
Executive Strategy Course for Cyclical Energy Businesses: Scenarios, Capital and Change

13 – 17 September 2027
Barcelona





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Programme Summary

Executive strategy for cyclical energy businesses is the subject of this one-week training course for senior managers, directors and heads of function in oil, gas and petrochemical companies, ending in a strategy decision pack for one business unit. Prices, margins and capital needs swing sharply, yet strategy is often set once a year and defended against every change. The programme links market reading, scenario planning, capital choices and change leadership into one sequence, applying each tool to a unit the participant leads. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on executive strategy for cyclical energy businesses to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

Capital-heavy hydrocarbon businesses commit funds for years against prices that move within months. When strategy rests on a single forecast, leaders either overspend near a peak or freeze near a trough, and teams and partners receive mixed signals. Executives who test several scenarios, rank capital against them and plan how to lead the resulting change can hold direction through the cycle and explain their choices to owners.

- Capital Efficiency: Improves as projects are ranked against several price scenarios, not one forecast.
- Strategic Agility: Improves as signposts and triggers prompt earlier, planned responses.
- Execution Alignment: Improves as roles, partners and decision rights are agreed before change begins.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Scenario planning: Building several plausible futures from uncertain drivers shapes the work in Session 2.
- Porter's five forces: Industry structure analysis guides the reading of competition and margins in Session 1.
- Kotter's eight-step model: A staged approach to leading change structures the plan built in Session 4.
- Capital allocation: Ranking projects by value, risk and cash resilience guides the choices made in Session 3.



Intended Participants

- Senior managers who set the direction of an upstream, midstream, downstream or petrochemical business unit.
- Directors who answer to owners for capital and performance.
- Heads of function who must align finance, operations and commercial teams behind one strategy.
- Strategy and planning leaders who prepare scenarios and investment cases.
- Joint venture and partner managers who negotiate direction with co-owners.

Typical functions include corporate strategy, business unit management, finance and planning in energy companies.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to evaluate industry structure, cost position and price drivers for their own business.
2. Participants will be able to construct a set of scenarios with signposts and triggers.
3. Participants will be able to prioritise projects and assets against capital and cash limits.
4. Participants will be able to diagnose resistance and gaps in a change plan.
5. Participants will be able to design an alignment approach for teams, partners and owners.
6. Participants will be able to justify a strategy to a board using scenario evidence.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Executive Strategy in a Cyclical Energy Business

What do price cycles, costs and competitors mean for the choices open to the business?

- Cycle and Price Driver Map
- Porter's Five Forces Chart
- Cost Curve Position Sheet
- Value Chain Margin Map
- Strategic Question Brief

Day 2: Scenario Planning for Uncertain Markets

How can leaders prepare for several futures without betting on one?

- Driver Uncertainty Matrix
- Scenario Narrative Set
- Signpost and Trigger List
- Strategy Stress Test Table
- Early Warning Dashboard Outline



Day 3: Portfolio and Capital Choices

Which assets and projects deserve capital when cash and conditions swing?

- Portfolio Balance Chart
- Capital Ranking Matrix
- Cycle-Resilient Cash Flow Check
- Stage-Gate Criteria Sheet
- Hold, Grow or Exit Table

Day 4: Leading Change and Alignment

How do leaders bring teams, partners and owners behind a chosen direction?

- Change Case Statement
- Kotter Eight-Step Plan
- Stakeholder and Partner Map
- Decision Rights Chart
- Communication Cascade Plan

Day 5: Applying the Tools to One Business Unit

Do the environment, scenario, capital and change tools support one strategy?

- Applying the Session 1 Cost Curve Position Sheet
- Using the Session 2 Signpost and Trigger List
- Testing the Session 3 Capital Ranking Matrix
- Checking the Session 4 Stakeholder and Partner Map
- Completing the Strategy Decision Pack

Methodology

The programme uses a case analysis method built on anonymised cases from upstream, refining and petrochemical businesses, price series and board paper extracts. Participants work in peer groups on a shared business unit, challenge each other's assumptions and rankings, and receive written facilitator feedback on each exercise set.

- Suggested activity: Building two contrasting price scenarios and testing one strategy against both.
- Suggested activity: Ranking ten candidate projects under a capital limit and defending the order.
- Suggested activity: Mapping partner positions on a proposed change.



Capstone Output

Each participant completes a strategy decision pack for one business unit. It holds an environment summary, a scenario set with signposts, a ranked capital list, a change plan and a stakeholder map. The pack is used at work to brief a board or owner, open budget discussions and set the agenda for the next strategy review.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is executive strategy for cyclical energy businesses suitable for leaders without a planning background?

Yes. Executive strategy for cyclical energy businesses assumes senior responsibility for a unit or function and builds scenario and capital reasoning step by step, without advanced modelling.

Which models does executive strategy for cyclical energy businesses rest on?

Executive strategy for cyclical energy businesses rests on scenario planning, Porter's five forces and Kotter's eight-step model, together with capital allocation principles.

How is the pack from executive strategy for cyclical energy businesses used at work?

You use the strategy decision pack to brief a board or owner, open budget discussions and set the agenda for the next strategy review.

How does executive strategy for cyclical energy businesses differ from general leadership training?

Executive strategy for cyclical energy businesses centres on price cycles, scenarios and capital choices in hydrocarbon industries, while general leadership training centres on personal style and team management.