

## IN THIS ISSUE

### FEATURE:

- The Advanced Strategies Approach to Organizational Design
- Announcement of Our First Book Release
- Book Excerpt

If you would like to receive our newsletter electronically, e-mail your request to [TheStrategist@AdvStr.com](mailto:TheStrategist@AdvStr.com)

## New Course Available!

We at Advanced Strategies are happy to announce the addition of a new course in Facilitating Business Process Modeling to our catalog. This course was added due to requests from a number of former students wanting to further their facilitation skills as they relate specifically to process modeling.

The first public offering of this course will be held April 26-28 at our St. Paul, MN office. There are currently a few seats left, but they are going fast. To sign up for this course simply go to [www.advstr.com](http://www.advstr.com) and click on the [Newsletter](#) icon. Also, watch for other new course offerings throughout the year on our website.

**Course Overview:** Business process modeling is a powerful technique for working with individuals and small groups to discover current processes, assess those processes, and come up with a specification for an optimized “to-be” world. Facilitation multiplies the power of process modeling by enabling analysts to lead groups of 3 - 15 people through a structured session that enables participants to resolve their differing and conflicting perspectives into agreement and buy-in on how the “to-be” world should be structured across business functions and roles.

While modeling and facilitation are two closely related skills, they are best learned independently. While business process modeling classes teach how to discover and document current processes, and business process analysis classes teach how to break through the complexity to create “to-be” models, this facilitation course focuses on:

- How to optimize the use of participants’ time.
- How to use a structured approach to enable agreement from diverse, conflicting, and political perspectives.
- How to focus the session on the areas that will deliver the highest returns.
- How to advise people on how to improve their processes without the push back of: “quit telling me how to do my job.”
- How to ensure the sessions speak the language of business and are seen as valuable by all participants.

### Course Outcomes:

Students of Advanced Strategies’ Facilitating Process Modeling Sessions course will return to work with the skills necessary to plan, prepare, facilitate, and wrap moderately complex group process modeling sessions to analyze current and future processes.

## The Advanced Strategies Approach to Organizational Design

Over the past year we at Advanced Strategies have seen an increase in the number of client requests for help in undertaking organizational design projects, in order to meet the growing challenges of business in the 21st century. We have worked with large government agencies, businesses in the private sector, and non-profit groups to enable both the redesign of current organizations and the creation of new designs for emerging organizations. The excerpt below is from an article which summarizes at a high-level the reasons for this rise in organizational design, and the process we have developed for undertaking these efforts. The entire article may be viewed by going to [www.advstr.com](http://www.advstr.com) and clicking on the icon for [Newsletter](#).

## Key Steps for a Successful Organizational Design Project

You don’t have to be in the working world long before getting swept up in changes to your organization. Does any of this sound familiar?

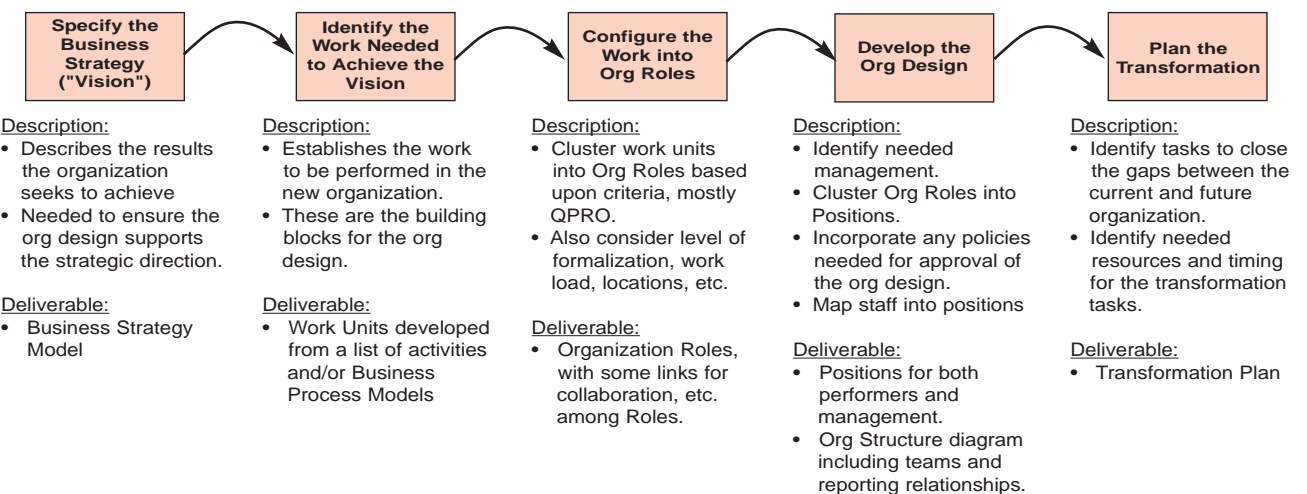
- Your organization shifts to centralize functions in order to gain consistency and efficiency, then a few years later de-centralizes them to put them closer to the customers.
- A new executive is brought in who wants to re-organize to put his or her stamp on the organization. Departments or functions are shifted, merged, and/or split.

