing business. Unless companies embrace change, they are likely to be freeze and unless companies prepare to deal with sudden, unpredictable, discontinuous, and radical change, they are likely to be extinct.

Three steps for initiating strategic change are:

- Recognise the need for change** – The first step is to **diagnose** the which facets of the present corporate culture are strategy supportive and which are not.
- Create a shared vision to manage change** – Objectives of both individuals and organisation should **coincide**. There should be **no conflict** between them. This is possible only if the management and the organisation members follow a **shared vision**.
- Institutionalise the change** – This is an **action** stage which requires the **implementation** of the changed strategy. Creating and sustaining a different attitude towards change is essential to ensure that the firm does not slip back into old ways of doing things.

Q15.

Glassware Ltd. is about to go through a significant restructuring. The strategic change involves moving from a decentralized to a centralized structure. This will help Glassware avoid duplication of support activities and lower its costs. The management have held the first staff briefing in which they went to great lengths to explain that the change was necessary to equip the company to face future competitive challenges. Identify and explain the current stage of Glassware Ltd. from the Lewin's three-stage model of change?

(RTP, May 2022, NA)

Glassware Ltd. is currently in the 'unfreezing' stage, where management is attempting to explain the need for change in an attempt to maximize buy-in by employees and reduce the amount of resistance.

Unfreezing the situation: The process of unfreezing simply makes the individuals **aware** of the necessity for change and **prepares them** for such a change. Lewin proposes that the changes should not come as a surprise to the members of the organization. Sudden and unannounced change would be socially destructive and morale lowering. The management must **pave the way** for the change by first "unfreezing the situation", so that members would be willing and ready to accept the change.

Unfreezing is the process of breaking down the old attitudes and behaviours, customs and traditions so that they start with a clean slate. This can be achieved by making announcements, holding meetings and promoting the new ideas throughout the organization.

Q16. XYZ Ltd. is an automobile company that offers diversified products for all customer segments. Due to COVID-19, the changes took place in the economy forced the company to change its strategy. Being the CEO of the company, what stages will you follow for developing and executing the new strategy?
(SA, May 2022, 5 Marks)

Today, India has become the outsourcing hub for many of the global automobile manufacturers. The auto industry comprises of four segments which are passenger vehicles, commercial vehicles, three wheelers and two wheelers. XYZ Ltd. is an automobile company that offers diversified products for all customer segments. The company has already in existence, so it has its own vision, mission and a strategy to execute for achieving its vision. While developing and executing the strategy, XYZ Ltd. might have followed the five-stage managerial process as given below:

1. Developing a **strategic vision**.
2. **Environmental and organisational analysis**.
3. **Formulation of strategy**.
4. **Implementing and executing the strategy**.
5. **Strategic evaluation and control**.

But due to COVID-19, the automobile industry has faced the lockdown situation. Changes in the economy forced the XYZ Ltd. to change its existing strategy and prepare the new strategy. The changes in the environmental forces due to COVID-19 requires XYZ Ltd. to make **modifications** in their existing strategies and bring out new strategies. For initiating strategic change, three steps can be followed by the CEO of the company which are as under:

- i) **Recognize the need for change:** This is the first step to **diagnose** facets of the corporate culture that are strategy supportive or not. This has already identified by the XYZ Ltd.
- ii) **Create a shared vision to manage change:** Objectives and vision of both individuals and organization should **coincide**. The CEO of XYZ Ltd. need to constantly and consistently communicate the vision not only to inform but also to **overcome resistance**.
- iii) **Institutionalize the change:** Creating and sustaining a different attitude towards change is essential to ensure that the XYZ Ltd. does not slip back into old ways of thinking or doing things. All these changes should be set up as a practice to be followed by the company and be able to transfer from one level to another as a well settled practice.

Organisational Structure

Q17. Explain the concept of Network structure.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

OR

"A network structure is suited to unstable environment." Elucidate this statement
(RTP, May 2022, NA)

OR

Due to reoccurrence of various variants of Corona virus, LMN Ltd. is facing unstable environment and it has started unbundling and disintegrating its activities. It also started relying on outside vendors for performing these activities. Identify the organisation structure LMN Ltd. is shifting to. Under what circumstances this structure becomes useful?
(SA, May 2022, 5 Marks)

OR

(P)

"Samar Electronics Limited" is engaged in manufacturing and sale of consumer electronic goods globally. The company is rated 'best' in 'customer satisfaction survey' for 5 years in a row. The spread of the current pandemic has affected the internal and external environment of the company adversely. Such adverse impact has negatively impacted the revenue of the company. In order to survive and retain the business, the company decided to outsource a major part of its organisational activities, like manufacturing, distribution channels, after sales service etc. Now the organisation's business functions are scattered worldwide with a small headquarter connected to independent business units digitally.

What type of organisational structure is the company transitioning into? List the basic features of this new structure and the disadvantages that the company may face in future in this new structural arrangement.

(RTP, Nov 2022, NA)

Samar Electronics Limited transitioning into **network structure**. It is a newer and somewhat more radical organisational design. Its essential features are as follows:

1. It is termed as "**non-structure**" as it eliminates in house functions and outsources many of them.
2. An organisation organised in this manner is often called "**virtual organisation**" because it is composed of a series of project groups or collaborations linked by constantly changing nonhierarchical, cob-web like structures.
3. Network structures become most useful when the environment of a firm is **unstable** and is expected to remain so. Under such conditions, there is usually a strong need for innovation and quick response.
4. Instead of having salaried employees, it may contract with people for a specific project or length of time.
5. Long term contracts with suppliers and distributors replace services that company could provide for itself.

However, network structure does have following disadvantages that the company may face in future:

1. The availability of **numerous potential partners** can be a source of trouble.
2. **Co-ordination** among the functioning of business partners is perhaps, the biggest problem for the management in the networking structure.
3. Employees may **lack the level of confidence** necessary to participate actively in organisation sponsored learning experiences.

