

**THE STRATEGIC CONTINUING TRAINING NEEDS OF EXECUTIVES AND
MANAGERS IN A SELECTION OF LARGE SOUTH AFRICAN COMPANIES**

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to Dean

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SUMMARY

The strategic environment of companies is divided in four domains. These domains are the known, knowable, complex and chaos domains. The known and knowable domains are characterised by order while the chaos and complex domains are characterised by un-order. The factors present in the chaos and complex domains are emergent in nature and are regarded as un-ordered. Executives and managers need to be prepared to manage in all four these domains in order to ensure the long-term competitiveness of companies. This implies that the training needs of executives and managers need to be identified and addressed in order to prepare them to manage in the four domains in the strategic environment of companies.

Executives and managers are trained by means of traditional and/or strategic training. Traditional training prepares executives and managers to manage in the ordered domains while strategic training prepare executives and managers to manage in the domains characterised by un-order which are emergent in nature. Strategic training is “based on predictions of future job requirements” (Rothwell & Kazanas, 1994:425). Traditional training addresses the training needs of executives and managers as it flows from the current strategic orientation of the company while strategic training addresses the training needs of executives and managers as it flows from the emergent strategic orientation of the company.

Knowledge management entails the establishment of an environment within which knowledge processes (creation, codification, sharing, organisation and use of knowledge) are performed through a variety of tools and techniques to the benefit of the company. Knowledge processes regarding the emergent strategic orientation of companies are performed during a strategic training process and therefore strategic training is regarded as a knowledge management technique. Strategic training enables executives and managers to learn as regards the emergent strategic orientation of the company. Ahmed,

Kok and Loh (2002:23) state: “The objective of organizational learning and knowledge management is to create a motivated and energized work environment that supports the continuous creation, collection, use and reuse of both personal and organization knowledge in the pursuit of business success.” Furthermore, Ahmed, Kok and Loh (2002:23) explain that the ability of companies to capitalise on their knowledge assets defines their competitiveness. Knowledge management techniques such as strategic training should be used to ensure that the knowledge assets of companies contribute to the long-term competitiveness of companies.

The literature on strategic training was studied and empirical research was conducted in a selection of 24 large South African companies in order to ascertain the nature and scope of training offered to executives and managers. The nature and scope of training in large South African companies were studied to ascertain whether these companies use a strategic training process to identify and address the strategic training needs of executives and managers and thus if companies perform knowledge processes regarding their emergent strategic orientation. It was ascertained that only a few of the 24 large South African companies which participated in the study use a strategic training process to identify and address the strategic training needs of executives and managers. A framework for the implementation of a cyclical strategic training process is therefore proposed as a guideline for companies that want to use a strategic training process.



KEY WORDS

Strategic training

Strategic training needs

Strategic human resource development

Knowledge management

Knowledge processes

Traditional training

Strategic environment

Cynefin framework for organisational sense making

Training infrastructure

South African companies

OPSOMMING

Die strategiese omgewing van maatskappye word verdeel in vier domeine. Hierdie domeine is die bekende, weetbare, komplekse en chaos domeine. Die bekende en weetbare domeine word gekenmerk deur orde terwyl die komplekse en chaos domeine gekenmerk word ongeordenheid. Die komplekse en chaos domeine is voortkomend van aard. Bestuurshoofde en bestuurders moet voorberei word om in al vier hierdie domeine te bestuur ten einde die langtermyn mededingendheid van maatskappy te verseker. Dit bring mee dat die opleidingsbehoefte van bestuurshoofde en bestuurders geïdentifiseer en aangespreek moet word ten einde hul in staat te stel om in al vier bogenoemde domeine in die strategiese omgewings van maatskappye te bestuur.

Bestuurshoofde en bestuurders word opgelei deur middel van tradisionele en/of strategiese opleiding. Tradisionele opleiding berei bestuurshoofde en bestuurders voor om in die geordende domeine te bestuur. Strategiese opleiding fokus daarop om bestuurshoofde en bestuurders voor te berei om ook in die domeine te bestuur wat gekenmerk word deur ongeordenheid en voortkomend van aard is. Rothwell en Kazanas (1994:425) verduidelik dat strategiese opleiding gebaseer is op voorspellings van die toekomstige werksomgewing. Tradisionele opleiding spreek die opleidingsbehoefte van bestuurshoofde en bestuurders aan soos dit voortspruit uit die huidige strategiese oriëntasie van die maatskappy terwyl strategiese opleiding die opleidingsbehoefte van bestuurshoofde en bestuurders aanspreek soos dit voortspruit uit die voortkomende strategiese oriëntasie van die maatskappy.

Kennisbestuur behels die skep van 'n omgewing waarbinne kennisprosesse (skep, kodifikasie, deel, organisasie en gebruik van kennis) uitgevoer word deur gebruik te maak van 'n verskeidenheid hulpmiddele en tegnieke tot voordeel van die maatskappy. Kennisprosesse rakende die voortkomende opleidingsbehoefte van bestuurshoofde en bestuurders word uitgevoer gedurende 'n strategiese opleidingsproses en derhalwe word

strategiese opleiding beskou as ‘n tegniek waardeur kennisbestuur moontlik gemaak word. Strategiese opleiding stel bestuurshoofde en bestuurders in staat om te leer aangaande die voortkomende strategiese oriëntasie van die maatskappy. Ahmed, Kok en Loh (2002:23) verklaar: “*The objective of organizational learning and knowledge management is to create a motivated and energized work environment that supports the continuous creation, collection, use and reuse of both personal and organization knowledge in the pursuit of business success.*” Ahmed, Kok en Loh (2002:23) verduidelik voorts dat die mededingendheid van maatskappye bepaal word deur hul vermoë om hulle kennisbates te kapitaliseer. Kennisbestuurstegnieke soos strategiese opleiding moet gebruik word om te verseker dat die kennisbates van maatskappye bydra tot die lang termyn mededingendheid van maatskappye.

