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Transformative Scenario Planning

INTRODUCTION

- The increasingly complex economic, political and social environment in which most organizations now operate is placing a huge demand on their planning and leadership capability. The standard assumption is that we cannot predict or influence the future – merely adapt to it. As a result only about 3% of organizations bother to use scenario planning as an integral part of their strategic thinking and strategic planning. This failure to use scenario planning not only results in poor strategies and poor performance but also fails to identify and address problems and challenges that can seriously limit and ultimately destroy an organization or a society.
- This training programme covers a robust approach to planning for the future called ‘Transformative Scenario Planning’ that not only identifies a range of possible futures but also sets out to change the future by influencing systems, structures and processes around us and to do so in a collaborative and holistic manner.
- This training course on Transformative Scenario Planning will address all of these areas by covering the relevant background information and models and providing the powerful practical skills required to negotiate the five key phases of scenario planning. By applying this proven approach delegates will be able to anticipate and plan for a range of likely possible futures that might well impact their organizations and so enjoy a sustainable lead over their private sector or public service competitors.

This training course on Transformative Scenario Planning will combine imagination with robust analysis and highlight how to:

- Assemble a scenario planning team that represents the whole system your organization is operating within
- Become aware of and observe what is happening in and around your organization
- Design and deliver detailed, believable, consequential stories about what could happen in the future
- Identify what can and must be done to mould to or proactively influence the system
- Plan and act to adapt to – and transform – structures, processes and players in the system

OBJECTIVES

This training course is designed to help attendees to:

- Fully understand the nature and role of scenario planning in today's private and public sector organizations
- Clearly distinguish scenario planning from forecasting, contingency planning, trend analysis and threat matrices
- Really appreciate and master the five key phases of the planning process
- Confidently structure and implement each phase for maximum success
- Powerfully apply the results of the process both internally and externally to drive innovation in product development, service delivery, funding, etc.
- Skillfully disseminate the panel's outputs and thus enhance their organization's reputation, credibility and standing

TRAINING METHODOLOGY

- This training course will use a range of approaches to learning, including experiential group activities, individual exercises, mini-case studies, existing scenarios, role plays and syndicate discussions. Graphical materials and stimulating explanations will be used to introduce underlying models.
- A key part of the learning process is sharing the different experiences participants bring, as well as experimenting with novel – and sometimes challenging – techniques.

ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT

Your organization will benefit from:

- Gaining a key input to its strategic planning and strategic thinking process
- Enhanced, world-class planning capability
- Increased alignment with key players in its operating environment
- Improved communication, openness and levels of trust with its major stakeholders
- Enhanced creativity and innovation in its problem-solving
- Collaborative resolution of conflicts and challenges
- Higher levels of organizational productivity

PERSONAL IMPACT

- Participants will be exposed to probably the most powerful strategic management process that exists. A process that has literally been responsible for the end of apartheid in South Africa, that accelerated the end of the former Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall and the success of global organizations that have consistently out-performed their rivals over several decades.
- Participants will also add to their leadership, team-development, planning and problem-solving skills. These skills and insights can be used in many different areas of their professional and personal lives and will make them considerably more valuable in today's highly competitive job market.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- This training programme is suitable for both individual participants and teams with some experience in strategy, planning and leadership roles who are looking to explore new ways of thinking about strategy or keen to identify potential opportunities and risks in our turbulent world.

The following will also benefit on attending this training course:

- Strategic Planning Teams
- Board-level Members
- Senior Managers
- Politicians
- Policy Developers
- People working in private organizations, government departments, public sector organizations, emergency services, NGOs, academia, professional bodies

Course Outline

The Origins and Nature of Scenario Planning

- Origins of Scenario Planning
- What Scenario Planning is and When to use it
- The Shortcomings of Traditional Strategic Management Approaches
- How Scenario Planning Works
- An Overview of the Phases of the Process and the Timescales Involved

Assembling a Team that Represents the Whole System

- Choosing a 'Convening Team'
- Assembling a 'Plausible Future' vs. a 'Delphi' Panel that both Represent the Whole System
- Selecting Key Members / Actors for the Panel

Becoming Aware of and Observing What is Happening

- Allowing Time for the Panel to (a) transform their understandings, relationships, and intentions (Phases 1 to 4) and (b) adapt to and transform the system (Phase 5)
- Understanding Your Own and Other's biases in Thinking, Planning and Communicating
- Enabling the Panel to Examine the Current Reality in and Around the Overall System
- Determining the Driving Forces of the System: Events, Patterns, Trends and Structures / Processes
- Creating a Space that Enables Trust, Safety, Autonomy, Re-perceiving and Dialogue
- Using Facilitation to Exploit Divergent, Emergent and Convergent Thinking
- Deciding on 'Learning Journeys' / Field Visits, White Papers, Researchers and 'Remarkable Persons'
- Listing 'Certainties' and 'Uncertainties' in and Around the System

Designing and Telling Stories about What could Happen

- Determining Two Major Uncertainties / Dimensional Axes
- Designing Four Scenarios around the Two Uncertainties using both Deductive and Inductive Thinking
- Conceiving Non-obvious Scenarios using Inductive Thinking
- Transforming the Final Four Scenarios into Logical, Consequential Stories
- Finding Metaphors, Images and Titles for each Scenario
- Documenting the Scenarios to Facilitate Compelling Communication using Different Media

Identifying What Can and Must be Done

- Looking at the Scenarios to Provide Direction: Adapting to and Influencing / Transforming the System
- Appreciating What can be done alone and also through Partnerships
- Discovering What can and must be done based upon What could happen
- Pausing, Reflecting and Making meaning of both Adaptive and Transformative Meanings and Implications
- Using a 'Reverse SWOT' in Adaptive Stance; using Roles, Responsibilities and Obligations in Transformative Stance
- Describing Future 'Contexts' and Defining their 'Triggers', 'Early Warning Indicators' and Appropriate 'Planned Responses'

Planning and Acting to Adapt to and Transform the System

- Transforming the Scenarios to Actions: Goals / Policies, Objectives, Programs, Initiatives / Projects, Structures / Processes, Legislation, etc.
- Using the Insights into Possible Opportunities, Risks and Choices to Frame your Service Provision and Activities
- Leveraging Alliances and Partnerships to Work in New Ways
- Engaging with the World as a Collective Panel or Independently with more Aligned, Understandings, Insights, Relationships, Intentions and Wisdom
- Using Meetings, Briefings, Workshops, the Media (broadcast and social) and Spinoff Initiatives
- Utilising the Difference between Simply Distributing vs. Disseminating the Panel's Outputs using Inspired Actors

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