COURSE SYLLABUS

Activity Costing Executive Seminar for Performance Accountability Course (Self-Paced)

Executives and decision makers need to know what projects, processes, activities, and programs cost to make the best use of limited resources in achieving efficient and effective operations while promoting a performance accountability culture. This seminar is an essential overview for understanding and applying activity based costing to data-driven planning and actions.

Group classes (Live Online) and onsite training are available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://www.graduateschool.edu/courses/activity-costing-executive-seminar-for-performance-accountability-course-self-paced



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Course Outline

Module 1: Getting Started

- Review the strategic role of cost management in public and private sectors
- Challenge common misconceptions about cost control and financial stewardship
- Understand managerial vs. financial costing and the value of credible measurement

Module 2: The Mechanics of Activity-Based Costing

- Differentiate between guessing, direct costing, and allocation
- Learn cost driver theory and application
- Explore cost objects, cost pools, and distribution methodologies

Module 3: Pitfalls in Designing ABC Approaches

- Identify common mistakes in cost driver selection and system design
- Understand the risks of cross-subsidization and over-precision
- Explore behavior-driven implications of cost measurement errors

Module 4: Other Allocation Considerations

- Apply Level of Effort (LOE) as a driver in service-oriented environments
- Explore random error vs. systematic bias in estimates
- Compare direct, step-down, and reciprocal allocation methods

Module 5: ABC's Mission Benefits and Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA)

- Review case studies from FDA and Army cost-informed decisions
- Apply an 8-step process for CBA and cost estimation
- Integrate ABC into CBA for more strategic resource allocation

Module 6: Framework for Cost Measurement – Part 2

- Explore alternatives to budget compliance as cost control strategy
- Learn how productivity gains drive organizational capacity
- Discuss leadership's role in driving cost-informed decision-making

Module 7: Role-Based Control and ABC Applications

- Implement role-based cost control systems within support/core structures
- Use ABC to reallocate overhead and motivate cost reductions
- Review practical examples from SPAWAR and NRaD

Module 8: Summary and Conclusions

- Compare organization-based, role-based, and output-based control systems
- Explore applications in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing
- Establish practices for sustaining a cost-managed organization