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# Strategic Landscaping

Moving from strategic planning to strategic thinking

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A man in a light blue striped shirt is speaking into a microphone, gesturing with his left hand. He is standing in front of an audience of people, some of whom are looking at him. The background is dark. The text 'Moving from strategic planning to strategic thinking' is overlaid on the right side of the image.

## Moving from strategic planning to strategic thinking

This three-day workshop challenges business critical communities within organisations to transcend their differences and their deeply held worldviews (which often keeps them separate, or in passive or aggressive conflict e.g., between R&D and Commercial, or between Marketing and Sales), so they can co-create breakthrough pathways and solutions that enable them to leapfrog the competition.



# Breakthroughs of Strategic Landscaping

- Transforming the regulatory landscape of a critical industry sector
- Reframing competitive dynamics in Eastern Europe markets
- Reducing research and development timelines from nine to five years
- Increasing the productivity of core product portfolios by 40% over 8 years
- Transforming the investment approach to a global technology pipeline and platform

## What clients and participants have said...

*'I hate roller-coasters but this one was worth riding.'*

*'It's opened up opportunities that I never expected.'*

*'It feels like we have just grown up in this market, and have now moved from childhood to adulthood in terms of our ambition and wisdom.'*

*'We now have a wider lens in which to see opportunity.'*

*'This is a multi-functional approach, I feel engaged and empowered.'*

*'It's simple. Bring the people into one space. Get the experts in the room. Give them accountability and good process.'*

*'I'm extremely optimistic about our new earnings target – double, double is now clearly possible.'*

'It's like shining a light into the dark areas that have previously been undiscussable and left unexplored.'

'This is our new way of doing strategy. It is efficient and hugely effective.'

## An evocative story...

*'We don't get them; and they don't get us. This is how we started this workshop; sentiments that we have been carrying for a long time between R&D and Commercial. However, it was surprisingly refreshing to stop and listen to each other's ideas, insights, values, motivations, questions, hopes and fears ... such that we started to see and appreciate each other differently.'*

*As we moved into small mixed groups, we were given very specific instructions and structured materials. Instead of feeling tied down and restricted by the process, it somehow facilitated skillful discussion and deep disclosure. The process led us step-by-step through a series of large-scale landscapes, challenging us to always think spatially and relationally.*

*Then one of our most senior leaders hit the nail on the head by saying: how can we reach a commanding market share from a position of feeling desperate, misunderstood and without support for decades? We used this focusing question to quantify the value of our market share target. When we worked it out, it amounted to \$1 billion. Until then we had not seen that it might be possible to capture so much value in a depressed market. It completely changed the way we saw the future, how we saw each other, and how we would need to work together going forward.*

*Bit-by-bit we started to think together. We had transcended our differences and challenged our assumptions. Instead of saying 'no' to each other, we imagined ways forward that had been simply unavailable to us through the orthodoxy of our different worldviews. Then we had our 'eureka' moment – a way forward that would change the game, with what we reckoned as a 75% chance of success. It was an amazing feeling.'*

## What is Strategic Landscaping...?

Great strategy is very different from good strategic planning. Often organisations confuse the former with the latter, reducing strategy to the management of bottom-up requirements and the management of top-down prioritisation and resource allocation. What this misses is strategy as a spatial and relational activity, in search of the most elegant and innovative ways forward.

Strategic Landscaping is a highly choreographed workshop, which invites different functions or business-units to explore the creative space between them, so they can co-create the most powerful stepping-stones for shaping the future.

The three-day workshop follows a generic form:

- **Preparation:** Using a data-driven set of pre-reads to saturate participants in the history, fact-base and systemic context of the strategic challenge
- **Sharing worldviews and widening perspectives:** Creating the container for creative dialogue, to deepen the listening, and to start to feel into new possibilities
- **Landscaping:** A highly facilitated process, where small groups of 6-8 people learn to think spatially and relationally to co-create new strategic pathways, to identify key choice-points and pinch-points, and to explore risk, investment and return on investment
- **Animation:** Layering the patterns from each of the small groups into one strategic landscape, and then turning this landscape, and the thinking behind it, into a strategic booklet – to transform insight into action, and to help engage and on-board key stakeholders

Strategic Landscaping is a powerful way of getting breakthrough insights into the building blocks of corporate strategy. Each workshop makes visible and available that which was previously hidden from view. The trick is not to act upon every new insight and avenue of value creation and capture, but to learn to step above the different insights and shape a meta-strategy that changes the rules of the game.

To learn more about *Strategic Landscaping* email us at [catalysts@nowhere.com](mailto:catalysts@nowhere.com)

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