COURSE BROCHURE

Managing Departments and Budgets

An applied course for non-financial department managers covering the departmental operating plan, building the budget in Excel, variance analysis, spending control and monthly performance reporting.

Code	HT-MGT-131
Category	Management & Leadership
Duration	1 week
Level	Intermediate
City	Amsterdam

Introduction

Department managers are held to account for both results and costs, yet many are handed a finished budget they had no part in building and whose logic they do not follow. Understanding the budget lets a manager defend resources and steer them toward priorities.

Objectives

- Prepare a departmental operating plan linked to organizational goals
- Explain budget types, budgeting approaches and cost behavior
- Build a detailed departmental budget on clear assumptions and cost drivers
- Analyze variances between actual and planned figures and identify their causes
- Produce a monthly report combining the department's financial and operational performance

Who should attend

- Non-financial department managers and section heads
- Cost center and project managers
- Newly appointed heads of technical and service sections
- Departmental planning and budget coordinators

Skills you will develop

- Departmental operating planning
- Budgeting in Excel
- Variance analysis and forecasting
- Cost control and reporting

Learning Outcomes

- Build an operating budget model for a department in Excel from payroll, materials and services lines
- Prepare a capital request justification setting out the need, the alternatives and the expected return
- Produce a monthly variance report with explanations and corrective actions
- Design a concise departmental dashboard combining financial and operational indicators

Course Outline

Day 1: The Department Manager's Role and the Operating Plan

- The department's mission and linking its goals to the organization's strategic plan
- The annual operating plan: objectives, initiatives and resources
- Organization structure, headcount planning and workload distribution

Day 2: Budget Fundamentals

- Operating, capital and cash budgets and the budgeting cycle
- Budgeting approaches: incremental, zero-based, activity-based and rolling forecasts
- Cost behavior: fixed, variable and semi-variable, direct and indirect, and cost centers

Day 3: Preparing the Departmental Budget

- Building payroll, materials, service contract and training lines in Excel
- Assumptions, cost drivers and phasing the budget across the months of the year
- Justifying capital requests and defending the budget before the review committee

Day 4: Budgetary Control

- Variance analysis: price variance, volume variance and the flexible budget
- Tracking commitments, purchase orders and accruals
- Forecasting year-end spend, transfers between budget lines and corrective actions

Day 5: Performance Reporting and Cost Optimization

- The departmental dashboard and the monthly report to senior management
- Reducing costs without harming service levels
- Applied project in which each participant builds a departmental budget and a variance report in Excel and presents both

Training methodology

Trainer-led, step-by-step construction of a budget model in Excel
Variance analysis exercises on data from a fictional department
Simulated budget defense session before a finance committee
Ready-made templates that participants adapt to their own department

Certification

Participants receive a Harbor Training Center certificate of attendance on completing the course.

Upcoming dates

City	Dates	Language	Fee
Amsterdam	15 – 19 February 2027	EN	EUR 5,500
Amsterdam	16 – 20 August 2027	AR	EUR 5,500

Fees are per participant.

Contact us

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To register and for details, scan the code or visit:

https://harbor4training.com/en/courses/managing-departments-budgets