Die literatuur oor strategiese opleiding is bestudeer en ‘n empiriese ondersoek is gedoen om die aard en omvang van strategiese opleiding te bepaal wat aan bestuurshoofde en bestuurders gebied word in ‘n seleksie van 24 groot Suid-Afrikaanse maatskappye. Die ondersoek het behels dat die aard en omvang van opleiding in groot Suid-Afrikaanse maatskappye bestudeer is ten einde te bepaal of hierdie maatskappye gebruikmaak van ‘n strategiese opleidingsproses om die strategiese opleidingsbehoefte van bestuurshoofde en bestuurders te identifiseer en aan te spreek. Daar is vasgestel dat slegs enkele van die 24 groot Suid-Afrikaanse ondernemings wat aan die studie deelgeneem het gebruikmaak van ‘n strategiese opleidingsproses om die strategiese opleidingsbehoefte van bestuurshoofde en bestuurders te identifiseer en aan te spreek. ‘n Raamwerk vir die implementering van ‘n sikliese strategiese opleidingsproses word derhalwe voorgestel om as riglyn te dien vir maatskappye wat van ‘n strategiese opleidingsproses gebruik wil maak.



SLEUTELTERME

Strategiese opleiding

Strategiese opleidingsbehoefte

Strategiese menslike hulpbronontwikkeling

Kennisbestuur

Kennisprosesse

Tradisionele opleiding

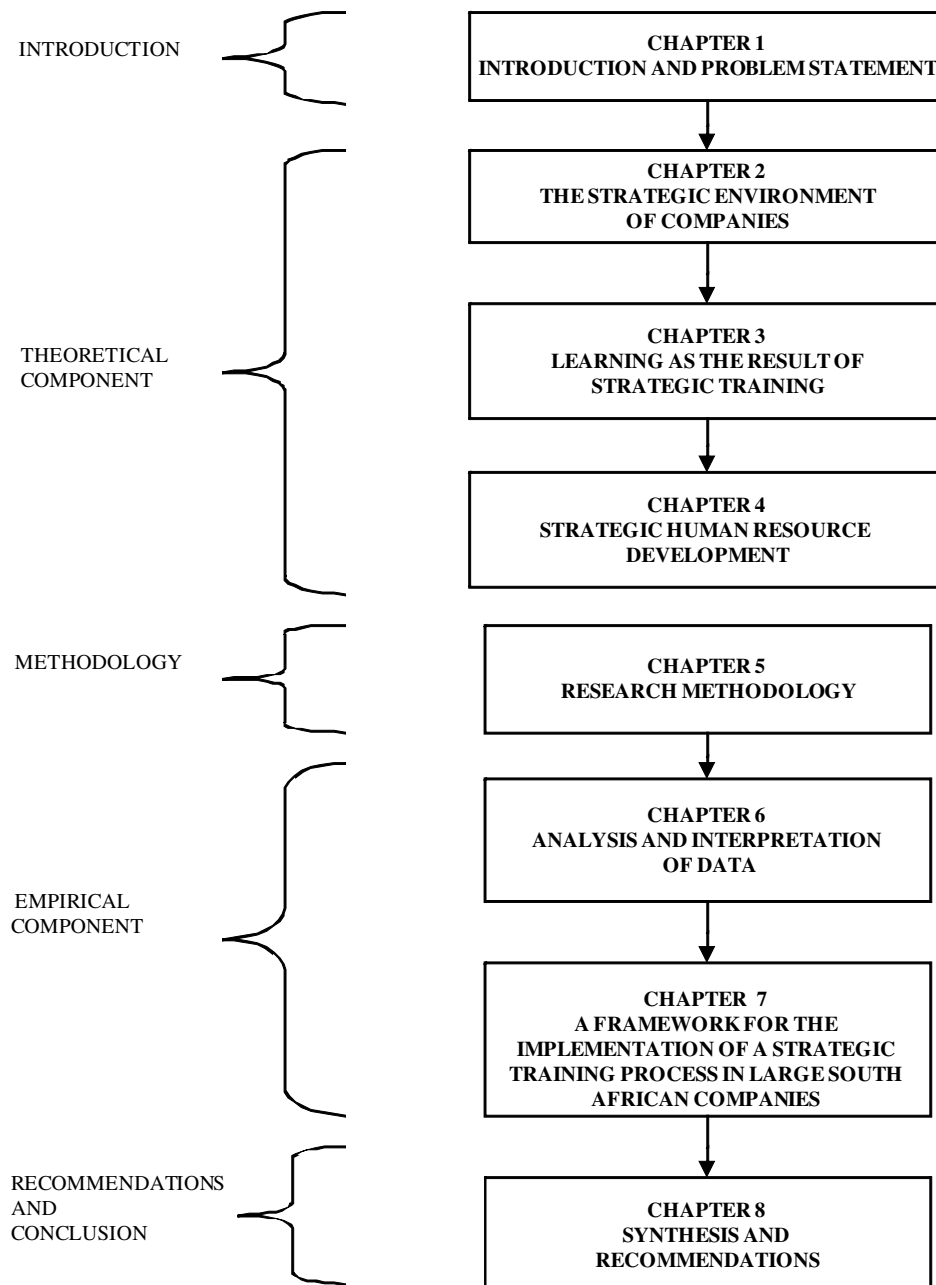
Strategiese omgewing

Cynefin framework for organisational sense making

Opleidingsinfrastruktuur

Suid-Afrikaanse maatskappye

GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE STUDY



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