

As I read more into the subject of strategy then I noticed that disquiet over the field was palpable. Phil Rosenzweig, in the Halo Effect (2007) pointed to the cause being a marriage of convenience: *“Managers are busy people, under enormous pressure to deliver higher revenues, greater profits and ever larger returns for shareholders. They naturally search for ready-made answers, for tidy plug-and-play solutions that might give them a leg up on their rivals. And the people who write business books — consultants and business school professors and strategy gurus — are happy to oblige.”*

I wanted to change this, to somehow give people the tools they needed to learn themselves by exposing that secret tome of strategy to everyone. I wanted to be free of this marriage of convenience. I still believed there was a secret tome back in 2007 and that it was probably guarded in the halls of business schools. I started to think about doing an MBA, shuddered at the expense and borrowed copious notes and books from friends who had. However, I was disappointed. Beyond basic concepts in financial, marketing and operational “strategy” there was no discussion of landscape or context. Maybe the tome was guarded in the halls of strategy consultancies themselves?

I applied for a job with one of the more prestigious consultancy firms and I was invited to a competitive interview process with dozens of other candidates. We would be put through our paces in a number of rounds in a Darwinian battle, a survival of the fittest. In my first round I was asked a question — “A news media company is looking at