

Scenario planning - shaping the future

Overview

A practical course in scenario planning in which participants will:

- o Anticipate possible future scenarios
- o Explore uncertainties and forces that are impacting on the future
- o Examine possible future developments that could impact on individuals, organisations or societies
- o Think proactively and plan for the future

Organisations facing conditions such as the following can benefit from scenario planning:

- o High levels of risk, uncertainty and complexity
- o A desire to influence events
- o Low level of strategic thinking
- o Industry has changed significantly
- o A recognized need to anticipate change
- o Past mistakes such as costly surprises
- o Few new opportunities being developed

Learning outcomes

On completion of this course participants should be able to:

- o Identify future driving forces
- o Link scenarios to business strategy
- o Enhance your ability to manage change
- o Manage risk proactively
- o Apply principles of systems thinking
- o Reduce the likelihood of surprises
- o Develop robust strategies to deal with complexity and uncertainty
- o Improve your decision making capability
- o Avoid common pitfalls

Case Studies (selected from)

- o Royal Dutch Shell
- o Queensland Transport
- o Scenarios for the Post -Industrial City
- o National City Bank - aligning IT & business
- o World Economic Forum and the Confederation of Indian Industry: India@Risk
- o Agricultural Science and Technology in India
- o Strategy Failure in America's Largest Telco
- o Driving forces in health
- o Aerospace business environment
- o Energy industry scenarios
- o Gas asset management

Overview of content

Session One - Putting scenario planning into context

- Using scenario planning to develop corporate strategy
- The what and why of scenario planning
- Generative and adaptive scenarios - your level of control or influence
- Range of applications
- Views of the world
- Exploration of high risk industries (public, private and non-profit) - general and specific

Activity: Identify the key external factors that impact your organisation

Session Two - Understanding the scenario development process

- Models and processes to shape the future
- Scenario planning steps
- Developing stories about the future
- Applying principles of Systems Thinking

Activity: Develop four different possible futures

Session Three - Identifying the key drivers of change

- Recognising predetermined elements
- Separating knowns from critical uncertainties
- Examining risk and levels of uncertainty
- Developing checklists of drivers: political, economic, social, technological, environmental, legal
- Ranking driving forces by uncertainty and importance

Activity: Rank driving forces

Session Four - Laying the foundations for scenarios

- Identifying driving forces
- Selecting key issues which are most relevant to the future
- Setting the scenario agenda
- Analysing and questioning assumptions
- Engaging with stakeholders

Activity: Select key issues & analyse assumptions

Session Five - Building powerful scenarios

- Scoping – exploring boundaries and terms of reference
- Applying deductive, inductive, normative and incremental methods
- Asking the right questions
- Designing scenarios using story templates
- Dealing with change – culture & perceptions

Activity: Create a scenario matrix

Session Six - Evaluating scenarios from a range of perspectives

- Developing criteria to evaluate scenarios
- Identifying critical success factors
- Applying principles of reflection
- Analysing implications from the perspective of key external & internal stakeholders

Activity: Test your scenarios for consistency, plausibility and other key criteria

- Day one wrap-up

DAY TWO

Session One - Managing risk – responding to uncertainty

- Identifying and evaluating risks including critical uncertainties
- Exploring pandemic scenarios
- Capitalising on opportunities
- Responding to risks

Activity: Undertake a risk analysis

Session Two - Bridging from scenarios to strategies

- Exploring the implications of diverse scenarios
- Linking short-term action plans and long term strategies
- Reading early-warning signs
- Prioritising external and internal initiatives
- Building sustainable strategies – closing the implementation gap

Activity: Identify early warning signs

Session Three - Developing mechanisms to deal with disruptive changes

- Speculating on future crises
- Using wind tunnels to test the future
- Increasing managers capability through shared mental models
- Exploring emerging issues that will change the shape of our world
- Ensuring that we are prepared to meet future challenges
- Shaping the wider policy agenda

Activity: Managing perceptions and potential reactions

Session Four - Managing successful scenario planning projects - process and content

- Producing the project plan – roles, KPI's, deliverables, timing, resources etc
- Planning the logistics – invitations, venue, timing
- Developing the stakeholder management plan
- Gathering up relevant information
- Developing questionnaires and agendas
- Engaging with stakeholders through interviews, workshops etc

Activity: Develop an outline scenario planning project plan

Session Five - Applying further tools and techniques

- Systems thinking
- Creative thinking principle & tools
- Wide Band Delpi
- Strategic alliances
- Other approaches to scenario development

Activity: Apply advanced tools to enhance your scenario

Session Six - Plenary session and wrap-up – Key factors for successful scenario planning

- Developing proactive approaches
- Consolidating insights on building and using scenarios
- Avoiding scenario planning traps
- Building leaders at all levels

Activity: Develop your action plan

- Summary and close

Who should attend?

Senior managers, managers, program managers, strategic planners, account managers

Course Duration

Typically two days. Can be delivered in one day format