Q18.

SH.P

Write short note on Characteristics of strategic business unit (SBU).

(MTP2, May 2018, 3 Marks)

OR

Explain strategic business unit (SBUs).

(RTP, Nov 2018, NA)

OR

What is a strategic business unit? What are its advantages?

(RTP, May 2020, NA) (MTP1, May 2020, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

Moonlight Private Limited deals in multi-products and multi-businesses. It has its own set of competitors. It seems impractical for the company to provide separate strategic planning treatment to each one of its product or businesses. As a strategic manager, suggest the type of structure best suitable for Moonlight Private Limited and state its benefits.

(SA, Jan 2021, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

How the 'Strategic Business Unit (SBU), structure becomes imperative in an organization with increase in number, size and diversity of divisions?

(RTP, May 2022, NA)

OR

Write short note on Strategic Business Unit (SBU).

(SA, Nov 2022, 5 Marks)

SBU is a part of a large business organization that is **treated separately** for strategic management purposes. It is separate part of large business serving product markets with readily identifiable competitors. It is created by adding another level of management in a divisional structure after the divisions have been grouped under a divisional top management authority based on the common strategic interests. Very large organizations, particularly those running into several products, or operating at distant geographical locations that are extremely diverse in terms of environmental factors, can be better managed by creating strategic business units. SBU structure becomes imperative in an organization with increase in number, size and diversity.

The three most important characteristics of SBU are:

- It is a **single business or a collection of related businesses** which offer scope for independent planning and which might feasibly stand alone from the rest of the organization.
- It has its **own set of competitors**
- It has a manager who has responsibility for strategic planning and profit performance. He has control of profit-influencing factors.

Benefits of SBU are:

- Establishing **coordination** between divisions having common strategic interests.
- **Facilitates** strategic management and control on large and diverse organizations.
- Fixes **accountabilities** at the level of distinct business units.
- Allows **strategic planning** to be done at the most relevant level within the total enterprise.
- Makes the task of strategic review by top executives **more objective and more effective**.
- Helps **allocate corporate resources** to areas with greatest growth opportunities.

Thus, an SBU structure with its set of advantages would be most suitable for the company with the given diverse businesses having separate identifiable competitors, but a common organizational goal.

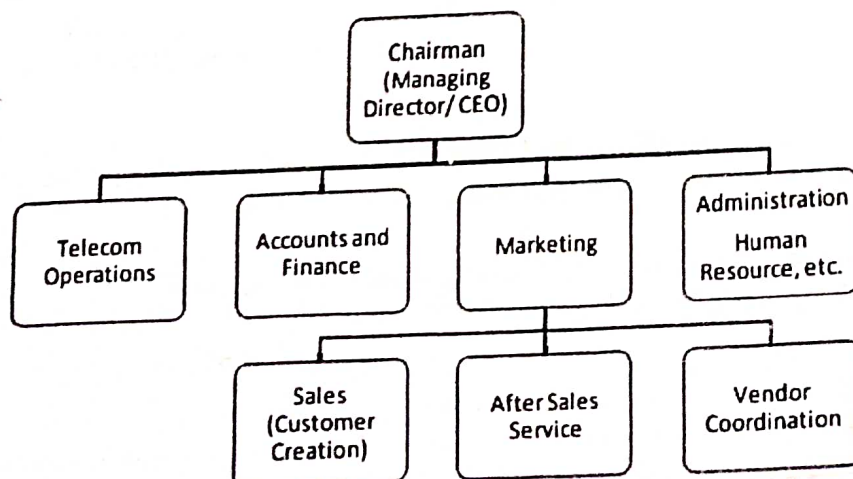
Q19. Davis and Lawrence have proposed three distinct phases to develop matrix structure. Explain.
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA)

For development of matrix structure; Davis and Lawrence have proposed three distinct phases:

- **Cross-functional task forces:** Temporary cross-functional task forces are initially used when a **new product line** is being introduced. A project manager is in charge as the key horizontal link.
- **Product/brand management:** If the cross-functional task forces become more permanent, the project manager becomes a product or brand manager and a second phase begins. In this arrangement, function is still the primary organizational structure, but product or brand managers act as the **integrators** of semi-permanent products or brands.
- **Mature matrix:** The third and final phase of matrix development involves a true **dual- authority structure**. Both the functional and product structures are permanent. All employees are connected to both a vertical functional superior and a horizontal product manager.

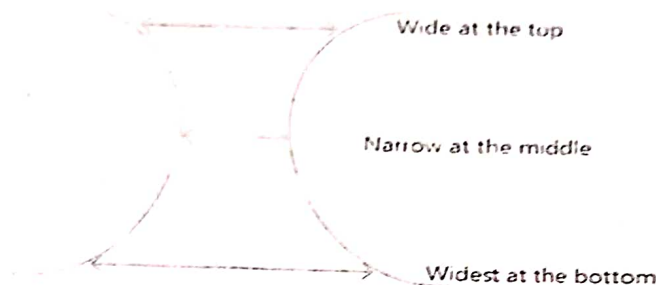
Q20. Manoj started his telecom business in 2010. Over next five years, he gradually hired fifty people for various activities such as to keep his accounts, administration, sell his products in the market, create more customers, provide after sales service, coordinate with vendors.
Draw the organization structure Manoj should implement in his organization and name it.
(SA, Nov 2018, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

Manoj has started a telecom business. **Accounts, Administration, Marketing** (customer creation, after sales service, vendor coordination) are the functional areas that are desired in the organisational structure. Further there is inherent need to have a department for the management of telecom services/ operations.
Thus, the **functional structure** in the telecom business of Manoj can be as follows:



- Q21. Delta is an organization specializing in Information Technology enables Services (ITeS) and Communications business. Previous year the organization had successfully integrated an Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool named 'Zeus' into the existing ERP system. The AI tool using Deep Learning technique provided a digital leap transformation in various business processes and operations. It has significantly diminished the role played by specialist managers of the middle management. This technological tool in addition to saving organisational costs by replacing many tasks of the middle management, has also served as a link between top and bottom levels in the organization and assists in faster decision making. The skewed middle level managers now perform cross-functional duties. Which type of organisational structure is the company transitioning into? (RTP, Nov 2020, NA) (MTP1, Nov 2020, 5 Marks)

The company Delta is transitioning into the **Hourglass organization structure** because it has used **technological tools** to transform various business processes and operations and has significantly **diminished** the role played by specialist managers of the **middle management**. The technological tool in addition to **savings organisational costs** by replacing many tasks of the middle management has also served as a **link between top and bottom levels** in the organization and assists in faster decision making. The skewed middle level managers now perform **cross-functional duties**. All these factors indicate towards Hourglass organization structure.



