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An Effective On-the-Job Training Model  
-To Facilitate Strategy Execution

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A Project carried out on the Management area, under the supervision

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# An Effective On-the-Job Training Model- To Facilitate Strategy Execution

## Abstract

Strategy execution has been a heated topic in the management world in recent years. However, according to a survey done by the Conference Board (2014), the chief executives are so concerned about the execution in their companies and have rated it as the No.1 or No.2 most challenging issue. Many of them choose to invest in training with a purpose to harvest the most for strategy execution. Therefore, this research is trying to find out a model to design training programs that can at most contribute to the success of strategy execution with three real-life training cases done by BTS Consulting Service. It was found that strategy execution could be greatly supported by training programs that take into consideration the four factors, namely Alignment, Mindset to Change, Capability and Organization Support. Main implications of the findings are presented and discussed.

Key Words: Strategy execution, on-the-job training programs, effectiveness

## **1. Introduction and Purposes**

Every year, companies invest thousands of millions of revenue in developing strategies to outperform competitors. However, not every one of them is lucky enough to achieve their strategic goals with the investment even though they have an exceptional strategy at hand. It is undoubtedly hard to develop a rivalry strategy for a company, but it is even harder to execute the strategy successfully. What is execution? It is to achieve results that the strategy is supposed to bring. According to a report from the Economist Intelligence Unit (2013) who did a survey with executives from major companies around the world, 80% of survey respondents recognized the importance of strategy execution and said that executing strategic initiatives successfully will be “essential” or “important” to the organizations’ competitiveness over the next three years. But most of the time, the management of companies ignores the execution of the strategy and expects the strategy to bring the results as it is supposed to be. As the report (2013) elaborated, only 56% of the strategic initiatives were successfully executed in the past three years, which could be deemed as poor execution. Moreover, only 3% of executives believe their companies are successful at execution and even 80% of the senior management believes it is nearly impossible to achieve the ability of successfully executing strategic initiatives. When it came to the reasons to failure, 28% admit that it was the lack of senior-level support and another 60% said their companies do not have sufficiently skilled personnel to execute strategic initiatives. Therefore, it is obvious that companies are facing enormous challenges in strategy executions.

In line with the Pyramid Building Approach (Prasad Kaipa et al. 1999), people, system, process and organization should be aligned to ensure the achievement of business goals. Therefore, in the case of strategy execution, they should be aligned to execute the goal of successful strategy execution. However, among the four, the factor of people is relatively the most effective and decisive driver in executing strategy. Strategy fails in being executed,

mostly due to the truth that the strategy is not communicated to the entire organization, which resulting in the dis-alignment in the organization. Here people fail in understanding what the strategy is, why it is needed and how it will be executed. Furthermore, people do not think that it is urgent to change the status quo of the organization or believe in the success of the strategy, which results in the lack of passion in making the strategy a reality. Worse yet, the employees do not know how to make it happen. They are not equipped with the capabilities needed to make the strategy a reality, including the necessary business acumen, leadership and management skills and sales & customer focus ability, etc. Therefore, when they are presented to the changes to make the strategy happen, they simply have cold feet or hesitate to move. These three reasons are closely linked together when it comes to the impact of successfully executing a strategy inside the organization. Only when the three root causes are considered, it is half way through to the success of the execution, together with well-designed process, system and organization.

Usually, companies achieve the above three aspects about People by providing employees trainings. When training programs inside organizations are designed, the fundamental logic (Brimkerhoff et al, 2008) used starts from identifying a lack of needed skills, knowledge or attitude (SKA) of the employees. They participate in the training programs designed to obtain the needed SKAs. After mastering the SKAs, they apply them effectively in important workplace behaviors, which produces business results and adds value to the organization. However, this logic of designing training programs seems to be contingent, which means the employees are trained to accomplish a certain tasks to achieve short-term but not long-term goals. As the overall corporate strategy evolves, training programs should be more than meeting short-term goals. The role of training programs is slowly shifting from meeting temporary requirements to generating long-term and profound impact to the companies and employees. Therefore, from a long-term perspective, the training programs designed to

support strategy execution should tie tightly with the strategy, that is, to design a program that aligns the whole organization from the top to the bottom, prepare the mindset of the people ready for the strategic initiatives and at the same time train the needed capabilities, including necessary business acumen and SKAs to facilitate the execution of strategy. It, at the same time, develops a type of long lasting learning experience and eventually fosters a corporate culture that facilitates the strategy execution, which can be deemed as a virtuous circle.

