BLACKBIRD FOR TRAINING

Advanced Strategic Planning

18 – 22 January 2027
Cape Town (South Africa)



Advanced Strategic Planning

Ref: 3255968_357457 **Date:** 18 – 22 January 2027 **Location:** Cape Town (South Africa) **Fees:** 4200 GBP

Course Introduction

Advanced strategic planning enables organizations to move beyond short-term reactions and develop a clear, evidence-based direction for future growth, resilience, and performance. In an environment shaped by economic uncertainty, technological disruption, changing customer expectations, regulatory pressure, and increasing competition, leaders need more than annual plans and broad ambitions. They require a disciplined process for analysing the external environment, understanding internal capabilities, making strategic choices, allocating resources, and converting priorities into measurable action.

Many organizations struggle not because they lack ideas, but because their strategies are unclear, overly ambitious, disconnected from operational realities, or poorly communicated. Strategic objectives may compete with one another, resources may be spread across too many initiatives, and performance indicators may focus on activity rather than outcomes. In other cases, planning becomes a formal exercise that produces documents but does not influence decisions, budgets, projects, or daily management.

This course provides a comprehensive and practical approach to advanced strategic planning. It develops the capabilities required to assess complex environments, identify strategic issues, define future direction, evaluate alternatives, and create an integrated implementation framework. Participants learn how to connect vision, mission, values, strategic themes, objectives, initiatives, resources, risks, and performance measures within one coherent planning process.

A major emphasis is placed on strategic analysis and decision quality. Participants explore methods for examining political, economic, social, technological, environmental, legal, and industry factors. They also assess internal capabilities, resources, processes, culture, performance, and organizational readiness. By combining external and internal perspectives, decision-makers can distinguish between genuine strategic priorities and issues that may be important but do not require organization-wide attention.

The program also addresses uncertainty and scenario planning. Traditional plans often rely on a single view of the future, making them vulnerable when conditions change. Participants learn how to identify critical uncertainties, develop alternative scenarios, test strategic assumptions, and build options that improve organizational flexibility. This approach supports better risk management and reduces dependence on forecasts that may quickly become outdated.

Effective strategy depends on execution. For this reason, the course explains how to translate strategic objectives into initiatives, programs, responsibilities, budgets, milestones, and measurable results. Participants learn how to prioritize initiatives, manage strategic portfolios, establish governance, align departments, and create review mechanisms that keep the strategy active throughout the planning period.



The course is suitable for executives, senior and middle managers, strategic planning professionals, department heads, policy specialists, project and portfolio managers, business analysts, performance managers, and decision-makers in government and private-sector organizations. It is particularly valuable for institutions seeking to improve strategic alignment, resource allocation, performance measurement, risk awareness, and the practical execution of long-term priorities.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Explain advanced strategic planning principles and their organizational value.
- Distinguish between strategic, operational, and tactical planning.
- Assess the external environment using structured analytical tools.
- Evaluate internal capabilities, resources, performance, and readiness.
- Identify critical strategic issues and long-term priorities.
- Develop clear vision, mission, values, and strategic themes.
- Formulate measurable and outcome-focused strategic objectives.
- Generate and evaluate alternative strategic options.
- Apply scenario planning to uncertain and changing conditions.
- Prioritize initiatives according to value, feasibility, risk, and urgency.
- Translate strategy into programs, projects, budgets, and responsibilities.
- Establish strategic governance and accountability mechanisms.
- Develop meaningful key performance indicators and targets.
- Align departmental and individual plans with organizational strategy.
- Monitor execution and adjust strategy using evidence and feedback.
- Prepare an integrated strategic plan and implementation roadmap.

Course Modules

Day 1: Advanced Strategic Planning Foundations

- Purpose and value of strategic planning.
- Strategic, tactical, and operational planning.
- Strategy versus goals, plans, and projects.
- Strategic thinking and systems perspective.
- Characteristics of effective strategy.
- Vision, mission, values, and purpose.
- Strategic planning models and cycles.
- Stakeholder expectations and influence.
- Strategic planning roles and governance.
- Common causes of strategy failure.
- Planning assumptions and decision constraints.
- Strategic planning process design.



Day 2: External and Internal Strategic Analysis

- Political, economic, social, and technological analysis.
- Environmental and legal influences.
- Industry and sector structure.
- Market and competitor assessment.
- Customer and stakeholder trends.
- Emerging risks and opportunities.
- Internal capability assessment.
- Resources and core competencies.
- Organizational performance analysis.
- Culture and leadership readiness.
- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Identification of strategic issues.

Day 3: Strategy Formulation and Scenario Planning

- Developing strategic themes.
- Formulating strategic objectives.
- Defining desired future outcomes.
- Strategic option generation.
- Evaluation of strategic alternatives.
- Value, cost, risk, and feasibility criteria.
- Growth, efficiency, innovation, and service strategies.
- Scenario planning principles.
- Identification of critical uncertainties.
- Development of alternative future scenarios.
- Stress-testing strategic choices.
- Selection of preferred strategic direction.

Day 4: Strategy Execution and Organizational Alignment

- Translating objectives into initiatives.
- Strategic initiative prioritization.
- Program and project portfolio alignment.
- Resource and budget allocation.
- Ownership and accountability.
- Departmental strategy alignment.
- Cross-functional coordination.
- Change management considerations.
- Communication of strategic priorities.
- Strategic risk management.
- Governance and decision rights.
- Execution milestones and review cycles.



Day 5: Performance Measurement and Practical Strategic Planning

- Strategy maps and cause-and-effect relationships.
- Key performance indicator selection.
- Leading and lagging measures.
- Baselines, targets, and thresholds.
- Benefits and outcome measurement.
- Strategic performance dashboards.
- Progress reporting and review meetings.
- Corrective action and strategic adaptation.
- Monitoring assumptions and environmental changes.
- Practical strategic planning case study.
- Strategic plan presentation and evaluation.
- Development of an implementation roadmap.

Why Should You Attend This Course?

- Strengthen your ability to think and decide strategically.
- Build plans based on evidence rather than assumptions alone.
- Improve alignment between vision, priorities, budgets, and execution.
- Identify the strategic issues that require leadership attention.
- Evaluate alternative strategies using structured criteria.
- Prepare for uncertainty through scenario-based planning.
- Reduce fragmented initiatives and competing priorities.
- Improve resource allocation across strategic programs.
- Establish clearer accountability for strategic implementation.
- Design meaningful measures for tracking outcomes.
- Connect departmental plans with organizational direction.
- Develop a practical and adaptable strategic roadmap.

Course Conclusion

Advanced strategic planning provides organizations with a disciplined approach to navigating complexity, setting priorities, and directing resources toward meaningful long-term outcomes. It moves planning beyond broad statements and annual activities by connecting analysis, choice, execution, measurement, and adaptation.

This course equips participants with practical tools for assessing the environment, evaluating organizational capabilities, developing strategic options, and selecting a clear direction. It also strengthens their ability to test assumptions, prepare for alternative futures, and make decisions under uncertainty.

Participants can apply the course outcomes by improving existing planning cycles, refining strategic objectives, prioritizing initiatives, establishing clearer governance, and developing more useful performance indicators. These actions help ensure that strategy influences budgets, projects, operations, and management decisions.



Over the long term, effective strategic planning improves organizational focus, resilience, accountability, and performance. It enables institutions to respond to change without losing direction and creates a practical foundation for sustainable growth, service improvement, innovation, and stronger decision-making.