- Resources are tight, so a project is launched to improve the organization in order to do “more with less”.
- Every time a new challenge or opportunity arises, the head of the organization knee-jerk adjusts the org design and/or staffing. Eventually, the organization feels like it is held together by band-aids and duct tape.

It is easy to wonder if their approach is just to keep trying something new and hope that someone will eventually find the right answer. For staff in the trenches, the challenge is even greater because these changes add uncertainty and confusion to their jobs. Individuals feel less clear if they are doing the right work and how their job fits into the broader organization.

We live in a fast-paced world in which change cannot be stopped or ignored. In response to this, management is often tempted to task a couple of people to rush an organization design in a “smoky back room”. But the result is almost always based on a limited perspective and often lacks sufficient detail to be explained and defended. The resulting chaos can paralyze an organization. However, there is a methodical approach to developing an optimal organizational structure that clearly defines roles for staff and management. By following this robust process, the resulting organization will be able to withstand major business changes without having to re-design the organization structure.

The following illustration summarizes the key steps for a successful organizational design effort. This methodology works whether you need to re-design an existing organization or are building a brand new organization. Each step is explained further in the subsequent sections, (to view go to [www.advstr.com](http://www.advstr.com)).



**BEATING THE ODDS:** Poker Strategies for Leading Projects and Winning at Work by John Schroeder. As many of you know, the book evolved out of a series of successful speeches on project leadership and poker given by John at symposiums and corporate training events over the past year. It combines many of Advanced Strategies tried and true techniques with a poker story line that both enlightens and entertains.