This work project aims at identifying a model to design strategy based training programs within organization to facilitate strategy execution with a multi-case study, finding out the key drivers to design effective training programs that can bring the largest Return on Investment (ROI) to companies.

The work project then draws its conclusion from 3 real-life training cases of three different top industrial leaders. It starts with a brief literature review that provides a theoretical support to the study conducted here. Afterwards the research results are presented and discussed. Meanwhile, key findings and conclusions are presented along with a model for further studies.

## **2. Strategy Execution**

Strategy execution is a set of decisions and activities taken in order to turn the strategy into commercial success. To achieve “execution excellence” is to realize the best possible results a strategy enables. It seems to be easy, but more than 70% of large organizations are struggling with executing their strategies, according to a report from Harvard Business Review. In line with Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan (2002), strategy execution is not simply a tactic to realize the strategy, but a discipline and a system that need to be built into the overall organization. For most of the time, people blame the strategy itself rather than the wrong execution when the intended results are not achieved. No one in such organizations ever

realize that there is a system that should be followed in order to achieve the goals. Further inspired by Larry and Ram, strategy execution lies in three core processes, namely People, Strategy and Operations. “People” is ranked the No.1 process that requires the most effort in order to achieve effective strategy execution.

So another question appears- “How to achieve effective strategy execution” where effectiveness should be the main target. As illustrated above, people is the main factor to tackle in order to achieve the intended results after execution. As it is said, it is possible that strategy fails in execution because the people do not have the required capacity (including business acumen, skills, knowledge and attitude) to support the strategic initiatives, or they do not believe that the strategic initiatives can actually make difference to the business, or even because the message is passed down in a different manner throughout the whole organization. Realizing these issues, most of the organizations are trying to change the situation by providing training opportunities to their employees with the main purpose of improving their capabilities without realizing the other two possible reasons. Undoubtedly, these training programs actually do not realize the purpose to facilitate the execution of strategic initiatives due to the overlooking of the strategy execution as a system. The lessons learned have provoked many industrial practitioners to dig deeper and find out an effective way to change the situation in organizations. In recent years, there are some consulting firms who have focused their expertise in finding an effective way to help organizations execute strategies. BTS Consulting firm<sup>1</sup> is one of them who has developed a methodology to design training programs for companies to maximize the success of strategy execution. The three cases that are used for the research of the work project are provided by them.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bts.com/>  
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### **3. Method**

To better understand the key drivers that affect the success of strategy execution and those that should be considered and covered when an execution-oriented training program is designed, a multi-case study was conducted. In line with the Case Study Design by South-East European Research Center<sup>2</sup>, a multi-case study with evidence from more cases can draw much more compelling results. In the work project, three real life cases were used for analysis with the support from BTS Consulting. The three cases were selected for the study because they were the cases where the firm did effectiveness measurement 1-2 months after the programs were delivered in clients' sites. And the firm measured the effectiveness with the methodology called Success Case Method (Brinkerhoff et al, 2002). According to this method, the firm conducted the pre- and post- program interviews and was able to compare the perceptions of the participants towards their work behaviors and key performances. Reports were developed, including the statements of the participants and their perceived behavioral and mindset changes at work. These reports were also collected from the firm for posterior in-depth analysis.

The analysis followed the principle of Grounded Theories (Anselm et al, 2006), progressing from a very detailed and empirical reading to greater generality. It began with identifying critical factors in the programs that changed their work behaviors and mindset. The source for this step is the statement collected during the post-program interviews, which forms the building of the first order of the model. In the second round of analysis, the first order concepts were grouped into key themes that form the second order. At the end, eight second order themes were structured into four aggregate dimensions. Through the hierarchical process, it allows reaching aggregate dimensions and going deeper to find out the determining

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.seerc.org/new/>  
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factors that drive the success of the training and eventually facilitate the success of strategy execution.

#### **4. Sample of Cases**

Three cases were selected and used for the work project. These programs were designed to facilitate the execution of strategies in the three companies who are industrial leaders and had bold strategies to develop growth in the markets they were operating in. They were chosen for the study because they proved the effectiveness to facilitate the execution of strategic initiatives with the support of Success Case Method.

