CONCEPT

Operations Management and Operations Strategy: Capacity, Performance and the COO Role

22 February – 5 March 2027
Amsterdam - Zuidas business district hotel



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Introduction:

Operations management often runs on last year's capacity assumptions: sites chase every order, bottlenecks move unnoticed, queues build in service lines and cost-to-serve rises while nobody decides which performance objective matters most. This Core Concept programme equips senior operations leaders to set an operations strategy, match capacity to demand and run the operation through a disciplined review rhythm. Across two weeks, cases from manufacturing, healthcare, logistics and retail services build towards an Operations Strategy and Capacity Plan with a KPI Cockpit, tested through a capacity and process simulation.

Course Objectives:

- Align operations decisions with competitive strategy by ranking quality, speed, dependability, flexibility and cost for each customer segment
- Judge process type, layout and capacity strategy options for a site or service network against volume, variety and demand variability
- Diagnose bottlenecks and queues using Little's law and utilisation data, and decide where added capacity pays back
- Direct planning and control, inventory and demand management choices at portfolio level, including the link to sales and operations planning
- Govern operations risk, resilience and cost-to-serve through a KPI cockpit and a monthly operating rhythm
- Present an Operations Strategy and Capacity Plan with a KPI Cockpit for a case business, supported by simulation results

Target Audience:

- Executives accountable for the output, cost and service levels of multi-site manufacturing operations
- Senior leaders who run service delivery networks such as clinics, contact centres, branches or field service
- Heads of operations who decide capacity investment, sourcing and network footprint
- Senior leaders responsible for plant, distribution and service performance reviews with the executive team
- Executives preparing to take over enterprise-wide operations responsibility

Course Outline:

Day 1: Operations in Competitive Strategy and Performance Objectives

- Operations Role Spectrum: Implementing, Supporting and Driving Strategy
- Five Performance Objectives: Quality, Speed, Dependability, Flexibility and Cost
- Order Winners and Order Qualifiers Analysis by Customer Segment
- Performance Objective Trade-off Curves and the Efficient Frontier
- Productivity Ratio Baseline: Output-to-Input Measures by Site

Day 2: Operations Strategy Content and Process

- Market Requirements Versus Operations Resources Reconciliation
- Structural and Infrastructural Decision Areas in Operations Strategy
- Top-Down, Bottom-Up and Emergent Strategy Formation Routes
- Operations Strategy Matrix Linking Decision Areas to Performance Objectives
- Ecological Soundness as an Operations Performance Criterion

Day 3: Process Types, Layout and Flow Design

- Volume-Variety Positioning of Project, Jobbing, Batch, Mass and Continuous Processes
- Layout Options: Fixed-Position, Functional, Cell and Product Layouts
- Service Process Types: Professional Services, Service Shops and Mass Services
- Process Design Measures: Throughput Time, Cycle Time and Work-in-Process
- Process Positioning Diagnostic for Mismatched Volume and Variety

Day 4: Capacity Strategy, Queuing and Bottlenecks

- Capacity Lead, Lag and Match Demand Strategies
- Design, Effective and Actual Capacity with Utilisation and Efficiency Calculations
- Little's Law Applied to Work-in-Process, Throughput and Lead Time
- Queue Behaviour Under Arrival Variability and High Utilisation
- Bottleneck Identification and Constraint Buffer Placement

Day 5: Supply Network Choices and Week-One Integration Case

- Supply Network Configuration: Tiers, Site Location and Capacity Increments
- Make-or-Buy Decision Grid: Strategic Importance and Relative Capability
- Guided Case: Food Manufacturer Facing a Shift in Order Winners
- Guided Case: Outpatient Clinic Network with a Recurring Capacity Shortfall
- Week-One Operations Strategy Diagnostic Presentation

Day 6: Planning and Control, Inventory, Demand and Service Operations

- Planning and Control Horizons: Loading, Sequencing and Scheduling Choices
- Push and Pull Control Logic and Just-in-Time Prerequisites
- Inventory Policy at Leadership Level: Cycle, Safety and Pipeline Stock
- Demand Management: Forecast Accountability and Demand Shaping Levers
- Customer Contact Design and Peak Demand Handling in Service Operations

Day 7: Operations Risk, Resilience and Quality Governance

- Operations Risk Register: Failure Modes, Likelihood and Impact Scoring
- Resilience Levers: Redundancy, Flexibility and Recovery Time Targets
- Supplier and Single-Source Dependency Exposure Review
- Cost of Quality Model: Prevention, Appraisal and Failure Costs
- Improvement Portfolio Triage Against Performance Objective Gaps

Day 8: The COO Operating Rhythm and Leading Large Operations Teams

- Sales and Operations Planning Cycle: Demand Review, Supply Review and Executive Meeting
- Monthly Operations Performance Review Agenda and Escalation Rules
- Decision Rights Between Operations, Commercial and Finance Functions
- Span-of-Control Design for Shifts, Sites and Supervisors in Large Workforces
- Frontline Engagement and Operations Change Communication Plan

Day 9: Operations KPIs, Cost-to-Serve and Benchmarking

- Operations KPI Tree from Performance Objectives to Site Measures
- Cost-to-Serve Analysis by Customer, Channel and Order Profile
- Equipment Effectiveness and Service Level Measures Compared
- Internal and External Operations Benchmarking Protocol
- KPI Cockpit Layout: Leading Indicators, Thresholds and Owners

Day 10: Capstone: Operations Strategy and Capacity Plan with KPI Cockpit

- Case Business Brief: Demand Forecast, Process Map and Capacity Data
- Capacity and Process Simulation of Alternative Expansion Scenarios
- Operations Strategy and Capacity Plan Drafting
- KPI Cockpit Build for the Chosen Scenario
- Executive Board Presentation and Plan Defence

Skills You Will Gain:

- Operations Strategy Formulation
- Performance Objective Prioritisation
- Capacity Planning
- Bottleneck and Queue Analysis
- Make-or-Buy Judgement
- Operations Risk Oversight
- Cost-to-Serve Analysis
- Operating Rhythm Design

Why Attend This Course:

- Leave with an Operations Strategy and Capacity Plan and a KPI Cockpit built on a case business and ready to adapt to your own operation
- Test capacity expansion options in a simulation before committing capital or headcount
- Run tighter monthly performance reviews and sales and operations planning meetings with clear escalation rules
- Compare operations choices with senior leaders from manufacturing plants, hospitals, logistics networks and service businesses

Conclusion:

Operations strategy matters only when it shapes capacity, process and network decisions and is then held in place by a steady review rhythm. Week one builds that foundation: performance objectives, strategy content, process types, capacity, queues and supply network choices. Week two adds planning and control, inventory and demand management, service operations, risk and resilience, the COO operating rhythm, KPIs and cost-to-serve. The capstone brings these together in an Operations Strategy and Capacity Plan with a KPI Cockpit, tested through simulation.