- Q22. Elucidate Matrix Structure (SA, Jan 2021, 5 Marks)

OR

Write a short note on Matrix structure. (RTP, Nov 2023, NA)

In matrix structure, functional and product forms are combined simultaneously at the same level of the organization. Employees have **two superiors**, a product / project manager and a functional manager. The "home" department - that is, engineering, manufacturing, or marketing - is usually functional and is reasonably permanent. People from these functional units are often assigned temporarily to one or more product units or Projects.

The product units / projects are usually temporary and act like divisions in that they are differentiated on a product-market basis. The matrix structure may be very appropriate when organizations conclude that neither functional nor divisional forms, even when combined with horizontal linking mechanisms like strategic business units, are right for the implementation of their strategies. Matrix structure was developed to combine the stability of the functional structure with flexibility of the product form. It is very useful when the external environment (especially its technological and market aspects) is **very complex and changeable**.

A matrix structure is most complex of all designs because it depends upon both vertical and horizontal flows of authority and communication. It may result in higher overhead costs due to more management positions.

The matrix structure is often found in an organization when the following three conditions exist:

1. Ideas need to be cross-fertilized across projects or products;
2. Resources are scarce; and
3. Abilities to process information and to make decisions need to be improved.

- Q23. Discuss the concept of Multi Divisional Structure. (RTP, May 2019, NA) (MTP 2, May 2019, 5 Marks)

OR

Bunch Pvt Ltd is dealing in multiproduct like electronics and FMCG and are having outlets in different cities and markets across India. Due to scale of operation, it is having technical difficulty in dealing with distinct product line and markets

especially in coordination and control related problems. Identify and suggest an ideal organizational structure for Bunch Pvt Ltd in resolving the problem?
(RTP, Nov 2021, NA) (MTP1, May 2023, 5 Marks)

To deal with the problems facing by the Bunch Pvt Ltd., we suggest **Multi divisional structure** for the organisation. Multidivisional (M form) structure is composed of **operating divisions** where each division represents a **separate business** to which the top corporate officer delegates responsibility for day-to-day operations and business unit strategy to division managers. By such delegation, the corporate office is responsible for formulating and implementing overall corporate strategy and manages divisions through strategic and financial controls.

Multidivisional or M-form structure was developed in the 1920s, in response to coordination- and control-related problems in large firms. Functional departments often had difficulty dealing with distinct product lines and markets, especially in coordinating conflicting priorities among the products. Costs were not allocated to individual products, so it was not possible to assess an individual product's profit contribution. Loss of control meant that optimal allocation of firm resources between products was difficult (if not impossible). Top managers became over-involved in solving short-run problems (such as coordination, communications, conflict resolution) and neglected long-term strategic issues.

Multidivisional structure calls for:

- Creating **separate divisions**, each representing a distinct business.
- Each division would house its **functional hierarchy**.
- Division managers would be given responsibility for **managing day-to-day operations**.
- A small corporate office that would determine the **long-term strategic direction** of the firm and exercise overall **financial control** over the semi-autonomous divisions.

Q24. What is an Hourglass structure? How is it beneficial for an organization?
(SA, May 2019, 3 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

Discuss the concept of Hourglass Structure
(RTP, Nov 2019, NA)

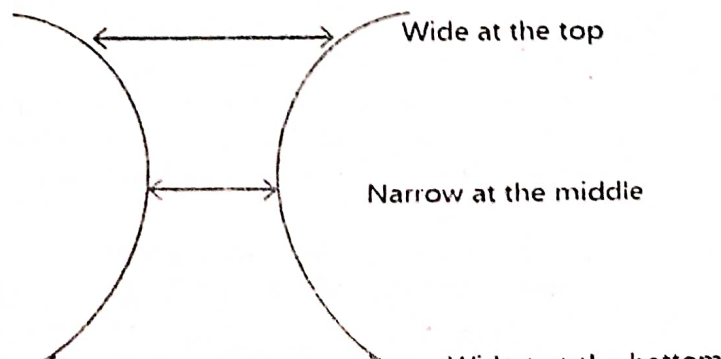
OR

Maadhyam, a hearing aid manufacturer recently introduced an AI based management tool in its organization which are having the qualities and capabilities of managing teams across functions. This technological tool in addition to saving organisational costs by replacing many tasks of the middle management has also served as a link between top and bottom levels in the organisation and assists in quick decision making. The skewed middle level managers now perform cross-functional duties. What could be their new organizational structure post implementation of AI based management tool? How can this structure benefit the organization?

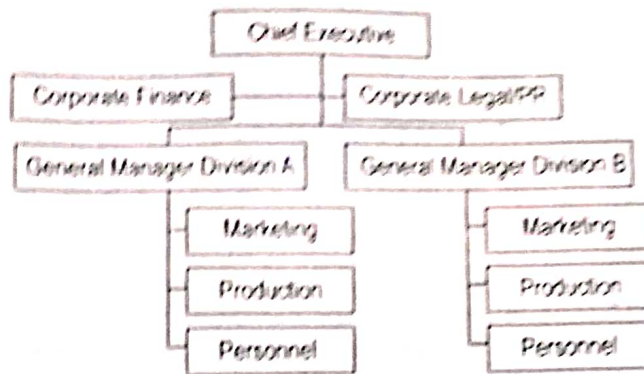
(MTP1, Nov 2021, 5 Marks)

In the recent years information technology and communications have significantly altered the functioning of organizations. The role played by **middle management** is **diminishing** as the tasks performed by them are increasingly being **replaced by the technological tools**. Hourglass organization structure consists of **three layers** in an organisation structure with **constricted middle layer**. The structure has a **short and narrow middle management level**.

