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In Search of Supportive Factors for SWOT Analysis in Strategy Formation:

2S × (SWOT)

Mohammad Saeid Taslimi, (Ph. D.)¹

Abstract

It seems that each one of the strategic crucial elements needs to be supported by another independent factor by which the role of those positive elements (S&O) accurately take place and accordingly the role of negative elements (W&T) become controllable or even optimistically be converted gradually to neutral and positive, i.e. weakness to strenght and threat to opportunity .

These processes require a deep analysis about the helping factors outside the known four elements. In this paper we have introduced two original independent factors as supportive elements to SWOT which are "synectic" and "strive". A casual analysis entails at least the use of these two supportive factors.

1- Faculty Member of Tehran University

Key Words

Strategy Formation - Strength - Weakness - Opportunity - Threat- Supportive Factors - Synectic - Strive.

Introduction

As a critique on strategy and the factors which shape it, this research is going to describe the need and necessity of supportive elements from which every strategy more or less may in one or the other way take advantage .

The effect of "synectic" and "strive" on each of the 4 strategic elements needs to be analysed and the outcome of the overall analysis will indicate that all strategies need support, and the abbreviation of 2S's [Synectic and Strive] with SWOT will bring up a new vision of supportive mentality and action for the strategies and so will do they the strategic decisions or strategic functions.

Therefore, it will be reasonable to present a simple formula for the so called strategy support system (SSS)

$$(S/S/S) \approx \sum \left\{ \begin{array}{l} (\text{synectics}) \times (\text{swot}) \\ (\text{strive}) \times (\text{swot}) \end{array} \right\}$$

$$(\text{synectics} + \text{strive}) \times (\text{swot}) \Rightarrow 2s \times (\text{swot})$$

Terminology

Before proceeding let us have a look at the meaning of the

terminology we have used here, so that the readers can better understand the point .

1) **Synectic:** means a theory or system of problem - stating and problem- solution based on creative thinking that involves free use of metaphor and analogy in informal interchange within a carefully selected small group of individuals of diverse personality and areas of specialization (Webster, 1996: 1182-1183).

2) **Strive:** means to make great efforts to do one's best, to try very hard, to use entrepreneurial efforts to get access to the target. To bring forth together (Webster, 1983: 1804).

3) **Strategy:** means the science of planning and directing large - scale military operations,- a plan or action based on the above - skill in managing or planning (Webster, 1983: 1797).

4) **Strength:** means the state or quality of being strong,- the power to resist strain and stress (Webster, 1983: 1801).

5) **Weakness:** means the state or quality of being weak, - lacking in force or effectiveness, - lacking ability to perform in a well or normal manner , a weak point, a fault, a defect (Webster, 1983: 2072).

6) **Threat:** means an indication of imminent danger or harm, a statement or expression of intention to hurt or destroy (Webster, 1983: 1901).

7) **Opportunity:** means fit or convenient time or occasion, a combination of circumstances favourable for the purpose, suitable time, convenience, fitness (Webster, 1983: 1255).

8) Tactics: means any skillful management for effecting a desired result. the science and art of disposing military and naval forces in action (Webster, 1983: 1855).

9) Technique: means the method or procedure in rendering an artistic work or carrying out a scientific or mechanical operation , the degree of expertness (Webster, 1983: 1872).

Analytical Hypothesis

Nevertheless a few hypotheses concerning this matter can be proposed as follows:

H₀ : All of the strategic plans, decisions and functions pertain some degree of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, whereas the combination of the afore said factors by an analysis indicate a serious need for (supporting) each one of the four famous strategic elements.

As a matter of fact, supportive factor for each one of these four factors affect it in order to its nature.

H₁ : There is no assurance for the strength to survive unless taken care by "the syncetic" and protected by "the strive" factors .

H₂ : Any symptoms of weakness in a strategic plan, decision or action indicate the serious need for the "synectic" factor in order to figure out the various possibilities for overcomming them, and elaborating on the basic of deep cause and effect analysis in order to prevent the plan, decision and action from any similar weakening factor.

H₃: An "Opportunity " by itself may come up with without any use or advantage, if it receives support neither from "Synectic" nor from "Strive", and even increase otherwise may decrease or even be driven out .

H₄: "Synectic" and "Strive" will help the strategic planners, decision makers , and functionalists to figure out the very successful and effective ideas and courses of action to cope up with the threats and even overcome them, and unbelievably even change the threats into opportunities.

Emerging Questions

1) Is it sufficient to be prepared by "strength" in a strategic plan, decision or function ?

2) What element(s) may help strategy to overcome the weakness either to reduce or overwhelm and even convert it to strength ?

3) Is there any need for keeping the opportunity away from negative intervening factors, if so, what could be the basic factors?

4) What kind of effective factor(s) could help the negative factor of "Threat" in any strategic plan , decision or function to be cared of and even convert them to opportunity ?

Discussion

SWOT analysis is a planning exercise in which managers identify organizational strengths (S) and weaknesses (W), and

environmental opportunities (O) and Threats (T) (Jones, George & Hill, 2000: 241). SWOT analysis should not only result in the identification of a corporation's distinctive competencies, but also in the identification of opportunities that the firm is not currently able to take advantage of, due to lack of appropriate resources (Wheeler & Hunger, 2000: 107).