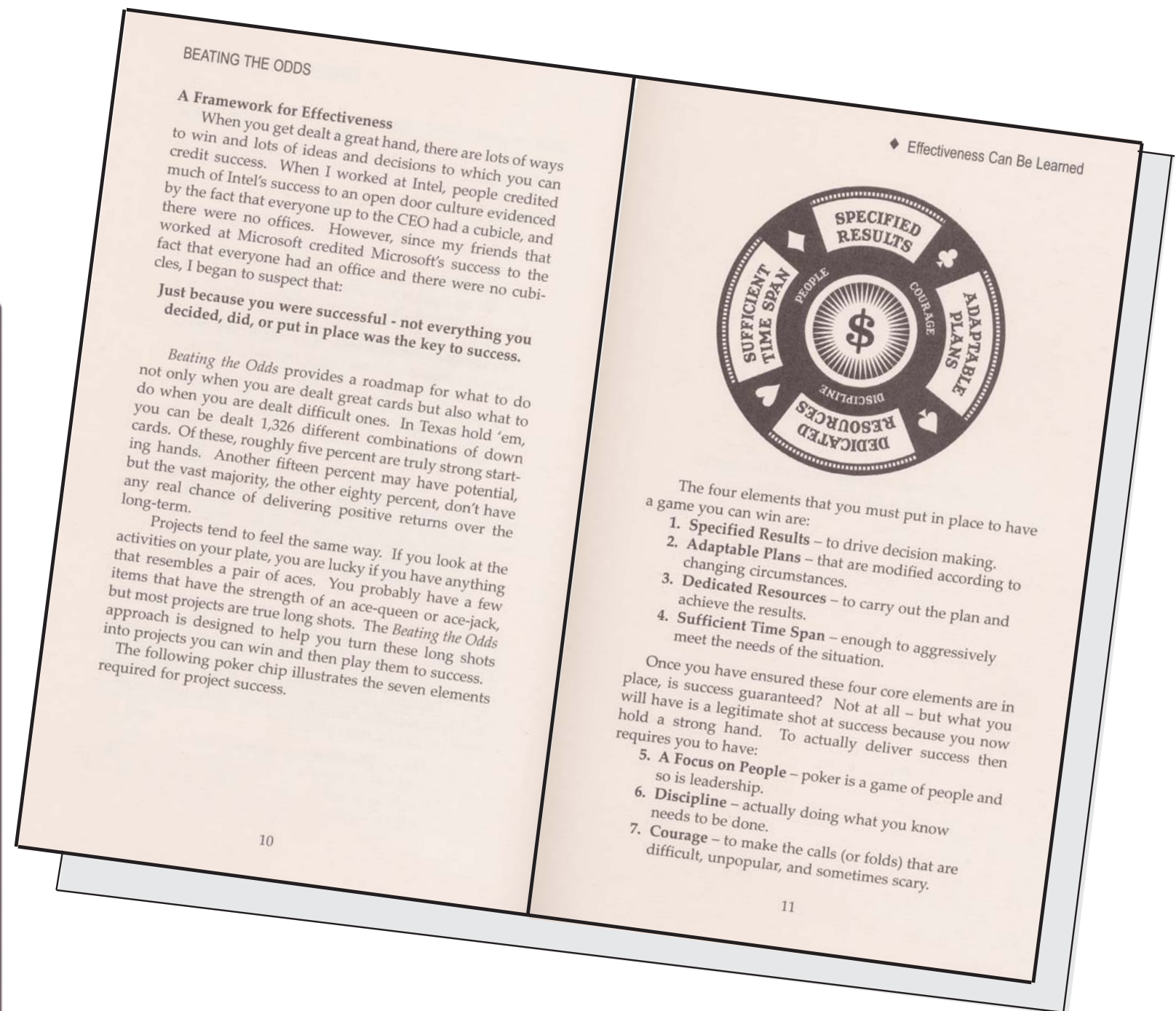
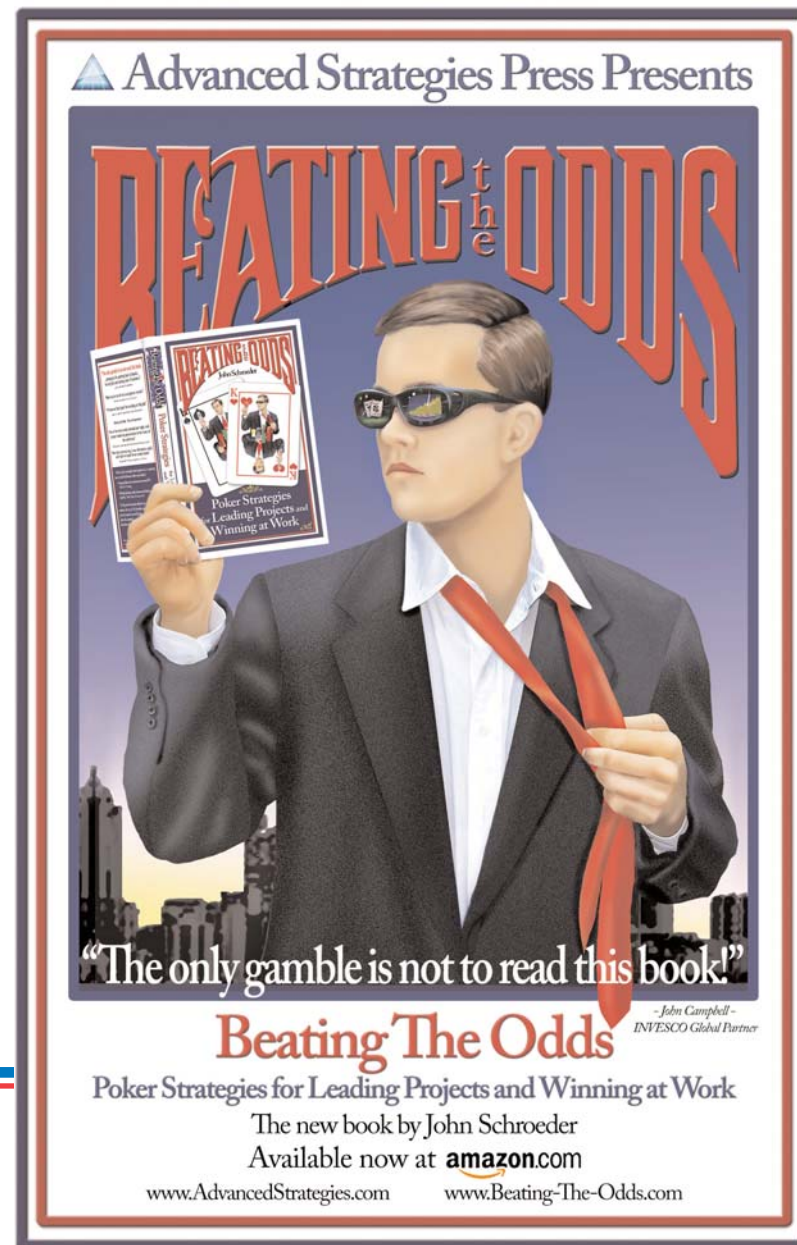
**Why Poker?** Because today's business environment has become fiercely competitive and success in business, like poker, requires influencing people, managing complexity and making correct decisions based on incomplete information. Beating the Odds uses easily understandable poker scenarios to illustrate the strategies that are as critical to success in the boardroom as they are in the card room and demonstrates how to immediately apply them to improve job performance.

Successful project leadership is not simply about "luck" or natural ability – it is a skill that can be learned and mastered through practice. Beating the Odds shows you how to:

- Set up every project as a game you can win with the table stakes needed for success.
- Look beyond the cards, the schedule, and the budget to focus on the people who will make or break the effort.
- Play like a pro with the courage and discipline needed for success.

The excerpt included on the following pages lays out the framework for the book, which is available now at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

**Advanced Strategies is proud to announce the publication of our first book:**



Beating the Odds: The Live Experience, workshops are now available by request. Simply go to [www.advstr.com](http://www.advstr.com) and click on the **Newsletter** icon for more details.