



# Middle Managers Role in Strategy Implementation – The Lynchpin of Success

A results oriented workshop designed to enhance middle managers' capabilities in translating strategy into actions.

*facilitated by Robin Speculand*

**BRIDGES™**

Business Consultancy Int.

# Introduction

Not enough attention is paid to the role of middle managers in implementing strategy, which contributes to its poor success rate.

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*Senior leaders are responsible for crafting strategy and middle managers are the lynchpin of success. But they are often ignored.*

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This course is designed to enhance and reinforce middle managers' capabilities in translating strategy into the business. It provides powerful techniques, tips and a framework to support the middle managers; that is often missing.

The course was initially developed and designed in 2010 as a public offering for Singapore Management University. It continues to be conducted every year at the University and for our clients due to its popularity, easy to adopt tools and contributing success to assisting organizations in their implementation.

Middle managers in strategy implementation are often called the thermal layer as they absorb both the senior managers inputs and the frontline feedback. They are the lynchpin who translate the strategy into what it means for the frontline and also provide the feedback to senior leaders on the progress being made.

The opening of the course immediately addresses the question that middle managers can influence change and explains how they can do it. The participants then receive 6 powerful tips that allows them to support and drive the implementation. In the second part of the morning the course explains the eight areas for excellence in , that make up the Implementation Compass™ framework.

In the afternoon the participants assess themselves in their digital maturity. The majority of the afternoon then focuses on the Harvard listed DBS bank case study, written by the course facilitator.

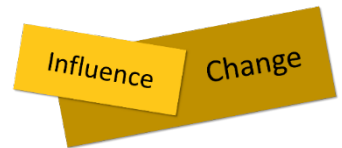


# Course Outline

## 1. How Middle Managers Influence Change

Middle managers can make the difference between success and failure; therefore, ignoring their role in implementing the strategy can be catastrophic.

The workshop opens by addressing the question, "Can middle managers influence change and if yes, 'how'?" It explains how they can create success by using their influence to change attitudes and actions, and emphasizes that it takes small changes, by lots of people that creates big change.



## 2. Six Tips for Success

Middle managers need to explain to their teams why people should work differently, as by definition a new strategy means working differently.

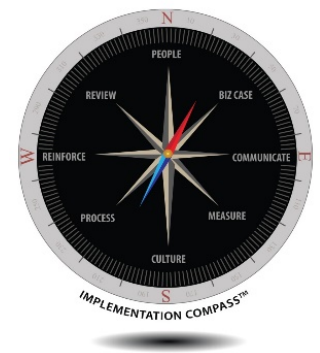
From Bridges' (the facilitators company) research over the years and their work with clients, six powerful tips have been developed. They include for example, "Less is More", "Small Actions" and "Give People a Choice". The tips are explained using research, puzzles, stories and examples.



## 3. Understanding the Implementation Challenge

A framework is needed to guide people through the implementation journey and identify the right actions.

Organizations are guilty of repeating the same mistakes when implementing strategy. This session explains why more implementations fail than succeed. It shares the framework used by organizations around the world, called the Implementation Compass™. This framework explains the eight areas required for excellence in execution through stories and examples



## 4. Digital Maturity Assessment

Many implementations today involve digitalization. This online assessment allows participants to understand which of the three stages they are at in their digital maturity - Reacting, Embedding or Strategizing.

More importantly, immediately upon finishing the assessment they receive a report with recommendations on how they can enhance their digital maturity by reading articles, listening to podcasts or watching videos.



## 5. Lessons Learned from DBS Case Study

Case studies are an integral part of any participant's learning. Participants receive the case study as a pre-reading assignment.

This final session helps participants learn from DBS Bank about how they implemented their strategy and highlight all the key learning from the of course. Participants share and discuss learning and ideas. They then apply the key lessons to their own organization.

DBS bank successfully transformed to the world's best bank by leveraging digitalization. The leaders created a purpose that aligned the whole organization and worked with their middle managers to drive the right actions across every part of the bank.



Written By:

**Robin Speculand**

Listed on:



## Who Should Attend

This course is suitable for supervisors and middle managers who wish to enhance their skills in:

- Translating the strategy into day-to-day actions.
- Guiding employees through the transition.
- Driving the right actions across the organization.
- Providing feedback on the implementation's progress to people both above and below them.

# Course Facilitator

## Robin Speculand

### Specialist in Strategy & Digital Implementation



Robin Speculand passionately lives and breathes strategy implementation. He continuously creates and develops new approaches to support leaders in transforming their organizations and is one of the world's most prolific writers on the subject.

He is founder of three companies, three business associations and CEO of Bridges Business Consultancy Int. Singapore Airlines was among the first organizations to embrace this new field and engaged Robin to support its global strategy implementation.

He is known for his breakthroughs on implementation methodology and techniques, including the Implementation Compass™, a proprietary framework built on the eight areas for excellence for execution; Readiness2Execute Assessment; Ticking Clock© Model, a framework for digitalizing an organization; Digital Maturity Index, a self-assessment that reveals a person's level of digital maturity; and the 40 Digital Best Practices Benchmark.

Robin also co-founded an online education forum—the Strategy Implementation Institute—that provides leaders with a community, online course, and online certification in the field.

In 2014, Robin recognized that digital transformation was markedly different and presented new challenges. He researched the challenges globally and in 2018 co-authored the white paper Transforming Your Company into a Digital-Driven Business. In 2021 he co-authored the white paper The Future of Strategy Implementation.

In 2021 Robin was co-nominated with Piyush Gupta, CEO of DBS Bank, for the Thinkers50 "Ideas into Practice Award." and winner of the "Business Strategist" Singapore 2021-22 by Prestige.

Robin has published five books on strategy implementation. His latest, World's Best Bank—A Strategic Guide to Digital Transformation, is an Amazon best seller. His pioneering work has been featured in media worldwide, including BBC World and *Forbes*. He is a TEDx speaker and an educator for Duke CE, IMD, and an adjunct member of Singapore Management University and National University of Singapore. He is an award-winning and Harvard listed case writer and a GlobalScot appointed by the First Minister of Scotland.

Outside of work, Robin competes in Ironman events around the world and calls Singapore home.

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