

Craig Lawrence Consulting Limited

“An organisation without a strategy is like a ship without map or compass.”¹

Introduction

All organisations need a strategy in place that explains how they are going to achieve their ambitious vision for the future by exploiting the opportunities, and overcoming the obstacles, that today’s volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environment creates.

However, developing an effective strategy is not that easy; if it were, all organisations would have one and few of them would ever fail. This is where we can help. By upskilling your strategy-making team and/or working with you to develop a completed strategy, we can help your organisation excel in today’s complex and ever-changing environment.

The programmes we offer range from a one hour interactive presentation during which we explore the characteristics of effective strategy, which makes a great introduction to a management board strategy ‘away day’, through to longer courses that upskill participants so they can lead the development and implementation of strategy in their own organisations. We also offer a complete strategy development and review service.

The following programmes and services are described in more detail in this brochure:

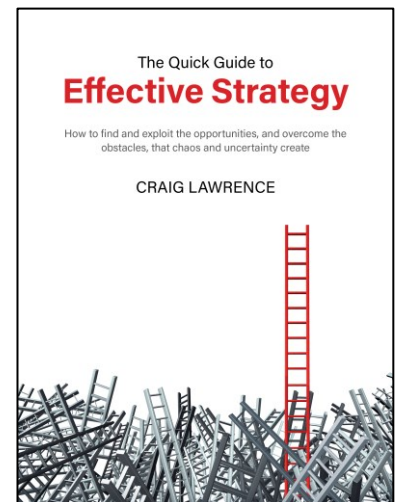
- An Introduction to Effective Strategy (1 hour + Q&A) – Page 3.
- Developing Effective Strategy Workshop (3 days) – Page 4.
- Strategy Development Masterclass (5 days) – Page 5.
- Strategy Development Masterclass Plus (10 days) – Page 6.
- Strategy development consultancy and review services – Page 7.

All our programmes and services are scalable and can be modified to meet a client’s specific needs. As well as providing our services direct to clients, we can meet clients’ requirements by collaborating with partner organisations in the UK Government’s procurement frameworks.

Our Approach

Our approach to developing strategy represents international best-practice and has been developed over many years of working with clients across a wide range of sectors, both in the UK and overseas. It places a premium on unlocking an organisation’s intellectual and creative capital to develop innovative solutions to the most intractable problems. At its heart are fourteen high-level critical thinking questions, which are dispersed over five thematic stages. Each high-level question is supported by supplementary questions that add granularity, as well as by a range of tools and techniques that can help answer the questions and bring rigour and structure to a strategy’s development. Our approach is described in *The Quick Guide to Effective Strategy*, which was published in March 2023.

Originally intended as a 'how to' guide for those who need to develop effective strategy, whether in the public, private or third sectors, the book is also proving popular with those who just want to understand the strategy making process better, such as a company director (executive or non-executive), charity trustee, government official or school governor who wants to ensure that the way their organisation approaches the development of strategy reflects best-practice. This is not just because they want their organisation to succeed but also because they have a legal responsibility to act in their organisation's best interests and allowing it to develop bad strategy falls a long way short of this as some of the examples in the book illustrate. The book is available from bookshops, online from Amazon and direct from us.



Who Are We?

Craig Lawrence CBE is a Fellow of both the Institute of Consulting and the Chartered Management Institute. He has a proven record of developing highly innovative strategies that exploit opportunities to deliver outstanding results; he set up his consultancy because he was struck by just how many organisations struggle to do the same.

Commissioned into Britain's Gurkhas in 1983, Craig spent much of his Army career developing strategy, including for NATO in Afghanistan. He left the British Army as a Major General in 2016 to lead the teaching of strategy and strategic leadership at the UK Government's 'strategy school' in London.



Since setting up his consultancy in December 2020, Craig and his team have worked with a wide range of clients in many sectors, helping them develop the strategies and high-level leadership skills that have enabled them to excel in today's complex and ever-changing environment.

Contact Us

Please get in touch if you'd like to find out more about how we can help you and your organisation achieve your ambitious vision for the future:

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An Introduction to Effective Strategy

This short interactive presentation explores the nature of strategy and why so many strategies fail. Using real-world examples and case studies, it identifies the characteristics of effective strategy and then explains what you can do to ensure that your strategy succeeds. The presentation makes an ideal introduction at the start of a management board strategy ‘away day’.

