

STRATEGIC THINKING AND BUSINESS PLANNING



GENTEX[®]
TRAINING CENTER



Introduction

Strategic Thinking and Business Planning Training Course prepares professionals to think strategically and then turn that thinking into a funded, workable business plan. Participants learn how to read markets, choose a direction, and build the plans that connect ambition to budgets and delivery. The program combines strategy frameworks with practical work on planning cycles, financial modelling, and plan approval. As a result, learners gain a complete method from insight to an approved plan. Furthermore, the course strengthens commercial judgement, risk awareness, and the communication that wins support for a plan.

Strategic Thinking and Business Planning Course Objectives

- Apply strategic thinking habits including systems perspective and long-term framing.
- Analyse the external environment using PESTLE, Porter's Five Forces, and SWOT.
- Apply core strategy frameworks including the resource-based view (RBV) and value chain analysis.
- Choose positioning and growth direction with Porter's generic strategies, the Ansoff matrix, and blue ocean thinking.
- Build a business plan structure covering market, operations, and financial sections.
- Develop revenue models and cost structures with break-even analysis.
- Apply investment appraisal with NPV, IRR, and payback to business cases.
- Forecast sales, costs, and cash flow with scenario and sensitivity analysis.
- Assess business risk with risk registers and mitigation planning.
- Present and defend a business plan to investors, boards, or senior management.

Course Methodology

- Interactive sessions built on real business planning cases.

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- Workshops on environmental analysis, strategy choice, and planning structure.
- Group work on revenue models, cost structures, and financial forecasts.
- Hands-on practice with NPV, IRR, break-even, and cash-flow modelling.
- Simulation of business plan pitches and investment committee reviews.
- Facilitator feedback and peer review on draft business plans.

Who Should Take This Course

- Business unit managers and department heads.
- Strategy, planning, and corporate development professionals.
- Entrepreneurs and business owners preparing growth plans.
- Finance and business partnering professionals supporting plans.
- Product, marketing, and commercial managers building business cases.
- Consultants supporting strategy and business planning work.

Strategic Thinking and Business Planning Course Outlines

Day 1: Strategic Thinking Foundations

- What strategic thinking is and how it differs from planning.
- Systems perspective, mental models, and long-term framing.
- Hypothesis-driven analysis and issue trees.
- Problem framing and separating cause from symptom.
- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis.
- Strategic intent, ambition, and success criteria.
- Case study: a business plan built on weak thinking.





Day 2: Market and Competitive Analysis

- Environmental analysis with PESTLE and Porter's Five Forces.
- Market sizing, segmentation, and customer analysis.
- Competitor analysis and strategic group mapping.
- Value chain analysis and the resource-based view (RBV).
- Positioning with Porter's generic strategies.
- Growth direction with the Ansoff matrix.
- Workshop: building a market and competitor analysis.

Day 3: Business Model and Plan Structure

- Business model canvas and value proposition design.
- Revenue models, pricing, and cost structures.
- Break-even analysis and contribution margin.
- The standard business plan structure and executive summary.
- Operations, resourcing, and capability planning.
- Milestones, timelines, and implementation roadmap.
- Exercise: drafting a business plan outline.

Day 4: Financial Planning and Investment Appraisal

- Sales forecasting methods and assumptions.
- Cost budgeting and gross margin planning.
- Cash flow forecasting and working capital needs.
- Investment appraisal with NPV, IRR, and payback.
- Sensitivity analysis and scenario planning.

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- Funding options: equity, debt, and internal investment.
- Workshop: building a three-year financial forecast.

Day 5: Risk, Approval, and Plan Execution

- Risk registers and mitigation planning for business plans.
- Governance and approval routes for plan sign-off.
- Presenting and defending a plan to investors or boards.
- Translating the plan into KPIs, budgets, and accountability.
- Review cycles and plan revision triggers.
- Communicating the plan across the organization.
- Capstone: presenting a complete strategic business plan.

Conclusion

By successfully completing Strategic Thinking and Business Planning, participants will gain a practical command of strategic analysis, business model design, and financial planning. They will acquire skills in market analysis, revenue and cost modelling, investment appraisal, and plan presentation. Gentex Training Center designs the program to help professionals build business plans that are strategically sound and financially convincing.

FAQs

Q1 What is the "Strategic Thinking and Business Planning" course about?

It connects strategic thinking with the practical work of building a business plan. The course spans environmental and competitive analysis, strategy and growth choices, business model design, financial forecasting and investment appraisal, and plan approval and execution.





Q2 What are the key benefits of the "Strategic Thinking and Business Planning" course?

You gain a complete method from strategic insight to an approved, funded plan. The course improves market analysis, sharpens positioning and growth choices, strengthens financial modelling, and helps you present a plan that investors and senior management accept.

Q3 What skills will I gain from the "Strategic Thinking and Business Planning" course?

You will develop four core skills: strategic thinking and market analysis, business model and plan design, financial forecasting and investment appraisal, and plan presentation with risk and execution governance.

Q4 What tools, methods, or standards are covered in the "Strategic Thinking and Business Planning" course?

The course covers PESTLE, Porter's Five Forces, SWOT, strategic group mapping, value chain analysis, the resource-based view (RBV), Porter's generic strategies, the Ansoff matrix, blue ocean thinking, the business model canvas, break-even and contribution margin analysis, NPV, IRR and payback appraisal, cash flow forecasting, sensitivity and scenario analysis, risk registers, and business plan structures with executive summaries.



Q5 How is the "Strategic Thinking and Business Planning" course applied in real-world practice?

Participants apply it to real work such as preparing an annual business plan for a unit, building a three-year financial forecast, assessing a new product or market venture, and presenting a business case for investment approval. The same methods support budget submissions and plan review cycles.