By having each or all of the four strategic factors namely Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat, handy for any strategic decision-making or a successful activity somehow, still there is a need for a final efficient factor which could make any of the four known elements effective.

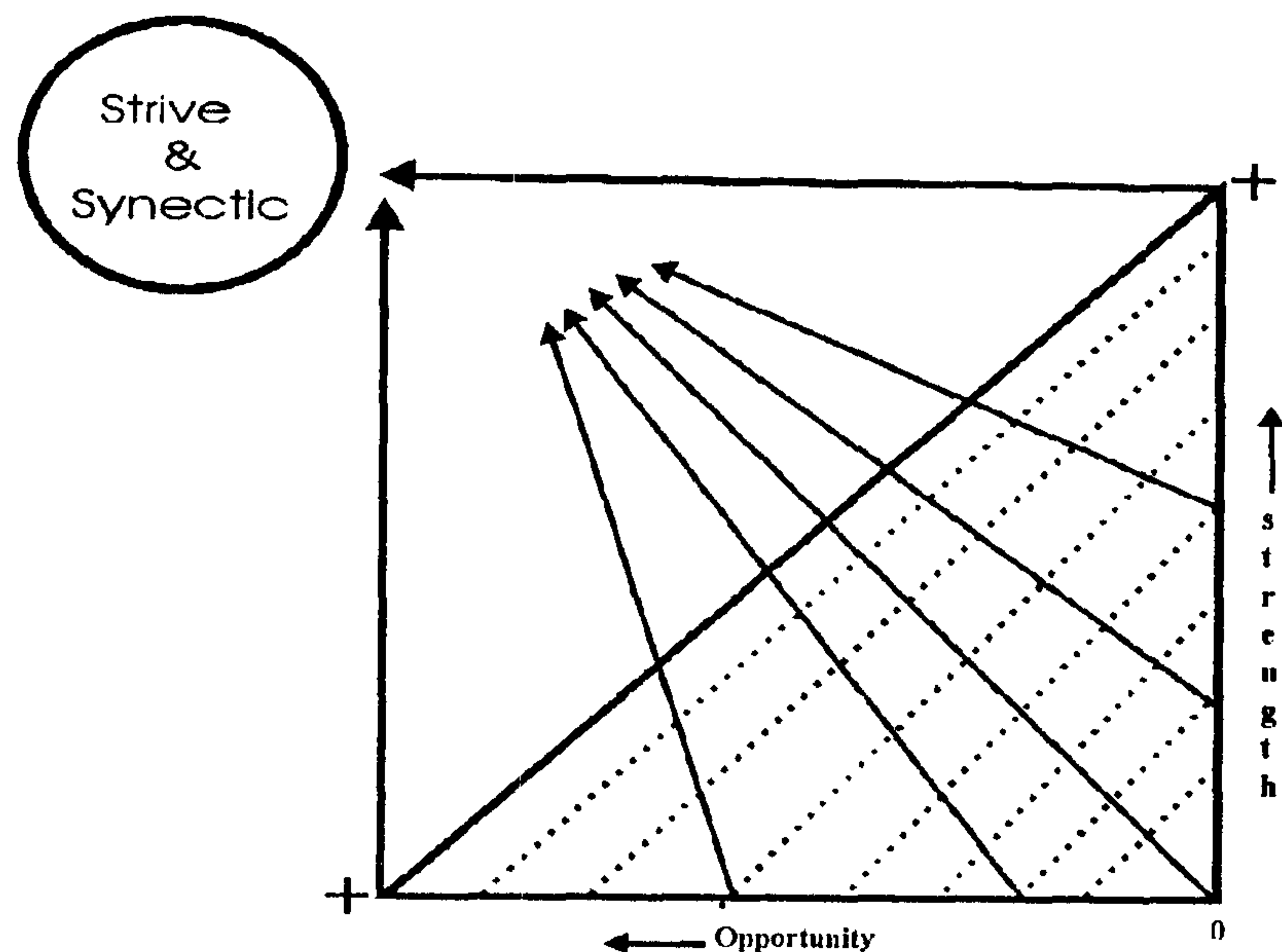
Supposedly, "Strength" by itself and without "Strive" would not have any applicability, nor weakness without "Strive" will be checked-in what about "Opportunity" without "Strive", will it be able to take advantage ?

And the last but not the least , "Threat", with no "Strive" will not activate the decision maker to prevent or get away from it. So far the very brief analysis about the necessity of "Strive" indicates that 5th element with the abbreviation of "S" looks to be the vital preservative for any combination of "SWOT" . This 5th factor will help to change the negative factors to positives or at least will cause the awareness, control and will alarm for any possible action in order to bring the cases under control and get them into steady state. Thus, it will make the positive elements "Strength & Opportunity " to be the most advantageous and

useful.

