Strategic Foresight and Tech Scouting for R&D Training Course

26 - 30 Oct 2026

Lisbon

4500 € (Per Person)

Ref: #RD6274_139639

Course Introduction / Overview:

In today's hyper-competitive landscape, reactive R&D strategies are a recipe for obsolescence. The ability to anticipate technological shifts and identify emerging opportunities before they become mainstream is the definitive competitive advantage. This course provides a comprehensive framework for integrating strategic foresight and technology scouting directly into the R&D and corporate strategy functions. We move beyond theoretical concepts to deliver a practical, actionable methodology for building a future-ready organization. Drawing on principles articulated by leading academics like René Rohrbeck, who emphasizes the importance of future orientation for firm performance, this program equips participants to systematically scan the horizon for weak signals, analyze technological trends, and translate those insights into a robust R&D pipeline. Participants will learn to build a proactive intelligence system that informs critical investment decisions, mitigates technological risks, and positions their organization as a leader. This BIG BEN Training Center course is designed to transform your R&D department from a cost center into a strategic value-creation engine, ensuring long-term relevance and growth.

Target Audience / This training course is suitable for:

- R&D Managers and Directors.
- Innovation Managers.
- Strategic Planners and Corporate Strategists.
- Technology Scouts and Analysts.
- Product Development Leaders.
- Business Development Executives.
- Chief Technology Officers (CTOs).
- Heads of Corporate Venturing.
- Market Intelligence Professionals.
- Project and Program Managers in technology-focused roles.

Target Sectors and Industries:

- Technology and Software Development.
- Manufacturing and Engineering.
- Pharmaceuticals and Biotechnology.
- Aerospace and Defense.
- Automotive and Transportation.
- Energy and Utilities.
- Telecommunications.
- Financial Services and FinTech.
- Consumer Goods and Retail.
- Government Agencies and Public Sector Research Institutions.

Target Organizations Departments:

- Research and Development (R&D).
- Strategy and Corporate Planning.
- Innovation Management.
- Product Development and Management.
- Business Development.
- Market Intelligence and Analysis.
- Corporate Venture Capital.
- New Business Units.
- Technology Transfer Offices.

Course Offerings:

By the end of this course, the participants will have able to:

- Master various foresight methodologies like horizon scanning and scenario planning.
- Develop a systematic process for technology scouting and intelligence gathering.
- Align technology acquisition and development with long-term business objectives.
- Construct robust technology roadmaps to guide R&D investments.
- Evaluate emerging technologies for potential impact and commercial viability.
- Integrate foresight and scouting outputs into the strategic planning cycle.
- Analyze patent landscapes and competitive intelligence to inform R&D focus.
- Build compelling business cases for investing in new technology areas.
- Foster a culture of proactive innovation and future-readiness within their teams.
- Effectively communicate strategic insights to executive leadership and stakeholders.

Course Methodology:

The training methodology at BIG BEN Training Center is designed for maximum engagement and practical application. This course rejects a passive, lecture-based format in favor of a dynamic, interactive learning environment. Participants will engage in a blend of expert-led instruction, intensive group workshops, and real-world case study analysis. The curriculum is structured to build skills progressively, starting with foundational concepts and moving towards complex strategic integration. A significant portion of the course is dedicated to hands-on exercises where participants will use foresight and scouting tools on industry-relevant scenarios. This applied learning approach ensures that attendees do not just learn about the methods but learn how to use them effectively. Collaborative sessions and peer-to-peer feedback are integral, allowing participants to learn from diverse perspectives and experiences. The instructor acts as a facilitator, guiding discussions and providing personalized feedback to help each participant build a practical toolkit they can implement immediately upon returning to their organization.

Course Agenda (Course Units):

Unit One: Foundations of Strategic Foresight and R&D

- The imperative for future-oriented R&D.
- Defining strategic foresight, technology scouting, and technology intelligence.
- The historical evolution and key concepts of future studies.
- Distinguishing between trends, weak signals, and wild cards.
- Understanding the link between foresight and competitive advantage.
- The role of foresight in mitigating strategic risks.
- Frameworks for assessing organizational future-readiness.

Unit Two: The Strategic Foresight Toolkit

- Introduction to horizon scanning and environmental scanning techniques.
- Mastering trend analysis and impact assessment.
- The Delphi method for expert-based forecasting.
- Developing robust scenarios for strategic planning.
- Back casting as a tool for defining future goals.
- Utilizing STEEP/PESTLE analysis for macro-environmental insights.
- Workshop: Conducting a mini-trend analysis exercise.

Unit Three: Mastering the Technology Scouting Process

- Establishing a systematic framework for technology scouting.
- Identifying and leveraging diverse sources of technological intelligence.
- Techniques for scouting in open innovation ecosystems.
- Utilizing patent analysis and literature reviews for insights.
- Frameworks for evaluating technology maturity and readiness (TRL).
- Assessing the strategic fit of new technologies.
- Building and managing a technology intelligence database.

Unit Four: Integrating Insights into R&D Strategy

- The art of translating foresight into actionable R&D projects.
- Developing and managing a strategic technology roadmap.
- Aligning the R&D portfolio with long-term business objectives.
- Using foresight to inform make-versus-buy-versus-partner decisions.
- Building a business case for emerging technology investments.
- Communicating strategic insights to senior leadership.
- Case study analysis of successful R&D strategy integration.

Unit Five: Building a Sustainable Foresight Capability

- Cultivating a culture of foresight and proactive innovation.
- Structuring the foresight and scouting function within the organization.
- Key roles, responsibilities, and required competencies.
- Measuring the ROI and impact of foresight activities.
- Overcoming common organizational barriers to implementation.
- Leveraging software and platforms to support intelligence efforts.
- Final project: Developing a basic foresight and scouting plan for a case study.

FAQ:

Qualifications required for registering to this course?

There are no requirements.

How long is each daily session, and what is the total number of training hours for the course?

This training course spans five days, with daily sessions ranging between 4 to 5 hours, including breaks and interactive activities, bringing the total duration to 20 - 25 training hours.

Something to think about:

How might an organization's risk appetite influence the balance between incremental innovation discovered through scouting and disruptive innovation envisioned through foresight?

What unique qualities does this course offer compared to other courses?

This course distinguishes itself by focusing on the critical bridge between analysis and action. While many programs teach the tools of foresight and scouting in isolation, our curriculum is uniquely designed around their strategic integration into the R&D and corporate decision-making process. We move beyond simply identifying trends to mastering the art of translating those insights into tangible R&D projects, robust technology roadmaps, and defensible investment strategies. The emphasis is less on theoretical models and more on building a practical, repeatable process that creates sustained value. Participants will not just learn what scenario planning is; they will learn how to use a scenario to challenge and refine their R&D portfolio. This holistic approach ensures that foresight and scouting are not treated as isolated academic exercises but are embedded as a core capability that drives competitive advantage, informs capital allocation, and shapes the future of the organization. The focus is on building organizational resilience and strategic agility in a world of constant technological change.