

Moving beyond prediction

- using foresight to flourish in turbulent times

Reglab Annual Conference

Gavle, Sweden

8 February 2017

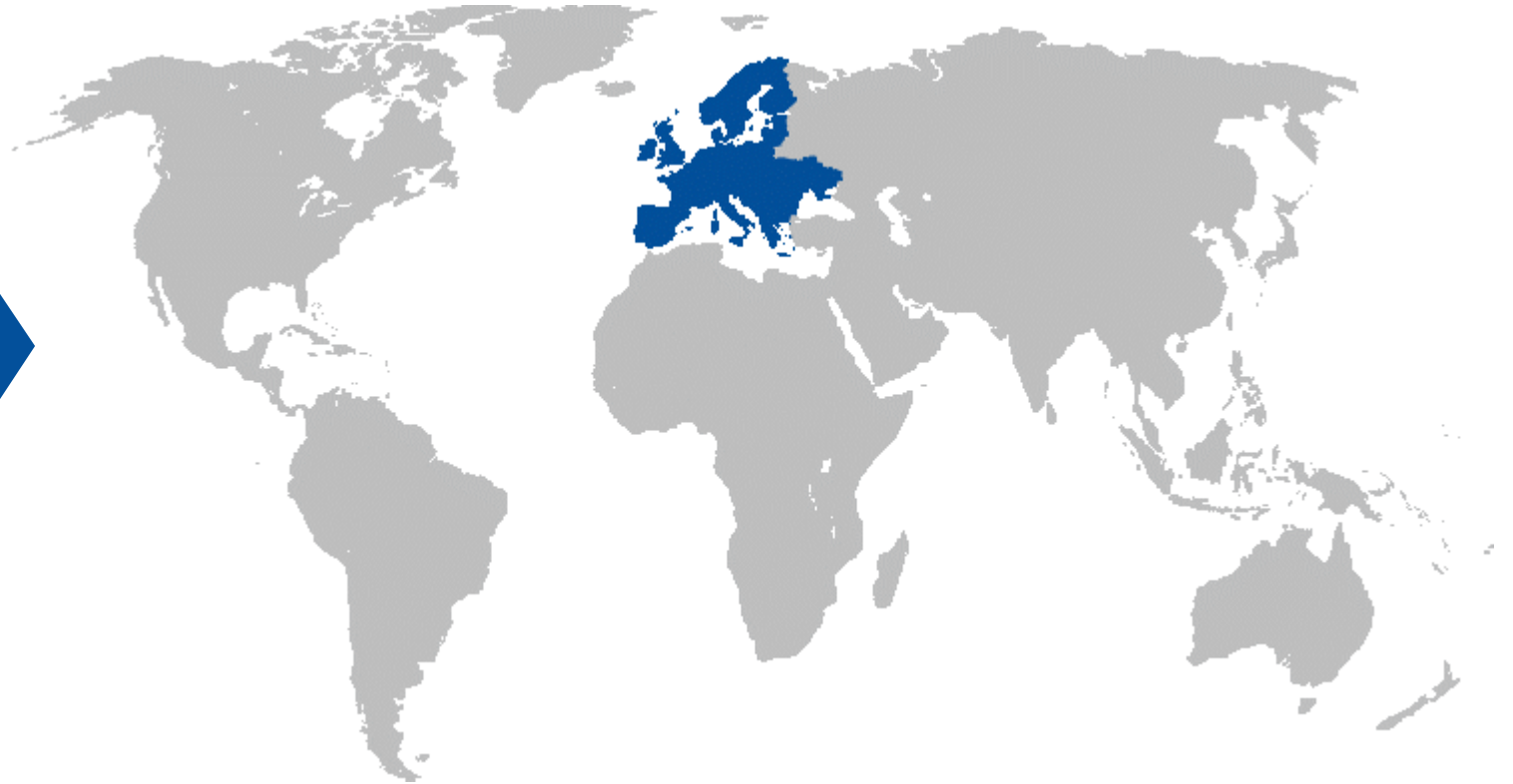
Dr. Angela Wilkinson

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Swedish regional development in a connected, shifting world

3 global accelerations are interacting

- 1 Markets
- 2 Mother Nature
- 3 Moore's Law



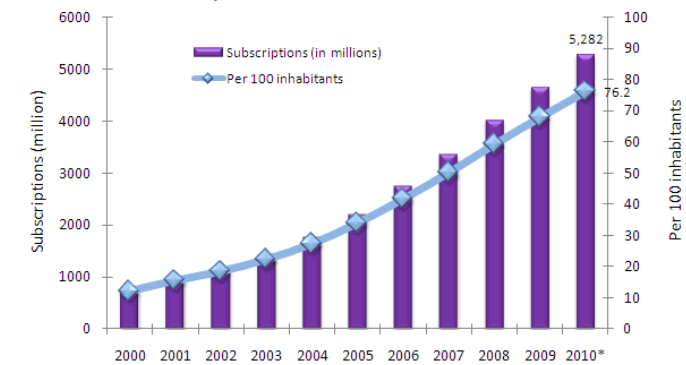
Markets, Mother Nature, Moore's Law

Uneven impacts – across geographies and generations – “glocalisation”

1 Markets

- Explosion of economic interdependency and global value chains
- Financial globalization - faster accumulation of wealth and new extremes in inequality
- Technological globalization – winner-takes-all dynamics of internet economy
- What will be traded in future?

