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**How our target group wants to learn?!**

# Overview

- Introduction – “Strategy”
- The project Strategy-Train
- Survey findings
  - Where small enterprises see deficits?
  - How they want to learn?
  - What does this mean for “e”-learning / course developers?



## Introduction

By three methods we may learn wisdom:  
 First, **by reflection, which is noblest**;  
 Second, **by imitation, which is easiest**;  
 and third **by experience, which is the bitterest**.

夫知者不惑



Confucius

Strategy tools & methods should help to

- Reflect and analyse the past
- Anticipate and plan the future
- Widen the perspective and think besides traditional ways
- Reflect internal and external factors
- Evaluate and correct all phases

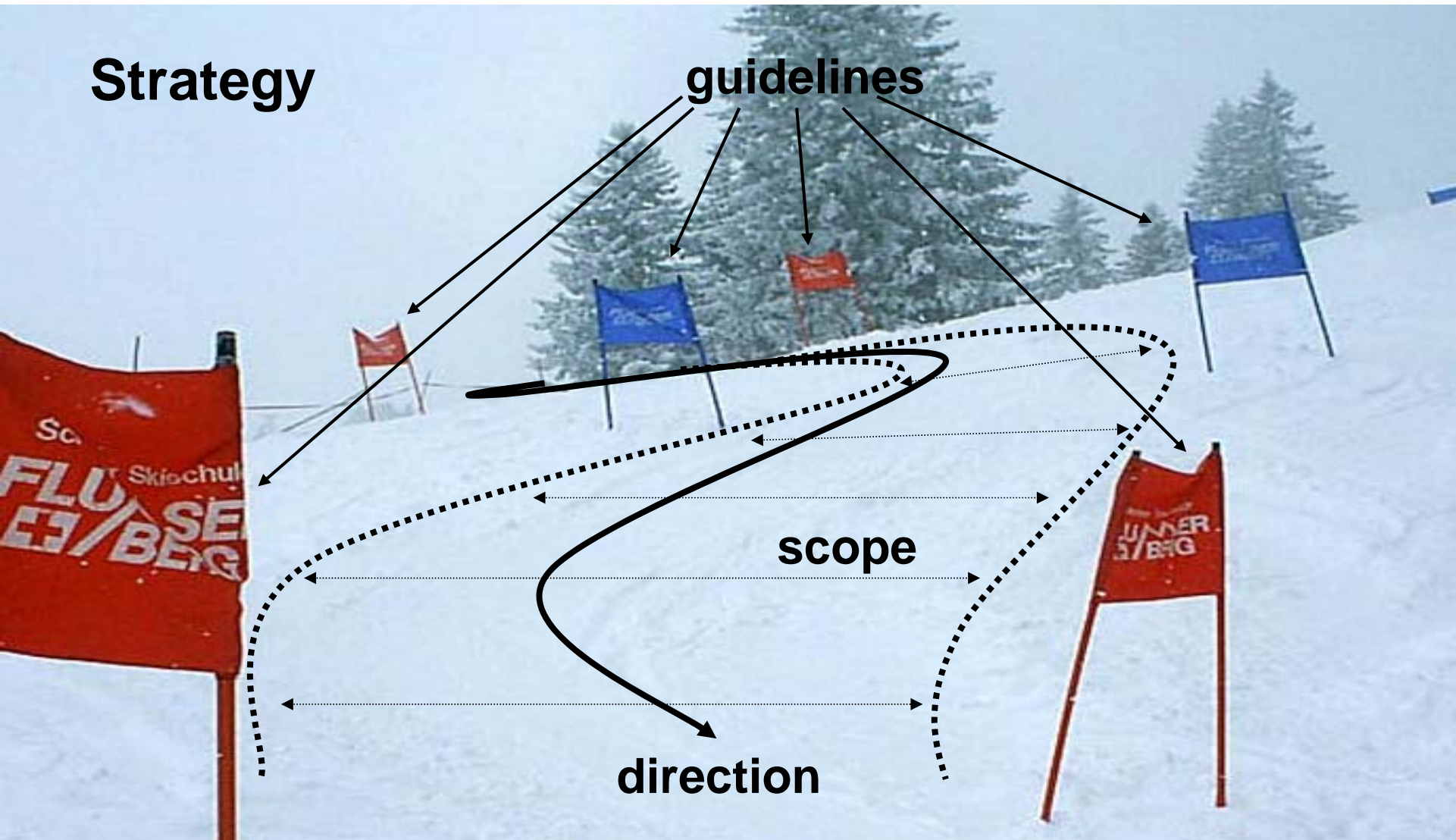


**Strategy**

**guidelines**

**scope**

**direction**





Background

## The situation

- Short, medium and long term enterprise strategies are developed in/for/with medium-to large size enterprises
- Most literature, case studies and tools address this group
- Education offers address this group
- So far small and micro enterprises are not sufficiently addressed

Target Groups

## Small Enterprises

- Less than 50 employees
- Less than 10 Mio € annual turnover
- Managers/decision makers
- No restriction concerning sectors
- More than 90% enterprises in Europe are small
- About 50% of European employees work there



## Tutors/Trainers, Consultants, ...

Aims

## We want to ...

- ... improve the competitiveness of small and micro enterprises by supporting them in strategic planning.
- ... develop a educational offer which is
  - flexible enough to address the specific needs of the target group,
  - is adoptable and modular (different backgrounds in terms of previous education and possible different needs in different sectors),
  - reflects the practical needs of the end users and
  - is accredited.



Survey findings

## “Cross-cultural needs analyses” in 7 countries

- Literature review
- Personal “expert” interviews
  - Education institutions
  - Enterprise representatives
  - Representatives of SMEs
- Online survey
  - Representatives of micro enterprises

**N=60**

**N=194**

## Main barriers to training in small enterprises

- Lack of understanding of own deficiencies
- Lack of suitable learning offers (65%)
- Cost  $\leftrightarrow$  Benefit (64%)
- Time (63%)
- Local availability (61%)
- Relevance of topics / course programmes (57%)



## Preferred type of learning provider

- Private trainers/training companies (68%)
- Consultants/mentors (61%)
- Professional institutions (56%)
- Chambers training institutions (54%)
- Universities (42%)
- Institutes of technology (41%)
- State agencies (37%)

## Preferred learning environment

- Networking events/discussions with peers (72%)
