

Strategic Planning and Dysfunction: The Dark Side of Mandating a Formal Planning System

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Strategic planning is believed to be different from traditional long-range planning in that it is “a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it” (Bryson, 1995: 5). While public managers in the central government of Taiwan are mandated to undertake strategic planning on a regular basis, few are sure about what exactly strategic planning is, let alone how to implement strategic planning. This study addresses this void by examining how agency administrators influence, and are influenced by, agency institutional and environmental conditions in the implementation of strategic planning initiatives. It identifies the key organizational conditions that facilitate and inhibit strategic

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planning efforts and discusses implications for generalizing these observations to other settings.

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I. Introduction

Despite the growing popularity of strategic planning in the public sector, little empirical research has been undertaken to justify this management innovation. Advocates of strategic planning conceive it as the single best approach to managing the future of organizations. They claim that organizations must undertake strategic planning 1. to be rational; 2. to coordinate their various functions and activities; 3. to better integrate themselves with the external environment; and 4. to ensure the future is taken into consideration (Mintzberg, 1994). However, another school of authors (Pascale, 1990; Stacey, 1993; Turner, 1993) are not as optimistic about strategic planning. For example, Ring and Perry (1985) argue that it is inappropriate to transfer the strategic planning practices from the private sector to public organizations since the distinctive constraints imposed by the public context require a totally different set of management behaviors from public managers. “The existence of incremental politics suggests that rational, comprehensive policy models—for example, planning modes—will rarely be appropriate in the public sector.” (Ring and Perry, 1985: 282)

Little research has been done to settle the above dispute on the usefulness of strategic planning, especially in the public sector. To be sure, the existing strategic planning literature provides a number of studies documenting the wide spread adoption of strategic planning by public organizations (Berry and Wechsler, 1995), and various theoretical models of strategic planning (Bryson et al., 1986; Nutt and Backoff, 1992) as well as prescriptions for proper strategic planning (Bryson, 1995; Nutt and Backoff, 1993). However, there is a real scarcity of empirical studies on the management of public strategic planning systems. This research addresses this gap in the literature by examining the

impact of strategic planning on large, general purpose public agencies in the Taiwan central government.

The existing strategic planning system of Taiwan's central government, namely the Medium-term Policy Implementation System (MTPIS) was developed by the Research, Development and Evaluation Commission of the Executive Yuan in 1998 largely based on John M. Bryson's (1995) Strategy Change Cycle which is intellectually rooted in the Harvard policy model and stakeholder model traditions (Bryson et al., 1986). Five central government agencies were selected to be the pilots of this new planning system in 1998, and hence had more than five years' experience with strategic planning by the time this research was conducted. In order to detect the impact of strategic planning on the governmental agencies, a series of interviews with individuals who had been responsible for introducing strategic planning into their respective agencies were conducted across three national agencies. The impact of strategic planning is examined primarily by exploring and recording the experiences and perceptions of the managers in the pilot agencies about the effects of strategic planning on their management operations. Specifically, five major questions are asked regarding strategic planning and its implementation:

1. What model(s) of strategic planning were introduced into the agencies?
2. How much participation was allowed in the agencies, and how has participation of middle and lower-level managers affected the processes?
3. To what extent have the budgeting processes of the agencies been linked to strategic planning?
4. How have the various stakeholders/constituents been involved?
5. How has strategic planning changed management in the agencies?

II. Literature Review

Undoubtedly most organizations engage in planning on a daily basis. However, strategic planning is believed to be different from traditional long-range planning in that it is a way of “matching organizational objectives and capabilities to the anticipated demands of the environment so as to produce a plan of action that will assure achievement of objectives.” (Denhardt, 1991:235) Bryson (1995) defines strategic planning as “a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does and why it does it.” (Bryson, 1995: 5) More specifically, Berry (1994) defines strategic planning as a management process that combines four basic features:

1. a clear statement of the organization’s mission;
2. identification of the agency’s external constituencies or stakeholders, and the determination of their assessment of the agency’s purposes and operations;
3. delineation of the agency’s strategic goals and objectives, typically in a 3- to 5-year plan; and
4. development of strategies to achieve them.

While recognizing the basic differences between governmental agencies and private corporations, supporters of strategic planning in the public sector maintain that unlike the other “management fads”, strategic planning is compatible with the political contexts of public organizations, and, if used correctly, will help leaders in the public sector to think and act strategically to accomplish their missions (Bryson, 1995; Moore, 1995).