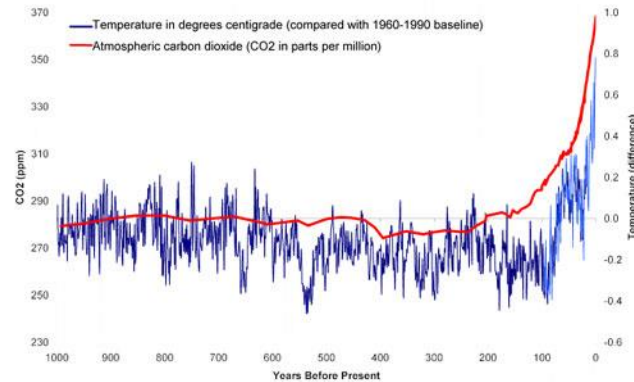
Global mobile cellular subscriptions, total and per 100 inhabitants, 2000-2010*



*Estimates
Source: ITU World Telecommunication /ICT Indicators database

2 Mother Nature

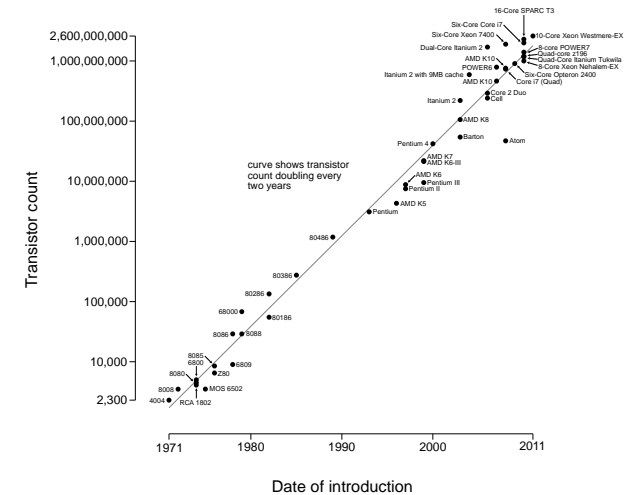
- Global – climate change momentum is still increasing (Paris Agreement?)
- Local – increasing water stress, habitat destruction, species extinctions, ice-melt
- Transboundary - ocean acidification, shifting circulation patterns
- Getting ahead of connected challenges?



3 Moore's law

- Digitalization – Big Data, Internet of Things
- Multiple frontiers converging - robotics, nano-, bio-, AI, materials, genomics, synbio
- Can social, political and institutional transitions keep pace?

