

The Transitions Certificate of Achievement in Strategic Management

Transitions vision is to capture and exploit the spirit of enterprise within organisations. The roots of our philosophy lie in the recognition that every business strategy needs to be combined with a top management team that believes in a coherent vision, shared understanding and shared values.

INTRODUCTION

Transitions deliver a masters-level postgraduate Certificate in Strategic Management (TCMS) to meet the personal development and training needs of managers in larger businesses.

It is a modular programme of project-driven learning, arranged around five classroom -style



sessions, each of three days' duration and accredited by Nottingham Trent Business School. The programme is designed to provide existing, newly appointed or aspiring managers with the opportunity to undertake a modular management development programme, which leads to a University award in Strategic Management. The key objectives of the programme are:

- To provide managers with a broader business perspective.
- To develop their understanding of other business functions and how these integrate with their roles;
- To provide them with tools to do their jobs more effectively;
- To enable them to approach decision-making more strategically;
- To prepare them for progression within the organisation.

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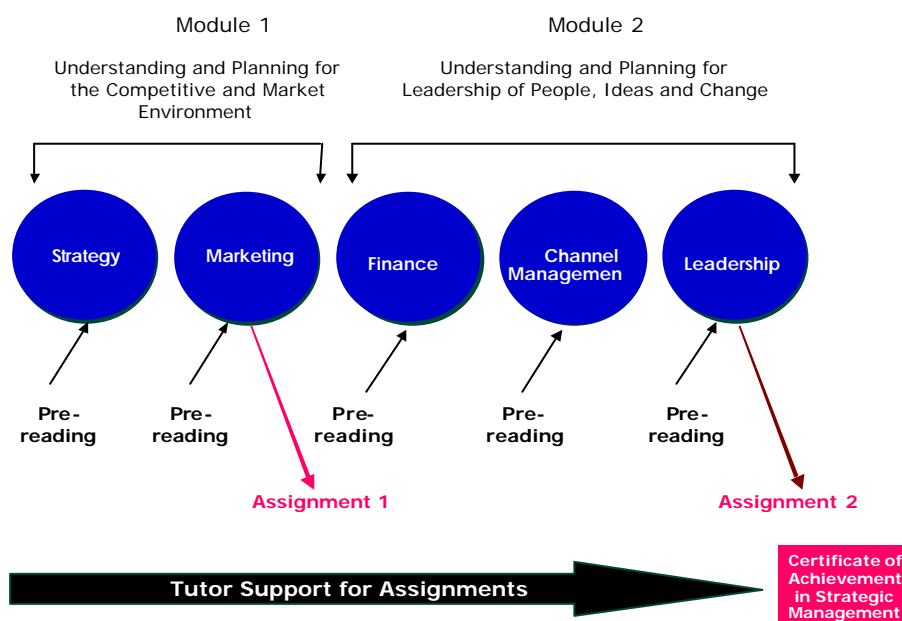
Programme Structure and Content

The TCSM is run as an in house programme and through the structure and content of the programme delivers specific benefits to the company and the participating managers. In addition TCSM offers the company the opportunity to identify potential 'high flyers'.

The TCSM is structured around two modules that are essential to the development of effective strategy management performance in the business. These two modules are designed to address the key roles and areas of activity of the managers within the company to ensure the objectives are achieved. The modules are:

- 1 Understanding and Planning for the Competitive and Market Environment.
- 2 Understanding and Planning for Leadership of People, Ideas and Change.

Each module consists of a number of 'off the job' teaching modules.



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The purpose of these teaching blocks is to provide the individuals with the necessary theory, skills and understanding to underpin the development of knowledge and effective practice within the module.

Each module is undertaken over a period of time, sufficient to allow attendance at the relevant days/courses, and allow for the study time necessary to complete the module assignments. The precise time therefore to complete the programme is flexible, according to the needs of the business and the individuals, but would not be expected to exceed one year.

