
Scenario Planning and Strategic Foresight

18 – 22 January 2027
Amsterdam





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Programme Summary

Traditional corporate roadmaps frequently assume a single predictable trajectory, leaving institutions vulnerable to sudden systemic shocks. The Scenario Planning and Strategic Foresight masterclass equips corporate strategists and portfolio architects with systematic methodologies to navigate radical ambiguity. Delegates progress through environmental scanning, critical uncertainty matrix modelling, plausible future world generation, and strategic wind-tunnelling. This one-week professional development programme is provided by Mars Training Centre UK.

The Business Case

Institutions that anchor capital commitments to single-point forecasts face catastrophic exposure when macroeconomic, technological, or regulatory environments rupture. Embedding disciplined foresight architectures enables enterprises to recognise emergent shifts earlier, evaluate structural exposures, and maintain operational agility across divergent operating environments.

- **Forecast Fallacy Mitigation:** Eliminates reliance on baseline projections by evaluating strategic robustness against divergent, non-linear operating environments.
- **Early-Warning Capability:** Establishes sensory indicators that identify macro-environmental inflection points long before they disrupt commercial operations.
- **Capital Allocation Agility:** Stress-tests capital expenditure and major investment commitments against multiple plausible operating contexts.
- **Strategic Flexibility:** Expands executive mental models to generate pre-emptive contingency options, compressing reaction latency during structural transitions.

Principles and Evidence Base

- **Intuitive Logics Methodology:** Establishes the foundational matrix architecture for structuring high-impact, high-uncertainty drivers into discrete, internally consistent future worlds.
- **Association of Professional Futurists APF Competencies:** Guides the practice of systematic framing, scanning, forecasting, visioning, designing, and institutionalising foresight capabilities.
- **Futures Cone Framework:** Categorises environmental trajectories across projected, probable, plausible, possible, and preposterous domains to challenge orthodox assumptions.



Intended Participants

- Corporate planning executives and foresight specialists managing multi-year enterprise transformation roadmaps.
- Portfolio managers and enterprise risk officers seeking to stress-test long-cycle capital allocations against divergent external shifts.
- Heads of policy, regulatory response, and institutional governance facing volatile socio-political developments.
- Functional department chiefs and enterprise transformation leads accountable for sustaining operational relevance across changing operating conditions.

The curriculum addresses professionals managing capital-intensive assets across energy, financial services, technology platforms, transport infrastructure, and public administration.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to apply horizon scanning methodologies to identify emerging technological, socio-economic, and environmental disruptions.
2. Participants will be able to distinguish critical uncertainties from predetermined elements using structured ranking matrices.
3. Participants will be able to construct divergent, internally consistent alternative futures using inductive and deductive matrix methods.
4. Participants will be able to execute stress-testing protocols to assess corporate vulnerability across distinct future environments.
5. Participants will be able to establish early-warning indicator scorecards to track macro-environmental trajectory shifts.
6. Participants will be able to embed strategic foresight routines into recurrent enterprise governance and resource allocation cycles.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Horizon Scanning and Environmental Trajectory Mapping

How do institutions detect structural shifts beyond standard forecasting horizons?

- Limitations of Extrapolative Forecasting and Deterministic Projections
- The Futures Cone: Differentiating Projected, Plausible, and Wildcard Realities
- STEEP Taxonomy: Systematic Macro-Environmental Driver Auditing
- Weak-Signal Detection Protocols and Fringe Phenomenon Identification
- Information Noise Filtering and Environmental Sensation Mapping

Day 2: Critical Uncertainties and Matrix Architecture

How are complex, interrelated macro drivers structured into coherent axes of uncertainty?



