



**ADAM BRANDENBURGER**  
*J.P. Valles Professor*  
*NYU Stern School of Business*  
*Distinguished Professor*  
*NYU Tandon School of Engineering*  
*Faculty Director*  
*NYU Shanghai Program on Creativity +*  
*Innovation*  
*Global Network Professor*

NYU Stern School of Business  
44 West 4th Street  
New York, NY 10012  
U.S.A.

NYU Shanghai  
1555 Century Avenue  
Pudong, Shanghai  
China 200122

adam.brandenburger@nyu.edu  
adambrandenburger.com

## The Strategist

MGMT-GB.2113.20 and 2113.30

Spring 2018

Meeting time: Thursdays, 1:30pm-4:20pm or 6:00pm-9:00pm

Instructor: Adam Brandenburger

### Overview

Business success requires being different. To succeed, a business needs to stand out from the competition. This is what business strategy courses teach, and they are right. But finding a way to be different is harder than just knowing that it is important to be different. This is the fundamental challenge facing the business strategist. It is the challenge of looking at an existing organization and coming up with ways to make its position in the marketplace more distinctive. Or, it is the challenge of looking at the potential of a new business and creating a distinct position for it. The strategist is equally important in the worlds of existing enterprise and of entrepreneurship.

The challenge of being different is considerable. Much of the time, everyone has access to more or less the same knowledge base, and everyone can see the same world as everyone else sees. These factors are likely even more at work today, in a globally interconnected world, than in the past. In this environment, the key to being different becomes one's ability to think differently. Of course, one has to think both differently and better, and come up with not just a different but a superior business. Out-thinking others in this way is the job of the business strategist.

In this course, we will develop a four-way framework to help us think differently and better and become better business strategists. The four components of the framework (4 C's) are:

Strategy from Contrast  
Strategy from Combination  
Strategy from Constraint  
Strategy from Context

We will examine many examples of great business strategies of each of these four types, and we will also use this framework to help us generate entirely new strategies.

The course will be multimodal, involving readings, discussion, videos, projects, and presentations. A significant part of the course will involve group work. A detailed syllabus will be posted closer to the beginning of the course.

The course will ask for a spirit of adventure and experimentation on the part of everyone there!