



What is this futures thing all about anyway?

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- When you think about the word 'future', what images spring to mind?



- What words would you use to describe your organisation's strategy processes?



- Do organisations develop strategy today that actually prepares them to deal with the future?



- How do you make the strategy process more **effective**, more **meaningful**, and more **innovative**?



Futures ready strategy...



as opposed to...



or...



PLANNING

MUCH WORK REMAINS TO BE DONE BEFORE WE CAN ANNOUNCE
OUR TOTAL FAILURE TO MAKE ANY PROGRESS.



www.despair.com

- When you build strategy today, you are making decisions for people who are not yet in your space, and who may not even be born.



Every decision you make today affects future global generations.

You have a responsibility to make wise strategic decisions today.





- How do you **think** systematically about the future if it will be nothing like the past and the present?

- What will be the **shape** of the future?
- What will be **important**?
- What will be **peripheral**?



- What will matter in the future for universities and educational strategy?



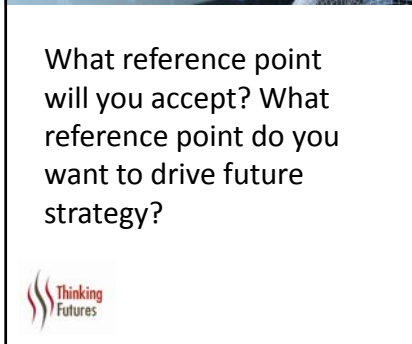


Universities and students today - traditional reference points drive strategy.



Universities and students in the future?

What reference point will you accept? What reference point do you want to drive future strategy?



The impact of global trends...



...the rise of pervasive computing and increasing connectedness



...student choice and time, place and pace of learning

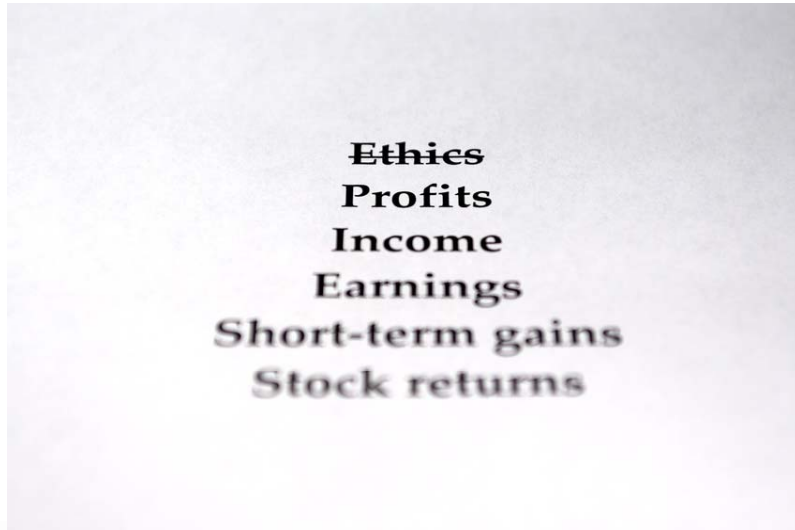


Changing demographics affecting rich and poor, east and west differently...





Ethics and underpinning values are at risk...



...while the power of community grows



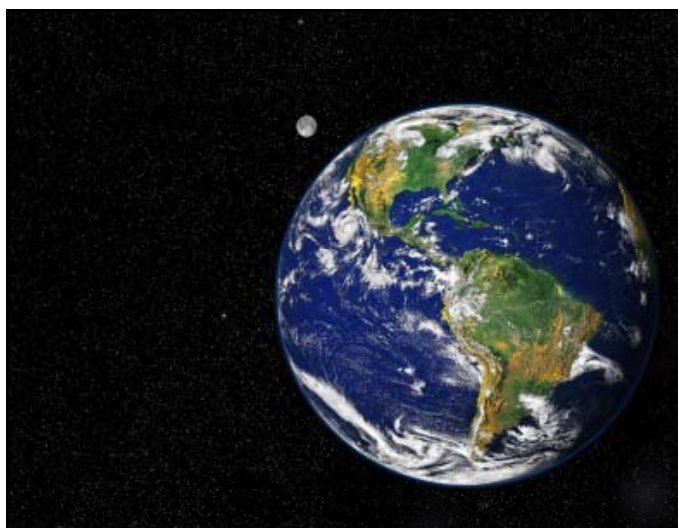
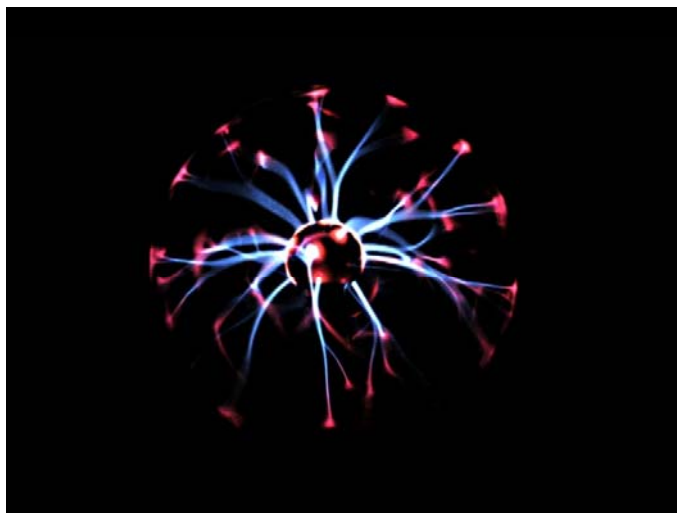
Decision making about the future in an uncertain context