Information technology links the top and bottom levels in the organization taking away many tasks that are performed by the middle level managers. A **shrunk middle layer** coordinates diverse lower level activities.



	Hourglass structure has obvious benefit of reduced costs . It also helps in enhancing responsiveness by simplifying decision making. Decision making authority is shifted close to the source of information so that it is faster . However, with the reduced size of middle management, the promotion opportunities for the lower levels diminish significantly.
Q25.	<p>A Chennai based fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) major CDE Ltd. recently announced restructuring its business. The company indicated that the business would be split into mainly four different streams- FMCG, E-commerce, Retail and Research and development. The company management has decided that these four units will operate as separate businesses. The top corporate officer shall delegate responsibility for day to day operations and business unit strategy to the concerned managers.</p> <p>Identify the organization structure that CDE Ltd. has planned to implement. Discuss any four attributes and the benefits the firm may derive by using this organization structure.</p> <p>(SA, Dec 2021, 5 Marks)</p> <p>CDE Ltd. has planned to implement a Strategic Business Unit (SBU) structure. Very large organisations, particularly those running into several products, or operating at distant geographical locations that are extremely diverse in terms of environmental factors, can be better managed by creating strategic business units. SBU structure becomes imperative in an organisation with increase in number, size and diversity.</p> <p>The attributes of an SBU and the benefits a firm may derive by using the SBU Structure are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A scientific method of grouping the businesses of a multi – business corporation which helps the firm in strategic planning. • An improvement over the territorial grouping of businesses and strategic planning based on territorial units. • Strategic planning for SBU is distinct from rest of businesses. Products/ businesses within an SBU receive same strategic planning treatment and priorities. • Each SBU will have its own distinct set of competitors and its own distinct strategy. • The CEO of SBU will be responsible for strategic planning for SBU and its profit performance. • Products/businesses that are related from the stand point of function are assembled together as a distinct SBU. • Unrelated products/ businesses in any group are separated into separate SBUs. • Grouping the businesses on SBU lines helps in strategic planning by removing the vagueness and confusion. • Each SBU is a separate business and will be distinct from one another on the basis of mission, objectives etc.
Q26.	<p>What do you understand by functional structure?</p> <p>(MTP1, May 2022, 5 Marks)</p> <p>Functional structure is widely used because of its simplicity and low cost. A functional structure groups tasks and activities by business function.</p> <p>The functional structure consists of a chief executive officer or a managing director and limited corporate staff with functional line managers in dominant functions such as production, accounting, marketing, R&D, engineering, and human resources. Disadvantages of a functional structure are that it forces accountability to the top, minimizes career development opportunities, etc.</p>
Q27.	<p>Draw 'Divisional Structure' with the help of a diagram. Also, give advantages and disadvantages of this structure in brief.</p> <p>(SA, Nov 2020, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)</p> <p>Divisional structure is that organizational structure which is based on extensive delegation of authority and built on division basis. The divisional structure can be organized in one of the four ways: by geographic area, by product or service, by customer, or by process. With a divisional structure, functional activities are performed both centrally and in each division separately.</p>



Advantages of divisional structure

- **Accountability is clear:** Divisional managers can be held responsible for sales and profit levels. Because a divisional structure is based on extensive delegation of authority, managers and employees can easily see the results of their good or bad performances and thus their morale is high.
- **Other advantages:** It creates career development opportunities for managers, allows local control of local situations, leads to a competitive climate within an organization, and allows new businesses and products to be added easily.

Disadvantages of divisional structure

- **Higher cost:** Owing to following reasons: (i). requires qualified functional specialist at different divisions and needed centrally (at headquarters); (ii). It requires an elaborate, headquarters – driven control system.
- **Conflicts between divisional managers:** Certain regions, products, or customers may sometimes receive special treatment, and it may be difficult to maintain consistent, company-wide practices.

Organisation Culture

Q28. Write short note on Importance of corporate culture.
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA)

A culture where creativity, embracing change, and challenging the status quo are pervasive is very **conductive** to successful execution of a product innovation and technological leadership strategy. A culture built around such business principles as listening to customers, encouraging employees to take pride in their work, and giving employees a high degree of **decision making responsibility** is very conducive to successful execution of a strategy of delivering superior customer service.

A strong strategy-supportive culture nurtures and **motivates** people to do their jobs in ways conducive to **effective strategy execution**; it provides structure, **standards**, and a value system in which to operate; and it promotes **strong employee identification** with the **company's vision, performance targets, and strategy**. All this makes employees feel genuinely better about their jobs and work environment and the merits of what the company is trying to accomplish. Employees are **stimulated** to take on the challenge of realizing the company's vision, do their jobs competently and with enthusiasm, and collaborate with others as needed to bring the strategy to success.

Q29. Describe corporate culture. Elaborate the statement "Culture is a strength that can also be a weakness".
(SA, Nov 2018, 5 Marks)

OR

How can a corporate culture be both strength and weakness of an organisation?
(MTP1, May 2019, 5 Marks) (MTP1, Nov 2019, 5 Marks)

Corporate culture refers to a **company's values, beliefs, business principles, traditions, way of operating and internal work environment**. Every corporation has a culture that exerts **powerful influences** on the behaviour of managers.