Learning Objectives

On completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Explain what strategy is and describe the relationship between strategy and policy.
- Explain why developing effective strategy is so challenging and why more than half of all strategies fail.
- Describe the eight characteristics of effective strategy.
- Describe the benefits of applying a proven methodology for developing strategy.

Topics covered include:

- Different descriptions of strategy and an agreed definition.
- The difficulty of developing strategies in complex and ever-changing environments.
- The nature of ‘wicked’, ‘adaptive’ and ‘gnarly’ problems.
- The characteristics of effective strategy.
- Environmental and stakeholder analysis (to identify opportunities & threats).
- The role of Red Teaming, wargaming, pre-morteming and ROC Drills in developing strategy.
- The benefits of applying a proven methodology for developing strategy.

Note that this presentation can be expanded to include a seminar discussion about the nature of strategy, which helps consolidate learning and provides an opportunity for participants to share their own experiences. The scope can also be expanded to include an overview of the attributes, actions and attitudes (the ‘3As’) that can help those leading the development and implementation of strategy unlock the intellectual and creative capital of their organisation to achieve outstanding results.

Developing Effective Strategy Workshop

This three day programme aims to improve participants' understanding of what strategy is and why developing effective strategy is so challenging before introducing them to a proven methodology that they can apply to develop effective strategy in complex and ever-changing environments.

Learning Objectives

On completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Explain what strategy is and describe the relationship between strategy and policy.
- Explain why developing effective strategy is so challenging and why more than half of all strategies fail.
- Describe the characteristics of effective strategy.
- Differentiate between a strategy that is likely to fail and one that is likely to succeed.
- Apply a proven and accessible methodology for developing strategies that are effective in complex and ever-changing environments.
- Contribute to the development of effective strategy in their own organisations.

Topics covered include:

- Different descriptions of strategy and an agreed definition.
- The strategic trends shaping the global and regional environment.
- The nature of 'wicked', 'adaptive' and 'gnarly' problems.
- Envisioning and the importance of understanding 'why'.
- The role of values in shaping strategy.
- Environmental analysis (using PESTLE to identify opportunities & threats).
- Stakeholder mapping (to identify opportunities and threats).
- SWOT Analysis.
- Deconstructing a vision into realistic and achievable strategic objectives.
- Developing different options that exploit opportunities to achieve the strategic objectives.
- Applying the 'five tests of strategy' to differentiate between different strategic options.
- The role of Red Teaming, wargaming, pre-morteming and ROC Drills in developing strategy.
- Developing an implementation action plan.
- Aligning the implementing organisation (applying the McKinsey 7-S Framework).
- Developing a communications plan and strategic narrative to support strategy implementation.
- Identifying and recording risks.
- Performance metrics and adaptation.

Strategy Development Masterclass

The first three days of this five-day course are focused on improving participants' understanding of what strategy is and why developing strategy is so challenging before introducing them to a proven methodology for developing effective strategy. During the last two days of the course, participants consolidate their strategy making skills by applying the methodology in facilitated workshops to develop an outline real-world strategy, which can be chosen by their organisation. The course concludes with an overview of the attributes, actions and attitudes (the '3As') that can help in leading the development and implementation of strategy. On completion of the course, participants will return to their own organisations able to lead the development and implementation of strategy in complex and ever-changing environments. They will also have an outline real-world strategy that can be developed further before implementation.

Learning Objectives

On completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Explain what strategy is and describe the relationship between strategy and policy.
- Explain why developing effective strategy is so challenging and why more than half of all strategies fail.
- Describe the characteristics of effective strategy.
- Differentiate between a strategy that is likely to fail and one that is likely to succeed.
- Apply a proven and accessible methodology for developing effective strategy.
- Describe the attributes, actions and attitudes that can help leaders develop and implement effective strategy.
- Lead the development and implementation of strategy in their own organisation.
- Lead the post-implementation review and adaptation of strategy.

Topics covered include:

- Different descriptions of strategy and an agreed definition.
- The strategic trends shaping the global and regional environment.
- The nature of 'wicked', 'adaptive' and 'gnarly' problems.
- Envisioning and the importance of understanding 'why'.
- The role of values in shaping strategy.
- Environmental analysis (using PESTLE to identify opportunities & threats).
- Stakeholder mapping (to identify opportunities and threats).
- SWOT Analysis.
- Deconstructing a vision into realistic and achievable strategic objectives.
- Identifying and recording risks.
- Developing different options that exploit opportunities to achieve the strategic objectives.
- Applying the 'five tests of strategy' to differentiate between different strategic options.
- The role of Red Teaming, wargaming, pre-morteming and ROC Drills in developing strategy.
- Aligning the implementing organisation (applying the McKinsey 7-S Framework).
- Developing an implementation action plan.
- Developing a communications plan and strategic narrative to support strategy implementation.
- The power of diversity, inclusivity and creativity in developing effective strategy.
- Performance metrics and adaptation.
- Leading the development and implementation of strategy.

