



Stanford Advanced Project Management Certificate

Leadership for Strategic Execution (XAPM111)

Sample Syllabus

Primary Instructors

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The DNA of Execution

The program kicks off by exploring the inherent challenges associated with transforming a strategic vision into reality to generate the desired business results forecasted. Then the Strategic Execution Framework (SEF) is introduced as the course's integrating model by demonstrating its adaptability at the individual, project, portfolio, and organizational levels. The application of the model will be brought to life by comparing it with the strategic approach of one of the prominent execution leaders of our generation.

Leadership and Wisdom

Breathing life into the strategy and implementation plan is the role of a leader, so we'll explore in more detail some essential elements that effective leaders use to turn strategy into action. Leveraging the latest research from Evidence-Based Leadership, we'll explore the myths and misconceptions, as well as the current realities, that every leader must know to bridge the knowing-doing gap.

Strategic Execution Mapping

Creating a comprehensive strategy that will move the organization toward projected goals AND has broad buy-in from those who must execute it is at the root of organizational success. We'll start by thinking about the way we think. Great leaders are able to embrace the systems-thinking approach necessary to envision the future and anticipate the ripple effect that our decisions have across the organization and into the marketplace. Learn to harness the power of visually displayed information to surface great ideas from key stakeholders and transform them into breakthrough strategies. Communicating the strategy across the organization can't be taken for granted, so we'll preview some tools that will ensure that strategy execution doesn't get derailed before ever getting started.

Execution Risk Assessment

Once the strategy has been defined, it's time to roll up our sleeves and figure how to turn it into reality. One of the essential questions to ask is if an organization's management systems enable its doing the right things to facilitate achieving business objectives. The risk-based assessment methodology presented offers a strategic risk management approach to planning, executing, and reporting on organizational capability and the related risks. Finally, we'll look at the communication planning process to ensure that key information is delivered to all stakeholders in an appropriate format and in the right sequence to maximize success.

Effective Decision Making

The leader's role in making the "right" strategic decisions is more critical than ever, due to the increasing complexity of the work environment and the execution demands placed on us by shareholders and the Street. An interactive exercise will provide the backdrop to highlight the difficult decisions placed on teams and the biases that we must override for effective decision making to occur. The resulting lessons learned will be leveraged throughout the remainder of the course to keep a razor-sharp focus on the keys to effective decisions at every stage of executing a strategy.



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Leading with Power

Although power has been called “the organization’s last dirty secret,” John Gardner once commented, “to say that a leader is preoccupied with power is like saying a tennis player is preoccupied with making shots his opponent cannot return. Of course leaders are preoccupied with power.” That is because implementing anything in organizations requires building and exercising influence. Many people are at once ambivalent about power and also have incomplete or inaccurate implicit theories about the sources of power and how it can be exercised.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship is an important element of any successful strategy implementation because of the increasing complexity of organizations. You’ll apply tools and processes to build stronger sponsorship and manage interfaces relative to your appropriate Strategic Execution Framework lifecycle requirements. You’ll walk away with a comprehensive guide and an action plan to begin implementing back on the job.

Change Leadership

As an organization moves into the strategy implementation phase, its leaders must have an acute awareness of the inherent challenges associated with planning, communicating, and managing change around these new initiatives. One key dimension in determining which leadership strategy to use is how fundamental is the change effort? Is it core or is it more evolutionary? Another important factor is the existence of an aligned team or whether the leader has to go it alone. This session will provide both conceptual models and actionable approaches to help you plan your change attempt.