

Global Perspective . . .

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Assess your global position

- Learn as much as you can about the organization's current global vision and strategy. Thoroughly understand the value proposition offered to the organization's customers. What success has the organization had with this strategy?
- Talk with your customers and their customers to understand the industries in which they operate.
 - What keeps your customers up at night?
 - What problem resolution would allow your customers to offer significantly more value to their customers.
 - What is happening in the associated industries? How will these changes affect your customers' needs?
 - What changes do they see?
 - How do they wish you could help them?
- Pay particular attention to your most demanding customers. Very good, demanding customers are valued partners in understanding the future. Often, the demanding customers are living the future; you can gain tremendous insight into new trends and themes from them.
- Discuss your customers' view of what they expect from you and your organization. How are their expectations influenced by their view of being global and responding to customer needs?
- Review competitive analyses to determine what your competitors are doing and their plans for the future. Figure out what assumptions they hold about the future, based on their actions.
- Focus on your strongest competitors and likely competitors from other industries. Like a good customer, a strong competitor can provide excellent information about the future.
- Study how other companies operate in a particular country or culture. Arrange benchmarking visits to study the values and practices of successful global corporations. Compare these to the values and practices of your organization. Identify lessons you can learn from their successes and failures, and apply them to new markets.
- Study developing and growing economies in the world and examine the dynamics of their growth. How could they impact your business?
- Conduct an environmental scan every year as part of your planning process. Avoid becoming locked into one way of viewing the business. Use different methods and consulting resources for your scan. Encourage the participation of cross-functional representatives.
- Make sure your team knows that you want them to challenge the status quo, identify faulty assumptions, spot trends, and recognize potential global opportunities.



Assess your global strategy

Each global approach has its strengths and limitations. Periodically assess the strengths and vulnerabilities of your globalization and your global approach.

- What are your global strategic initiatives? What progress is being made?
- To what extent are you actively managing a global culture?
- How does information technology (IT) support the globalization of the business?
- Is the IT future strategy consistent with globalization?
- Have you been able to gain competitive advantage in the expected ways with your model? If not, how can you work on maximizing the strengths of your model?
- Where are the opportunities to leverage economies of scale?
- What progress has the organization made on developing mass customization capabilities that can respond quickly to local markets?
- What are you doing to increase the competence of your executives, managers, and team leaders?

If you do not have a global vision, create one with your management team. Communicate the vision to everyone in your part of the organization. Provide information about the reasons for the particular vision, so people can buy into its importance and substance.

Business processes differ depending upon an organization's global strategy, its customers, the geopolitical context in which the organization operates, and the cultural differences within the countries with whom the organization does business or where it is located.

Determine how culture and business are intertwined in the countries where your organization currently does business, and in those where it may expand in the future.