Culture as a strength – Culture can facilitate **communication, decision making and control** and create **cooperation and commitment**. An organisation's culture could be strong and **cohesive** when it conducts its business according to clear and **explicit set of principles and values**. The management devotes considerable time in communicating values & principles to employees and sharing them widely across the organisation.

Culture as a weakness - can obstruct the smooth implementation of strategy by creating resistance to change. An organisation's culture can be characterised as weak when many sub cultures exist, few values and behavioural norms are shared and traditions are rare. In such organisations, employees do not have a sense of commitment, loyalty and a sense of identity

- Q30 Jupiter Electronics Ltd. is known for its ability to come out with path-breaking products. Though the work environment at Jupiter is relaxed and casual, yet, there is a very strong commitment to deadlines. The employees believe in "work hard play hard" ethic. The organisation has moved away from formal and hierarchical set up to a more results-driven approach. Employees are committed to strategies and work towards achieving them. They guard innovations, maintain confidentiality and secrecy in their working. They are closely related to values, practices, and norms of organisations. What aspects of an organization that are being discussed? Explain.
(RTP, Nov 2019, NA)

The scenario being referred to is **culture** in Jupiter Electronics. Strong culture promotes good **strategy execution** when there's fit and impels execution when there's negligible fit. A culture grounded in values, practices, and behavioral norms that match what is needed for good strategy execution helps **energize** people throughout the organization to do their jobs in a strategy-supportive manner. A culture built around such business principles as listening to customers, encouraging employees to take pride in their work, and giving employees a high degree of decision-making responsibility. This is very conducive to successful execution of a strategy of delivering superior customer service.

A strong strategy-supportive culture makes employees feel genuinely better about their jobs and work environment and the merits of what the company is trying to accomplish. Employees are **stimulated** to take on the challenge of realizing the organizational vision, do their jobs competently and with enthusiasm, and collaborate with others.

- Q31 How can management communicate that it is committed to creating a new culture assuming that the old culture was problematic and not aligned with the company strategy?
(RTP, May 2021, NA) (MTP1, May 2021, 5 Marks)

OR

You are appointed as a manager of a company where you find that the company's culture is out of sync with what is needed for strategic success. Discuss steps you would initiate to tackle the problem.
(MTP2, Nov 2022, 5 Marks) (RTP, May 2023, NA)

Corporate culture refers to company's values, beliefs, business principles, traditions, ways of operating and internal work environment. Changing problem cultures is very difficult because of deeply held values and habits. It takes concerted management action over a period of time to replace an unhealthy culture with a healthy culture or to root out certain unwanted cultural obstacles and instil ones that are more strategy-supportive.

- The first step is to **diagnose** which facets of the present culture are strategy supportive and which are not.
- Then, managers have to **talk** openly and forthrightly to all concerned about those aspects of the culture that have to be changed.
- The talk has to be followed swiftly by visible, aggressive **actions** to modify the culture-actions that everyone will understand are intended to establish a new culture more in tune with the strategy.

Management through communication has to create a shared vision to manage changes. The menu of culture-changing actions includes revising policies and procedures, altering incentive compensation, shifting budgetary allocations for substantial resources to new strategy projects, recruiting and hiring new managers and employees, replacing key executives, communication on need and benefit to employees and so on.

- Q32. 'A strategy-supportive culture promotes good strategy execution.' - Explain.
(RTP, Nov 2022, NA) (MTP2, Nov 2023, 5 Marks)

Strong cultures promote **good strategy execution** when there's fit and hurt execution when there's negligible fit. A culture grounded in values, practices, and behavioral norms that match what is needed for good strategy execution helps **energize** people throughout the organization to do their jobs in a strategy-supportive manner. A culture built around such business principles as listening to customers, encouraging employees to take pride in their work, and giving employees a high degree of **decision-making responsibility**. This is very conducive to **successful execution** of a strategy of delivering **superior customer service**.

- A work environment where the culture matches the conditions for good strategy execution provides a system of informal rules and peer pressure regarding how to conduct business internally and how to go about doing one's job.
- A strong strategy-supportive culture makes employees feel genuinely better about their jobs and work environment and the merits of what the company is trying to accomplish. Employees are stimulated to take on the challenge of realizing the organizational vision, do their jobs competently and with enthusiasm, and collaborate with others.

Strategic Leadership

- Q33. Distinguish between Transformational and transactional leadership
(RTP, May 2018, NA) (SA, Nov 2019, 5 Marks) (MTP1, Nov 2021, 5 Marks)
OR
How can you differentiate between transformational and transactional leaders?
(RTP, Nov 2020, NA) (RTP, Nov 2021, NA) (ICAI Study Material)
OR
Distinguish between Transformational Leadership Style and Transactional Leadership Style.
(MTP1, Nov 2022, 5 Marks)
- Difference between transformational and transactional leadership:
1. Transformational leadership style uses **charisma** and **enthusiasm** to **inspire** people to exert them for the good of organization. Transactional leadership style uses the **authority** of its office to exchange rewards such as pay, status symbols etc.
 2. Transformational leadership style may be appropriate in **turbulent** environment, in industries at the very start or end of their cycles, poorly performing organisations, when there is a need to inspire a company to embrace major changes. Transactional leadership style can be appropriate in **static** environment, in growing or mature industries and in organisations that are performing well.
 3. Transformational leaders inspire employees by offering excitement, vision, intellectual stimulation and personal satisfaction. Transactional leaders prefer a more **formalized** approach to motivation, setting clear goals with explicit rewards or penalties for achievement and non-achievement. Transactional leaders focus mainly to **build** on existing culture and enhance current practices.
- Q34. Suresh Sinha has been recently appointed as the head of a strategic business unit of a large multiproduct company. Advise Mr Sinha about the leadership role to be played by him in execution of strategy.
(RTP, May 2018, NA) (MTP2, May 2021, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2022, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)
OR
Discuss the leadership roles played by the managers in pushing for good strategy execution.
(SA, May 2019, 5 Marks)
OR
You have been appointed as a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in a company which is facing many difficulties in proper execution of its strategy. Explain the leadership roles which you should play in pushing for good strategy execution
(SA, Nov 2022, 5 Marks) (SA, May 2023, 5 Marks)
- A manager as a strategic leader has many different leadership roles to play: visionary, chief entrepreneur and strategist, chief administrator, culture builder, resource acquirer and allocator, capabilities builder, process integrator, crisis solver, spokesperson, negotiator, motivator, arbitrator, policy maker and so on. Managers have five leadership roles to play in pushing for good strategy execution:
- i) **Staying on top** of what is happening, closely monitoring progress, solving out issues, and learning what obstacles lie in the path of good execution.
 - ii) **Promoting a culture of esprit de corps** that mobilizes and energizes organizational members to execute strategy in a competent fashion and perform at a high level.
 - iii) **Keeping the organization responsive** to changing conditions, alert for new opportunities, bubbling with innovative ideas, and ahead of rivals in developing competitively valuable competencies and capabilities.
 - iv) **Exercising ethical leadership** and insisting that the company conduct its affairs like a model corporate citizen.
 - v) **Pushing corrective actions** to improve strategy execution and overall strategic performance.
- Q35. Ritchwick, located in Mumbai, Maharashtra, is owner of a popular brand of ready to eat snack 'Trendy'. Yash, his son after completing Chartered Accountancy started assisting his father in running of business. The approaches followed by father and

