DECIDE — A Simulation for Making Better Business Decisions

Thomas Pray, Ph.D.
Matthew Richter

April 29, 30, and May 1, 2014
Hilton Garden Inn San Francisco Airport North
San Francisco, CA
**Workshop Description**

This three-day, award-winning simulation kicks off with a bang! Participants form small groups and lead hypothetical companies through a tumultuous, simulated two-year period. Over that time, each team establishes a vision and mission, sets objectives, implements strategies, and fully controls their organization. During each business quarter, teams make over 24 cross-functional decisions about production, sales, marketing, HR, finance, quality, and more. Each decision they make affects the outcomes of future quarters and impacts their competition (the opposing teams). Teams receive objective feedback on key performance metrics, including their profitability and cash flow, sales and production, quality, competitive benchmarks, and customer satisfaction. Of course, they receive market feedback as they watch their stock value rise and fall. Teams quickly recognize the dynamic way decisions and strategic planning – or lack of it – affect other decisions and foster eventual success or failure.

**Target Group**

This workshop is designed for senior managers, high potential leaders, management consultants, executive coaches, and anyone ready to learn more about the cross-functional decisions all corporate leaders make daily.
Three-Day Break Down

Day One

After a brief overview of how the simulation works, participants develop a functional understanding of how the different variables that go into leading a company interrelate and impact each other. Teams come together and become familiar with their company’s current state through the different financial statements in the Simulation. They discover which performance metrics to track. They then start to develop their strategy. After a trial run to get the competitive juices flowing, teams begin their first real decision round. As the results become apparent, teams take the time to fully develop their two-year business plan. Skills and Concepts in Day One include:

- Understanding interrelationships among different business decisions
- Reading financial statements
- Choosing a strategic direction based on the market, the competition, and the company’s capacity
- Identifying a business strategy
- Developing a business plan for that strategy
Day Two

The Simulation continues as a full year goes by (four decision rounds). Interspersed throughout the Simulation, the facilitators coach and debrief the teams’ performance and subsequent decisions. Teams learn how to identify the specific financial measures that indicate health and sickness. They apply the DuPont Model as a way of tracking their own progress and use that information to tweak and adapt their business plans. Teams learn how to perform contribution analysis and how to conduct fact-based decision-making. Skills and Concepts in Day One include:

- Reviewing the three bottom lines
- Applying the DuPont Model to their simulated company and seeing how it relates to their real-life work
- Conducting fact-based decision making
- Differentiating different types of costs and how each can affect strategy
- Dissecting several mini-cases that illustrate the types of business decisions executives and leaders need to make every day
- Recognizing the impact HR and the people side of the business have on success
Day Three

Teams complete the two-year cycle and a winner is identified. Teams analyze how they achieved their results and why. They identify what they could have done differently and how their strategies were affected by the other teams’ strategies and decisions. And, finally, the individual participants build a portfolio of new concepts and skills they can bring to their daily work. Skills and Concepts in Day Three include:

- Making changes to the strategy
- Making changes to the tactical plan
- Identifying how data and information guide future decisions
- Analyzing performance
- Conducting the post-mortem
- Presenting the findings
The Facilitators

Thomas F. Pray, Ph.D. recently joined The Thiagi Group as a business consultant and facilitator of his Web-DECIDE Simulation. He is Professor Emeritus of Decision Sciences at the Saunders College of Business at Rochester Institute of Technology, past chairman of the Department of Decision Sciences and MIS, and former head of RIT’s Executive MBA program.

A nationally recognized leader in the field, Tom began his career by co-authoring three business simulation books and corresponding software. Today Tom is a global consultant and a Fellow of the Association for Business Simulation and Experiential Learning (ABSEL), the international organization for the field. Among other honors, he is the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award given by the North American Simulation and Gaming Association (NASAGA), Tom has a master’s degree in industrial management and doctorate in managerial economics.

Matthew Richter is the President for The Thiagi Group. He is a facilitator, game designer, instructional designer, and management consultant. Matthew has consulted with organizations that include Redwood Trust, CenturyLink, EA, Microsoft, Carolina Power and Light, IGT, Cadence Design Systems, Twilio, and Sony. He is an expert in the areas of management, leadership, and performance technology. He specializes in employee motivation. Matthew mixes corporate, not-for-profit, academic, and independent experience, enabling him to adapt and best serve his clients.