Two different applications of "Synectic" and "Strive" in the "SWOT" Strategy can be propounded here:

1. Both Synectic and Strive on the positive side of "SWOT" have "pulling out" position, as shown below:



Synectic
&
Strive] \Rightarrow for increasing the S (strength) and taking better advantage from O (opportunity)

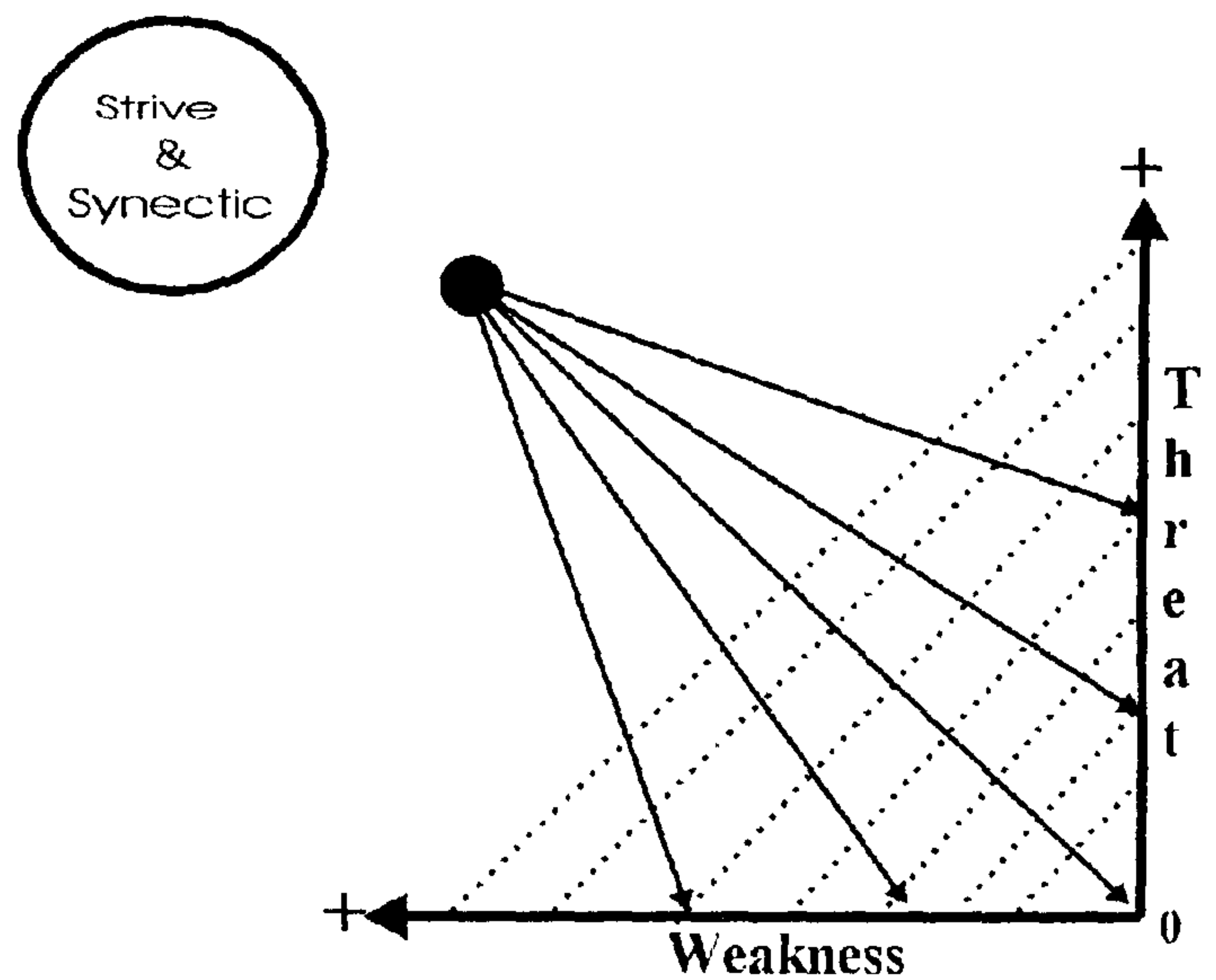
The "pulling-out" character of "Synectic" & "Strive" will cause the maximization of both strength and opportunity up to.

Therefore, strategies will be advantaged by the most possible strengths and the most possible opportunities, as well .

In other words , the effect of both Synectic and Strive on the strenght and opportunity in a strategic decision, plan or action is to move "S and O" up to the most possible extreme:

(strive + synectic) → maximization of (strength & opportunity)

2. Both "Synectic" and "Strive" in the negative side of the "SWOT" have also "pushing-in" position as shown below:



}
Synectic
&
Strive
}
⇒ for decreasing W (weakness)
and the T(threat)

The "pushing-in" character of "Synectic" and "Strive" will cause the minimization of the 'weakness' and "Threats" to the level of zero degree. The supportive effects of "Synectic" and "Strive" for any strategic decision , plan and action are to decrease the existence of weakening and threatening factors, by which otherwise the strategy may fail. In other words, there is some declining relation between Strive and Synectics with each one of the

weakening and threatening factors in all strategies.