son in management were very different. While Ritchwick preferred to use authority and having a formal system of defining goals and motivation with explicit rewards and punishments, Yash believed in involving employees and generating enthusiasm to inspire people to deliver in the organization. Discuss the leadership style of Ritchwick and Yash.
(MTP2, May 2018, 5 Marks) (RTP, May 2019, NA) (MTP2, May 2022, 5 marks) (ICAI Study Material)

Ritchwick is a follower of **transactional leadership style** that focuses on designing systems and controlling the organization's activities. Such a leader believes in using **authority** of its office to exchange rewards, such as pay and status. They prefer a more **formalized** approach to motivation, setting clear goals with explicit rewards or penalties for achievement or non-achievement. Transactional leaders try to **build** on the existing culture and enhance current practices. The style is better suited in **persuading** people to work efficiently and run operations smoothly.

On the other hand, Yash is follower of **transformational leadership style**. The style uses **charisma** and **enthusiasm** to inspire people to exert them for the good of the organization. Transformational leaders offer excitement, vision, intellectual stimulation and personal satisfaction. They inspire involvement in a mission, giving followers a 'dream' or 'vision' of a higher calling so as to elicit more dramatic changes in organizational performance. Such a leadership **motivates** followers to do more than originally affected to do by stretching their abilities and increasing their self-confidence, and also promote **innovation** throughout the organization.

- Q36. Ram and Shyam are two brothers engaged in the business of spices. Both have different approaches to management. Ram prefers the conventional and formal approach in which authority is used for explicit rewards and punishment. While, on the other hand, Shyam believes in democratic participative management approach, involving employees to give their best. Analyse the leadership style followed by Ram and Shyam.
(SA, May 2018, 5 Marks) (RTP, May 2021, NA)

Ram is a follower of **transactional leadership style** that focuses on designing systems and controlling the organization's activities. Such a leader believes in using **authority** of its office to exchange rewards, such as pay and status. They prefer a more **formalized** approach to motivation, setting clear goals with explicit rewards or penalties for achievement or non-achievement. Transactional leaders try to **build** on the existing culture and enhance current practices. The style is better suited in **persuading** people to work efficiently and run operations smoothly.

On the other hand, Shyam is a follower of **transformational leadership style**. The style uses **charisma** and **enthusiasm** to inspire people to exert them for the good of the organization. Transformational leaders offer excitement, vision, intellectual stimulation and personal satisfaction. They inspire involvement in a mission, giving followers a 'dream' or 'vision' of a higher calling so as to elicit more dramatic changes in organizational performance. Such a leadership **motivates** followers to do more than originally affected to do by stretching their abilities and increasing their self-confidence, and also promote **innovation** throughout the organization.

- Q37. KaAthens Ltd., a diversified business entity having business operations across the globe. The company leadership has just changed as Mr. D. Bandopadhyay handed over the The company leadership has just changed as Mr. D. Bandopadhyay handed over the pedals to his son Aditya Bandopadhyay, due to his poor health. Aditya is a highly educated with an engineering degree from IIT, Delhi. However, being very young he is not clear about his role and responsibilities, In your view, what are the responsibilities of Aditya Bandopadhyay as CEO of the company.
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (RTP, May 2020, NA) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

Mathew & Sons Ltd. is a diversified business entity having business operations across the globe. Presently, Mr. Mathew is the CEO of Mathew & Sons Ltd. He is going to retire in next 4 months, so he has decided to change the company's leadership and hand over the pedals to his elder son Marshal. Marshal is a highly educated with an engineering degree from USA. However, being very young he is not clear about his role and responsibilities.

In your view, what are the responsibilities of Marshal as CEO of Mathew & Sons Ltd.

(MTP1, Nov 2018, 5 Marks)

Aditya Bandopadhyay, an effective strategic leader of KaAthens Ltd. must be able to deal with the diverse and cognitively complex competitive situations that are characteristic of today's competitive landscape.

A Strategic leader has several responsibilities, including the following:

- Making strategic decisions.
- Formulating policies and action plans to implement strategic decision.
- Ensuring effective communication in the organisation.

- Managing human capital (perhaps the most critical of the strategic leader's skills).
- Managing change in the organisation.
- Creating and sustaining strong corporate culture.
- Sustaining high performance over time.

