

# **BUILDING BUSINESS ACUMEN: ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING**

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

The Building Business Acumen: Essential Skills for Strategic Decision-Making course is a 5-day intensive program designed to equip professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to understand the broader business context and make informed decisions. Business acumen is a critical competency that combines financial literacy, operational insight, and strategic thinking, enabling participants to contribute to organizational success effectively.

In today's competitive and dynamic business environment, professionals at all levels are expected to align their actions with organizational goals, identify opportunities, and mitigate risks. This course helps participants build their ability to interpret financial data, analyze market trends, evaluate business performance, and communicate decisions effectively.

Through interactive lectures, real-world case studies, and hands-on workshops, participants will learn to identify the key drivers of business success, link their functional expertise to organizational strategy, and improve their problem-solving and decision-making skills. The program also emphasizes the importance of aligning operational efficiency with long-term strategic objectives to foster innovation and growth.

By the end of the program, participants will be equipped to think like business leaders, make data-driven decisions, and influence stakeholders to achieve desired outcomes.

## **TARGET COMPETENCIES**

- Strategic decision-making and critical thinking.
- Financial literacy and performance analysis.
- Market awareness and competitive positioning.
- Operational efficiency and resource management.
- Communication and influence in strategic processes.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course, attendees will be able to:

- Understand and analyze key business drivers.
- Interpret financial statements and use insights for decision-making.
- Evaluate market conditions and competitive dynamics.
- Align functional operations with strategic goals.
- Communicate decisions effectively and influence stakeholders.

## **TARGET AUDIENCE**

- Managers and team leaders seeking to enhance their business skills.
- Professionals aspiring to leadership roles.
- Entrepreneurs and business owners aiming to improve decision-making capabilities.
- Non-business professionals transitioning to business-focused roles.

# **COURSE METHODOLOGY**

The course employs a mix of:

- Interactive Lectures: Core concepts explained with practical relevance.
- Case Studies: Real-world business scenarios to analyze and solve.
- Workshops: Hands-on exercises in financial analysis, strategy, and market assessment.
- Group Discussions: Collaborative problem-solving and peer learning.
- Capstone Project: Application of learning to real-world business challenges.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **UNDERSTANDING THE BUSINESS LANDSCAPE**

- Key Drivers of Business Success: Financial, operational, and strategic factors.
  - How businesses create and deliver value.
  - Balancing short-term performance with long-term goals.
- The Business Ecosystem: Industry dynamics and market influences.
  - Internal and external factors impacting businesses.
  - Identifying opportunities and threats.
- Goal Alignment: Connecting organizational objectives with daily operations.
  - Setting SMART goals aligned with strategy.
  - Bridging functional roles with business strategy.

### **FINANCIAL LITERACY FOR DECISION-MAKING**

- Understanding Financial Statements: Income statement, balance sheet, and cash flow.
  - How to extract meaningful insights from financial reports.
  - Identifying red flags and areas for improvement.
- Key Financial Ratios: Profitability, liquidity, and solvency metrics.
  - Practical application of ratios in evaluating performance.
  - Comparing performance with industry benchmarks.
- Linking Finance to Strategy: Using financial insights to inform decisions.
  - Cost optimization strategies.
  - Enhancing revenue streams through data-driven actions.

### **MARKET AND COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS**

- Market Analysis Techniques: Identifying trends and understanding customer needs.
  - Tools for analyzing market conditions and dynamics.
  - Adapting to changing market conditions.
- Competitive Positioning: Strategies for gaining and sustaining competitive advantage.
  - SWOT analysis for understanding internal and external factors.
  - Benchmarking performance against competitors.
- Using Data for Strategic Insights: Translating market data into actionable strategies.
  - Identifying opportunities for innovation.
  - Predicting shifts in customer demand.

### **OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

- Streamlining Operations: Improving efficiency in processes and resource use.
  - Identifying bottlenecks and inefficiencies.
  - Tools and techniques for process improvement.
- Resource Allocation: Optimizing resources for maximum ROI.
  - Aligning resource use with strategic priorities.
  - Balancing costs and benefits.
- Risk Management in Operations: Identifying and mitigating operational risks.
  - Preparing for contingencies and disruptions.
  - Building resilience into operations.

### **STRATEGIC THINKING AND DECISION-MAKING**

- Strategic Decision-Making Frameworks: Tools for structured problem-solving.
  - Applying decision trees and scenario analysis.
  - Balancing data-driven decisions with intuition.
- Communicating and Influencing: Presenting decisions to stakeholders.
  - Tailoring communication to different audiences.
  - Gaining buy-in for strategic initiatives.
- Capstone Project: Applying learning to a business scenario.
  - Developing and presenting a strategic plan.
  - Receiving feedback and refining decision-making approaches.