- Learning at the workplace (63%)
- Lecture-type setting (out of workplace) (61%)
- Self learning materials (56%)
- Online (56%)
- Literature/books (52%)

## Preferred learning tools/methods

- Practical tools / practice examples (87%)
- Discussions / peer-group-work (81%)
- Workshops (67%)
- E-learning materials (61%)
- Use of text/reading material (60%)
- On-job mentoring/coaching (56%)
- *Combination of different tools/methods* (80%)

## Preferred learning structure

- Training tailored to specific needs (87%)
- Task specific, short-term training (78%)
- Attending peer-networking events (64%)
- Training during working hours (60%)
- Online, short, modular (duration 30-60min) (58%)
- Paper based, short, modular (duration 30-60min) (51%)
- Training on weekends (39%)

## Summary – top results I

- Missing skills regarding strategic planning
- No sufficient strategic management (StrMgt) training
- Day-to-day focus / strategic planning is a “luxury” / can’t assess deficiencies
- Recognition that StrMgt is important but no action
- Lack of suitable StrMgt training and support (75% of respondents)
- General management ability rated average to good

## Summary – top results II

- Lack of suitable learning structure (65% of respondents)
- Cost of courses (64% of respondents)
- Time (63% of respondents)
- Local availability (61% of respondents)
- Lack of relevance in terms of StrMgt (57% of respondents)
- Lack of understanding amongst owner / managers of their own deficiencies or lack of knowledge, the consequences and how this can be addressed



E-learning/online training

## Advantages/Constraints of respondents

Potential advantages	Potential constraints
time and cost	lack of interpersonal relationships/interaction with peers/tutors
accessibility and flexibility	need for discipline and motivation
up-to-date information	lack of familiarity with technology or lack of suitable technology
potential customisation	difficulty in monitoring / evaluating participant progress and the difficulty in getting a complex topic like strategic management into an online format

*“Strong awareness creation campaign is necessary so that people would be aware of the benefits of the online tool and how to maximise its use.”*

# Our conclusions I

1. Handbook and (e-)learning content:
  - Learning model including proposals for a course structure for trainers
  - A diagnostic tool to identify deficiencies
  - Based on the results of the tool: provide users with a general guide tailored to subjects of most interest/benefit to their needs
  - Online materials structured/delivered in a short, concise, modular format (possibly task specific)
  - Provide users with an online version of self-study materials thereby providing a flexible, blended learning approach.

