

# NSW PUBLIC SECTOR GRADES 11-12

## STRATEGIC THINKING & ADVANCED PROBLEM SOLVING

16 - 17  
FEBRUARY  
ONLINE DELIVERY

### EXPLORE

- ▶ Apply practical outcome-driven strategic thinking and problem solving models
- ▶ Explore a structured systems thinking approach to analysing problems and formulating strategy
- ▶ Harness stakeholder engagement principles to work collaboratively on organisational issues
- ▶ Understand your role as an executive leader in empowering others to solve problems

### EXPERT FACILITATOR



**Michael Collins**  
High Potential Officer  
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## ABOUT THE EVENT

In light of significant changes to its operating environment, the NSW Public Sector is reassessing many of its traditional approaches to solving problems. The current landscape is characterised by significant uncertainty, complexity and changing citizen needs and expectations. This environment is testing governance structures, workforce skills and organisational capacity.

Strategic thinking brings the big picture into focus. It helps to make visible the connections between multiple causes, stakeholders and interdependencies that are at play within many of the 'wicked problems' that leaders face. It is the responsibility of leaders to recognise critical trends and patterns in their internal and external environments shaping the future. Strategic thinking is an evolving skill and will remain a key competency to enable the transformational leadership required to steer the NSW Public Sector through the challenging times ahead.

This course has been designed for NSW Grades 11-12 leaders who are seeking to expand their existing skills to deal with problems on a strategic level. The tools applied in this course will contribute to improved strategic insight and greater confidence overall in developing evidence-solutions to problems that will bring about lasting change for the better.

## YOUR FACILITATOR

Michael Collins is one of the region's leading talent, leadership and change experts with over 25 years of experience in roles spanning Australia, New Zealand and Asia. He is a trusted adviser, thought leader and seasoned practitioner in the field of leadership assessment and development, in particular he specialises in identifying and discovering high potential leaders, differentiating leadership talent, neuropsychology and organisational change.



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## DAY ONE

### Strategic thinking and problem solving

- ▶ How the current strategic context is shaping the NSW Public Sector
- ▶ Executive-level leadership and the importance of strategic thinking and problem solving
- ▶ Responding to emerging strategic challenges in 2022 and beyond

### Strategic thinking skills and tools

- ▶ The cognitive principles, tools and strategies essential to strategic thinking
- ▶ Common limitations and challenges to strategic thinking
- ▶ Models, tools and tactics to shape strategic thinking

### Advanced problem solving for executive leaders

- ▶ How to objectively collect and evaluate evidence
- ▶ Exploring reason-based approaches to problem solving
- ▶ Applying rational and creative problem solving tools and techniques to address strategic issues

### Leading and influencing others on strategic issues

- ▶ Effectively engaging stakeholders to understand the problem and identifying potential solutions
- ▶ Integrating multi-stakeholder perspectives and facilitating shared understanding
- ▶ Resolving conflict and disagreement in group problem solving

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## DAY TWO

### Definition: Understanding the problem

- ▶ Reaching agreement on the problem: Defining key variables, known causes, structure, scope, stakeholder impact, interdependencies and constraints
- ▶ Evaluating problem impacts
- ▶ Developing solution criteria and the problem solving approach

### Analysis: Identifying and evaluating possible solutions

- ▶ Generating and evaluate solutions based on feasibility, impact and risk
- ▶ Taking stock of required skills, knowledge and resources to resolve the problem or realise the opportunity
- ▶ Leadership, management, planning and team deployment considerations

### Implementation: from strategy to results

- ▶ Testing solutions: prototypes, pilots, simulations
- ▶ Adopting a systematic approach to solution implementation
- ▶ Building engagement and embedding change

### Overcoming roadblocks to strategic thinking and problem solving

- ▶ Cognitive biases, ideological paradigms and group-based
- ▶ The inherently challenging nature of 'wicked problems'
- ▶ Cultivating your skills and maintaining your edge as a strategic thinker and problem solver

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## WHAT OUR DELEGATES ARE SAYING



“ Great presenter and some really good life experiences as examples provided. ”

Assistant Director, IT Security  
Australian Bureau of Statistics

“ Very insightful. Made me re-evaluate my leadership practices. Provided a number of tools to utilise on a personal and professional level. ”

Compliance Manager, Department of Defence



“ Great training, with relevant material and engaging presenter. Learnt lots of new techniques and ways of thinking. ”

Senior Solicitor/Senior Commercial Manager,  
NSW Land and Housing Corporation

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