
Construction Company Strategy Course: Positioning, Portfolio Choices and Capability Plans

13 – 17 September 2027
Amsterdam





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Programme Summary

Construction company strategy is the subject of this one-week training course for chief executives, managing directors and strategy leads of contractors, developers and engineering firms, ending in a strategy and annual target plan for one business. Direction is often set by whichever bid comes next. The programme moves from market and client analysis to positioning, sector and portfolio choices, risk appetite, capability and partnership plans, financial resilience and annual targets, using building and infrastructure cases. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on construction company strategy to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

A construction firm that bids for everything tends to carry the wrong risks, stretch its people and earn thin margins. Deliberate choices about clients, sectors and project types give leadership a basis to decline work, invest in capability ahead of demand and protect cash. A shared method makes those choices explicit and reviewable. Each choice is recorded so that later reviews can test it against results.

- Margin Quality: Improves as bids are screened against agreed positioning and risk appetite.
- Backlog Balance: Improves as the portfolio is spread across clients, sectors and contract types.
- Financial Resilience: Improves as cash, bonding and capacity limits are tested before growth is committed.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Competitive Positioning Principles: Explain how a firm chooses where to compete and why clients prefer it, applied in Sessions 1 and 2.
- Portfolio Selection Principles: Balance return, risk and capacity across projects, applied in Session 3.
- Risk Appetite Principles: Set the limits within which a firm accepts contract and market risk, applied in Sessions 3 and 4.
- Strategy Execution and Review Principles: Turn direction into targets and review dates, applied in Sessions 4 and 5.

Intended Participants

- Chief executives and managing directors who set the direction and risk limits of a construction business.
- Strategy and business development leads who analyse markets and clients and prepare bid recommendations.
- Commercial and finance directors who test the cash, bonding and margin consequences of growth plans.



- Operations and resourcing leaders who plan the people, plant and partners needed for the chosen portfolio.

Typical sectors include building and infrastructure contracting, property development and engineering consultancy.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to analyse a construction market and its clients to identify where the firm can win and earn.
2. Participants will be able to construct a positioning statement that states target clients, sectors and project types.
3. Participants will be able to prioritise bids and projects into a balanced portfolio against risk appetite.
4. Participants will be able to evaluate the capability and partnership gaps that the chosen strategy creates.
5. Participants will be able to assess the financial resilience of a growth plan under adverse conditions.
6. Participants will be able to justify annual targets and review routines that carry the strategy into practice.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Construction Company Strategy and Market Analysis

Where is the market going, and where does the firm stand with its clients?

- Market Segment Map
- Client and Procurement Pattern Review
- Competitor Position Profile
- Firm Strength and Weakness Audit
- Strategic Question List

Day 2: Positioning and Sector Choices

Which clients, sectors and project types should the firm pursue, and why?

- Value Proposition Statement
- Sector Attractiveness Matrix
- Project Type Fit Table
- Client Selection Criteria
- Position Choice Paper

Day 3: Portfolio, Bidding and Risk Appetite

How does the firm decide what to bid for and how much risk to accept?



- Bid and No-Bid Screening Form
- Backlog and Pipeline Balance Chart
- Contract Risk Appetite Statement
- Project Return and Exposure Ranking
- Portfolio Mix Scenario Sheet

Day 4: Capability, Partnerships and Financial Resilience

What does the strategy require in people, partners and cash?

- Capability Gap Register
- Partnership and Joint Venture Options Table
- Resource Capacity Plan
- Cash and Bonding Stress Test
- Growth Funding Limit Note

Day 5: Strategy and Annual Target Plan for One Business

Do the market, positioning, portfolio and finance records support one plan?

- Applying the Session 1 Strategic Question List
- Testing the Session 2 Position Choice Paper
- Reviewing the Session 3 Contract Risk Appetite Statement
- Checking the Session 4 Cash and Bonding Stress Test
- Completing the Strategy and Annual Target Plan

Methodology

The programme uses a case analysis method built on a shared case of a mid-sized contractor deciding where to grow. Participants work through prepared market, backlog and financial data, then adapt each tool to a business of their own.

- Suggested activity: Screening a set of live tenders against a positioning statement and risk appetite.
- Suggested activity: Stress testing a growth plan for delayed payment and a lost contract.
- Suggested activity: Defending a positioning choice to a mock board.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a strategy and annual target plan for one business. It holds a market analysis, a positioning statement, a bid screening form, a risk appetite statement, a capability plan and a stress test. The plan is used at work to brief the board and guide bid decisions.



Frequently Asked Questions

Is construction company strategy training suitable for leaders without a strategy background?

Yes. Construction company strategy is taught through cases and templates, assuming senior experience in a construction business but no strategy qualification.

Which principles does construction company strategy training rest on?

Construction company strategy training rests on competitive positioning, portfolio selection, risk appetite and strategy execution principles, with no single standard governing the subject.

How is the plan from construction company strategy training used at work?

You use the strategy and annual target plan to brief the board, guide bid and no-bid decisions and set targets with named owners and review dates.

How does construction company strategy differ from construction project management training?

Construction company strategy centres on which work a firm pursues and how it grows, while construction project management training covers planning, cost control and delivery of a single project.