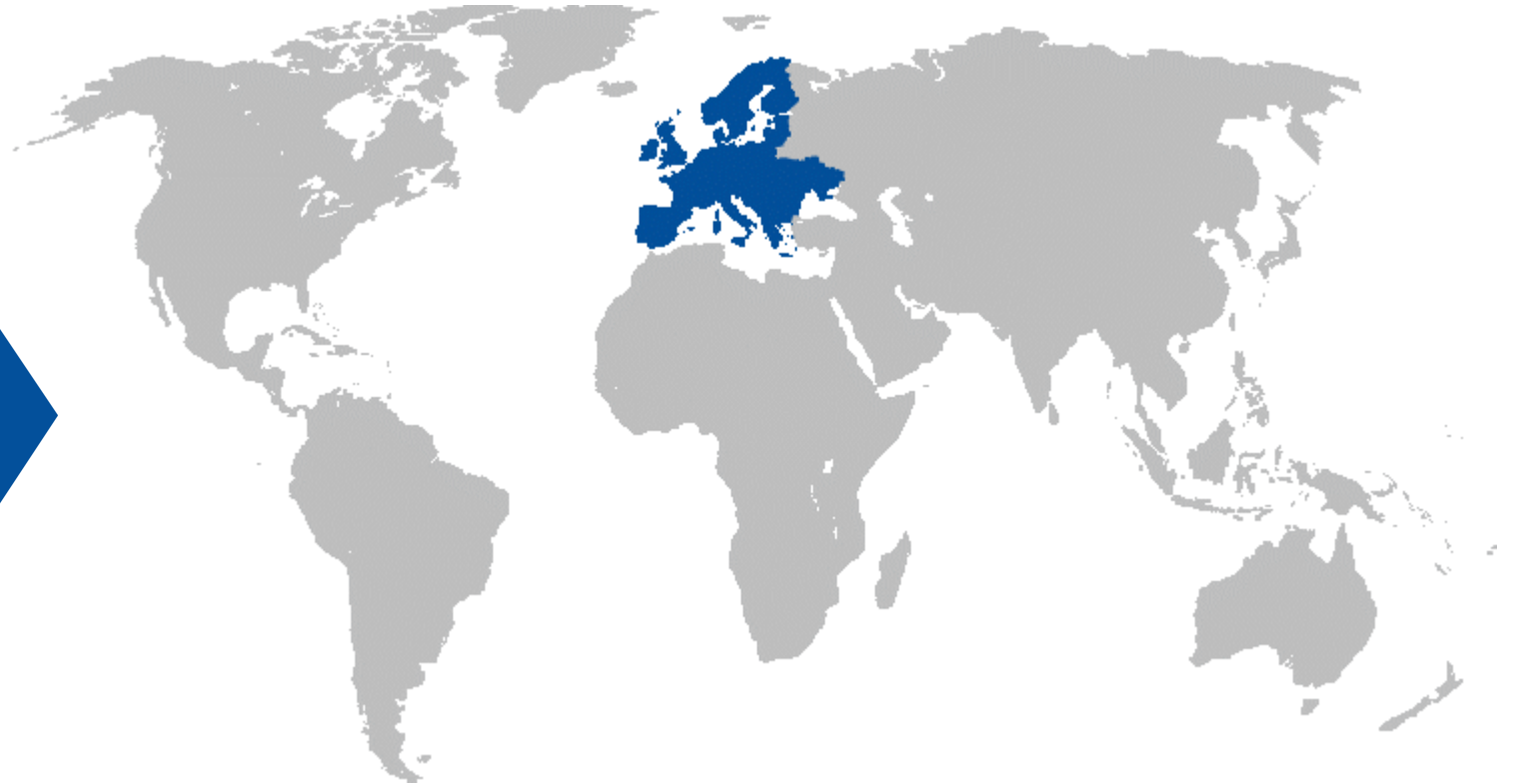
Microprocessor Transistor Counts 1971-2011 & Moore's Law



The “open” futures challenge

Which developments to attend to - comprehensive vs. comprehensible?

- 1 Markets
- 2 Mother Nature
- 3 Moore's Law
- 4 (mass) Migrations
- 5 (re)Militarisation
- 6 Motivations



Migration, Militarisation, and Motivations

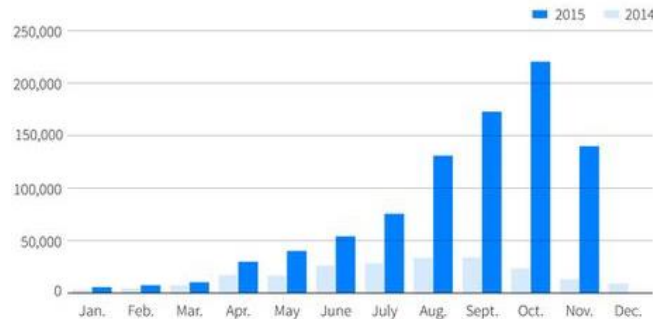
Thinking the unthinkable – engaging with less comfortable, unfamiliar, less visible shifts

4 Migration

- New waves of migration in multiple world regions (into USA, into EU, into Australia, etc.)
- More lone children and families on the move
- Increasing pressures for migration – conflict, economic, environmental stresses and crisis
- is mobility a global resilience mechanism?

Maritime arrivals to southern Europe

Refugee arrivals in southern Europe fell sharply in November after reaching a peak in October, with the total reaching more than 880,000 so far according to latest data from the U.N. refugee agency.



Sources: International Organization for Migration; UNHCR. *Includes missing people presumed dead.

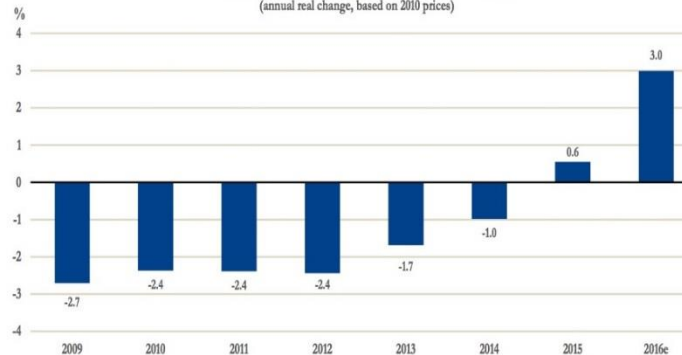
C. Inton, 07/12/2015

REUTERS

5 (Re)Militarisation

- Rising tensions within and between countries – rise of nationalism, extremism
- NATO defence spending (Europe and Canada) has been increasing since 2012, with the sharpest rise in 2016
- IHS Jane's forecasts spending in the Asia-Pacific region will climb 23 percent to \$533 billion annually by 2020
- Can new wars be avoided?