## Our conclusions II

2. Online content: introduction to strategic management, most important tools, good practice examples
3. Material which is easily transferable between online and paper based (hard copy) formats
4. Based on feedback from respondents relating to preferred learning providers the Strategy-Train outputs will be promoted to private trainers/training companies, mentors/consultants, professional institutions who use them in their work with small business.



# Strategy-Train Learning Model

	Components	Objectives	Actors	ST Content Management System		
				Modules	Case studies/Guidelines/Tools	Templates
Blended and Action Training Approach + Peer Learning	<b>Seminars</b>	<p>To discuss the importance of strategic planning for corporate survival</p> <p>To demonstrate how to assess the SP skills</p> <p>To bring in a number of practical leadership tools and models</p> <p>To discuss success case studies on SP on European SMEs</p> <p>To present /introduce ST learning model and subsequent stages</p>	Mentor + a small group of managers	<p><b>A comprehensive business competencies model on SP</b></p> <p><b>Learning modules</b></p>	<p>Guidelines for Mentors, Including:</p> <p>Theoretical support on peer advisor group</p> <p>Case study battery on SP in European SMEs</p> <p>The theory behind the use of learning contract</p>	
	<b>ST Contract</b>	<p>To clarify expectations, patterns of work and</p> <p>To establish commitments between the ST partner and the receiving small enterprises entities.</p>	mentor and manager			ST learning contract
	<b>Small Enterprise Diagnose on SP</b>	<p>To enable small enterprises to reflect upon their own SP competencies;</p> <p>To identify SP competencies allowing a competitive advantage face main competitors;</p> <p>To identify the main gaps on SP competencies;</p> <p>To Identify the competencies with greater impact in increasing competitive capacity of the small enterprise;</p> <p>To establish the small enterprise strategic diagnostics and encourage managers to focus on SP skills and competitive advantages based on enterprise distinctive capabilities</p>	Manager		<p>Assessment tools: should support small enterprises in the process of mobilization and alignment of necessary competencies for achieving their strategic objectives.</p>	
	<b>Designing a Plan on SP</b>	<p>To Define a plan on SP to be implemented through action plans with specific activities</p> <p>To determine a matrix of project planning</p> <p>To establish the enterprise project that will achieve the goals outlined</p>	Manager		<p>Guidelines for Mentors, Including:</p> <p>Theoretical support on designing, implementing and evaluating results on SP</p>	Plan on SP
	<b>Implementation of the Plan on SP</b>	<p>Implementation of measures</p> <p>Company's project</p>	manager + mentor			Project of the company
	<b>Evaluating results</b>	<p>Evaluation of the intervention results and reformulation of the Medium and Long Term Planning, where appropriate</p>	manager + mentor			Monitoring and evaluation tools
	<b>Reporting</b>	<p>To produce a report by enterprise</p> <p>To compile enterprises specific reports and produce a final report</p>	Mentor		Report Structure	

## More Information

<http://www.strategy-train.eu>

Six languages

- ▶ home
- ▶ project
  - ▶ in short
  - ▶ background
  - ▶ aim
  - ▶ results
- ▶ partners
- ▶ activities
- ▶ logbook

About STRATEGY-TRAIN

Time-Plan / Gantt Chart

News, Downloads, Presentations, Flyers, etc.

<p>AUSTRIA</p> <p>FH JOANNEUM</p>	<p>GERMANY</p>
<p>BULGARIA</p>	<p>GREECE</p>
<p>FINLAND</p>	<p>IRELAND</p>
	<p>PORTUGAL</p>