##### **Company 1: Top Spanish bank**

Company 1 is the second largest bank in Spain with a hundred year history. In 2013, its revenue registered €21 billion with operations around the world. In 2011, Company 1 experienced a revenue decrease. In the same year, it hired BTS to develop a training program to its employees with a strategic goal to increase sales and facilitate the execution of their newly formulated strategy. More than a hundred employees from the marketing and sales functions participated in the program, including Account Managers and Sales Managers, etc. The firm designed the program for Company 1, intending to achieve the strategy by forming a consistent and corporate-wide way of working of the participants, align their mindsets and eventually obtaining the strategic goal. After the program, as reported by the participants, the program truly created a strong impact on sales and contributed directly to the strategic goals and the business of Company 1 in general.

##### **Company 2: World leading consumer electronics producers**

Company 2 is a world leading consumer electronics producer and also a gaming developing company. However, the growth of the company has been slow and in some years the profit was even negative. The company was very nail biting with the best products in the world and

had an excellent strategy at hand. In 2011 the company hired the firm to find out the issues they had been experiencing from the perspective of execution. After diagnoses, the firm found out that the company was weak in product launches, cross functional cooperation and retailer incentives, etc. Therefore, it developed a program that aligned the organization, led the participants towards the direction the company should move towards, changed their behaviors on the job and improved some other skills targeting at the weaknesses. According to the post program survey results, the participants claimed that the program was the most effective training that they have ever completed. The sales revenue in that year had a significant increase with improvement witnessed in other related areas.

### **Company 3: World largest food and beverage company**

The firm was hired by Company 3 to design a training program in 2011 when the company was trying to transit from traditional trade to modern trade and gain profitable revenue growth, which required all employees to quickly acquire necessary skills and knowledge and also be aligned from the top to the bottom. There were in total 44 participants in the program and they claimed afterwards that, according to the survey results, they gained new learning and insight that they have already applied on the job and communicated to the whole organization. The revenue also witnessed a significant growth after 2011 when the program was delivered.

## **5. Research Findings**

According to the qualitative data from the post program interviews, there were some commonalities that allow clustering into eight major second order themes. With the increasing familiarities among the data, it became even more possible to formulate four final aggregate dimensions. These dimensions represent the four aspects that comprise an effective training model to facilitate strategy execution.

The final model consists of three major parts, namely, the first order concepts, the second order themes and the aggregate dimensions (Figure 1 in the appendix). Based on the first order evidence, it allows synthesizing the second order themes. With a further study, the second order themes show deeper commonalities among each other and four categories were finally drawn, building a holistic understanding of the strategic goals and among stakeholders in the organization (Alignment), prepare the employees and gain their commitment to apply the learning on the job after the program (Mindset to Change), improve their capabilities to make important decisions and provide tools and methodologies for them (Capability Improvement), and show care and support to the employees (Organization Support).

### **Alignment**

The first and foremost factor found to support the development of such a training model is alignment, which serves as the basic for the model. Drilling it down, as the followings, allows seeing the key elements to align within the organization.

#### *Second order theme (a): Strategic goal alignment*

According to surveys done by BTS, 49% of the strategies fail in execution due to the poor communication of the company's vision and long term strategy within the organization. People within the organization, from the top to the bottom, have their own understandings of the strategy. Towards the most basic questions including 'What is the Strategy?' 'Why is it important to have the strategy?' and 'How will the strategy be executed effectively', there are probably a thousand explanations. As an old saying goes, the bottom decides the head. The top-level management (usually refers to the C-suite) takes responsibility for controlling and overseeing the entire organization. Therefore, they are paying more attention to control the business following the overall strategy for the upcoming 5 to 10 years. They have the most accurate understanding of the strategy. The lower level it goes down, the more misunderstanding of the overall direction and goals it can be. Middle-level managers execute

the organizational plans that are complied with the company's policies while the low-level managers focus on controlling and directing the employees they supervise. Since the middle level managers know the company's plan and policies well, their understanding of the strategy is still reasonable and following correctly in the right direction, while the low level managers might have a slightly twisted understanding of the strategy and more focus on the tactics rather than the big picture, which mislead the employees they supervise to focus on the wrong direction indirectly. Due to the different focus and stress on the different part of the picture, information is normally dis-aligned within organizations. The lower level in the pyramid might not have the right answers to the three key questions listed above. Therefore, the first thing to do to achieve successful strategy execution, the whole organization needs a thorough and common understanding of the "What"- the direction the company is heading and the targeted strategic initiatives, "Why"- the overall environment that entails this strategy, and "How"- the means to make the strategy happen in a consistent manner. The cases were successful because they achieved this factor, such as "I used the training to create a more holistic understanding of the business that has shaped my decision-making in several value added ways" and "The training caused me to reflect more and take more strategic actions since learning more about the larger business and the importance of profits and cash flow."