Both Gummer (1992) and Bryson (1995) argue that most of the previous attempts to transfer management tools originally developed in the private sector

to public organizations did not succeed primarily because the assumptions upon which these management techniques are based do not hold true in the public sector. On the other hand, strategic planning takes the dynamic political interactions happening during the planning process into consideration. It can effectively guide public managers in undertaking rational analysis when facing complicated strategic issues, and, in turn, help public organizations adapt to a changing environment.

Nicholas Henry (2004) indicates that public strategic planning is a method of making and communicating the decision premises of public administrators. Therefore, it can enhance the likelihood of improved organizational coordination and effectiveness. Bryson et al. argue that traditional governmental planning usually focuses on a specific function (e.g. land use, transportation, etc.) or on implementing a new program or project. Strategic planning provides a valuable counterbalance to the tendency for public organizations to be organized into specific policy networks:

“In essence, much of the public sector is organized not horizontally by units of government across programs but vertically by programs across levels of government. Strategic planning provides governments with an opportunity to make connections and changes across programs— and therefore to make more of a whole out of the disparate parts of public policies and programs.”
(Bryson et al., 1986: 66)

While strategic planning in the private sector mainly focuses on helping corporations deal with market-driven competition, the expected advantages of undertaking strategic planning in the public sector are multi-dimensional (Nutt and Backoff, 1993). Public organizations often serve multiple and sometimes conflicting purposes. They operate under greater public scrutiny, and are subject to unique public expectations, within relatively complex, multilateral power, influence, bargaining, voting, and exchange relationships (Rainey, 1991).

The advantages of implementing strategic planning in a general purpose government agency include “coalignment of streams of institutionalized actions designed to achieve a basic balance among purpose, present conditions, desired future outcomes, and inner and outer environments.” (Wechsler and Backoff, 1986: 321). Roger L. Kemp (1992) concludes in his book of *Strategic Planning in Local Governments* that “the contemporary society in which local governments operate demands new planning tools to function successfully under rapidly changing conditions. It is only through such modern planning practices that public confidence in government can be restored and local governments can successfully adapt to the future.” (Kemp, 1992: 170)

(I) Organizational Level and Perceptions of Strategic Planning

Today, organizations are facing increasingly turbulent environment. Many senior managers recognize that they are too far from where the action happens. It is necessary to shift power to the middle management to make organizations more responsive to environmental changes. Many authors have noted the importance of middle management in dealing with the ever greater challenges (e.g. Kanter, 1983; Tregoe and Tobia, 1990). As Wooldridge and Floyd claim (1992: 36):

“Strategic effectiveness depends on middle managers who effectively monitor, interpret, and communicate changing conditions. Moreover, the best performing firms have middle managers who persistently and persuasively communicate alternative strategies to upper management.”

Conversely, a few scholars indicate that when management innovations are introduced into an organization, middle and lower level managers are often much less enthusiastic about the initiative than top management (MacMillan and Guth, 1986; Stern, 1995). Furthermore, Macmillan and Guth (1985) and

Brower and Abolafia (1995) identified in their studies substantial success of middle managers at intervening in organizational decisions in which their self-interest was at stake. Middle managers tend to resist or delay the implementation of a strategy if they disagree with upper management on the desirability of the outcomes of the strategy, or on the procedures required for implementing the strategy. Therefore, in order for organizational strategies to work, or even just to be implemented, the commitment of the middle managers is essential.

Although the advocates of strategic planning claim that strategic planning promotes broad participation, and in turn, commitment in the planning process (Bryson, 1995; Denhardt 1991; Steiner, 1979; Kaufman and Jacobs, 1988), Mintzberg (1994) argues that the very purpose of planning is to ensure coordination among different units. To coordinate, some central group must get others to do things they do not want to do. Therefore, planning tends to preclude participation in the determination of the final result, and hence, discourage the very commitment of the people at the lower levels it claims to require. In other words, according to Mintzberg, strategic planning tends to reinforce a unitary, centralized hierarchy in the organization.

(II) Participation and Strategic Planning

Peters and Waterman (1982) depict the successful companies as those that emphasize motivating and stimulating their people through social influences, team building, and participation. It is believed that broad participation can overcome resistance to change, increase members' commitment to organizational goals, and hence improve individual and organizational performance (French and Bell, 1995).