As far as Synectic and Strive give downsloping direction, the negative dimension of strategic decisions, plans and actions leads them to the least possible extreme. Therefore the mentioned position of Synectic and Strive for the strategies are supportive:

$$(\text{synectic} + \text{strive}) \rightarrow (\text{weakness \& threats}) \rightarrow 0$$

Rating the SWOT strategy of an organization at the time of threat, we have to apply our supportive factors accordingly.

There can be various conditions between S&W as:

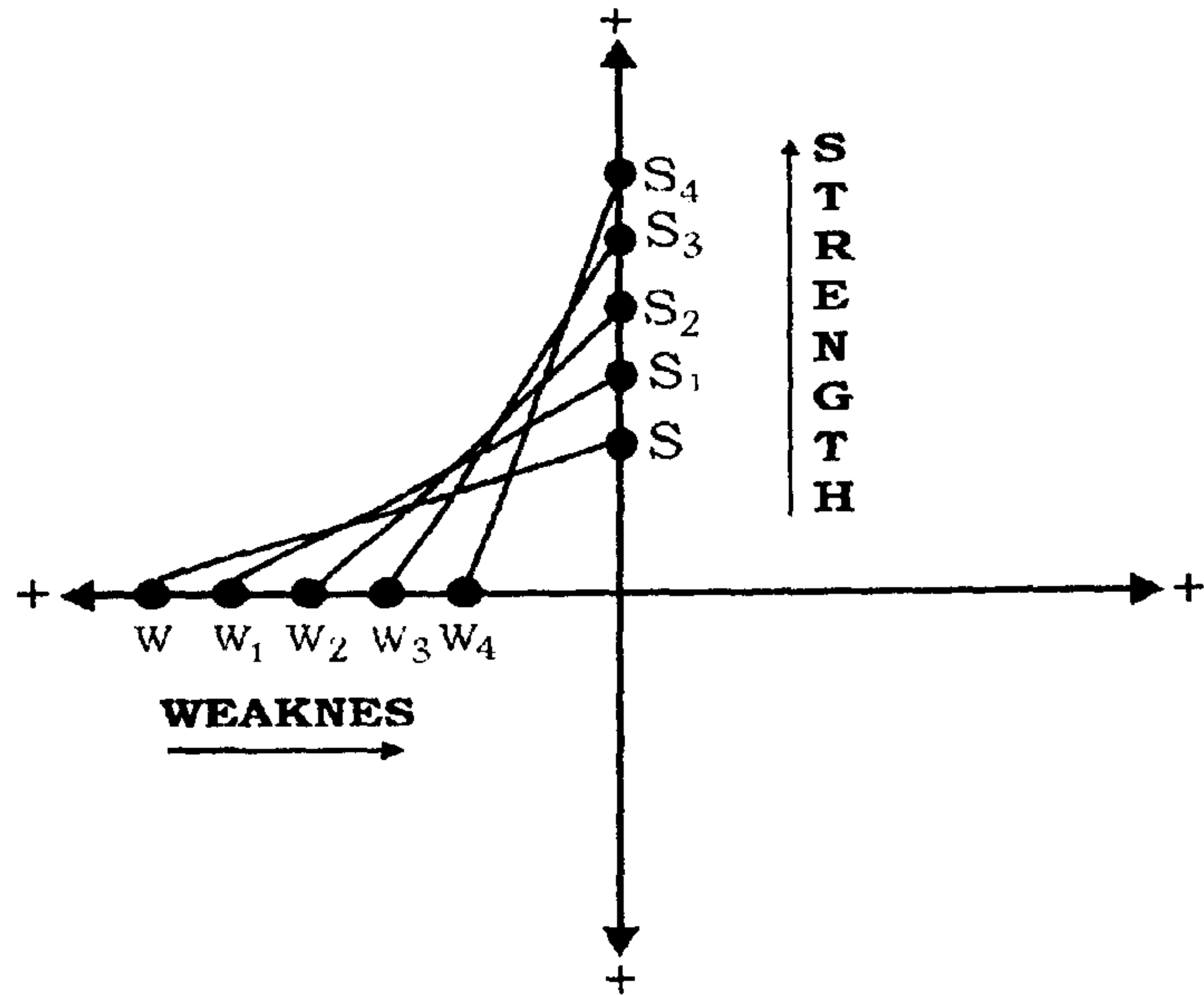
C1: Considering weakness in steady state and having strength increasing, there is:

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} S \rightarrow S_1 \\ S_1 \rightarrow S_2 \\ S_2 \rightarrow S_3 \end{array} \right\} \rightarrow \text{Maximizing Strength}$$

C2: Considering strength to a steady state and having weakness decrease as shown above.