Data will help...but there is no data about the future.



Use your intuition, and explore how the trends and data might come together...



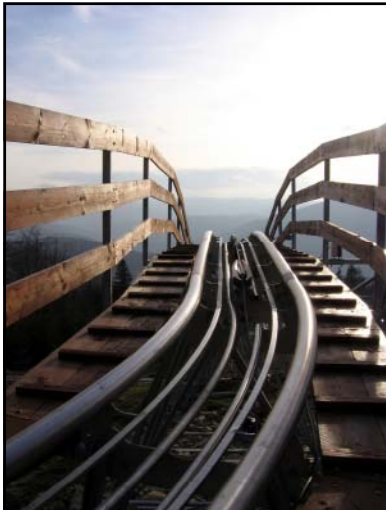
Take a big picture perspective...your decisions today WILL affect the lives of future generations.



Understand where you are now. Understand the impact of your past.



But...if the future is unknowable and uncertain, what's the point?



- The future might be **unknowable**, but you can understand a lot about what will **influence** the future.
- It all depends on what, and how, you **think** about the future.



Everyone thinks about the future every day.



Futures work around strategy takes individual thinking about organisational futures and makes it collective.



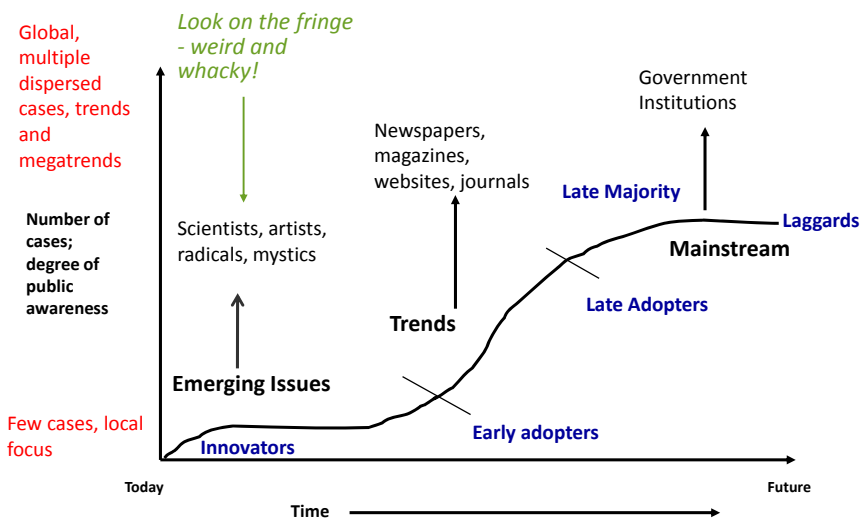
How do you do that?



Scan the horizon often and systematically...



Get smart about analysing and interpreting trends and emerging issues...



