

BUDGET PREPARATION AND PLANNING SKILLS



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TRAINING CENTER



Introduction

Budget Preparation and Planning Skills Training Course builds the hands-on skills needed to prepare a budget that survives review and stays usable through the year. Participants work through the budget cycle, cost and revenue estimation, assumption setting, budget submission, and monitoring as one connected practice. The programme focuses on the mechanics managers and budget officers actually handle, from templates to justification notes. As a result, learners gain a working method rather than a theory of budgeting. Furthermore, the course strengthens estimation discipline, justification quality, and the reporting that keeps spending under control.

Budget Preparation and Planning Skills Course Objectives

- Explain the budget cycle and each stage from call to approval.
- Apply incremental, zero-based, and activity-based budgeting methods.
- Estimate costs accurately using historical data and cost behaviour analysis.
- Prepare revenue and income budgets with documented assumptions.
- Build a budget submission with justification and prioritisation notes.
- Apply cost-benefit thinking to justify new spending requests.
- Prepare headcount, capital, and cash budget schedules.
- Monitor budget execution and explain variances to management.
- Apply appropriation, virement, and commitment control discipline.
- Prepare budget reports and presentation materials for review committees.

Course Methodology

- Interactive sessions built on budget preparation and planning cases.

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- Workshops on cost estimation, assumption setting, and budget submission.
- Group exercises on justification notes, prioritisation, and variance explanation.
- Hands-on practice with budget templates, cost schedules, and variance reports.
- Simulation of a budget committee defence and a mid-year monitoring review.
- Facilitator coaching and peer review on personal budget plans.

Who Should Take This Course

- Budget officers and planning specialists.
- Department and unit managers preparing budgets.
- Finance officers and management accountants.
- Cost controllers and analysts.
- Administrative and programme managers with budget duties.
- Professionals new to budget preparation responsibility.

Budget Preparation and Planning Skills Course Outlines

Day 1: The Budget Cycle and Preparation Stages

- The budget cycle from call for estimates to approval.
- Roles and responsibilities in budget preparation.
- Budget calendars, deadlines, and submission requirements.
- Incremental, zero-based, and activity-based budgeting compared.
- Linking the budget to strategy and organisational objectives.
- Policy, ceilings, and resource envelopes.
- Case discussion: a budget submission rejected for weak justification.





Day 2: Cost and Revenue Estimation

- Cost classification: fixed, variable, direct, and indirect.
- Using historical data and trend analysis for estimates.
- Cost behaviour and the relevant range in estimating.
- Applying inflation, currency, and price assumptions.
- Revenue and income estimation methods.
- Contingency, risk, and sensitivity in estimates.
- Workshop: preparing a cost estimate schedule for a department.

Day 3: Preparing the Budget Submission

- Structuring a budget submission and standard templates.
- Writing justification notes and business cases for new spending.
- Prioritisation techniques for competing requests.
- Cost-benefit and value-for-money reasoning.
- Headcount, capital, and operating schedules.
- Common errors in budget submissions and how to avoid them.
- Exercise: preparing a complete budget submission with justification.

Day 4: Cash, Commitment, and Budget Control

- Cash budget preparation and cash flow timing.
- Working capital items in the budget: receivables, payables, inventory.
- Commitment accounting and obligation tracking.
- Appropriation, virement, and reallocation rules.
- Spend gates, approval limits, and internal control.

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- Procurement plans and their budget implications.
- Simulation: handling a budget reduction request with reallocation.

Day 5: Monitoring, Variance, and Budget Reporting

- Budget versus actual reporting and monitoring cadence.
- Variance classification and materiality thresholds.
- Root cause investigation for significant variances.
- Re-forecasting and corrective action during the year.
- Preparing budget review packs and presentation slides.
- Presenting and defending a budget in a committee.
- Capstone: presenting a complete budget preparation and monitoring plan.

Conclusion

By successfully completing Budget Preparation and Planning Skills, participants will gain a practical command of the budget cycle, cost and revenue estimation, submission preparation, and monitoring. They will acquire skills in justification writing, prioritisation, commitment control, and variance reporting that make budgets credible and controllable. Gentex Training Center designs the programme to help professionals prepare budgets that withstand review.

FAQs





Q1 What is the "Budget Preparation and Planning Skills" course about?

It builds the hands-on skills needed to prepare a budget that survives review and stays usable through the year. The course spans the budget cycle and preparation stages, cost and revenue estimation, preparing the budget submission, cash, commitment and budget control, and monitoring, variance and budget reporting.

Q2 What are the key benefits of the "Budget Preparation and Planning Skills" course?

You gain a working method rather than a theory of budgeting. The course improves estimation accuracy, strengthens justification and prioritisation of spending requests, sharpens commitment and control discipline, and gives you reporting routines that keep spending visible and correctable.

Q3 What skills will I gain from the "Budget Preparation and Planning Skills" course?

You will develop four core skills: budget cycle management and submission preparation, cost and revenue estimation, justification writing and prioritisation, and commitment control with variance reporting.



Q4 What tools, methods, or standards are covered in the "Budget Preparation and Planning Skills" course?

The course covers the budget cycle and calendar, incremental, zero-based, and activity-based budgeting, cost classification and behaviour analysis, historical and trend-based estimation, inflation and currency assumptions, revenue and income estimation methods, contingency and sensitivity planning, budget submission templates and justification notes, cost-benefit and value-for-money reasoning, headcount, capital and operating schedules, cash budgets and working capital planning, commitment accounting, appropriation and virement rules, spend gates and approval limits, procurement planning, budget versus actual reporting, variance classification and materiality thresholds, root cause investigation, and re-forecasting routines.

Q5 How is the "Budget Preparation and Planning Skills" course applied in real-world practice?

Participants apply it to real work such as preparing a departmental cost estimate schedule, writing a justification note for new spending, building a cash budget, handling a mid-year reduction request, and presenting a budget review pack to a committee. The same methods support procurement planning and monthly monitoring reports.