Q38. Anshuman was a CEO at a struggling company. Despite the challenges, he believed in the potential of his team and was determined to turn the company around. He started by communicating his vision to his employees. He encouraged them to think outside the box, take risks and be creative. He also invested in training programs to help employees develop new skills. He regularly recognized and rewarded employees for their hard work, which increased their job satisfaction and commitment. As a result, the company began to see positive changes. Identify and discuss the leadership style adopted by Anshuman? (RTP, May 2023, NA)

Being a CEO of a struggling company, Anshuman has adopted **Transformational leadership style**. The style uses charisma and enthusiasm to inspire people to exert them for the good of the organization. Transformational leaders offer excitement, vision, intellectual stimulation and personal satisfaction. They inspire involvement in a mission, giving followers a 'dream' or 'vision' of a higher calling so as to elicit more dramatic changes in organizational performance. Such a leadership motivates followers to do more than originally affected to do by stretching their abilities and increasing their self-confidence, and also promote innovation throughout the organization.

Anshuman believed in the potential of his team. He started by communicating his vision to his employees. He encouraged them to think outside the box, take risks and be creative. He also invested in training programs to help employees develop new skills. He regularly recognized and rewarded employees for their hard work, which increased their job satisfaction and commitment.

Q39. Ramesh and Suresh own software development firms ACS Ltd. and BDS Ltd. Ramesh and Suresh pitch their business in international markets and win international contracts. Ramesh has fifty software engineers in his team. Suresh, on the other hand, leads a team of forty software engineers. Every project has a specific and fixed timeline. Individual projects are assigned to project heads by Ramesh and Suresh. Ramesh adheres to strict rules and procedures. He met with the project heads to get an update but exchanged ideas occasionally. He set a weekly target of forty hours to complete the assigned goal or task. The group that met the deadline and completed the task received a 10% bonus. The group that was unable to meet the deadline was penalized. The group that did not meet the deadline was penalized with unpaid extra working hours to complete the task. Suresh, unlike Ramesh, did not priorities a structured approach to work. Suresh inspired the project managers by making them feel like leaders rather than just participants. Suresh's empowering attitude helped to align individual goals with group goals. Ramesh established routines to maximize his team efficiency. Suresh, on the other hand, used positive reinforcement to maximize his team efficiency.

- Identify the leadership style employed by Ramesh and Suresh.
 - What are the conditions/situations that make such leadership styles more appropriate?
 - Discuss the characteristics of the leadership styles.
- (SA, May 2023, 5 Marks)

(i) Ramesh adopted transactional leadership style, while Suresh adopted transformational leadership style.

(ii) Transactional leadership style can be appropriate in settled and static environment, in growing or mature industries and in organizations that are performing well. Transformational leadership style may be appropriate in turbulent environment, in industries at the very start or end of their life cycles, in poorly performing organizations when there is a need to inspire a company to embrace major changes.

(iii) Transactional leadership style uses the authority of its office to exchange rewards such as pay, status symbols etc. Transactional leaders prefer a more formalized approach to motivation, setting clear goals with explicit rewards or penalties for achievement and non-achievement. Transactional leaders focus mainly to build on existing culture and enhance current practices.

Strategic Control

Q40. Write short note on Implementation control.
(RTP, May 2018, NA) (MTP2, Nov 2018, 5 Marks) (MTP1, May 2019, 5 Marks)
OR

What is implementation control? Discuss its basic forms.
(RTP, Nov 2019, NA) (RTP, Nov 2021, NA) (RTP, Nov 2023, NA) (ICAI Study Material)

Managers implement strategy by converting major plans into concrete, sequential actions that form incremental steps. Implementation control is directed towards assessing the need for changes in the overall strategy in light of **unfolding events and results** associated with incremental steps and actions.

Strategic implementation control is not a replacement to operational control. Strategic implementation control, unlike operational controls, continuously **monitors the basic direction** of the strategy. The two basic forms of implementation control are

- i) **Monitoring strategic thrusts:** Monitoring strategic thrusts help managers to determine whether the overall strategy is progressing as desired or whether there is need for readjustments.
- ii) **Milestone reviews.** All key activities necessary to implement strategy are segregated in terms of time, events or major resource allocation. It normally involves a complete reassessment of the strategy. It also assesses the need to continue or refocus the direction of an organization.

Q41. Explain different types of strategic control in brief.
(SA, May 2018, 3 Marks)

OR

What is strategic control? Briefly explain the different types of strategic control?
(RTP, May 2020, NA) (RTP, Nov 2022, NA) (MTP2, Nov 2023, 5 Marks) (ICAI Study Material)

OR

Why is Strategic Control important for organizations? Discuss briefly 4 types of strategic control that can be implemented to achieve the enterprise goals
(RTP, May 2021, NA)

OR

"Strategic control focuses on implementation and results produced by the strategy". Explain strategic control along with its different types.
(SA, May 2023, 5 Marks)

Importance of strategic control: Strategic control is an important process that keeps organisation on its desired path. It involves **evaluating** strategy as it is formulated and implemented. It is directed towards identifying problems and changes in premises and making necessary adjustments.

Strategic Control focuses on the dual questions of whether: (1) the strategy is being **implemented as planned**; and (2) the **results produced by the strategy** are those **intended**.

There are four types of strategic control:

- a) **Premise control:** A strategy is formed on the basis of certain **assumptions** or premises about the environment. Premise control is a tool for systematic and continuous **monitoring** of the environment to verify the validity and accuracy of the premises on which the strategy has been built.
- b) **Strategic surveillance:** Strategic surveillance is **unfocussed**. It involves **general monitoring** of various sources of information to uncover **unanticipated** information having a **bearing** on the organizational strategy.
- c) **Special alert control:** At times, **unexpected events** may force organizations to reconsider their strategy. Sudden changes in government, natural calamities, unexpected merger/acquisition by competitors, industrial disasters and other such events may trigger an immediate and intense review of strategy.
- d) **Implementation control:** managers implement strategy by converting major plans into concrete, sequential actions that form incremental steps. Implementation control is directed towards assessing the need for changes in the overall strategy in light of **unfolding events and results**.