- Predetermined Elements Versus Critical Uncertainties: Impact-Uncertainty Mapping
- Identifying Core Dilemmas and High-Impact Enterprise Vulnerabilities
- Deductive 2x2 Matrix Formulation and Structural Polarity Selection
- Inductive Morphological Analysis for Multi-Dimensional Trajectory Design
- Ensuring Plausibility, Independence, and Orthogonal Divergence Across Axes

Day 3: Narrative Construction and Plausible Future Pathways

How are dry analytical uncertainties transformed into rigorous, internally consistent worlds?

- Systemic Logic Verification: Causal Loop Diagramming of Future Dynamics
- Developing Coherent Narrative Arcs and Plausible Branching Logics
- Fleshing Out Operating Realities: Regulatory, Commercial, and Technological Ecosystems
- Immersion Artefacts: Designing Evocative Future Operating Snapshots
- Peer Stress-Testing for Internal Consistency and Cognitive Blind Spots

Day 4: Strategy Wind-Tunnelling and Option Generation

How do executive teams evaluate existing strategic commitments against divergent alternative futures?

- Wind-Tunnelling Protocols: Assessing Policy Vulnerability Across Distinct Worlds
- Identifying Core Imperatives, Robust Contingencies, and Fragile Assumptions
- Formulating Hedging and Shaping Maneuvers for Variable Operating Conditions
- Real Options Thinking: Preserving Flexibility Under Irreversible Capital Commitments
- Risk Surface Mapping: Quantifying Enterprise Fragility Under Adverse Scenarios

Day 5: Indicator Dashboards, Governance, and Foresight Integration

How are foresight mechanisms institutionalised within ongoing corporate decision cycles?

- Designing Early-Warning Indicator Frameworks and Sensory Scorecards
- Threshold Definition: Establishing Triggers for Executive Course Correction
- Overcoming Organisational Inertia and Cognitive Defences Against Uncomfortable Futures
- Integrating Foresight Cycles into Enterprise Risk and Capital Allocation Audits
- Capstone Briefing: Presenting Alternative Futures to Executive Governance Boards

Methodology

Delivery centres on an immersive simulation model where participants construct a full foresight cycle around an enterprise dilemma. Working collaboratively, delegates evaluate macro-environmental drivers, construct uncertainty matrices, detail divergent world narratives, and execute rigorous strategy wind-tunnelling exercises.



- Suggested activity: Conducting an environmental scanning workshop using structured cross-impact analysis matrices to isolate volatile drivers.
- Suggested activity: Generating a four-quadrant uncertainty matrix to produce divergent operating environments for a contested capital project.
- Suggested activity: Wind-tunnelling a corporate strategic plan through adverse alternative futures to isolate fatal operational assumptions.

Capstone Output

Each delegate develops a comprehensive Foresight Architecture Dossier featuring an environmental driver audit, a validated four-quadrant alternative future matrix, an enterprise wind-tunnelling diagnostic matrix, and an early-warning indicator scorecard. This deliverable serves as an actionable framework that participants can deploy directly to evaluate long-horizon investments within their sponsoring institutions.

Frequently Asked Questions

How does scenario planning differ from conventional enterprise risk management?

Enterprise risk management typically focuses on mitigating known operational or compliance hazards within an established operating paradigm. Scenario planning investigates structural ruptures that redefine the operating paradigm itself, addressing uncertainty that cannot be reduced to statistical probabilities.

Is this programme quantitative or qualitative in orientation?

The curriculum integrates both dimensions. It pairs qualitative macro-environmental scanning, systems dynamics, and narrative development with quantitative impact-uncertainty ranking, cross-impact matrix evaluation, and indicator threshold metrics.

Can these foresight frameworks be applied to short-term operational decisions?

While the methodologies excel at five- to twenty-year horizons, the analytical disciplines of identifying critical uncertainties and monitoring early-warning indicators provide immediate clarity when navigating near-term market turbulence or regulatory shifts.

How are the generated scenarios brought back into existing corporate governance?

The final module focuses specifically on governance integration, detailing how to translate alternative future worlds into dynamic strategy wind-tunnelling, trigger-based capital release gates, and board-level risk oversight agendas.