Modules and Duration

- Understanding and Planning for the Competitive and Market Environment – Two 3-day teaching blocks.
- Understanding and Planning for Leadership of People, Ideas and Change – Three 3-day teaching blocks.

Assessment

The assessment and practical application of skills and knowledge gained during the off-job training are essential elements of the programme. Each of the two modules will have a written assignment, which individuals will be required to undertake in their personal management situations. These assignments will have been supported by practical exercises and workshops situations during the training sessions. The purpose of each assignment is the same:

- To provide individuals with the opportunity to reflect on the practical application of skills and techniques learned in the off-the-job modules.

Assignments take into account the workload problems that individuals will encounter from time to time. They are expected to demonstrate evidence of having engaged critically with appropriate readings.

These assignments form the bases of assessment and successful completion of the programme is dependent upon satisfactory completion of the assignments.

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Each module is supported by recommended reading texts and there is a dedicated programme website through which on-line support and information is provided.

BENEFITS

This is what the Vice President of one global organisation said about the TCSM programme

Why did you undertake to establish the management development programme in the European Sales Team?

“Business education was limited to a selected handful of very senior managers being offered the opportunity to attend a two week short course at somewhere like Wharton or London Business School. This kind of course was deemed to be sufficient to identify you as a senior manager and that you were fully “educated”. We wanted to change this approach, because having been on such courses that were unconnected to our context we wanted to expose people in our organization to business education much earlier in their career.

We also wanted to link business education to our business strategy, develop business projects that linked the learning to our context and acquire some tools and techniques that could be applied more widely.

A business education programme aimed at the people we identify as capable of future growth would also result in linkages to our HR policy on promotion and development, provide recognition and perhaps result in a more competitive spirit in which people can see routes to future progress. With a break in the traditional career paths to progress in large companies we also wanted other ways to recognise and reward endeavour.”

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Has it worked for you?

“We are now in the third year of our relationship and the outcomes have been outstanding for us. In fact we had a review at very senior levels about the merits of this programme, especially in the current economic climate but felt that the design, delivery and outcomes have been so positive that this style of business education must not become a soft target for budget cuts. Here are some examples of what we have achieved so far.

Several people in the organisation have added new responsibilities and received promotion. The programme is seen as a fast track route by senior management and the participants. The kudos of participation has been a far superior level of recognition than we anticipated.

Several of the participants have asked for formal feedback to their assignments and projects and see their huge effort being rewarded when their senior colleagues read their reports and provide feedback. The signalling effect has been very positive and in a difficult economic climate this process has pulled people together in very positive ways. It has also enabled people to learn how to express their views in a coherent and compelling way to their senior colleagues. This is a really important outcome for people to continue their progress within any organisation.

There is clear evidence of the application of lessons from the programme and indeed the vocabulary of many of our meetings and reports is much more sophisticated through the use of the new insights gained on the programme.



Several projects conducted on the programme have been taken forward and in the links to academic institutions we had an MBA project conducted by students at Cambridge University that has resulted in the setting up of a new warehouse facility in Moscow in support of our growth strategy in Russia. This was an excellent project.

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Will you continue with the programme and Transitions?

“Without doubt! In addition to all the benefits we have described so far we have also the added outcomes of forming networks of future senior managers who can learn from each other in informal ways. Most of the people on the courses would not have met each other for another four to five years other than in short encounters in large meetings. Here we have an in-depth immersion of contact over several months, so we are also bonding colleagues who will grow together in the organisation.

As for Transitions – I believe we made the right decision. They have been outstanding in several ways. Not only have they provided the right content, high level delivery and met all our expectations. They have supported the programmes with superb administrative back up, an excellent website with all the details, access to resources and programme management information.

All our delegates feel completely comfortable with them, we are not distracted by the detail of having to manage a supplier and are easy to do business with.

At both a personal and business level we are more than impressed and trust them completely to continue doing a great job for us.