Graph 1: NATO Europe and Canada - Defence Expenditures
(annual real change, based on 2010 prices)



6 Motivations

- Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, Globalities...
- A new global vision – no one left behind; universal and multi-dimensional
- A redefining of progress – growth, well-living and sustainability
- How to navigate values-in-conflict?



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



Inevitable surprise

10 years ago who would have predicted (and been believed)....

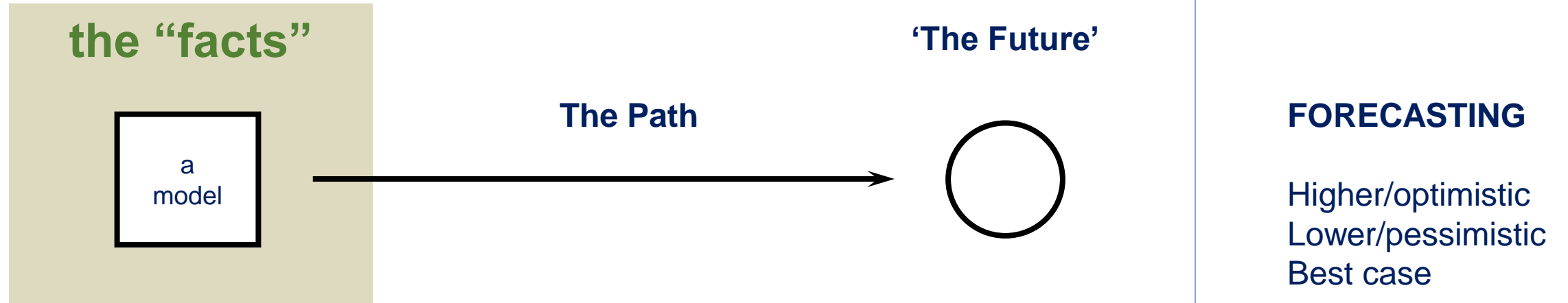
- Global financial crisis of 2008 (and slow recovery)
- Incursion of ISIS into Iraq
- Brexit referendum (and outcome)
- A sustained low oil price
- A “super-hot” Arctic winter
- Self-drive cars, jumping robots, 4 billion online
- Uber, AirBnB, Facebook

HOW WE THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE

SHAPES WHAT WE THINK AND DO ABOUT THE FUTURE

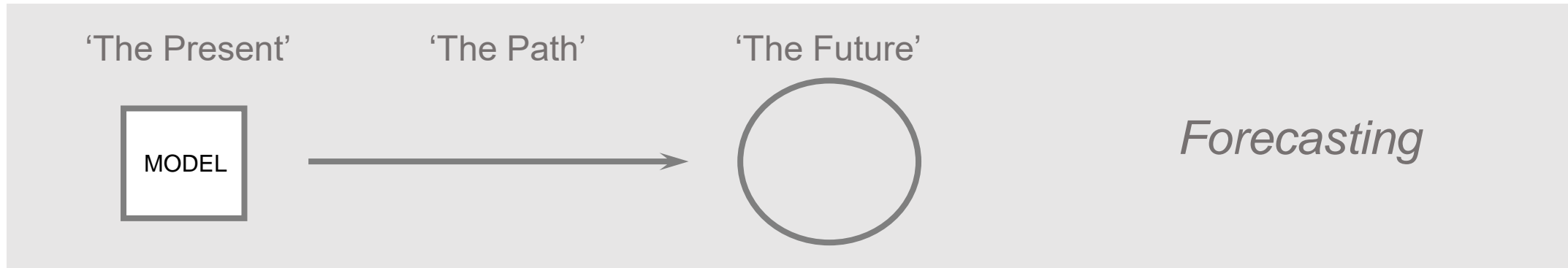
A conventional way of engaging the future in decision making...

Assume continuity and that all other things remain the same...



A Different Way....

