
Supply Chain Strategy Training Course: Rival Benchmarking, Service Segments and Network Roadmap

1 – 5 March 2027
Vienna





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Programme Summary

Supply Chain Strategy, covering rival benchmarking, service segments and the network roadmap, is the subject of this five-day training course for supply chain, procurement, logistics and planning leaders at strategic level, ending in a supply chain strategy brief for one business unit. Many organisations run supply chains by habit and compare themselves with rivals only on price. The programme moves from strategy principles, through diagnosis of position and gaps, to design of network and service choices, then to application on a real unit. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this Supply Chain Strategy programme for senior leaders.

The Business Case

A supply chain built for one customer promise often fails another. Without a clear view of rivals, service segments and cost-to-serve, leaders invest in speed where customers want price, or in cost cutting where they want reliability. A strategy tied to business priorities lets leaders choose, sequence and defend investment.

- Service Performance: Improves as service levels are set by customer segment rather than for all.
- Cost-to-Serve: Becomes visible by segment, which exposes unprofitable promises.
- Investment Return: Strengthens as initiatives are scored and sequenced against strategic priorities.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Porter's five forces: It structures the industry scan and rival analysis in Sessions 1 and 2.
- SWOT analysis: It frames the diagnosis of internal capability and external exposure in Session 2.
- SCOR model from ASCM: It provides the performance attributes used to benchmark against rivals.
- Balanced scorecard: It links objectives and measures in the roadmap work of Session 4.

Intended Participants

- Leaders who set direction for supply chain, procurement or logistics across several sites.
- Strategy and planning managers who translate business plans into supply chain priorities.
- Operations executives who sponsor network, sourcing or service investments.
- Commercial leaders who agree service promises and prices with customers.

The programme serves manufacturers, retailers, distributors and public-sector supply organisations, and suits mixed groups from several organisations.



Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to construct a cascade from business strategy to supply chain priorities.
2. Participants will be able to evaluate industry pressures and rival positions using a structured scan.
3. Participants will be able to diagnose capability gaps against rivals and customer needs.
4. Participants will be able to compare network, sourcing and service options on cost and service.
5. Participants will be able to prioritise strategic initiatives into a sequenced roadmap.
6. Participants will be able to justify a supply chain strategy to an executive team using evidence.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Supply Chain Strategy Principles

What must a supply chain strategy decide, and how does it follow business strategy?

- Business Strategy to Supply Chain Priority Cascade
- Porter's Five Forces Industry Scan
- Customer Service Segment Definition
- Strategic Fit Test
- Balanced Scorecard Objective Map

Day 2: Diagnosing Position, Rivals and Capability Gaps

How does the supply chain compare with rivals, and where are the gaps?

- Rival Benchmarking Grid
- SCOR Performance Attribute Comparison
- SWOT Analysis of the Supply Chain
- Cost-to-Serve Profile by Segment
- Capability Gap Heat Map

Day 3: Designing Network, Sourcing and Service Choices

Which network, sourcing and service options close the gaps at acceptable cost?

- Network Option Comparison Table
- Make-or-Buy Decision Matrix
- Sourcing Strategy by Category
- Service Tier Policy Sheet
- Scenario Planning Storyboard

Day 4: Planning the Roadmap and Strategic Governance

How are choices turned into a sequenced plan with owners and measures?



- Initiative Prioritisation Scoring Grid
- Strategic Roadmap Timeline
- Investment Case Outline
- Measure and Target Cascade
- Strategy Review Cadence Calendar

Day 5: Applying Supply Chain Strategy to One Business Unit

Is the strategy ready to take to the executive team?

- Applying the Session 2 Gap Heat Map to the Chosen Unit
- Testing the Session 3 Options Against Cost-to-Serve
- Checking the Session 4 Roadmap Against Capability Limits
- Rehearsing the Executive Challenge Session
- Completing the Supply Chain Strategy Brief

Methodology

The programme uses a case analysis method built on anonymised benchmark data, network maps and service records. Participants work on one business unit, compare options in small teams and defend their choices in peer reviews and a mock executive session.

- Suggested activity: Benchmarking a supply chain against two rivals on service and cost.
- Suggested activity: Comparing a central and a regional network option with sample data.
- Suggested activity: Presenting a roadmap to a mock executive team and answering challenges.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a supply chain strategy brief for one business unit. It holds an industry scan, a rival benchmark, a capability gap map, a service segment policy, the chosen network and sourcing options, and a sequenced roadmap with measures. The brief is used to seek executive agreement and guide investment requests.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is supply chain strategy suitable for leaders who have not written a strategy before?

Yes. Supply chain strategy starts from business priorities and simple scanning tools, and assumes responsibility for a supply chain or a major part of it rather than prior strategy work.

Which models does supply chain strategy rest on?

Supply chain strategy rests on Porter's five forces, SWOT analysis, the SCOR model from ASCM and the balanced scorecard.



How is the brief from supply chain strategy used at work?

You use the supply chain strategy brief to gain executive agreement, rank investment requests and set measures for each initiative.

How does supply chain strategy differ from a programme on supply chain operations?

Supply chain strategy centres on choosing a position, network and service policy, while a supply chain operations programme centres on running daily planning, inventory and delivery.