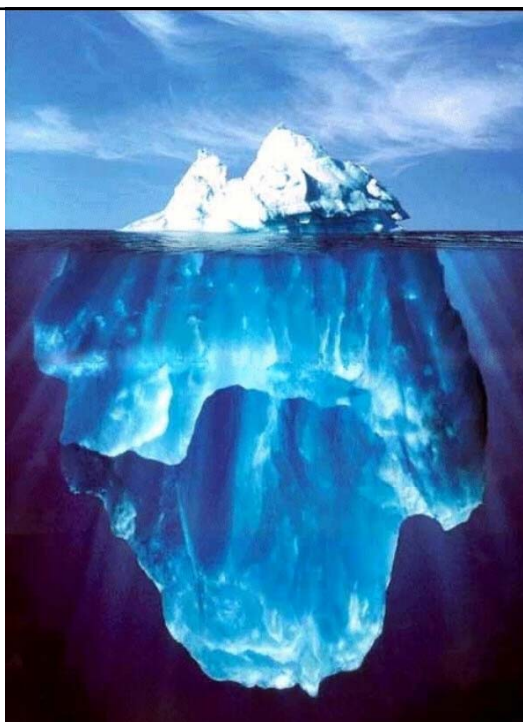
Adapted from the work of Graham Molitor, Wendy Schultz and Everett Rogers




Question and challenge all those assumptions that underpin how you see the world - and what you don't see.




Get very clear about your **worldview**.





Keep an open mind about what might be...and be open to re-learning what you always thought to be true.



Give yourself permission to think outrageously...



Escape the box – go on!



Be ready for strong and divergent views
about what it all really means...



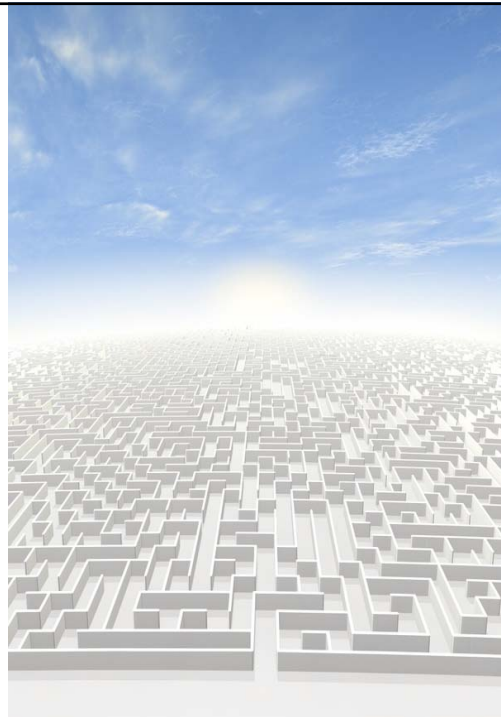
...because what works today will
probably not work for those who follow
you in the future...



- Why do you need to think differently about the future?



So that you can plot a path that works for you through the maze that is the future...with your eyes open.



- Would you go into a maze blindfolded?



If you go into the future maze blindfolded or with your eyes shut, you are entering the 'flatland'.

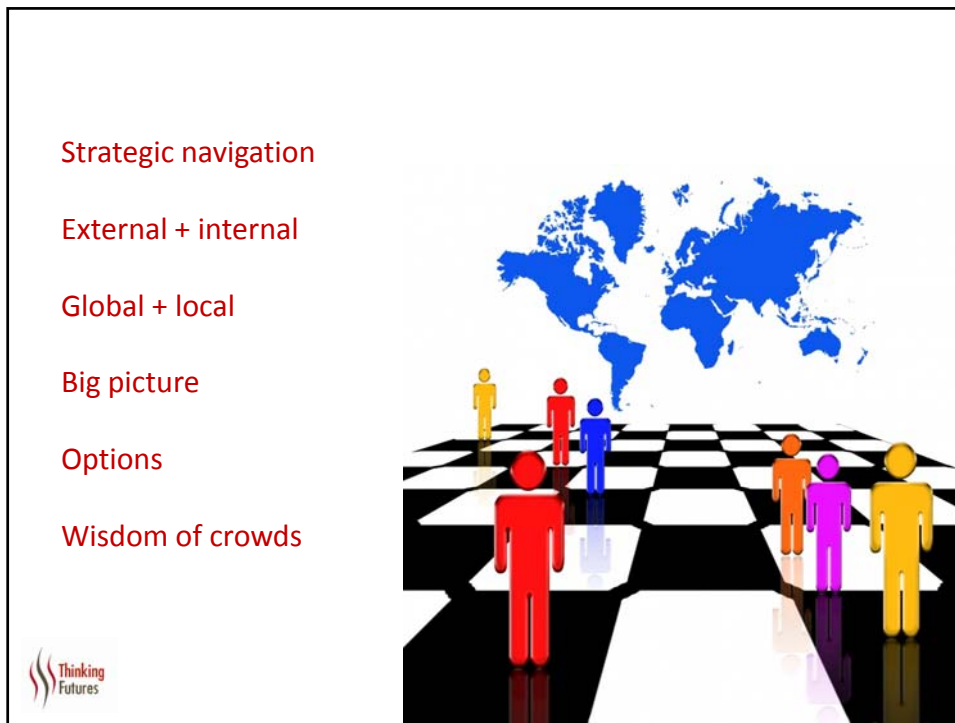


Think about your organisation's strategy development processes...is your organisation wearing a blindfold?