Matthew is the co-creator (with Scott Rigby of Immersyve, Inc. and Richard M. Ryan of the University of Rochester) of MAPS (Motivation, Assessment, and Performance System), an innovative performance management system that breaks all of the traditional paradoxes of management.

He is a sought-after public speaker and has delivered keynotes and conference presentations for such organizations as the International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI), American Society of Training and Development (ASTD), Training Magazine, the International Alliance for Learning (IAL), North American Simulation and Gaming Association (NASAGA), Influent, and the National Society for Black Engineers. He was the 2006 ISPI National Conference Chair, and was an encore presenter for five years for his presentation Creating a Motivating Environment.
Testimonials

Cadence Design Systems Wanted to Increase Business Acumen of their Mid-level Managers World Wide

“Web-DECIDE was instrumental in improving the business savvy of our mid-management cadre. We used it successfully across more than 10 cultures, including deliveries in Europe and India. The experiential approach provides more learning in three days than in many multi-week university programs.”— former Director of Training, Cadence University

The Web-DECIDE Workshop has been an Integral Part of Harris RF Communications Management Development Program (MDP) for 19 Consecutive Years!

“Harris RF Communications has used Web-DECIDE as a capstone to our Management Development Program for many years. Each year, the responses are the same and the employees who take the course are astounded by how interesting, educational, competitive and fun the simulation is.”

“Each employee comes away with a greater understanding of how a business operates a healthier sense of competition in the marketplace, and an amazing networking and team experience.”-Dani Richards Human Resources Manager, Harris RF Communications Division

A Senior Level Manager Commented on the Appropriateness of the Seminar for Mid-High-level Managers at a Large Technology Company

“I felt the course was outstanding. As you indicated during the kick-off Tuesday, we don’t do a lot of straight business education, and I was pleasantly surprised at the amount of general business information covered during the course. It’s obvious why Tom Pray’s seminar is in demand both domestically and abroad - his unique tool, course material, and passion for the subject matter translates into a seminar that not only educates, but also motivates his students. Strongly recommend this course for mid-high level managers across functions.”

Evaluation Comments from Typical Participants

“It is fast-paced, fun and competitive, while reinforcing business principles in a way that textbooks cannot. One learns from one’s mistakes fairly quickly – and these lessons are not easily forgotten.”

A fun workshop! This course really teaches you the importance of (i) staying focused on a business plan, (ii) accurate forecasting, and (iii) monitoring the competition.”

“Learned more in a week than in any other training course. Wish we had more time!”

“A Business game which challenges participants and it works”

“By far the most fun I have had learning in my life. I want to continue playing the simulation so badly that I will insist my company hires Tom and his team to conduct the workshop for all our managers! (He did, and we did.)

“Great Seminar! I am impressed with how comprehensive the simulation is and how well it works. Tom Pray has created a fun stimulating environment that made this a very enriching experience.”

“Every business in Dubai should go through this exercise.”

“A dramatic illustration of economic principles”

“A great program for non-financial people!”

“The DECIDE simulation pushed us to apply business principles in a competitive environment – quite similar to business in the real world.”

“Fantastic simulation... Insightful instructors who truly know their stuff.”

“Dynamic and passionate instructors kept the class interested and they fueled excitement and competition.”

“The Web-Decide simulation is insanely realistic!”
General Information

Decide — A Simulation for Making Better Business Decisions
April 29, 30, and May 1, 2014

Location
Hilton Garden Inn San Francisco Airport North
670 Gateway Blvd.
South San Francisco Bay Area, CA  94080
USA
Telephone:  1-650-872-1515

Fees:  $1599 USD

Group Discount
Groups of three or more who enroll at the same time will get a 10 percent reduction of their registration fees.

Cancellation
If you cancel your registration on or before April 1, 2014, we will charge you a processing fee of $50 and refund the balance of your registration fee. If you cancel after April 1, 2014, you are liable for the full registration fee.

Two Easy Ways to Register
Online. Visit our online store at thiagi.com and click on Workshops: 2014.
Telephone. Call 812-332-1478.

For Further Information
Please email Matthew Richter at matthew@thiagi.com or call him at 415-385-7248.