Writers on strategic planning and strategic management generally accept

this notion and assume that the involvement of middle management in the planning process would increase middle managers' understanding of, as well as their commitment to, the organizational goals (Steiner, 1979; Melcher and Kerzner, 1988; Koteen, 1989). The improved communication, combined with broad participation, in turn, are believed to be helpful to building teamwork and increasing members' commitment to the organizational goals (French and Bell, 1995; Bryson, 1995; Migliore et. al., 1995).

However, existing empirical studies on the subject present different findings on the impact of participation. For example, Wotring (1995) examined the perceptions of 130 participants who were involved in the year-long development of the strategic plan for the Belpre City School District, Ohio and found that both the degree to which the participant was involved and the participant's role in the planning process were strongly related to his perceptions toward the activities and product of the strategic planning process. On the other hand, Wooldridge and Floyd (1990) surveyed about two hundred managers across eleven banks and nine manufacturers to investigate the effects of strategic involvement of middle-level managers in the 20 organizations and concluded that there was no relationship between the involvement of middle-level managers in strategy formation and their commitment to the organizational strategies.

Pfeffer (1977) indicates that when lower-level organizational members participate in organizational decision making, they usually are allowed to respond to only the issues raised by the top managers in the organization, and participate within specific contexts defined by higher-level officials. Mohrman (1979) argues that such participation prevents (a) the exercise of influence by lower-level organizational members, (b) the ability of the lower-level members to express their needs and viewpoints, and (c) the opportunity of the lower-level

members to direct system attention and resources toward the problems that they perceive are important. It has serious limitations in either increasing communication or enhancing commitment in the organization.

III. Methods

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a number of managers at Agencies A, B and C. These three agencies were chosen mainly because that they had been designated as pilot agencies for implementing strategic planning, and hence were several years into the process and that they represented a varied cross section of agencies with regard to size, work technologies, and political valence.

Initial interviews were conducted with individuals who had been responsible for overseeing strategic planning efforts for their respective agencies. These subjects were interviewed and asked to suggest other appropriate interviewees, thus helping construct a snow-ball sample of key informants who provided both corroborating and competing perspectives. The author sought to increase theoretical richness in the sampling by seeking interviewees with both long and short term experience with strategic planning and individuals in roughly comparable roles in the three agencies.

This sample of managers were interviewed in person and asked to provide the thick rich details of implementation problems and what people actually did to overcome them. The author initiated follow-up phone conversations with the informants to examine key issues and questions that arose from the analysis of data. In this fashion, nearly twenty individuals—including executives from the three agencies, and policy analysts from the Research, Development, and Evaluation Council (RDEC) of the Executive Yuan—participated in the interviews.

IV. Findings: Strategic Planning Processes in the Pilot Agencies

Although all of the executive agencies under the Executive Yuan received the same instructions (RDEC, 1992) from the RDEC on how the agency strategic planning system should be implemented, the degree of implementation as well as the process that each agency adopts in implementing the new planning system varied considerably. This section reports the responses of the interviewees on how strategic planning has been implemented in the selected central government agencies. This description should prove helpful to the public managers contemplating the use of strategic planning. To maintain the anonymity of the informants, “Agency A”, “Agency B”, and “Agency C” are substituted for the real names of the agencies.

(I) Agency A

Agency A is one of the smaller service agencies in terms of full-time employees (2,184 in 2004). The content of the first strategic plan of the agency was outlined by the planning unit of the agency according to the existing organizational missions. The general secretary of the agency then invited all of the divisional directors to a series of meetings to provide feedback, and to make necessary modifications on the outline.

Without the participation of the Minister and other top management members, the meeting was not strategy-oriented but administration-oriented. The main purpose of the meeting was dividing the work for writing up the strategic plan, rather than coming up innovative strategies for the agency. Hence, after the outline was discussed at the meeting, each of the members in attendance was assigned the responsibility of writing up the parts of the plan

most related to their own divisions. These responsibilities were then reassigned by the directors to some of their staff members accordingly. Finally, after the divisional writing effort was completed, the coordinator of the planning unit of Agency A collected all of the “small plans” and integrated them into an agency-wide strategic plan.

The top management of Agency A did not play a significant role during the process. The minister participated only at the end by finally reviewing and approving the strategic plan before it was submitted to the RDEC. In addition, the other top managers were not enthusiastic about strategic planning. Many of the divisional directors even appeared to be highly reluctant to participate in the meetings summoned by the general secretary.

