

Tapping Your Inner Futurist

The Art & Science of Looking at the Future



**Bay Area Community Council
Futuring Workshop
September 14, 2018**

Workbook Overview

This Foresight Guidebook contains an overview of key strategic activities used in our Futuring Workshop and Seminars.

Futuring Program - Learning Outcomes

- Participants will learn how to apply Foresight tools, techniques and frameworks centered on the theme of *Future of Work* and implications for their organization and industry
- Participants will develop their ability to scan for signals of change and then synthesize ideas into stories that imagine disruptive implications of change for their organization and industry
- Participants will learn how to apply key questions that assess assumptions toward change, transitions, uncertainty, and role of leadership
- Participants will learn about how foresight techniques can be applied to both *personal* and *community futures* thinking

Fundamental Foresight Activities (Stages)

Step One Identifying & Monitoring Change

- Horizon Scanning
across STEEP Categories:
Society
Technology
Environment
Economy
Politics
- Emerging Issues Analysis
- Indicator Analysis
(Leading vs Lagging)

Step Two Exploring Implications

- Forecasts
(Trend Extrapolation)
- Scenarios
(Alternative Assumptions)

Step Three Communicating the Need for Change

- Visioning
- Backcasting
- Planning
- Goal Setting
Objectives - Actions
- Roadmapping

Foresight: Overview

Foresight refers to our ability to construct images of plausible, possible, and preferable futures based on a formal study of change. It is commonly referred to as: futures studies, strategic foresight, futuring or futurism.

Foresight is used to improve decision-making toward opportunities and threats that exist beyond present-day plans and market conditions. In recent years foresight activities have started to shift from a responsibility limited to executives offices – to being practiced at the level of *business* units.

In the practice of foresight we apply a mixture of qualitative and quantitative techniques used to support forecasting, scenarios and visioning activities. Insights are derived from a range of disciplines including sociology, economics, organizational behavior, and systems modeling.

The definition of *future* timelines vary based on clients and industry. Governments and companies involved in building and managing infrastructure and natural resources will typically plan using ten to thirty year time horizons. Organizations involved in consumer products and services typically view three to seven years as the furthest practical time horizon. Alternatively, news companies, stock markets, and consumer attitudes refer to time horizons based on seconds, days or weeks ahead.

The intent of strategic foresight is to avoid single-point forecasts (e.g. predictions) and create a range of plausible outcomes (e.g. scenarios within a cone of plausibility) that help us avoid surprises and expand our ability to respond effectively when changes do occur during market transitions.

A Select History of Applied Foresight

Modern day foresight dates back to the early 20th century:

1930s

Focus on Social Change, Policy and Technology

Sociologist William Ogburn writes *Recent Social Trends* which explores the notion of a cultural lag as society adjusts to technological change of the industrial age.



1950s

Focus on Scenario-based Decision Making

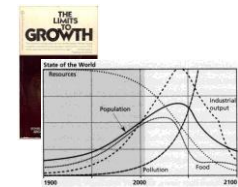
Hudson Institute Founder Herman Kahn works with government leaders to use scenario-based planning at the height of threats associated with the Cold War.



1970s

Focus on Systems Thinking and Principles of Interdependence

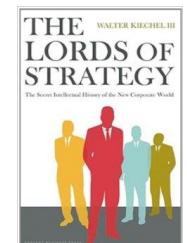
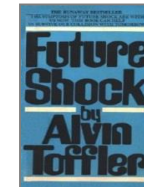
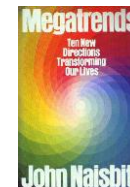
Authors of widely read book *Limits to Growth* use systems-based modeling to understand effects of non-linear change from the relationships of population growth, industrial production, and natural resource management.



1980s

Focus on Accelerating Change & Proactive Market Transitions

Birth of modern day *foresight* field with release of Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock*, John Naisbitt's *Megatrends*, and emergence of prominent strategic advisory firms: McKinsey and Co., Boston Consulting Group (BCG), and Monitor Group.



A Select List of Foresight Tools, Techniques & Frameworks

Quantitative

- Trend Extrapolation
- Benchmarking
- Patent Analysis
- Systems Dynamics
Systems Modeling
- Probability Forecasting
- Monte Carlo Models

Qualitative

- Scenarios
- Futures Wheel
- Implications Wheel
- Backcasting
- Simulations and Games
- Genius Forecasting
- Morphological Analysis
- Role-playing
- Ambient Futures
- Casual Layered Analysis
- Relevance Tree
- Appreciative Inquiry

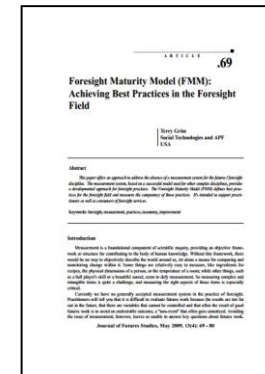
Qualitative-Quantitative Hybrid

- S-Curve Era-based Analysis
- Horizon Scanning
- Delphi Survey
- Cross Impact Analysis
- Road-mapping
- Survey/Focus Group
- Agent Decision Modeling
- Data/Text Mining
- Field Anomaly Relaxation (FAR)
- Fisher-Pry Analysis

Corporate Foresight Maturity Models

Assessment models test internal foresight capabilities for:

- Leadership
- Framing
- Planning
- Scanning
- Forecasting
- Visioning



By Terry Grim
 Foresight Alliance



By Rene Rohrbeck

Framework Foresight Funnel

Scanning Hits

300+



Trends/Inputs

50-75



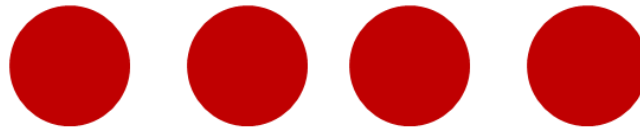
Drivers/Uncertainties

6-12



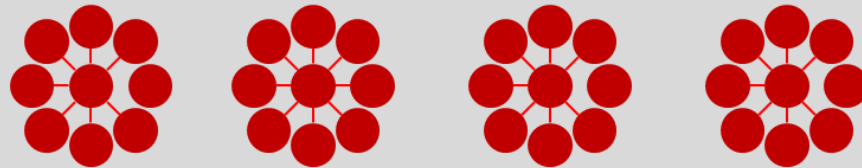
Scenarios

2-4



Implications

150-200



Issues/Opportunities

6-12



Source: A. Hines

Numbers are rough estimates

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Hinesight

For foresight, use Hinesight