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Strategic Planning and Golf

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Analysis by analogy

1. Start out planning to play the hole in par, say par 5. (Set long-term objectives and goals of plan.)
2. Select a club from a set of clubs - appropriate to the distance and ability of player. (Use appropriate planning tools - models, Delphi approach, consultation, etc.)
3. After the stroke, the ball goes somewhere! (The plan is struck!)
4. Digression on random walk in golf and planning. (Bias in the planning process can be likened to the slice or hook in golf.)
5. You observe the new position, select the same or a different club and hit again! (The iterative nature of planning.)
6. Digression on "rough", sand traps, out-of-bounds, lost balls. (Stumbling in planning; effect of government actions, hearing delays, takeovers, etc.)
7. At the point when you lay four and still are not on the green, your objective of par is more difficult to obtain! Nevertheless, you still want to minimize the number of strokes! (Long-term objectives may require modification as the reality of performance occurs.)
8. Eventually you get on the green, get your putter, and get down in one or two or three. In putting the important aspects include "reading the green", feel, and accuracy. (Short-term execution of operations is important to plan fulfillment.)
9. Remember the adage, "Drive for show; putt for dough!". (Good strategic planning can be defeated by bad operations, and, conversely, operations can overcome the deficiencies in strategic planning. But it can't catch up!) If you are not on the green in five, you can't make par no matter how good your putting!
10. Then you start the next hole! (Planning is a continuous process.)

What do you learn in golf? Good exercise and humility! (The future is not forecastable; but the futurity of present decisions can be studied through the planning process - the Drucker view.)

What do you do when playing in the wind?

- Recognize it - know its direction and strength. (Identification of external forces.)
- Select a longer club. (Need for a longer-term perspective in volatile times.)
- Unless it is a very perverse day, the wind will be at your back on some holes - take advantage of it! (External forces can help achieve your plan's goals more easily in some circumstances.)

In summary, good golf and good planning require:

1. Good tools
2. Practice
3. Balance!