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} W \rightarrow W_1 \\ W_1 \rightarrow W_2 \\ W_2 \rightarrow W_3 \end{array} \right\} \rightarrow \text{Minimizing Weakness}$$

C3: Having increasing S and decreasing W Simultaneously,



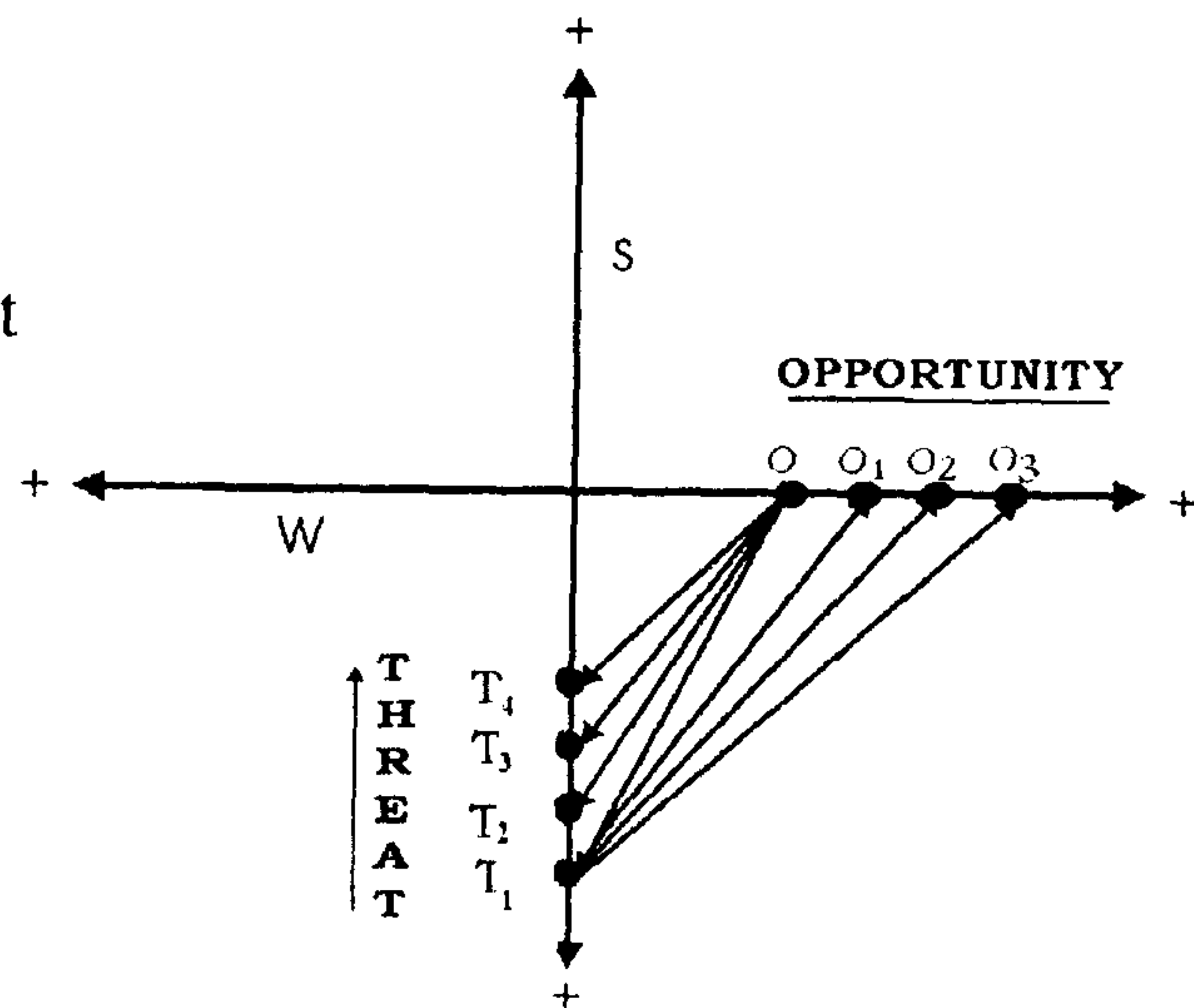
Between Opportunity and Threat

The conditions are as follows:

C1: Having threat in a steady state and increasing opportunity.