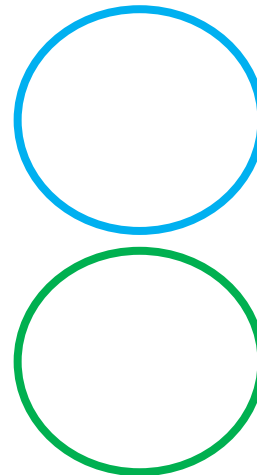
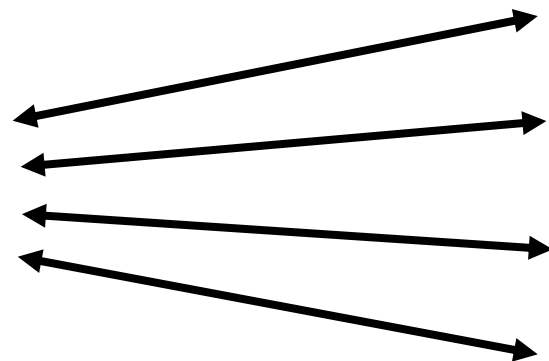
Create and use a limited number of futures – find the goldilocks zone



Different perspectives

Multiple paths

Alternative stories & future images



Foresight

Projected, plausible and preferable futures

Not one or too many futures

Foresight is about preparedness, not prediction

- ❑ Trends bend and break
- ❑ Facts vs. playing field of power
- ❑ All good vs. all bad extremes polarise
- ❑ Most incentives are for stepping up in crisis
- ❑ Late lessons from early warnings are common
- ✓ The future is always and only a fiction
- ✓ Different stories of the future are already emerging
- ✓ Reveal and test assumptions
- ✓ Open the future as a safe space
- ✓ Take responsibility to shape the future together

The aim is to design for disruption and to implement the imaginable

MIXED METHODS

No single best method, choice and mix of methods depends on purpose, users and their uses

