CONCEPT

# Evidence-Based Management: Research, Data, Expertise and Pilot Testing

23 – 27 November 2026
London - Central London four-star



# Evidence-Based Management: Research, Data, Expertise and Pilot Testing

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## Introduction:

Organisations regularly adopt restructures, engagement programmes, appraisal systems and change initiatives because a rival used them or a consultant promoted them, and rarely check whether they work. Evidence-based management offers a disciplined alternative: decisions informed by the best available evidence from scientific research, organisational data, practitioner expertise and stakeholder views. This Core Concept course gives managers, HR, organisational development, strategy and policy staff a practical routine to frame answerable questions, gather and appraise each source, combine findings and test proposals through small pilots. Participants produce an Evidence Brief and Pilot Design for a real management decision.

## Course Objectives:

- Explain evidence-based management and recognise when a proposed practice rests on fashion, imitation or anecdote rather than evidence
- Convert a vague management problem into an answerable question with defined population, intervention, comparison, outcome and context
- Acquire and appraise research, organisational data, practitioner expertise and stakeholder views for trustworthiness and relevance
- Combine findings from the four sources into a weighted judgement with a stated confidence level
- Design a small pilot with a comparison group, outcome measures and a scale-up decision rule before organisation-wide rollout
- Produce an Evidence Brief and Pilot Design that a decision board can act on

## Target Audience:

- Line and functional managers who propose or approve new practices, policies and restructures
- HR and organisational development specialists responsible for people programmes, appraisal and engagement initiatives
- Strategy and transformation staff who assess improvement proposals and consultant recommendations
- Policy and planning staff who prepare options papers for internal or public decisions
- Change and programme managers accountable for showing that an initiative achieved its intended outcomes

## Course Outline:

### Day 1: Evidence-Based Management Foundations and Management Fads

- Evidence-Based Management Definition: Best Available Evidence from Multiple Sources
- Management Fads and Fashions: Why Popular Practices Spread Without Proof
- Success Stories, Benchmark Imitation and Guru Claims as Weak Evidence
- The Six-Step Cycle: Ask, Acquire, Appraise, Aggregate, Apply, Assess
- Evidence-Use Self-Audit of a Recent Organisational Decision

### Day 2: Answerable Questions and the Four Sources of Evidence

- Problem-to-Question Conversion Worksheet for Management Issues
- Structured Question Format: Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome and Context
- Four Sources Map: Scientific Research, Organisational Data, Practitioner Expertise, Stakeholder Views
- Study Design Ladder by Question Type: Meta-Analyses, Controlled Studies, Surveys and Case Reports
- Evidence Search Plan for a People, Change or Policy Question

### Day 3: Acquiring and Appraising Evidence from Each Source

- Rapid Evidence Assessment Protocol for Management Questions
- Research Database Search Strings and Study Screening Checklist
- Critically Appraised Topic Summary of a Single Study
- Organisational Data Trustworthiness Check: Definitions, Coverage, Measurement Error and Missing Records
- Stakeholder Evidence Collection: Structured Interviews, Pulse Surveys and Focus Group Protocols

### Day 4: Aggregating Evidence, Expert Judgement, Pilots and Evidence Culture

- Practitioner Expertise Calibration: Track Records, Feedback Loops and Independent Estimates
- Evidence Aggregation Matrix Weighing Trustworthiness, Relevance and Consistency
- Pilot and Controlled Trial Design Before Organisation-Wide Rollout
- Outcome Evaluation Plan: Baseline, Comparison Group and Leading Indicators
- Evidence-Based Culture Levers: Leadership Questions, Decision Logs and Learning Reviews

### Day 5: Case Work: Evidence Brief and Pilot Design

- HR Case File: Evidence on a Proposed Flexible Working Policy
- Operations Case File: Evidence on a Team Restructuring Proposal
- Evidence Brief Drafting: Question, Findings by Source, Confidence Rating and Recommendation
- Pilot Design Sheet: Scope, Success Measures, Decision Rule and Scale-Up Criteria
- Evidence Brief and Pilot Design Review by a Mock Decision Board

## Skills You Will Gain:

- Management Question Framing
- Rapid Evidence Assessment
- Research Study Appraisal
- Organisational Data Quality Review
- Stakeholder Evidence Gathering
- Expert Judgement Calibration
- Pilot and Trial Design
- Outcome Evaluation Planning

## Why Attend This Course:

- Leave with an Evidence Brief and Pilot Design for a real management decision, reviewed by a mock decision board
- Challenge the next restructure, programme or consultant proposal with a short list of evidence questions
- Avoid costly organisation-wide rollouts by testing a proposal on a small scale first
- Compare evidence practice with managers, HR and policy staff from several sectors and countries

## Conclusion:

Good intentions and popular practices do not guarantee results; evidence gathered and weighed with care improves the odds. The course moves from the definition of evidence-based management and the spread of management fads, through answerable questions and the four sources of evidence, to rapid appraisal of research, data, expertise and stakeholder views, then to aggregation, pilots, outcome evaluation and an evidence-based culture. The final day produces an Evidence Brief and Pilot Design that participants take back to their decision makers.