Q42. Differentiate between Operational control and management control.
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA) (MTP2, Nov 2022, 5 Marks) (MTP1, Nov 2023, 5 Marks)

OR

What are the differences between Operational control and management control.
(ICAI Study Material)

Differences between operational control and management control are as under:

- i) The thrust of operational control is on **individual tasks** or transactions as against total or more aggregative management functions. When compared with operational, management control is **more inclusive and more aggregative**, in the sense of embracing the integrated activities of a complete department, division or even entire organisation, instead of mere narrowly circumscribed activities of sub-units. For example, procuring specific items for inventory is a matter of operational control, in contrast to inventory management as a whole.
- ii) Many of the control systems in organisations are operational and mechanistic in nature. A set of standards, plans and instructions are formulated. On the other hand, the basic purpose of management control is the **achievement of enterprise goals** – short range and long range – in an effective and efficient manner.

Q43. Explain premise control.
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA)

A strategy is formed on the basis of certain **assumptions** or premises about the complex and turbulent organizational environment. Premise control is a tool for systematic and continuous **monitoring** of the environment to verify the validity and accuracy of the premises on which the strategy has been built. It primarily involves monitoring two types of factors:

- i) **Environmental** factors such as economic (inflation, liquidity, interest rates), technology, social and regulatory.
- ii) **Industry** factors such as competitors, suppliers, substitutes.

Q44. What is strategic control? Kindly explain the statement that "premise control is a tool for systematic and continuous monitoring of the environment".
(SA, Nov 2020, 5 Marks)

Strategic Control

Strategic control is the process of **evaluating** formulated and implemented strategy. It is directed towards identifying changes in the internal and external environments of the organization and making necessary adjustments accordingly.

Strategic Control focuses on the dual questions of whether: (1) the strategy is being **implemented as planned**; and (2) the **results** produced by the strategy are those **intended**.

Yes, Premise control is a tool for systematic and continuous **monitoring** of the environment to verify the validity and accuracy of the **premises** on which the strategy has been built. It primarily involves monitoring two types of factors:

- i) **Environmental** factors such as economic (inflation, liquidity, interest rates), technology, social and legal-regulatory.
- ii) **Industry** factors such as competitors, suppliers, substitutes.

It is neither feasible nor desirable to control all types of premises in the same manner. Different premises may require different amount of control. Thus, managers are required to select those premises that are likely to change and would severely impact the functioning of the organization and its strategy.

Q45. Sanya Private Limited is an automobile company. For the past few years, it has been observed that the progress of the company has become stagnant. When scrutinized, it was found that the planning department was performing fairly well but the plans could not be implemented due to improper use of resources, undesirable tendencies of workers and non-conformance to norms and standards. You are hired as a Strategic Manager. Suggest the elements of process of control to overcome the problem.
(SA, Jan 2021, 5 Marks) (MTP2, May 2022, 5 marks) (ICAI Study Material)

Sanya Private Limited deteriorating performance due to poor implementation of plans that is improper use of resources, undesirable tendencies of the workers, and non-conformance to norms and standards, all point towards weak controls in the organization.

Implementation of plans cannot assure results unless strong and sufficient controls are put in place. The management of the company should focus diligently on developing controls especially in the identified problem areas.

The process of control has the following elements:

- a) **Objectives** of the business system which could be operationalized into measurable and controllable standards.
- b) A mechanism for **monitoring** and **measuring** the performance of the system.

- c) A mechanism (i) for **comparing the actual results** with reference to the standards (ii) for **detecting deviations** from standards and (iii) for **learning new insights** on standards themselves.
- d) A mechanism for **feeding back corrective and adaptive information** and instructions to the system, for effecting the desired changes to set right the system to keep it on course.

Above elements of control would ensure a proper check on improper use of resources, undesirable tendencies of the workers, and non-conformance to norms and standards and ensure a result oriented implementation of plans.

Part II: Correct/Incorrect Questions

Q1. Information gathering and deep analysis can eliminate uncertainty.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

The statement is **Incorrect**.

Strategic uncertainty is often represented by a **future trend** or event that has inherent unpredictability. Information gathering and additional analysis is **not** able to eliminate uncertainty.

Q2. Strategic surveillance is highly focussed and organised control activity.
(RTP, May 2018, NA)

The statement is **Incorrect**.

The strategic surveillance is **unfocussed**. It involves **general monitoring** of various sources of information to uncover **unanticipated information** having a **bearing** on the organizational strategy. It involves casual environmental browsing. Reading financial and other newspapers, business magazines, attending meetings, conferences, discussions and so on. Strategic surveillance, a **loose form** of strategic control, is capable of uncovering information relevant to strategy.

Q3. Corporate culture is always identical in all the business organizations.
(SA, May 2018, 2 Marks)

The statement is **incorrect**.

Every company has its **own organisational culture**. Each has its own business philosophy and principles, its own ways of approaching to the problems and making decisions, its own work climate, work ethics, etc. Therefore, corporate culture is **not identical** in all organisations. Organisations over a period of time inherit and percolate down its own specific work ethos and approaches.

Q4. Strategies may require changes in organizational structure.
(RTP, Nov 2018, NA)

The statement is **correct**.

Strategies may require changes in structure as the structure dictates how resources will be allocated. Structure should be designed to **facilitate** the strategic pursuit of a firm and, therefore, should **follow** strategy. Without a strategy or reasons for being, companies find it difficult to design an effective structure.

Q5. Structure has no impact on the strategy of the organization.
(SA, Nov 2018, 2 Marks)

The statement is **incorrect**.

Structures are designed to **facilitate** the strategic pursuit of a firm and, therefore, **follows** strategy. Without a strategy or reason for being, it will be difficult to design an effective structure. Strategic developments may require **allocation of resources** and there may be a need for adapting the organisation's structure to handle new activities as well as training personnel and devising appropriate systems.

Part III: Multiple Choice Questions

An organizational structure with constricted middle level is:
(a) Divisional structure