While the RDEC required the agencies to contemplate and develop the agency visions, goals, objectives, and strategic issues on which to base their respective organizational strategies, Agency A came up with their strategic plan in a different way. Due to the time constraint for submitting the agency strategic plan, most of the “strategies” of Agency A were actually the programs and policies of the various divisions that had been decided long before the strategic planning requirement was issued by the RDEC. In other words, the major responsibility of the planning coordinator was not introducing a new planning system into the agency, but reorganizing all of the existing plans into several “strategic themes” and then coming up with the visions, missions, and even environmental analysis required by the planning guidelines before the plan was submitted for review by the RDEC. According to a manager of the planning unit:

“I know that ideally when you develop a strategic plan, you need to first undertake environmental analysis, agree to an organizational vision, and think about the goals and objectives of the agency before the strategies can be decided. However, it was not possible to do all these works within a month.

Therefore, we had to adapt the process to our situation. That is, we first decided what programs would be included in the final strategic plan, and then to come up with strategies, objectives, goals and environment analysis. It was the only way that we could deliver the final product in time.”

Similarly, while the importance of stakeholder involvement was accepted by the top management as well as the planning staff of Agency A, they did not have time to hold public hearings or to consult outside interest groups.

Unfortunately, while budget preparation is the “acid test” of whether strategic planning is seriously implemented in an organization (Goodstein, 1993), the linkage between the strategic plan and the organizational budgets of Agency A had never been taken into consideration. As one of the planning staff argues:

“Well, I don’t think there is any relationship between the strategic plan and our budget. The strategic plan reflects only a part of our operations. Therefore, when preparing for annual budgets, no one would really pay attention to what are included in the strategic plan, or how that should influence our budget. We may take a look at it, but we do not have to follow it.”

Another interviewee showed his strong disappointment:

“Was our budget linked to the strategic plan? No. Actually, I was very disappointed in the strategic planning system because of that. After all the time and effort, nothing was done to make the linkage. I heard from the RDEC that due to the fact that most agencies tend to ask for too much more money than the Executive Yuan can handle, they were not sure how to reconcile the difference.....”

Finally, although the RDEC required the agencies to provide specific performance indicators of their strategies, Agency A was not able to develop quantifiable measures of their strategies. In fact, the informants pointed out that they did not even have specific performance indicators for the programs included in their annual plans. To be sure, the final product of the agency

strategic plan did include certain measures to satisfy the RDEC requirements. The problem is that these measures were not outcome oriented and not linked to the performance management or personnel performance appraisal system of the agency.

With respect to the preparation for mandating the implementation of strategic planning, the research informants of Agency A did not hesitate to express their dissatisfaction. The RDEC did provide a strategic planning workshop to help the other agencies implement the new system. Nevertheless, the planning staff at Agency A describe the content of the workshop as being “too abstract and theoretical”, with little time for the workshop participants to practice or to ask questions. Therefore, the agency planning staff complained that all they got back from the training experience were a flow chart of the overall strategic planning process, without real understanding of strategic thinking. Most of the participants still did not understand how strategic plans are different from their usual program or operation plans, or how strategic planning should be linked to the other management functions. One senior manager at Agency A described his experience of participating in the workshop as follows:

“It (the workshop) includes mostly strategic theories.....Actually I still have the teaching materials from that day. One of the sectional directors tried to provide a rationale on why strategic planning should be incorporated into the executive agencies. He also talked about things like environmental analysis, long-term trends, and so on. But the questions of how strategic planning is differentiated from, or linked to, annual planning or budgeting were never clarified. In order to fulfill the RDEC requirements, I even personally called the staff of the strategic planning coordinating unit at RDEC after the workshop. However, it seemed that even in RDEC, no one really understood the new planning system. Therefore, when we were selected as one of the pilots, I did not know how to instruct the people at my agency on how or what should be done to create of strategic plans. I really think more should have

been done to clarify the missing links. Not everyone understood!”

(II) Agency B

Agency B is a large cabinet-level agency with more than 10,000 full-time employees. Since the beginning, Agency B decided not to follow the format provided in *the Medium-term Policy Planning Instructions* issued by the RDEC. The top management decided that a plan divided by the major organizational divisions of the department was more suitable for the tasks of the department.