*Second order theme (b): Stakeholder alignment*

Besides the above theme that talks about the vertical communication of the same message, the horizontal communication should also be taken into consideration when executing the strategy. Horizontal communication refers to the communication among departments. Usually a strategic initiative requires a collaboration of several functions of the organization. Therefore, besides knowing the three key questions, another question is "Who else is involved" so as to get involved the right person and try to align the understanding towards the strategic initiatives. In large organizations, it is hard to get clear that who should be involved

in the initiatives due to the large number of departments and the over-lapping responsibilities among some departments. For most of the time, it is complicated and confusing for people to know exactly who from which department should be involved. On the other hand, different departments, due to the various habits among people, might also develop different ways of working. It, at the same time, presents a hard-to-mount barrier for cross department collaboration. Thus, the message of cross-departmental collaboration should be transmitted in a program aiming at facilitating strategy execution. In the cases, three training programs covered it and successfully passed the strategic message through all departments in an aligned manner by involving people from different departments. Some participants claimed after the training that “I had taken action by meeting with an executive in Finance to see what I would offer to the accounts as incentives” and “I am the liaison between marketing and manufacturing and also direct impact on development of new products.”

#### *Aggregate dimension: Alignment*

A strategy initiative can only be executed successfully if it is understood in the consistent manner across the whole organization horizontally and vertically. Therefore, seeking alignment within the organization is necessary and serves as a very important step to kick off the execution of the strategy. That is to say, when a training program is designed, it is necessary to make sure that the strategic goal of the organization is consistently communicated through out the program and it should be the thread line that go through the whole program.

#### **Mindset to Change**

It is not an easy job to encourage tens of thousands of employees across the organization to commit to the strategic initiative, but it will be an even more challenging strategy to execute if the people are not motivated. Motivation to change encourages the people to proactively

participate in the execution process, according to a Corporate Executive Board<sup>3</sup> report. Therefore, a well-designed training program aiming at facilitating the strategy execution should be able to motivate the people to the strategic initiatives. It can just be a message transmitted throughout the program.

*Second order theme (a): Motivation to apply the learning*

Motivating a person is not easy, no mention to motivate tens of thousands of people. But there are still some critical drivers to foster such a change of mindset among people. It is also a preparation of readiness in the organization before the execution. Firstly, making all the people believe in the strategy is not easy but critical. Employees in the organization need to believe that the strategy will help the business to grow faster than before and the company is able to achieve it if everyone is moving in the same direction. Afterwards, people need to feel the urgency to start following the strategy and know that it is the moment for “Now or Never”. Besides the belief and urgency, generating morale for all the employees to get involved in the mission will also create significant impact on the execution of the strategy. With the morale, they will believe that the strategy is going to make a difference to the company, the customers and themselves. Therefore, an effective training program should also play such a role to prepare the mindset for strategy execution and foster the motivation to apply the learning (from the training which transmit the above points) on the job. The cases successfully demonstrated the capability of achieving it. According to the participants, the programs affected their motivation to use the training and they are more confident in presenting to the senior management their new procedures of work.

*Second order theme (b): Commitment to apply the learning*

Preparing the people in the organization for the strategic initiative is one side for the execution, getting their commitment to change and apply on the job is another side to achieve

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cebglobal.com/>

through the training. People are used to stay in their comfort zone. Even if they were confident in the strategic direction the company is moving, they would still prefer the old way of doing things for safety's sake. Therefore, another aspect for an effective training program is to show the overall benefits and convenience they might gain doing things in a new way, which can be done through a simple process with user-friendly systems that make the work more efficiently done. Showing concrete benefits is a very efficient way to gain commitment from the people to apply the learning on the job, which should be taken into consideration when designing a training program for execution. When Francesca from one of the cases completed her training, she directed a new prospect in a town and decided to use the learning from the training and help her clients understand how the products can help their business goals. Guadalupe gave a resonance to Francesca that the training has been a key factor to exceed goals and construct a strong sales culture in the office. By seeing the benefits brought by the training programs, they were more confident and fully committed to make the changes happen.