Four basic types of foresight methodology



Horizon Scanning



Megatrends



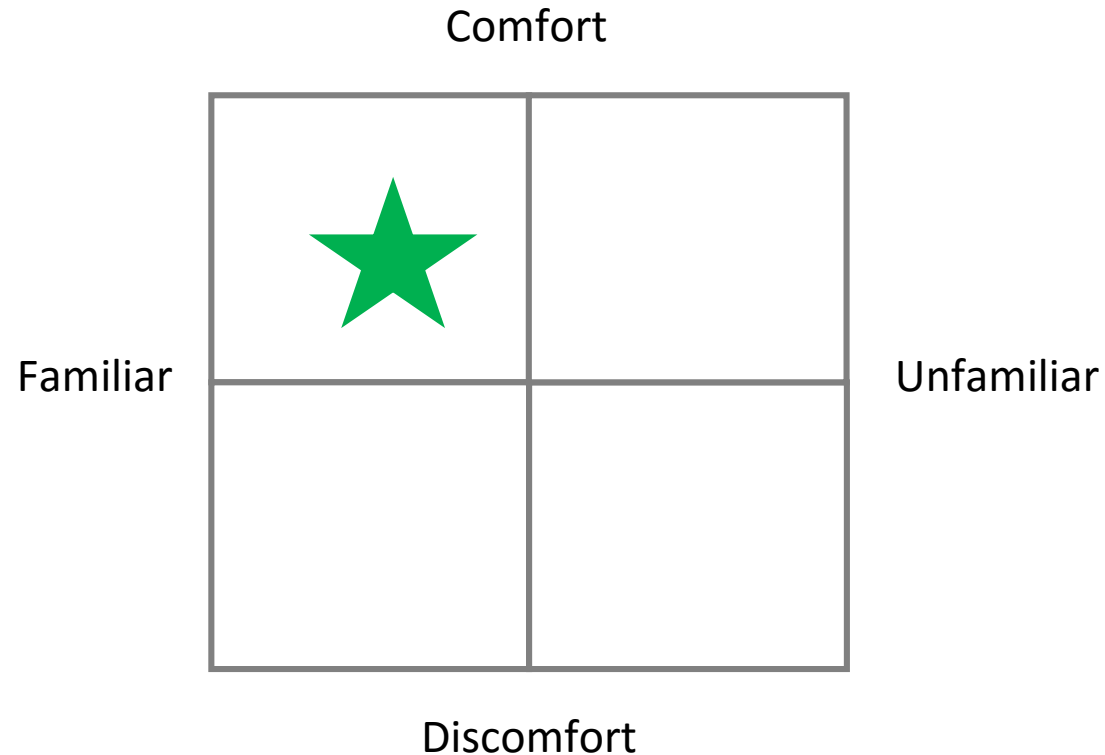
Scenario Planning



Visioning

Foresight and strategic leadership

Where top professionals live



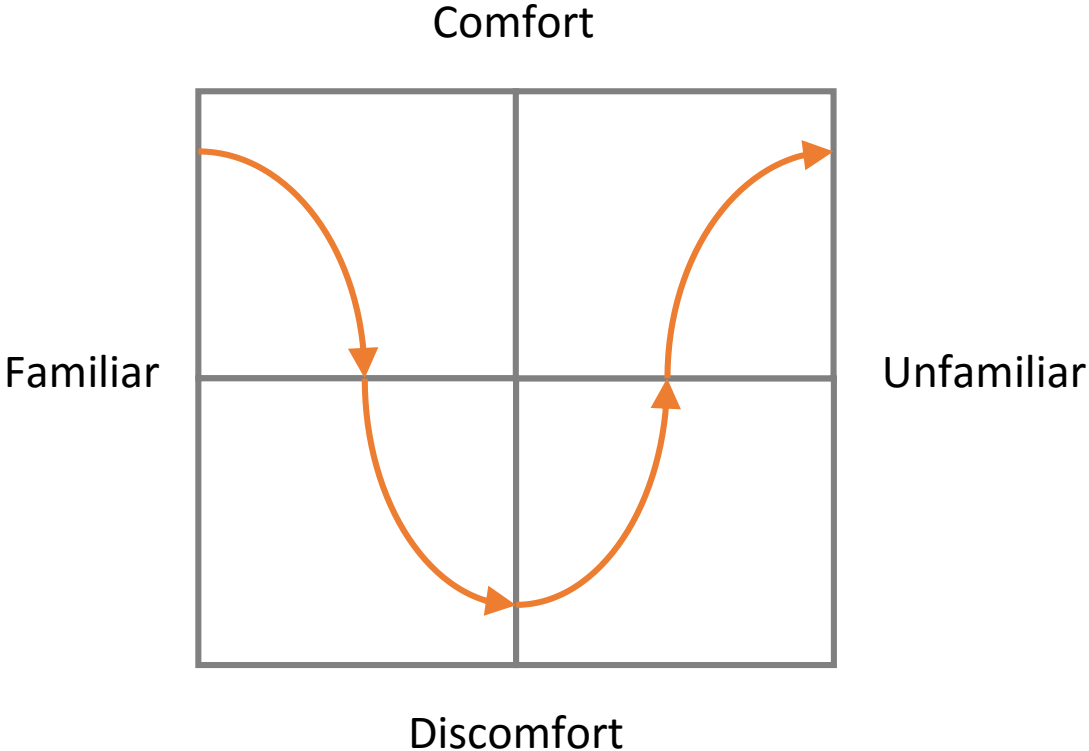
Smart people don't learn... because they have too much invested in proving what they know and avoiding being seen as not knowing.

Chris Argyris

QuoteAddicts

**Harvard
Business
Review**

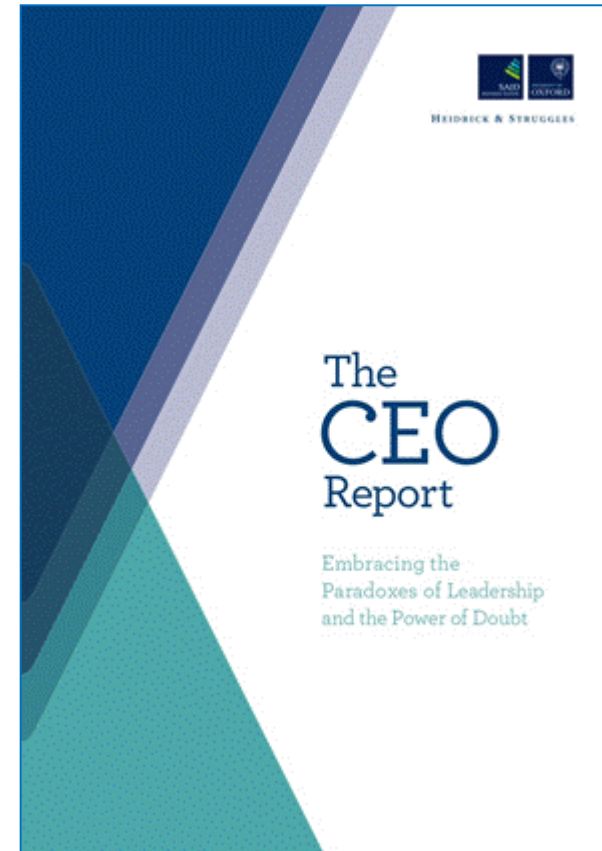
The scenario planning voyage



New leadership skill – “ripple intelligence”

“scenario planning...enables leaders to envision **how trends and contexts may intersect** and change direction, so they can...

...anticipate disruptions
...make time to plan, and,
...protect against being blindsided by unexpected events”



Leadership roles in leading foresight interventions

What other roles do you see? Which roles are you prepared for?