In reality, Agency B did not make any institutional change for implementing strategic planning. The planning staff working at the secretariat called the divisions upon returning from the strategic planning workshop and asked them to submit the plans and programs that they intended to do in the next four years. After all of the divisional plans were submitted, the secretariat staff combined them into different “strategies” and added the other elements of a strategic plan such as environmental analysis, visions, and missions, just to satisfy the review of the RDEC. In short, as the implementation process unfolded, the planning leaders soon realized that they did not have to do much to fulfill the requirements. As one explained:

“It’s almost the same as the usual annual budgeting and planning process. The only difference is that it’s for four years this time. What we at the secretariat did was just combining the existing stuff and trying to make them look more coherent. From my point of view, what the RDEC required was just a job of data manipulation.”

Predictably, Agency B conducted a very careless environmental analysis and program prioritizing process. As the planning coordinator at the secretariat admitted :

“I wrote up all of the required analysis by myself. Also, I was authorized to pick out the programs submitted by the divisions. I tried to make the best decision with my knowledge of the agency’s agenda. For examples, I tend

to delete the programs that look purely administrative and not strategic.”

The lack of commitment from the top B resulted in the atmosphere that most lower and middle managers saw the strategic planning process as more meaningless paperwork. The interviewees indicated that the short tenures of political appointees had done much harm to the perceptions of the organizational members about the usefulness of strategic planning:

“Well, you cannot say that the minister has never paid attention to the strategic plan. However, when comparing with his own agenda, the formal strategic plan is relatively insignificant. Besides, the four year planning spectrum is so unrealistic. How many ministers have ever served in the position for as long as four years? Even you create a perfect strategic plan in 2000, how likely do you think that the new minister come in office in 2001 would be interested in implementing it?”

Due to the lack of an integrative decision-making process among the different divisions, strategic planning had not caused any change in the budgeting process of Agency B:

“We already have the annual budget preparation process. We do not think it is necessary to reorganize our budget for the sake of strategic planning.”

Similarly, Agency B did not provide the performance indicators of its strategic plan required by the RDEC guidelines. The planning staff responded that much of the agency’s programs were related to engineering or construction. Since these programs had already been monitored by the Executive Yuan and related commissions of the Legislative Yuan, additional performance measurement seemed unnecessary.

(III) Agency C

Similar to Agency B, Agency C developed its strategic plan bottom-up. The agency divisions were asked to turn in their respective four-year plans to the planning unit. A strategic planning coordinator was assigned by the

planning director to make sure that the strategic planning requirements from the RDEC were followed, and to coordinate the drafting of the agency plan among the members from different divisions. As one planning staff member recounted:

“We gave the division directors a formal written notice for implementing strategic planning. Specific instructions were attached to the notice to help the preparation of strategic plan at the divisional level. We at the planning office then worked to integrate the divisional plans into an agency-wide strategic plan.”

The minister did not substantially participate in the process. Mostly what he did was ratify the process and review the final product. The lack of direct communications between the top management and the line unit was accepted as the way it should be:

“It is very unlikely for us to communicate with the minister directly. When you submit something for his review, a signature shows his approval. If he does not sign, we will make modifications according to his opinions. Also, my superior officer is able to meet the minister regularly. We try to understand his thoughts based on the above and the content of his public speeches.”

While environmental monitoring is necessary to provide data for the strategic planning team to plan the organizational strategies, it was poorly and inconsistently done in Agency C. Rather than systematically identify strengths and weaknesses as a means of establishing future objectives, during the planning process the planners of the agency accepted the weak elements and resource limits as given, and prioritized the agency’s programs accordingly. In addition, the strategic plan of Agency C remained a combination of individual functions or business unit plans, rather than a set of integrative strategies:

“The process of integration? We had so many plans and units. There was no way to gather everyone together. We have never had such meetings.

People are used to submitting written reports for approvals.....The minister will only participate when it concerns the agency's budget.”

With regard to performance audit, there was no formal tracking system to monitor the efficiency or effectiveness of the organizational strategies. Nevertheless, some informants at the agency thought the new system had raised the awareness of the agency managers that their works should be done in a more performance-oriented fashion:

“Although for a long time the agency has not been very enthusiastic about prior management reforms, I do feel that a new sense of mission and urgency has developed. The requirement of strategic planning has enabled the agency to be more results driven.”

V. Discussion and Conclusion

How can a rational management process such as strategic planning be implemented in the public organizations? It is clear from the three cases that, in general, the implementation of strategic planning has not been a simple or straight-forward process for the central government agencies in Taiwan. Based on the agency planning experience as well as the political environments surrounding them, each of the agencies selected for this study uses a somewhat different approach of planning. The case findings and analysis listed above first illustrate that agencies' efforts to implement strategic planning system can be influenced dramatically by the ways in which agency leaders define planning function and the chronology of other management initiatives under way.

