A GUIDE TO STRATEGY



What is strategy and how is it different from planning?

Strategy in simple terms is the sum of steps taken to achieve a goal, it requires active critical thinking and decision making. For strategy to be strategy, it needs tactical implementations. Tactics are defined as the individual steps that make up a strategy.

Planning is a set of predetermined events, threaded together to achieve a particular outcome. Improvisations can be made through contingencies which are accounted and prepared for in advance. Unlike Strategy, it does not require tactical implementation or on the spot critical thinking.

Take for example Light Yagami's memory loss plan. It's entirely planned, as Light prepared and set up things in a linear accord where he would achieve an aim, without having to actively implement tactics. All he did was make some preparations such as burying the notebook, and fabricating the rules which lead him to a situation that he had already prepared for. All that was needed was to improvise using his contingencies which were already prepared for the foreseeable circumstances and NOT active critical thinking thus, not strategy.

STRATEGY CATEGORIES

These are some categories you can use to scale strategy, while of course you don't have to use all of them but I would strongly recommend using these to scale strategy. These categories are roughly ordered in accordance to their perceived importance, some rankings are interchangeable but the triple Es (Execution, Effectiveness and Efficiency) are interchangeable strictly within the top 3.

1-) **STRATEGY EFFECTIVENESS**

Strategy Effectiveness is the degree of success in your strategy, it focuses on the end result of the strategy and looks at how potent your strategy was in achieving the desired result.

2-) **STRATEGY EFFICIENCY**

Strategy Efficiency is defined as the ability to execute your strategy and achieve your goals by using a cost effective approach, with the least amount of time and resources sacrificed. This is an extremely important category as it greatly values resource

management and critical thinking. The gist of efficiency is to process, analyze and simplify the strategy to make it manageable and easy to execute.

Remember the difference between Effectiveness and efficiency;

> Effectiveness: Doing the RIGHT thing.
> Efficiency: Doing THINGS right.

> Efficiency looks at the process.
> Effectiveness looks at the result.

3-) **STRATEGY EXECUTION**

Strategic execution is all about tactical implementation, how well your thoughts translate into action and refers to the deployment of the strategy; the means and process of achieving your goal.

4-) **STRATEGY RESILIENCE**

Refers to how well your strategy can withstand resistances. An extremely resilient strategy will not falter even if someone or something tries to hinder its success. Remember, resilience can only be gauged when the enemy is employing tactics to prevent your strategy's fruition and how well your strategy withstands those hindrances, and must not be mixed up with shielding.

5-) **STRATEGY SHIELDING**

Strategy shielding is how well you can cover for any discrepancies in your strategy that may cause it to collapse. Unlike resilience, shielding is the process of taking countermeasures to prevent enemy tactics that may hinder your strategy in the first

place which means that shielding tends to leave less room for resilience. Implementing tactics to prevent interventions that may harm your strategy falls under shielding.

6-) **STRATEGY FORESIGHT**

Strategic foresight refers to how far ahead you have mapped out your strategy. It's similar to anticipation, but for strategy strictly; Foreseeing possibilities and anticipating what the enemy may do in response to your strategy and what you may do in response to the enemy's actions. Accuracy, Potency, difficulty of foresight and amount of possibilities accounted for within the strategy make up foresight.

7-) **STRATEGY ADAPTABILITY:**

The ability to adapt to foreseen and unforeseen conditions, situations, and tactics that occur within your strategy. The ability to completely adjust in accordance to what the enemy or circumstances throw at you. To completely adjust and strategically think about new developments that arise, and then execute a new or accounted strategy in response. There has to either be a complete shift to your strategy and tactics, because you need a better one for this circumstance OR the ability to deploy and shift tactics to foreseen circumstances.

8-) **STRATEGY ALIGNMENT**

Alignment is how well you can make elements revolving your strategy align with each other in order to make your strategy more harmonious. Alignment can include how well you align positioning and time intervals of tactical implementation in regards to other external elements, and guide a target in accordance to your will; the process of making your execution work.

9-) **TACTICAL COMPLEXITY**

The amount of layers and tactical overlap in your strategy. It can make your strategy more difficult to see through subsequently increasing chances of success, but a more "complex" strategy leaves more room for adaptability and sacrifices efficiency, so there are better approaches to increase success chances without having to make the aforementioned sacrifices e.g shielding, resilience etc. It can hold great potential for misdirective purposes if done right; high risk high reward.