$T \rightarrow T_1$
 $T_1 \rightarrow T_2$
 $T_2 \rightarrow T_3$

} \rightarrow Minimizing Threat

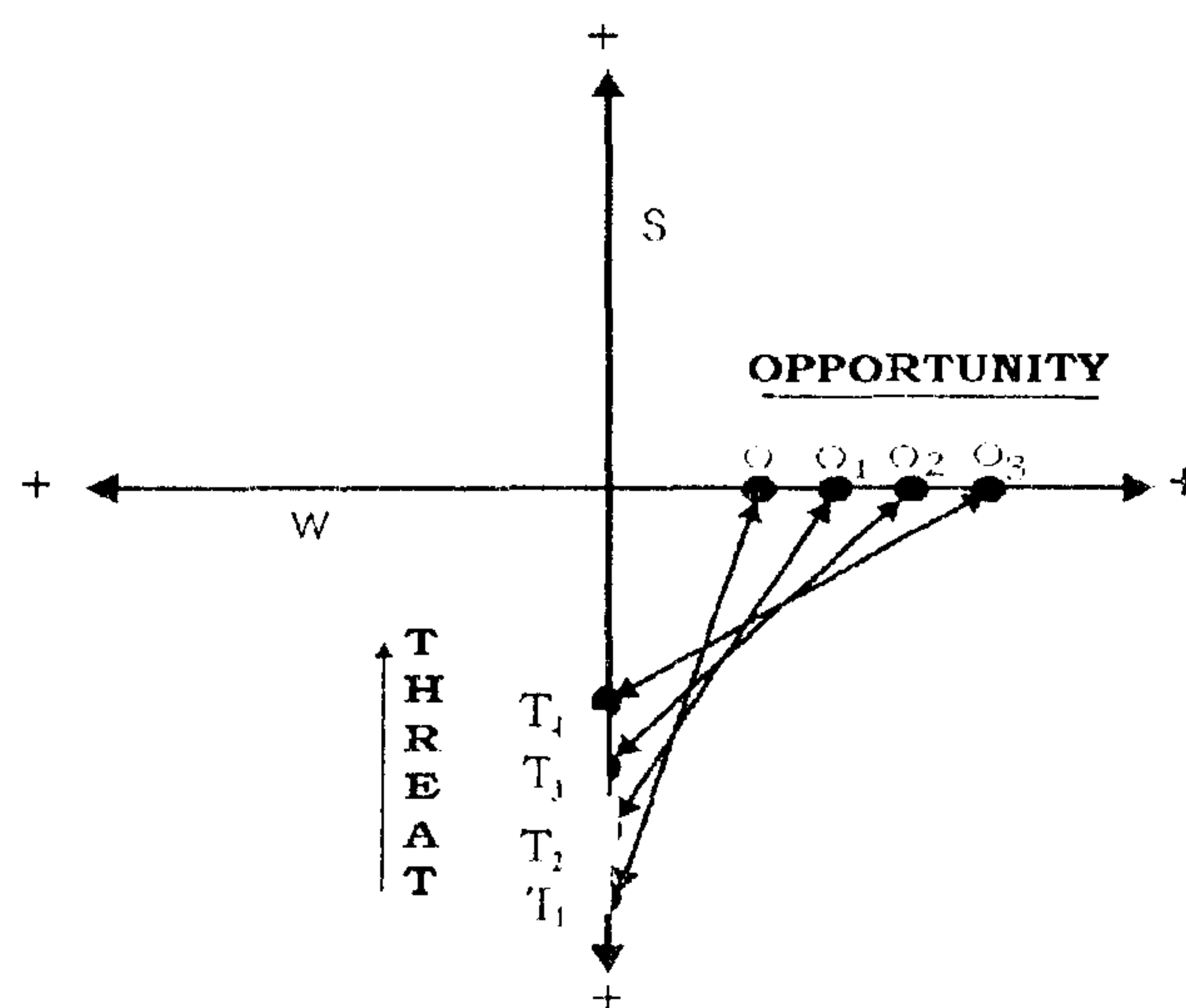


$O \rightarrow O_1$
 $O_1 \rightarrow O_2$
 $O_2 \rightarrow O_3$

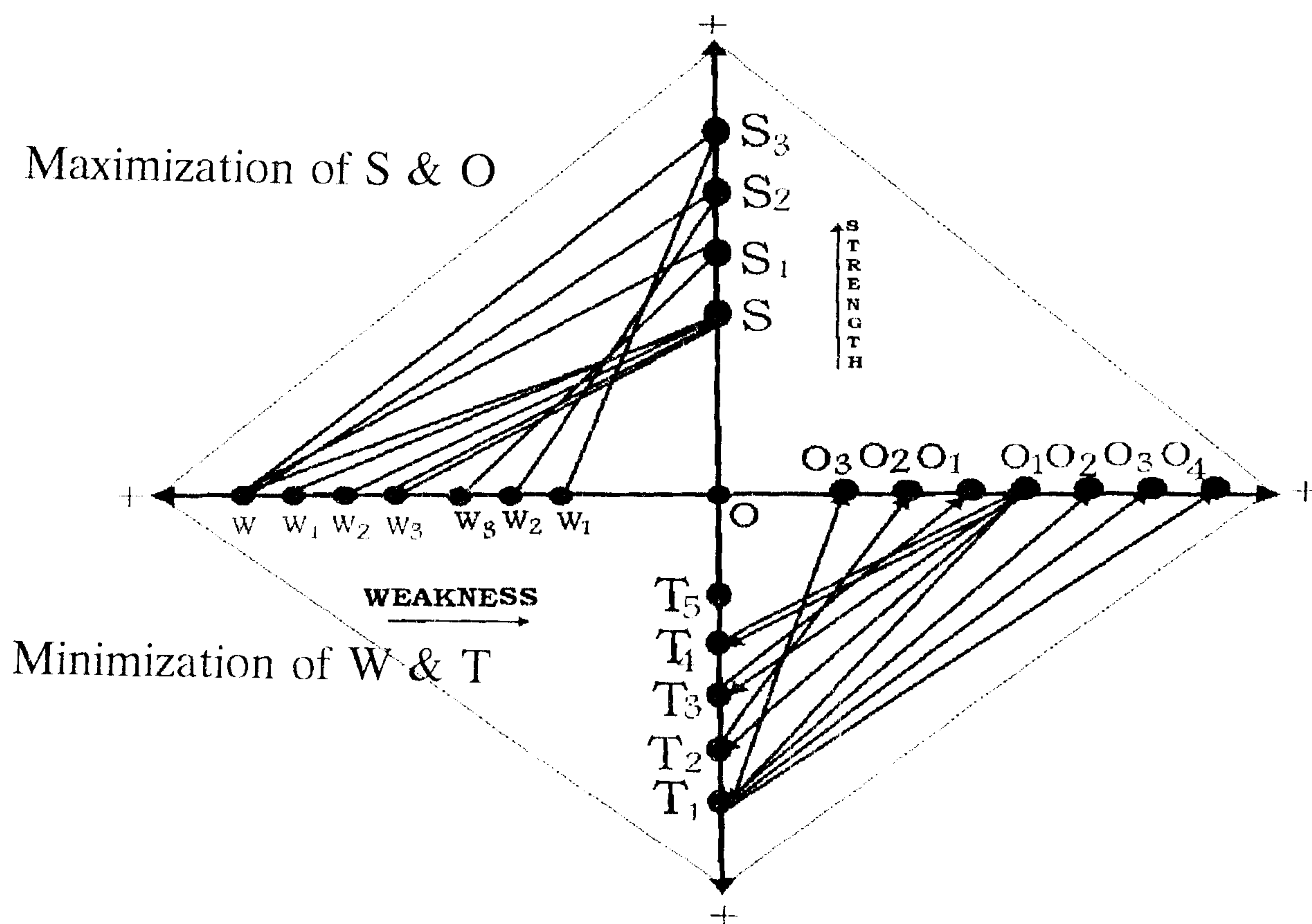
} \rightarrow Maximizing Opportunity

C2: Having opportunity in a steady state and threat in a decreasing state as shown in the above figures.