It is desirable that all public agencies regularly undertake a comprehensive review of what they are doing and how they are doing it. Unfortunately, none of the government agencies in this study appear to have done substantive strategic planning. One major reason is that the agencies generally do not have the motivation to conduct strategic planning. Most senior managers believe that

they have their own way of planning formally as well as informally. Hence, the line managers in the agencies undertook strategic planning not because it facilitated the performance of their own jobs, but because their superiors or the RDEC had requested or mandated it. From the viewpoint of the agencies' line managers, they are being asked to duplicate their planning already made and are doing so for somebody else's benefit.

The public organizations attempting to implement strategic planning must examine the managers' acceptance of strategic planning as a useful managerial tool. When the desire to develop organizational vision, undertake environmental monitoring, audit strategic performance, and manage the strategy implementation processes grows from the managers' personal motivation rather than compliance with a controlling authority, the process is much more likely to produce meaningful organizational strategies.

Similar to the reported experience of the U.S. GPRA implementation (Radin, 2000), the three agencies included in this study chose to give responsibility for the development of strategic planning, and performance indicators to the offices that are responsible for planning. While some of the offices may have opportunity to be involved in the budget process, more often they operate separately from the budget staff. In other words, the development of a strategic plan is a separate and parallel process from the development of the organizational budget.

A related lesson is that public organizations need to do more to break down their internal barriers. The strategic planning function remains the work of centralized planning or secretarial units. In short, the strategic plans of the agencies do not reflect significant input from line units. In order to facilitate the vertical and horizontal integration of strategic planning, related control mechanisms should be designed to coordinate across the unit boundaries.

While Bower (1970) pointed out that in large organizations, middle managers often are the only men in the organization who are in a position to judge whether strategic issues are being considered in the proper context, there is little involvement of middle management when conducting strategic planning processes. The senior managers of the three agencies often felt that it was best to keep strategies vague, thereby limiting potential conflicts within their agencies (Quinn, 1980). In addition, it appeared that top managers might feel that the time involved outweighs the potential benefits. Since involvement is expensive in terms of managerial time and energy, it may be seen as counterproductive to involve more organizational members.

Overall, strategic planning inherits the structural tension between the political leadership and the career public employees. As the cases in this study have illustrated, the one-size-fits-all approach of mandating strategic planning simply does not match the reality of policy design and politics. Even though career staff members may see strategic planning as an ideal management reform, they generally do not think it is compatible with the political agenda of their elected bosses. The strategic planning system may be viewed as a great attempt to separate politics from the management decision making processes of the agencies. However, politics has been a crucial component of the early experience of strategic planning in the government of Taiwan.

Viewed as whole, the strategic planning system of Taiwan's central government has failed to deliver many of its promised benefits. It is hoped that the experience of the pilot agencies would serve as a basis on which to improve future implementation of public strategic planning as well as the other management reforms in the public sector in general. Nevertheless, strategic planning still is in its infancy in Taiwan. Four years after enactment, the jury is still out on the various components of its success.

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策略規劃的黑暗面： 行政院中程施政計畫制度執行評估

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中程施政計畫制度的內容雖為中央統一的設計，但各部會的組織文化、管理制度，甚至首長的領導風格不同，均可能影響其運作。為了進一步了解中程施政計畫制度的執行狀況，本研究以五個早於民國八十七年就已先行推動此制度的試辦機關為研究對象，深入記錄其執行經驗，進而探討各機關發展其策略計畫的過程。

本研究採用針對關鍵人物的半結構式深度訪談進行資料蒐集的方法。研究資料的分析則以策略管理的主要面向為基礎，亦即以 1. 策略思考的過程、2. SWOT 分析、3. 利害關係人的參與、4. 績效評估系統的建立，5. 計畫的執行，以及 6. 機關計畫與預算的結合 (Bryson, 1995) 做為分析各機關中程施政計畫制度之執行經驗的理論架構。根據本研究的發現，雖然所有的行政院所屬機關都是根據研考會所頒發的編審作業規定來訂定其機關中程施政計畫的內容，各機關執行此新規劃系統的程度與過程卻與原規定的精神大異其趣。本文歸納許多各機關執行策略規劃的通病，並於最後提供未來的管理建議。

關鍵詞： 策略規劃、執行評估、政府再造、個案分析

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