#### *Aggregate dimension: Mindset to Change*

Preparing the mindset for bold strategy is very crucial for the success of strategy execution and gaining the commitment from the people to make the strategy happen guarantees the success of the execution. These two steps are difficult to achieve but decide the fate of the strategy. Therefore, an effective training program should be able to help the organization prepare the people for the challenges they are facing.

#### **Capability**

Companies are spending on average more than a hundred billion dollars annually on formal learning and development for employees and this number is expected to grow constantly. However, even though the companies are investing a large trunk of their revenue in capability building, the strategy still fails in execution due to the fact that they are not linking the

capability improvement intents to the strategic priorities. There are several capabilities that should be taken into consideration in an effective training program.

*Second order theme (a): Improved business acumen and SKAs (skills, knowledge and attitude)*

There are several business acumen that are critical to the success of strategy execution. First of all, where and how the profit of the company come from is the basic acumen that the employees should know clearly of, which requires them to oversee the whole picture of the company, including the drivers of profitability, market performance and the interrelations of each functions. Some other necessary skills and abilities that should be developed include management and leadership skills, decision-making skills, sales skills and customer-oriented abilities, in line with Rommin Adl and Dan Parisi (2015). These are the first and foremost capabilities to develop in order to support the execution of the strategy. After the training, one of the participants from HR department said he could build a better business case for the job evaluation system and metrics with the learning. Another client engaging manager implied that since the training he had a very systematic map and can do it step by step when he was contacting clients. Some other participants realized that they were more capable of influencing to convince other parties in their position during the interactions. The training programs helped the organizations to achieve a whole new level since the people are able to give up the short vision to focus only their responsibilities but start to looking at the big picture of the whole organizations.

*Second order theme (b): Common tools and methodologies provided*

It is not enough to just develop the necessary capabilities for successful execution. To guarantee a same way of working within the organization, it is also crucial to provide common tools and methodologies for the employees to apply. Therefore, what the training program should also cover is the ability and knowledge to apply the common tools and



methodologies whenever the employees need. It simplifies their work and gives a clear guidance for them to move on when they are working or have difficulties during the execution process in a consistent manner. Peter, a participant in one of the programs, indicated that the program helped him plan plant production over more than a quarter because the program taught him to think like an owner of the business. Another participant also expressed that he used the business language and not only the technique in the conversation about technology development with his clients. These examples further prove the importance of having common tools and methodologies.

*Aggregate dimension: Capability*

Improving the capabilities of the employees for the strategy execution paves the way for a smooth progress of the whole process. Combining the necessary business acumens and SKAs, and the common tools and methodologies maximize the probabilities of the strategy being successfully executed. Therefore, they should be taken into consideration when designing a training program for strategic initiatives.

**Organization Support**

The final category serves as the umbrella for the previous ones. Showing supports from the organization, including career development support and care, and management support during the execution process, encourages motivation, belief, passion, and foster commitment from employees. It is possible that they feel more confident in the job they are doing with senses of belonging and achievement because the organization is showing support and recognition to their performance. Meanwhile, they know where they can seek help from the organization whenever they encounter difficulties during the execution, which also generates boldness and innovation within the organization. Eventually, it fosters a corporate culture that is innovation oriented and flexible enough to embrace changes and full of moral.

*Second order theme (a): Career development support*

People feel being cared by the organization if it supports their career development, which provokes an attachment between the people and the organization. It is beneficial for the organization that is experiencing a critical execution of the strategy because it ensures the consistency of human resource and collaboration among different stakeholders. Recognition and sense of belonging are two critical factors that decide the success of the execution process. According to a study conducted by Futurestep<sup>4</sup> (2015), career development will have the most profound and direct impact on employees' productivity, retention and serves as an accelerant to an organization's business strategy. The more employees are engaged in the mission of the company, the more possible the strategic initiatives will be achieved. Some of the participants expressed they feel that the company was making big investment in them, cared about them and their success with the company and it means a lot to them. This is the biggest encouragement to push the employees to keep moving on.

