MERCURY

Strategic Finance for Non-Financial Managers Course

11 – 22 October 2027
Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)



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Strategic Finance for Non-Financial Managers Course

Ref: 8057_1059119 **Date:** 11 – 22 October 2027 **Location:** Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) **Fees:** 9500 Euro

Strategic Finance for Non-Financial Managers is a 2-week course for managers and supervisors outside finance who must defend budgets, price products and justify investments. You read the main statements, use cost behavior, breakeven and cost-based pricing, build a budget and appraise a capital project with NPV and IRR. You take back a Business Case and Budget Pack. This strategic finance course is delivered by Mercury Training Center.

About This Course

Managers are asked to approve spending, set prices and argue for new equipment, yet many cannot read the numbers finance sends back. To follow the course you should already manage a team, a cost center or a budget line. You practice on sample statements, cost data and project proposals, then on figures from your own department.

Who It Is For

- Managers who own a department budget and explain its variances.
- Supervisors who control day-to-day spending on staff, materials and services.
- Sales and marketing leads who set prices, discounts and volume targets.
- Operations and engineering leads who propose equipment, systems or expansion projects.
- Professionals moving into general management who must read and question financial reports.

This course is not for accountants who already prepare statements and need technical updates, who are better served by a financial reporting standards course, nor for managers who only need a short introduction to the statements, who suit a one-week accounting course for non-finance staff.

Competencies You Will Build

- Statement Reading: you read an income statement, balance sheet and cash flow statement and say what each tells you.
- Ratio Interpretation: you judge the health of a company or profit center from margins, liquidity and gearing.
- Cost Behavior Analysis: you separate fixed and variable costs and find the breakeven volume of a product or service.
- Pricing Judgment: you set or challenge a price using full cost, marginal cost and contribution.
- Budget Ownership: you build a departmental budget, track variances and apply cost control.
- Investment Appraisal: you evaluate a capital project with payback, NPV and IRR and test its sensitivity.

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What You Will Be Able to Do

By the end of the course you will be able to:

- From an annual report, extract the main figures and write a one-page view of the company's financial health.
- Given product cost data, calculate contribution and breakeven and decide whether a low-margin line should stay.
- Using a pricing request from sales, compare cost-based and marginal pricing and recommend a floor price.
- Given an equipment proposal, discount its cash flows at the cost of capital and state whether it creates value.
- From last year's spending, prepare next year's departmental budget with monthly phasing and control points.
- Using a cash shortfall scenario, choose working capital actions and a short-term financing source.

Course Content

Day 1: Goals of Financial Management

- Goals and Functions of Financial Management in Line Departments
- Three Questions Finance Answers: Profit, Cash and Value
- Business Transactions, Debits and Credits in Plain Terms
- Adjusting Entries at Month End
- IFRS as the Reporting Basis for Published Statements

Day 2: Reading the Financial Statements

- Income Statement Structure for a Profit Center
- Balance Sheet Assets, Liabilities and Equity
- Statement of Changes in Owners' Equity
- Cash Flow Statement: Operating, Investing and Financing Flows
- Linking the Statements Through One Month of Transactions

Day 3: Judging Business Health

- Profitability Ratios from the Income Statement
- Liquidity and Gearing Ratios from the Balance Sheet
- Efficiency Ratios for Inventory, Receivables and Payables
- Annual Report Reading for Managers
- Ratio Trends and Peer Comparison for a Business Review

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Day 4: Cost Behavior and Breakeven

- Fixed, Variable and Semi-Variable Cost Classification
- Cost-Volume-Profit Analysis for Products and Services
- Breakeven Point and Margin of Safety Calculations
- Economic Costs Versus Accounting Costs in Decisions
- Contribution Analysis for Product Line Choices

Day 5: Pricing and Marginal Decisions

- Marginal Analysis for Make-or-Buy and Special Orders
- Full-Cost and Cost-Plus Pricing Methods
- Marginal and Contribution-Based Pricing for Discounts
- Cost Drivers and Overhead Allocation in Pricing
- Price, Volume and Mix Variance Reading

Day 6: Budgeting and Cost Control

- Budgeting Guidelines and the Annual Budget Cycle
- Departmental Budget Building from Activity Plans
- Flexible Budgets and Variance Analysis
- Cost Control Techniques for Staff, Materials and Services
- Rolling Forecasts for Changing Conditions

Day 7: Time Value of Money and Cost of Capital

- Future and Present Value Calculations
- Discount Rates and the Cost of Capital
- Weighted Average Cost of Capital Basics
- Annuities and Loan Repayment Schedules
- Spreadsheet Functions for Discounting

Day 8: Capital Project Appraisal

- The Capital Budgeting Decision and Strategy Fit
- Payback and Accounting Rate of Return Methods
- Net Present Value and Internal Rate of Return
- Sensitivity, Scenario and Risk Analysis of Project Cash Flows
- Writing the Investment Recommendation for Approval

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Day 9: Working Capital and Cross-Functional Decisions

- Current Asset Management: Inventory, Receivables and Cash
- Sources of Short-Term Financing for Operations
- Cash Conversion Cycle Analysis
- Financial Insight for Marketing, Production and Investment Decisions
- Presenting Financial Arguments to Senior Management

Day 10: Building Your Business Case and Budget Pack

- Exercise: Reviewing the Financial Health of Your Organization
- Exercise: Breakeven and Pricing for One of Your Products or Services
- Exercise: Appraising a Capital Proposal from Your Department
- Exercise: Preparing Your Departmental Budget with Control Points
- Completing the Business Case and Budget Pack

Case Studies and Exercises

These are suggested activities, drawn from manufacturing, retail, healthcare and logistics settings.

- Case study: A manufacturer considers dropping a low-margin product line; you analyze contribution and fixed cost recovery and decide.
- Case study: A retail chain receives a large discount request from a corporate client; you set the lowest acceptable price using marginal cost.
- Exercise: A hospital department proposes new diagnostic equipment; you build the NPV and IRR appraisal and write the recommendation.
- Exercise: A logistics depot faces a cash squeeze; you choose working capital actions and a short-term financing source.

What You Take Back

The Business Case and Budget Pack is built on figures from your own department. In your first month back you use it to present next year's budget, defend one pricing or product decision, and submit a capital proposal with its NPV and IRR to the approving manager.

- A one-page financial health review of your organization.
- A breakeven and pricing sheet for one product or service.
- A capital project appraisal with sensitivity tests.
- A phased departmental budget with control points.

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Quick Answers FAQ

What should you know before strategic finance for non-financial managers training?

You need no accounting background. You should be comfortable with basic arithmetic and spreadsheets and already manage a team, budget line or cost center, so the examples connect to decisions you already make.

How does strategic finance for non-financial managers differ from a one-week accounting course for non-finance staff?

A one-week accounting course focuses on reading statements and basic ratios. Strategic finance over 2 weeks adds cost behavior, breakeven, pricing, budgeting and capital appraisal with NPV and IRR, and ends with a business case built on your own figures.

Why should non-financial managers understand NPV and IRR?

Most spending requests above a set limit are judged on NPV and IRR. Managers who can build and explain these figures present proposals in the terms approvers use and can spot when a project's assumptions are too optimistic.

What do you take back from strategic finance for non-financial managers training?

You take back the Business Case and Budget Pack: a financial health review, a breakeven and pricing sheet, a capital appraisal and a phased budget, all built on your own department's figures.

For Your Manager

After the course, the team member will be able to read the main statements, find breakeven, challenge prices, build and control a departmental budget, and appraise capital proposals with NPV and IRR. They return with the Business Case and Budget Pack for their own department, first used in the next budget round and the next capital spending request.