Exemplar Analysis



In this section of the documentary, I will be analyzing an iconic feat by Lelouch to demonstrate how these categories relate to strategy in practice.

Our example will be Lelouch's strategy to defeat Mao.

Context of adversity:

- Mao has a geass that grants him the ability to read a person's innermost thoughts even within the subconscious mind.

- Mao has a geass range of 500 meters radius and 300 meter height.

- He can focus on the thoughts of multiple targets but in turn has to reduce his radius.

- Vice versa is also true, Mao can maximize the 500 meter range if he's concentrating on a single individual.

- Mao can not deactivate his geass

- Mao has taken Nunally hostage via an extremely sensitive sensory detecting bomb.

- Mao has been studying Lelouch for a Long period of time, which includes his geass attributes, personality, Strategic wit and vulnerabilities

- Mao has previously engaged in a battle of wits against Lelouch, making him even more familiarized with his style and can adapt to the weaknesses that Lelouch exploited in their previous battle, forcing Lelouch to employ more FRI and creativity.

- C2 states that Lelouch is quite literally at a match-up disadvantage against Mao because Lelouch's greatest weapon is his mind and wit which Mao can easily read; ***"Because it's you... you can't win against Mao"***

Lelouch upon entering the area where Nunally is held hostage makes some observations and inferences:

1-) The bomb holding Nunally hostage has a range of over 500 meters, Naturally Mao would want to keep out of the detonation range and thus, Mao can't read the thoughts of anyone at Nunally's location at that moment.

2-) Bombs are not Mao's area of expertise, so this bomb is likely not very complex and the wire to be cut in order to defuse the bomb should be easily discernible. LL can also confirm his inferences by briefly dissecting the bomb through its appearance.

3-) Suzaku tells Lelouch "I'm a trained soldier, make use of that information". With this LL infers that Suzaku has the physical prowess to align his movements with the bomb movements and cut the right wire and defuse the bomb.

4-) There is a camera observing Nunally where she is held hostage, so Mao must be at a place back in the school where the surveillance signal transmits to in order to keep watch over Nunally's location.

EXECUTION

Lelouch makes use of the information and resources at hand, the fact that Suzaku is a soldier means that he has the physical prowess to align his movements with the swinging motion of the bomb and cut the correct wire that Lelouch discerns for him. Lelouch calculates the amount of time it would take for him to reach Mao's location and assigns Suzaku an interval of time slightly above the calculated time. His strategy is to use his geass on himself via a reflective surface whilst he's away from Mao's 500 meter range and make himself forget the strategy that he conveyed to Suzaku and thought for himself. After doing so he heads to Mao's location based off the previous inferences he made. Understanding Mao's envious and narcissistic nature he anticipates that he will weigh Nunally's life on a game of chess, as outplaying Lelouch in his expertise will bring satisfaction to Mao. Mao then begins to explain Lelouch's modus operandi claiming;

"There is a critic within yourself who is always looking at your own actions. And you are always looking at the critic who is another part of yourself"

Insane metacognition, implying a quintuple-meta layered strategy.

Lelouch was able to foresee the outcome of the chess game, knowing that Mao would overwhelm Lelouch due to his ability to read minds. Lelouch was also able to anticipate the fact that Mao would be able to propel him to scream out of pressure of losing the game, during which Lelouch had given Suzaku the order to barge into the room the moment he heard the scream and attack Mao, successfully disarming him. Lelouch knew that his memory-wiped self would engage in a game of chess with Mao, and show clear and subconscious signs of panic, giving him the illusion of victory. Making Suzaku defuse the bomb slightly after the interval of arriving at Mao's location gives Lelouch a chance to distract Mao from the camera in Nunally's location, providing Suzaku the perfect opportunity to defuse the bomb.

"You believe if you know a person's thoughts, you know everything. That's why you narrowed your range and focused all your power on my mind. That was your mistake."

- *Lelouch*

Managed to obliterate Mao by exploiting his strengths and turning them into his weaknesses.

