



Deallus Workshops: providing competitive advantage through Competitive Simulation

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Competitive Simulation, also known as Competitive Strategy or 'Wargaming' workshops, account for roughly 85% of the workshops that Deallus run.

As the name suggests, the practice of 'Wargaming' originates from the military. One of the founders of Deallus came from a military background and brought with him key knowledge and useful approaches that can be applied to commercial companies operating in a competitive environment.

Wargaming isn't just for the competitive and corporate landscape. As the name suggests, its heritage comes from the combat arena where countries and troops have attributed the strategic approach to a successful defence. There is much we can learn and apply to our business strategy.

Why choose Deallus to run your workshop?

We have developed a detailed and comprehensive workshop playbook that ensures our teams are well-prepared and well-versed with a set of tools ready to run your sessions. This, combined with in-depth sector and client knowledge, allows us to develop bespoke elements that truly reflect your needs, challenges, and opportunities.

Depth of client relationships and innovative delivery set Deallus apart



Strategic partners to drive impact and action



What is a workshop?

Competitive Simulation and scenario analysis will have tangible strategic, operation and team benefits that enable you to gain a competitive advantage ahead of a move in the market either by yourself, from a competitor or if the landscape is impactfully changing, such as with FDA regulatory changes.

Why run a workshop?

There are multiple drivers and scenarios for running a workshop but the main ones we've been involved in are to:

- **Pressure-test a strategy that has already been built to ensure it works in a competitive or changing landscape**
- **Understand competitive dynamics, for example wargaming a coming or anticipated market disruption**
- **Scenario planning for market uncertainty**
- **Prioritise a portfolio and strategically allocate resources across a set of products**
- **Set the context of a strategy if a competitor is making changes or has new product**

When to run a workshop?

While workshops can be reactive to changes in the marketplace, the most benefit comes from taking a proactive approach, ideally 6 – 12 months ahead of a known event taking place such as a competitor approval or levels of evidence. This allows time to act and implement necessary tactics to respond better and faster or place the business on a front-footing.

How to run a workshop?

Our experience and expertise in running workshops is based on proven methodologies and a focused approach. Typically they have a preparation time of approximately three months and can run in-person or virtually – although we see the best results when we are together and involve a mix of departments to discuss, challenge and ensure a tactical outcome that works in the real world.

Workshops tend to concentrate on a product or franchise level, and we bring variety and innovative approaches including from roleplay to embrace a mind-set – we've used Star Wars and Olympic themes that have engaged and enhanced competitive spirits.

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The fact Deallus understands so well what we are actually doing is the best thing about them... we don't waste time with them. They are very receptive of our suggestions, and I feel we have an open discussion and collaboration.

**Product Optimisation Franchise Leader
(Global Product Strategy), Large Pharma**

Deallus Workshops Have Tangible Strategic, Operational & Team Benefits

Team Benefits



- **Democratise Insights** to ensure cross-functional and vertical knowledge sharing across and through the organisation
- **Build Alignment** with full internal buy in across stakeholder teams
- **Generate Excitement** and belief in brand/portfolio/ corporate opportunities in both the short and long term

Strategic Benefits



- **Construct Sustainable Strategy** to be competitive through time
- **Pressure Test Existing Strategy** and internal tactics with leading healthcare strategists
- **Identify Blind Spots** in commercial, marketing, medical, clinical, communications and market access verticals
- **Anticipate Competitor Strategies** and tactical plans with guiding assumptions
- **Stimulate Fresh Thinking** in a creative and safe environment
- **Identify Opportunities** in existing, adjacent and new market places

Operational Benefits



- **Plan Implementation** with roadmaps defining departmental ownership and timelines
- **Convene & Enable Leaders** to make operational decisions aligned to strategy
- **Facilitate Action** with buy-in from teams and stakeholders
- **Investment Clarity** and rationale for the highest return decision on investment for a given brand or portfolio



Project Methodology Overview

Objectives Alignment

Workshop Preparation

Workshop Facilitation

Summary Output



Align on workshop objectives and framework

- Kickoff and project plan
- Existing materials transfer
- Internal alignment meetings
- Workshop framework



Support workshop planning and content generation

- Stakeholder interviews
- Competitor profiles
- Workshop agenda
- Pre-read materials



Facilitate workshop discussion and manage logistics

- Presentation content
- Facilitation materials
- Key learnings & takeaways
- Key action items



Synthesise key insights and strategic implications

- Executive summary
- Comprehensive deliverable
- Strategic implications
- Recommended next steps

The Deallus Workshop Design

When designing a workshop to understand competitors' strategy we use a framework that regards strategy as a cascade of choices, primarily focused on Where to Play and How to Win?

To answer these questions, we start by understanding the competitors' objectives, priorities, and capabilities. This provides us with the context into which the competitor will make their choices on strategy and implementation.

To make the choices come alive we finish by looking at how a particular competitor would choose to implement their strategy, taking into consideration their capabilities as well as their objectives and priorities.

What are the Critical Success Factors for a Deallus / Client workshop?

- **Understand the aim** We talk to the client about why they are running the workshop and what they need to get from it including the critical vs. nice to have requirements and agreeing the outcome in the time allowed. Having tactical outputs that can be implemented is paramount to any workshop.
- **Decision maker inclusion** It is critical to include the ultimate decision maker from the outset to ensure the output will be appropriate and useful to the business – they need to approve the objectives and design.
- **Cross functional input** including expert roles from across the business, such as market access, brand, and salespeople who interact with the customer, is paramount to the success of the workshop and outcomes identified and agreed.

What are the benefits from running a workshop?

Clear and specific call to action driving an aligned sense of urgency across the team that action needs to be taken perhaps because the competitor is more advanced than previously thought.

Alignment to develop a common set of assumptions on the competition or competitive environment across multidisciplinary stakeholders and markets. An example is where the workshop is built on a common set of assumptions on a competitor or competitive environment but different regions or divisions act on what they perceive to be true. Workshop alignment is then gained for a common strategic approach and tactical implementation.

Competitive readiness and awareness by role playing a competitor and thinking through their priorities, or strategic and tactical activities. A team can become more attuned to the context of competitor events, sanity check any new action is in line with previously thought and course correct in plenty of time.

Tangible and actionable outputs, as without these, there is a risk that a workshop can become too strategic if it doesn't have these elements built into the design.



I think their one-up on the competition is about how they listen to the client and provide a bespoke work, based on the client's requirements. The customer satisfaction is at the forefront of their offer.

**Product Optimisation Franchise Leader
(Global Product Strategy), Large Pharma**

Get in touch

If you would like to learn more about Deallus can support you and how a workshop would be beneficial to your organisation, please visit: deallus.com or email info@deallus.com



Further reading from Deallus:

Whitepaper on Strategic Workshops Supporting Pharma's Future
deallus.com/strategic-workshops-supporting-pharmas-future/



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Jonas is global C.I. thought leader and executive.
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Deallus is a global life science consultancy with a heritage in Competitive Intelligence. Our vision is to lead the industry in shaping and refining strategies for those striving to advance healthcare and improve patients' lives. For two decades Deallus has been the partner of choice for pharma, biotech, and med-tech to help our clients achieve this.

We are a team of commercial scientists which allows for a peer-to-peer partnerships with our clients through a shared understanding of how science intersects with commercial market realities.

We're proud of the part we've played in helping clients prepare for the future, achieve competitive advantage and allowing their organisations to remain at the forefront of the industry.