Psychoanalyst

Creates a safe space, engages anxieties, deals with fears, builds emotional resilience



Generous coach

Builds impetus for action, active listener, learns from team failure



Window cleaner

Looks 'outside the box', enables more to be seen, deals with blind spots, new perspectives



Map maker

Forges new, shared meanings, creates and contrasts different scenarios



(Intellectual) Midwife

Develops other's new ideas, promotes collaboration, prepares for new life



Bridge builder

Overcomes silos, relates to different communities and cultures, attentive to shared vocabulary

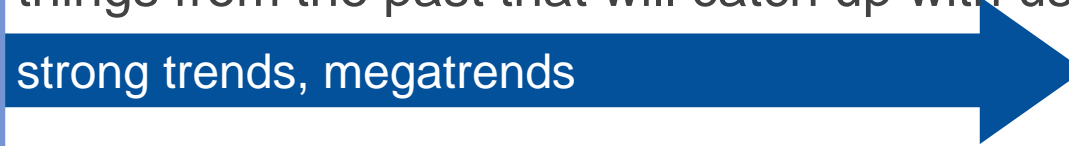
3 'future' perspectives in everyday action



present going forward
strategic goals, targets



things from the past that will catch up with us
strong trends, megatrends

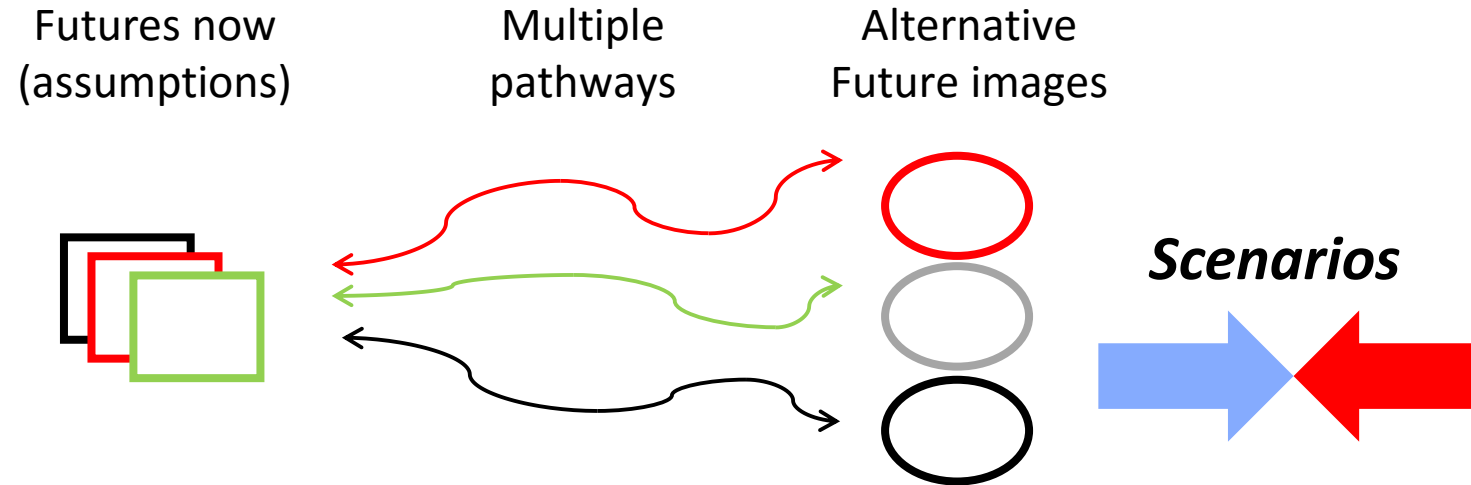
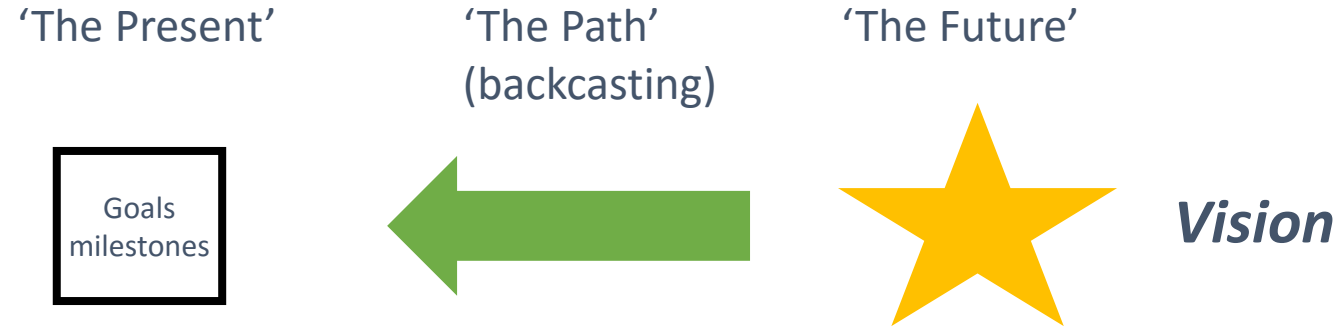


future coming towards present

weak signals, scenarios, new/emerging stories



Visioning vs. Scenario Planning

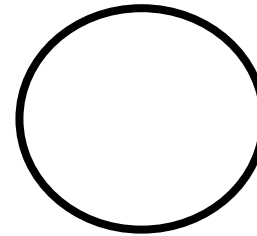


Scenario planning vs. forecasting

'The Present'

