STRATEGIC THINKING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

3 day training course
Accreditation:

This 6-credit HEQF (2007) level 8 short course covers knowledge of a formal postgraduate programme, approved and quality controlled as required by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) and the Higher Education Qualification Committee (HEQC).

Background:

As a leader and manager in the public sector, how do you cope with challenges confronting you? How do you respond to the uncertainties in this regulatory environment? What is the best response to political expectations, transformation, deregulation and delivery? Are you able to create sustainable public value?

Strategic planning is the deliberate creation of fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide every organisation, describing what it does and should be doing and why. It facilitates communication and participation, accommodates divergent interests and values, fosters wise and rational decision-making and promotes successful implementation and accountability.

This course will teach you to think strategically, plan strategically and ultimately manage strategically in the context of the public and development sectors.

Target participants:

This course is primarily aimed at strategic decision makers in the public sector. Strategic decisions are made at all levels in government including political and management levels. Public service decision makers in all spheres of government and in departments, entities, municipalities and even non-governmental organisations who have to make significant and counting decisions will benefit from the course. The course is particularly well suited for the needs of departmental decision teams from a department as the learning can then directly be applied to improve the strategic capacity of the department and the impact of the team in this regard.

Course objective, topics and outcomes:

The overarching course objective is to provide participants with a conceptual understanding of the strategic thinking and management disciplines in the public sector context.

The following outcomes will be achieved:

- increased understanding of strategic contexts and challenges,
- improved strategic capacity to deal with strategic challenges,
- enhanced competencies to understand strategy and to act strategically, and
- effective and ethical strategic leadership.
The following learning objectives are set:

- to transfer conceptual and theoretical understanding of strategic thinking and management to participants,
- to contextualise the conceptual understanding within the public governance context,
- to build first level competencies in the techniques used in strategic processes in the public sector,
- to transfer an introductory strategic skills set to participants,
- to practice strategic capacity through the application of some strategic techniques, and
- to reinforce all learning with experiential learning applications in the classroom setting.

The contents of this course include the following topics:

- Understanding strategic management in the public sector;
- Learning to think strategically about work processes and decisions;
- Planning skills for strategic thinkers;
- Integrating the skills: strategic thinking, planning and management
- Ability to apply various tools and techniques related to strategic thinking, planning and management.

Assessment and credits

After attending this course, participants should be able to fulfil the following assessment criteria through the indicated methods of assessment:

- Demonstrate an understanding of strategic concepts;
- Show capacity to analyse the strategic context;
- Illustrate strategic thinking and action capacity; and
- Integrate theory and practice for strategic action.

Assessment criteria:

Each participant must, through the assessments, provide proof that he / she is able to integrate the theory and practice of strategic thinking and action in a professional way.

The class based assessment will contribute 40% of the final mark. The individual assignment will contribute 60% of the final mark.

Individual assignments have to be submitted on or before the due date as agreed upon based on the class consensus. No late assignments will be accepted under any conditions.

Assessment methods:
Participants will be individually assessed by means of the following methods:

1. An individual assignment,
2. Class exercises;
3. Case studies;
4. A formally assessed class based group project.

Daily Programme of activities:

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<th>Times</th>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08:00 - 08:30</td>
<td>Registration, tea, coffee</td>
<td>Tea, coffee</td>
<td>Tea, coffee</td>
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<tr>
<td>08:30 - 10:30</td>
<td>Introduction Setting the Scene Ice Breaker</td>
<td>Strategic Thinking: The Challenges</td>
<td>Strategic Thinking and Management: Techniques: continued</td>
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<td>10:30 – 11:00</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:10 - 13:00</td>
<td>Strategic Thinking: The Context</td>
<td>Strategic Thinking: The Challenges: continued</td>
<td>Class Based Group Work and Evaluation</td>
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<td>13:00 – 13:45</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>13:45 - 15:45</td>
<td>Strategic Thinking: The Concepts</td>
<td>Strategic Thinking and Management: Techniques</td>
<td>Strategic Thinking and Management: Bringing it All Together Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:45 - 16:15</td>
<td>Strategic thinking: The Concepts</td>
<td>Strategic Thinking and Management: Techniques: continued</td>
<td>Strategic Thinking and Management: The Conclusions</td>
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**Course leader**

Professor Erwin Schwella PhD

Erwin Schwella holds a PhD degree in Public Administration which he obtained from Stellenbosch University in 1998. After having served as the Director of the School of Public Management and Planning of the University of Stellenbosch since 1992 he currently holds a full professorship in Public Leadership in the School. During his career, spanning over 26 years, he has held positions in national and local government. For the largest part of his career he has been an academic.

Erwin Schwella has been and still is a consultant and advisor to ministers and other executive office holders at all spheres of government in the democratic South Africa. He has travelled extensively and was a visiting academic at many prominent European and United States Universities.

He is a leadership and governance trainer who has trained senior members of the South African liberation movements in preparation for their roles in government as well as political and government leaders in the democratic South Africa and abroad.

Erwin Schwella is author and co-author of more than 30 academic publications in the fields of governance, leadership, organization development and public management. He serves and has served on the editorial boards of a number of national and international academic journals. He is a National Research Foundation rated researcher in South Africa.

Currently he is a member of the Board of Overseers of the Centre for Public Leadership in The Hague, the Netherlands as well as a Board member of the Centre for Executive Leadership and Governance at Rutgers University, New Jersey in the United States of America. His current research interests are pursued in the area of public leadership and institution building for good governance in a rule of law constitutional context. He is listed in *Who’s Who in the World*. 