I will now cover the relevance of all the aforementioned categories depicted within this strategy as a means to clear any doubts regarding how these categories may work.*

1-) **STRATEGY EFFECTIVENESS:**

- Successfully defused the bomb and saved Nunally & Ashford Academy
- Utterly crushed Mao by neutralizing his plan and effectively countering it through strategy.
- Managed to do all of that while concealing his geass and identity as Zero.

2-) **STRATEGY EFFICIENCY:**

- Was forced by Mao to not call anyone else for help, minimizing his resources and power
- Managed to make efficient use of Suzaku's physical prowess to disarm the bomb
- Utilized his geass in a creative and efficient manner that managed to counter Mao despite him having studied Lelouch's in-depth.
- Defeated Mao and saved Nunally + Ashford from detonation while being at a massive disadvantage in terms of resources and manpower, textbook efficiency.
- Kept his strategy concise and quick, spanning over a short period of time where he used few but very effective tactics to overcome such dire situation

3-) **STRATEGY EXECUTION:**

- Conveying specific orders to Suzaku as for what to do, when to do it and how to do it.
- Used the geass on himself to erase any memorial trace of his strategy, concealing it from Mao.
- The entire game of chess he played against Mao as a means to deceive him from his true strategy is excellent execution.

4-) **STRATEGY RESILIENCE:**

- Ordered Suzaku to enter right as he heard him scream and disarm Mao. This means that the moment Lelouch screams, Mao will have no chance to prevent his defeat even if he sees through the strategy.
- The resilience factor isn't very prevalent in Lelouch's strategy, But that's not a weakness, but rather that his shielding is so effective that it leaves Mao with no opportunity to attempt to resist.

5-) **STRATEGY SHIELDING**

- Mao's mind reading ability would be a nuisance to Lelouch's strategy to save Nunally, so by using the geass on himself he manages to shield his strategy from Mao's geass ability.
- Engaging in a game of chess with Mao to satisfy his ego is a tactic which distracts him from the camera installed in Nunally's room. This allows Suzaku to defuse the bomb and save Nunally without Mao finding out, perfect Shielding tactic.

6-) **STRATEGY FORESIGHT:**

- Entirely deductive based Anticipation, entailing 100% accurate foresight. That considering the amount of variables in the strategy as well as the metacognitive analysis boasts INSANE foresight.
- He was able to foresee how Mao would respond to Lelouch's strategy/arrival I.e engage in a game of chess to satisfy his ego and weight Nunally's life on said game.
- After coming up with his strategy, Lelouch had successfully anticipated how his memory-wiped self would react given the circumstance e.g how he would scream which acted as an intervention signal for Suzaku.

7-) **STRATEGY ADAPTABILITY;**

- Was in an extremely novel situation, with no preparation time. Had to quickly formulate a strategy to save Nunally and defeat a heavily prepared mind reader
- The situation was completely unforeseen by Lelouch as he believed Mao died from bullet wounds at the abandoned amusement park, yet he perfectly adapted to it and neutralized Mao's threat without needing to reveal his identity or power to Suzaku.

- Defeated someone who is stated to be a terrible match-up for him, insane adaptability and novel problem solving.

8-) **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

- Conveyed Suzaku his role with absolute detail, assigning him on what task to do, how he should do it and when he should do it, making him align even his bodily movements to the swinging motion of the bomb.
- After calculating the travel distance to Mao's location, he managed to align that time of Suzaku's defusing of the bomb, the diversion of Mao's attention away from Nunally and the chess match perfectly.
- Anticipating his own reactions to the chess match, had Suzaku enter at the precise time of his emotional outburst, knowing that the scream would be caused by losing the match, immediately after which Mao would check if the bomb has detonated, which is the instant Suzaku was ordered to disarm Mao.

9-) **TACTICAL COMPLEXITY**

- Managed to engineer a strategy built upon multi-dimensional tactics serving numerous purposes e.g the chess match playing the role of shielding Suzaku whilst appealing to Mao's emotion in order to invoke confidence of victory.
- Used a quintuple meta-layered strategy to defeat Mao, combining layers of his own, as well as Mao's thinking.

Personal ranking for the best strategy categories in this feat

Foresight > Effectiveness >= Efficiency >= Shielding >= Alignment >= Execution > Complexity > Adaptability > Resillience