*Second order theme (b): Management support*

Management support refers to the support from the managers who provide help whenever the employees encounter difficulties during the execution process. It serves as a lubricant in the process. It is common that the employees come across difficulties of what and how to deal with. Whenever they have doubts, they hope to seek valuable help. It is the time that generates trust between the supervisor and employees if the employees know that they can always seek help and advice from their managers related to the changes they are experiencing inside the organization. As time goes on, it will become part of the corporate culture and generate larger impact on the whole organization. Thus, it is one factor that an effective training program can help to create within the organization. After the trainings, some of the participants said that they have already received some follow-up support and coaching from

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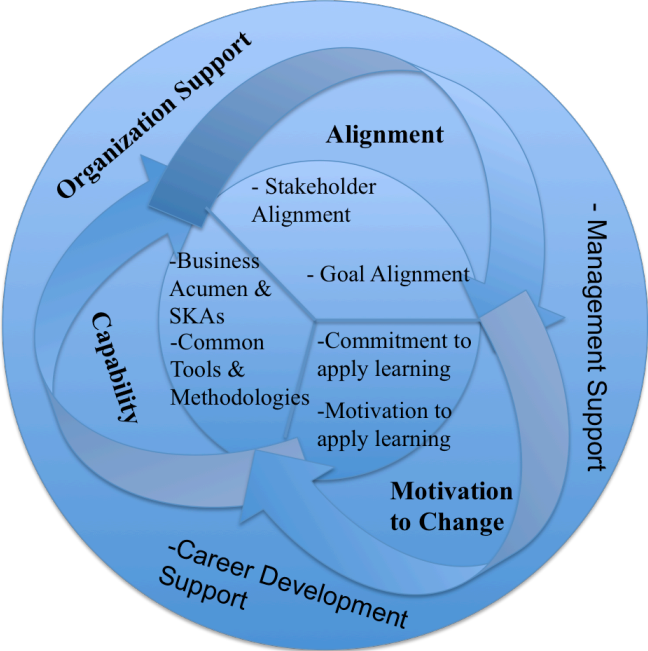
<sup>4</sup> <https://www.futurestep.com/>

their managers and some work with their directors to build clear and specific goals of their works.

*Aggregate dimension: Organization Support*

This final category is not something a training program can literally cover, but it is something the program can have impact on and help to foster among the participants who will bring it back to their organizations. Therefore, it is regarded as one of the critical categories to be considered in an effective model.

Based on the above analysis, the exhibit below clearly demonstrates the relationship among the four aggregate dimensions. Organization Support, as mentioned above, is an umbrella that helps in fostering a good environment for strategic initiatives. It is also a stimulator that pushes the other three dimensions to be developed quicker with higher quality. It will facilitate the achievement of the strategic goals if they are developed properly and efficiently, and eventually foster a favorable corporate culture.



*Exhibit 1 An Effective Model for Execution Oriented Training Programs.*

## **6. Discussion**

According to Kirkpatrick (1959), there are four levels to evaluate a training program. Level 1 Reaction. This level measures how the trainees reacted to the training. Level 2, Learning. It measures what the trainees have learned from the program and how much their knowledge increased as a result of the training. Level 3, behavior. It evaluates how far the trainees have changed their behaviors based on the training they received. Here it is important to note that behavior only changes if the conditions are favorable. Level 4, results. At this level, the final intended goal is reached and results are achieved. It includes the results the organization has determined for the sake of the business, clients and employees. Knowing the four levels and applying them to the cases that were used for the study, it is traceable that the cases have all achieved the four levels of training, which served as a base to the selection of these cases. In the cases, the participants learned concrete knowledge out of the program and afterwards due to the encouragement they gained from the program and support from the organization, they applied on the job and changed their behaviors of working. Eventually, the program generated a huge impact to the whole business, which was shown in the way of increased profitability and achieved goals. Besides, from the design of the programs of the cases, it is easy to observe that the programs cover the four factors, including alignment, mindset, capability and organization support. These factors are what the organizations in the cases were seeking from the beginning. By doing so, the training programs were able to reach the fourth level of the Kirkpatrick model.

Training, as it is known, is conducted based on a certain training needs within organizations. Addressing the training needs might not necessarily lead to the desired results or performance in the employees. This is still haunting the management in companies. One of the reasons that such an issue happens is that the management that designs the training simply links the training needs to a certain limited desired results, which is called superficial linkage, such as

“We need to improve our aftersales service so that we can retain customers.” Such superficial linkage that connects the training nominally with the nature of the business goal is not enough. It might not necessarily generate an impact on the strategic goal of the business that is to generate more sales supposedly. Based on the business goal, improve customer service through training is not an effective way to achieve the goal of generating more sales. Therefore, it is important to design a training program that is clearly based on the strategic goals of the business to eventually maximize the return of investment in such programs.