- How do you take the blindfold off without becoming overwhelmed by the uncertainty?





EPIC

- Watch with open minds.
- Dismiss nothing.
- Suspend disbelief.
- Anything is possible.

So what?

- What are the implications for universities in the future?
- What might learning look like if this future eventuated?
- What might you do today to prepare for an EPIC world – or avoid it? What might you do differently?



What is futures about?

- Futures work is about making wise decisions today to ensure a robust and sustainable future for us, for our organisations, and for future generations.



What is futures about?

- It's about strategic thinking, not crystal ball gazing.



What is futures about?

- It's about changing the way you **think** about the future.



What is futures about?

- **People** – involve many and build shared views
- **Process** – shared and overt, participative
- **Information** – data plus intuition and ideas
- **Time** – past, present and future
- **Thinking** – strategically, broadly and often plus permission to imagine what might be



Most importantly, it's about being ready for the future rather than waiting for it to bite you...



How do you use futures to build wiser strategy?

- Focus
- Worldviews
- Involve many
- Scan
- Analyse
- Interpret
- Think and imagine
- Relevance and plausibility
- Test, question, challenge
- Decide, implement and monitor



What are the benefits for organisations?

- Enhanced strategic thinking
- Using your collective intellect
- Connecting trends and making sense
- Imaging and appreciating possibilities
- Creating and responding to a range of possible futures
- Harnessing change
- Adapting, innovating and learning
- Skills of strategic navigation
- Organisational foresight
- Futures ready strategy



**And this means what
to me as an individual?**

- Creating futures
- Accepting responsibility

- Focus – important not urgent
- Shifting worldview

- Fresh perspectives
- New possibilities

- Community
- Power of collective intellect



Some Futures Methods

- Environmental scanning

- Trend analysis

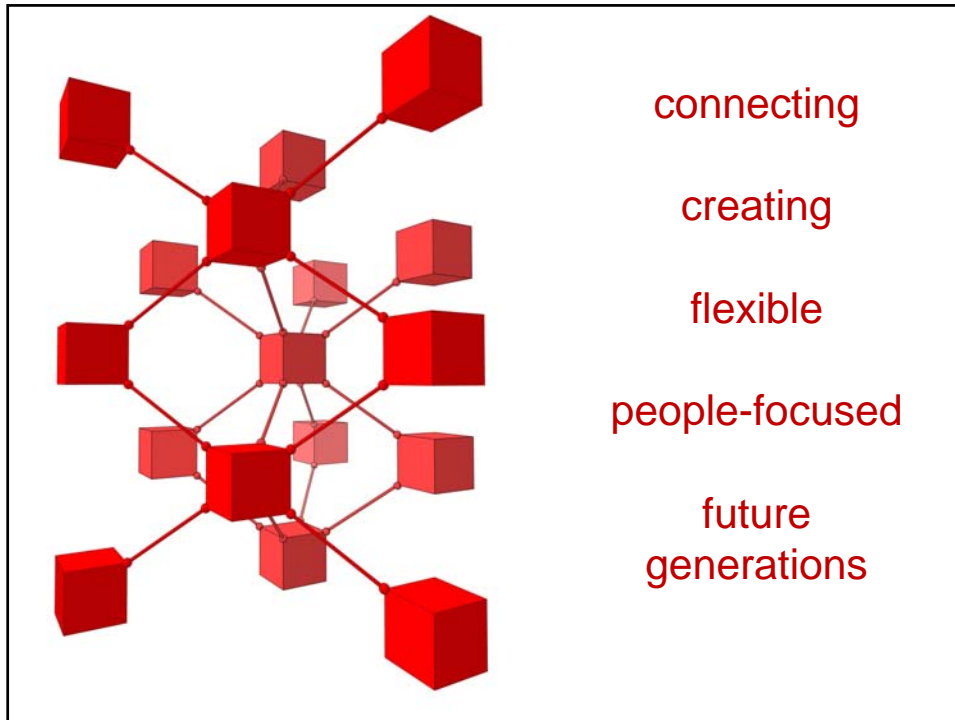
- Emerging issues analysis

- Scenario Planning

- Visioning

- ...whatever takes you away from conventional thinking...





- What and how **you** think about the future will shape that future.

Are you ready to change the way you think about the future?



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