



Strategic *Learning Map*[®] Module

What's arguably the single most challenging part of being human and sustaining relationships – work or personal – with other humans? It's the thing that most companies are only okay at doing, many couples struggle with, and where parents and children run into some real hurdles right around those “tweenage” years. Yes, that's right – communication. It's the hardest, and likely the most important, skill in any of those scenarios. Specifically, it's critical in organizations with people working in different cities (or countries!), having different skill sets, and focusing on different business agendas.

So many companies have a hard time starting and maintaining meaningful, strategic conversations – the kind that can really move the needle on the most important issues. All too often, the great conversations happen only at the top. Then, those “top” people go and tell everyone else about the big decisions, or the new plan, or the idea that's going to change everything. And when nothing happens – when behaviors haven't changed and there's no progress toward the new beacon of light – the “top” is left wondering why.

Show, don't tell

Because people don't want to just be told.

You've seen it a million times – conference rooms packed with people watching someone from leadership present a new phase of the corporate plan via an eye-glazing slide deck of spreadsheet tables and forward-looking statements. It's not that the information is not important, because it is. But people need to touch, to feel, to visualize, to make it their own. Leaders need to engage employees in the “why” of any strategy, along with where they want to go, how they intend to get there, and what role each employee will play. Employees need the long view.

root[®]

To create an entire company of business people who can make an impact, each employee has to have a grasp of the market, how the company makes money, what the customer cares about, the plan to serve those customers, and where they as the employee fit in. That is the long view. It's a view of the entire system that gives employees what they need to understand and embrace a new strategy or initiative and know they are a meaningful part of it.



Strategic *Learning Map*® modules are designed to create these all-important conversations, helping employees process new thinking and come to their own conclusions without being told (or talked at). The modules create a holistic systems-level understanding by exploring these critical areas:

- **The Big Picture** – Look at your business environment, customers, competition, and the market forces impacting the organization.
- **Economic Literacy** – Help employees understand the financial aspects of your business including how their work affects things like volume and profitability, as well as how they personally can improve short- and long-term financial performance.
- **Customer Value Proposition** – Use marketplace realities to help people grasp the importance of building relationships with customers and outline how everyone affects the customer experience.
- **Key Business Processes** – Give employees a picture of the entire organizational workflow process from the beginning (identifying a customer need) to the end (receiving payment) to help them envision how to deliver the best possible service to customers.
- **Strategic Direction and Me** – Bring it all together by connecting people's roles to the big picture and giving them the insight into the why, what, and how of the organization's new strategic direction with a sharp focus.

“For the executive team, the discussion and creation of the maps helped us better see each others’ views and gain alignment for the essential points we wanted to communicate broadly. With one sweeping effort, our entire organization now has a single baseline picture from which to speak. As a number of people summarized best in their direct comments, ‘It all makes sense now.’ I could not have written a better outcome.”

*— President and CEO,
pharmacy benefit
management company*

Strategic Learning Map® Methodology: Conversation through visualization

For over two decades, more than 800 organizations in a variety of industries across the globe have used Strategic Learning Map® modules to navigate their journeys. Root bypasses boring lectures and instead encourages open communication. We focus on a four-pronged approach for maximum impact.

- **First** – We break into small groups to sharpen the focus, enhance the interaction level, and help participants process critical information using dialogue.
- **Second** – We use the actual Strategic Learning Map® visual, which is a table-sized metaphorical drawing of your business system, to ignite inspiration, spark creativity, and make the information presented most memorable.
- **Third** – We use a lot of data and information that gets infused into the process to enhance the conversation and increase the level of competence on the key business issues.
- **Fourth** – We tap someone from YOUR side to play facilitator and allow you to scale this process rapidly and consistently.

In just an hour, the ice is broken and the group bonds over a unique experience. The visual components mean drastically shortened learning cycles, greater emotional buy-in, and superior retention of the content. This means you will see results much more quickly than you would with traditional approaches. The best part? It can be replicated and cascaded throughout your organization – slowly or quickly.

So much more than a pretty picture

Sure, Root’s Strategic Learning Map® modules are beautiful to look at. They’re artistic and colorful and intricate. Many companies frame them and put them on display for employees and visitors to enjoy. But Strategic Learning Map® modules are so much more than that. In their very creation, they quickly align leaders on what’s most important. Only one version of “where we are and where we’re going” actually makes it to the module, which forces clarity where and when it’s needed most.

Once that’s accomplished, the materials and associated tools make it possible to permeate the thinking across the organization in a way that involves people, so they “buy in” and want to act. Every employee will hear the same message, see the same visuals, and have the same discussions – replicating the vision and strategy hundreds, even thousands, of times with great consistency. Think of it as creating a new language on strategy in your organization that everyone can understand.



APG Partner

Contact Information

Content by Root Inc., an APG partner.

Advantage Performance Group is a professional services firm dedicated to providing a continuous stream of creative learning solutions that equip individuals, teams and organizations to be the best at what they do.

About Root

Root is a strategy execution company that helps organizations engage people as a catalyst for change using a proven framework that consistently achieves clarity, ownership, and results.