C3: Having opportunity increase and decreases the threat simultaneously:

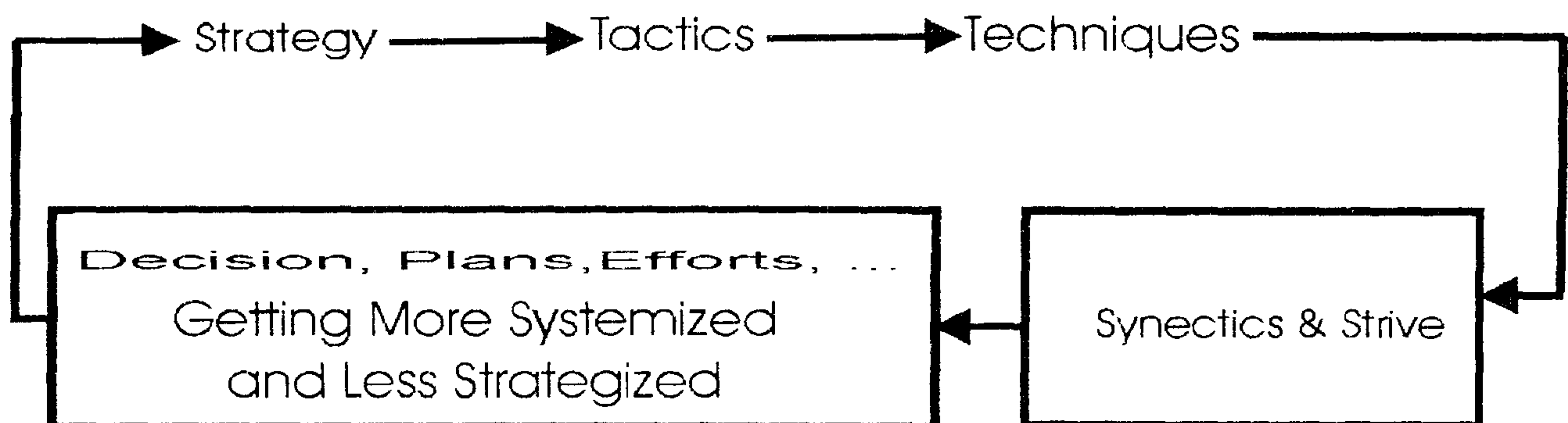


The following figures can summarize our hypothesis:



Strategies Getting Systemized

The process of strategy breakdown will bring up the conception of "strategy systemization" which is nothing but the degeneration of strategic approaches into systemic approaches gradually . As shown below:



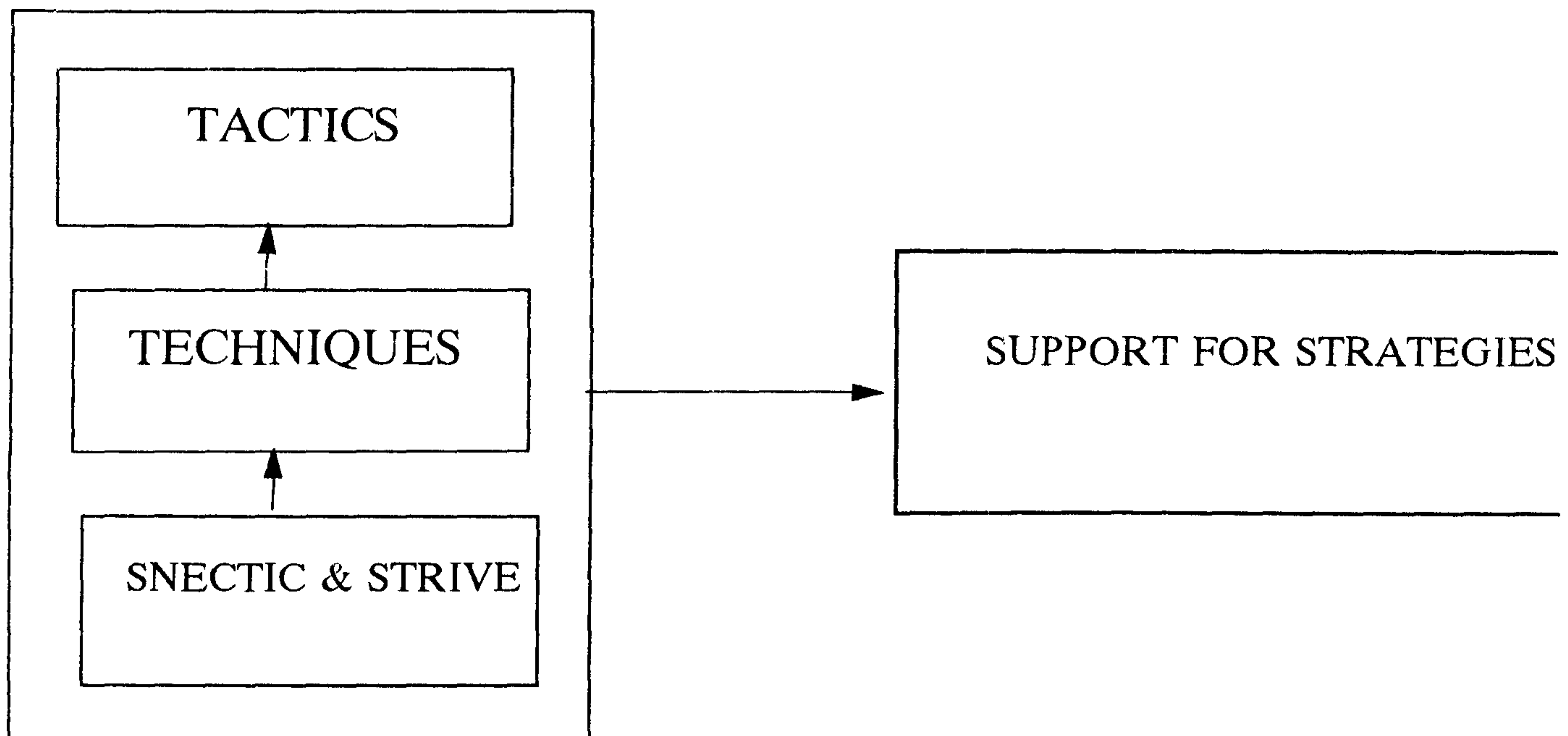
The effect of "Synectic" and "Strive " on the techniques is getting access to some known characteristics and is able to define and identify systematic approaches by which the meaning of the latent system within previous strategies will meagre.

It is quite obvious that "Weakness " and "Threats" in any strategic decision plan and action should be controlled otherwise, the entropy of the system will increce. But if the mentioned negative factors get under synectically and strived control. There may occur some pleasant and fruitful chances even for the conversion of weakness to strengths and threats to opportunities. Then what overall outstanding events happen to the system is that entropy in them changes to negentropy.

Synectic help strategies to come up with very influential and accurate tactics, either to increase the positive occasion such as

opportunities and strengths or to decrease the negative occasion of strategies such as weakness and threats in other aspects.

As long as some correct and just timely tactics emerge from Synectics and are accurately put into action by "Strive", then the needed context for strategy support emerges . The next clear and crucial role of Synectic and Strive after tactics emerge as their effects in "Techniques". Synectics and Strive will furnish tactics by



better techniques, as Synectic and Strive will furnish strategies by better tactics and will surely support those.

Conclusion

Although SWOT analysis is a clarifying exercise in order to figure out merely the exact condition of the enterprise which

policy makers, managers, strategic planners try to identify , in terms of organizational strength (S), weakness (W), Opportunities (O) and threats (T). Based on the stated mechanism, managers usually try to convert their willings into realities by directing their efforts to accomplish the organizational objectives; yet the four well known elements of strategic analysis need to become advantaged with some effective & supportive factors (2s's): -Strive- and-Synectic- which could prove to be a flash light for managers, planner, decision makers and for those sitting at the top for policy capturing.

These two factors, if applied just in time and in a sound way, can pave the way for administrators and managers to curb the challenges & threats for future, in the face of competition, change in technology or the global ups and downs.

"Strive" and "Synectic" are two factors which undoubtedly serve and support strategists to come up with new creative, effective and direct course of action to cope up with the threats and challenge, and even guide and lead them to convert these threats and challenges into the opportunities, as well as converting weaknesses into strengths.

This indication is brought up as a pre-requisite contribution to SWOT Analysis of strategies.

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