According to Robert Kaplan et al. (2008), strategy can be executed as a system that consists of 6 stages, namely, developing the strategy, planning the strategy, aligning the strategy, planning operations, monitoring and learning and testing and adapting. Aligning the strategy, as can be seen in the system, plays an important role of the system. Thus, if a training program that is designed to facilitate the execution of the strategic initiatives, it is extremely important to align the strategic goals within the organization horizontally and vertically. During the operation, capability improvement is another aspect that needs to be considered in order to support the normal operation. These two factors are exactly the drivers identified during the study, which further prove the feasibility of the model.

Looking back at the cases used for the study, there was one key tool that is worth pointing out. Since the management knows the training pitfall of not achieving strategic goals with the investment, a clear “Line of Sight” is used to design the training programs. The tool plays an important role of aligning the strategy of the companies with the team objectives, on-job behaviors and training outcomes. Take the line of sight of Company 3 as an example. (Only 1 to 2 examples are listed.)

<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>	<b>Critical On-Job Applications</b>	<b>Key Results</b>	<b>Organizational Goals</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a holistic view of the business and decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move from a functional view to a supply chain view and involve other functions in decision making and planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Products produced according to the market needs</li> <li>• New Launches achieved on time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profit growth</li> <li>• Transition from traditional trade to modern trade</li> <li>• Achieve “We are One Company” vision</li> </ul>

*Exhibit 2: Example of Line of Sight*

With the Line of Sight, it is not difficult to design the training programs that cultivate the mindset, foster alignment, improve necessary capabilities, encourage organization support and eventually build a result oriented corporate culture that facilitate the execution of strategy.

The programs in the three cases followed the Lines of Sight and were developed around the key factors, namely Alignment, Mindset to Change, Capability and Organization Support, which led to the success of the trainings and the strategy execution, more importantly, bringing great impact to the organizations. Thus, the model that is built around these factors can be regarded as effective in facilitating the success of strategy execution with the support of the above discussion.

## **7. Limitations and Future Research**

The research has limitations. Due to its nature, the specification of the model is limited because it is complicated to identify specific business linked KPIs and measure the cases by the KPIs, as it is recognized that business goals of different companies vary and the nature of business also differ. Therefore, the factors developed in the model for effective training program are more abstract rather than being specific with a certain KPIs. Due to the limited resources of different organizations, the ways they conduct such training programs based on the model might vary as well, which would also affect the success of the programs.

## **8. Conclusion**

Inspired by Robert Brinkerhoff and Tim Mooney (2008), this work project was aiming to find out an effective model to design training programs that facilitate strategy execution and maximize the return on investment in trainings at the same time. After the study of three cases provided by BTS Consulting, the probability to construct such a model was found to be high. The cases presented several key factors in the design that represent the key aspect that an effective program should cover. These factors are found out to be “Alignment”, “Mindset to Change”, “Capability” and “Organization Support”. Besides, supported by Kirkpatrick, an effective training program should be able to link the business goal and generate results that have impact on the business goals. This model is proved to be effective with the success stories of three real-life cases and therefore, training programs based on the model is assumed to be effective to facilitate strategy execution (Robert Kaplan, 2008). It delivers not just the intended content to foster motivation, improve capability and provide support to employees, but also creates a learning experience that encourages the participants to utilize what they learn in the program to the job and spread it to the organization they are in. Eventually, it fosters a corporate culture that is always ready for strategic changes, and being result oriented. On the other hand, training programs that are designed only with superficial linkage with the business goal are regarded as not effective even though they can, to some extent, achieve a certain training needs within the organization to improve some job related skills, knowledge and attitudes but not effectively affect the achievement of strategic goals.

The work project is developed along with some limitations. The limited sample size and the interpretation method allow the model developed to be applied outside of the research. Nevertheless, future research is suggested to explore much deeper in this topic to enrich the model. There might be more factors facilitating the successful strategy execution that can be further discussed, as People are the most unpredictable but decisive factors in the success of a

certain strategies. Besides, the way of delivering such programs can be another factor for the future study since it also gives great impact to the effectiveness of the programs. The ever-changing technology is another factor that might improve the quality of the model potentially, which can be discovered in the future study.

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