Strategy Development Masterclass Plus

The first three days of this ten day course are focused on improving participants' understanding of what strategy is and why developing strategy is so challenging before introducing them to a proven methodology for developing effective strategy. Over the next two days, participants consolidate their strategy making skills by applying the methodology in facilitated workshops to develop an outline real-world strategy chosen by their organisation. They also explore what leaders can do to help develop and implement the most effective strategies. The next five days are then spent refining the strategy and identifying how the implementing organisation can be aligned behind it. On completion of the course, participants will have a completed real-world strategy that they can begin implementing on return to their organisation. They will also be able to lead the development and implementation of other strategies for their organisation in complex and ever-changing environments.

Learning Objectives

On completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Explain what strategy is and describe the relationship between strategy and policy.
- Explain why developing effective strategy is so challenging and why more than half of all strategies fail.
- Describe the characteristics of effective strategy.
- Differentiate between a strategy that is likely to fail and one that is likely to succeed.
- Apply a proven and accessible methodology for developing effective strategy.
- Describe the attributes, actions and attitudes can help leaders develop and implement effective strategy.
- Lead the development and implementation of strategy in their own organisations.
- Implement the strategy developed during the course and lead the post-implementation review and adaptation of the strategy.

Topics covered include:

- Different descriptions of strategy and an agreed definition.
- The strategic trends shaping the global and regional environment.
- The nature of 'wicked', 'adaptive' and 'gnarly' problems.
- Envisioning and the importance of understanding 'why'.
- The role of values in shaping strategy.
- Environmental analysis and stakeholder mapping (to identify opportunities & threats).
- SWOT Analysis and deconstructing a vision into realistic and achievable strategic objectives.
- Developing different options that exploit opportunities to achieve strategic objectives.
- Applying the 'five tests of strategy' to differentiate between different strategic options.
- The utility of Red Teaming, wargaming, pre-morteming and ROC Drills in developing strategy.
- Aligning the implementing organisation (applying the McKinsey 7-S Framework).
- Identifying and recording risks.
- Developing an implementation action plan.
- Developing a communications plan and strategic narrative to support strategy implementation.
- Performance metrics and adaptation.
- Leading the development and implementation of strategy.

Strategy Consultancy

As well as delivering courses to upskill a strategy making team, our consultants can work with you and your organisation to help you refine your ambitious vision for the future and then develop a winning strategy to achieve it. We do this by applying our proven methodology in facilitated workshops which are specifically designed to unlock the intellectual and creative capital of your team. The end-product is a strategy that you can begin implementing immediately.

The completed strategy we deliver will comprise:

- An introduction that explains why the strategy is necessary and that outlines the benefits it will deliver.
- A vision statement that describes the desired endstate the strategy is intended to achieve.
- The values that underpin the strategy.
- A description of the operating environment, now and over the lifetime of the strategy, that highlights likely opportunities that could be exploited to help achieve the vision, as well as the threats/obstacles that will probably need to be overcome.
- A description of the strategic objectives, which, if achieved, would collectively realise the vision.
- A strategy implementation action plan that details the coordinated actions necessary to achieve each of the strategic objectives. These should leverage the organisation's strengths to exploit the opportunities and address the threats/obstacles that have been identified, whilst protecting the organisation's weaknesses. Actions necessary to realign the implementing organisation's operating model with the strategy will also be included in the implementation action plan.
- A strategic narrative and associated communications plan to support the strategy's implementation.
- A risk register that captures the risks to the strategy's success.
- Performance metrics that can be used to track whether the strategy is being implemented as intended and whether it is having the desired effect.
- The governance structures that will ensure that the strategy's implementation is monitored, and the strategy adapted if necessary.

Strategy Review Service

If you already have a strategy, we can work with you to review its effectiveness and, if appropriate, recommend how it might be adapted to ensure that it achieves its vision.

¹ Andy Start (CEO DE&S), *Lecture to the Royal College of Defence Studies* (4 December 2020).