'The Path'

'The Future'

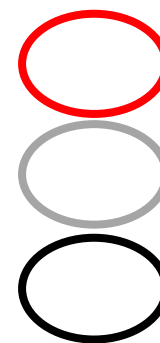
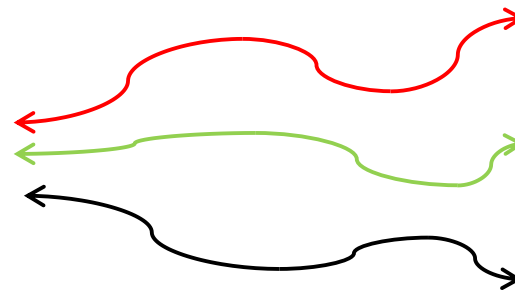


Forecasting

Diverse perspectives

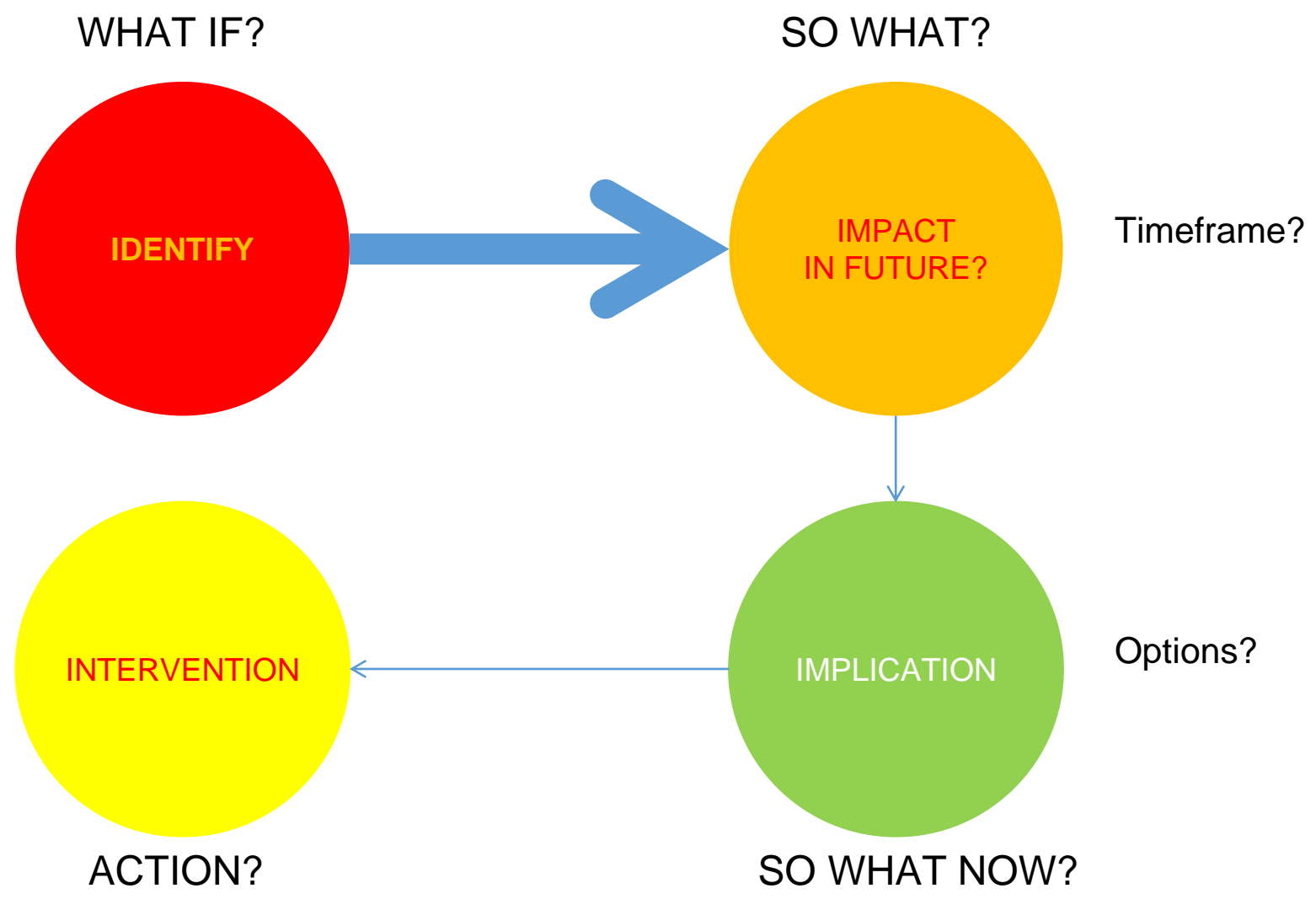
Multiple pathways

Alternative futures

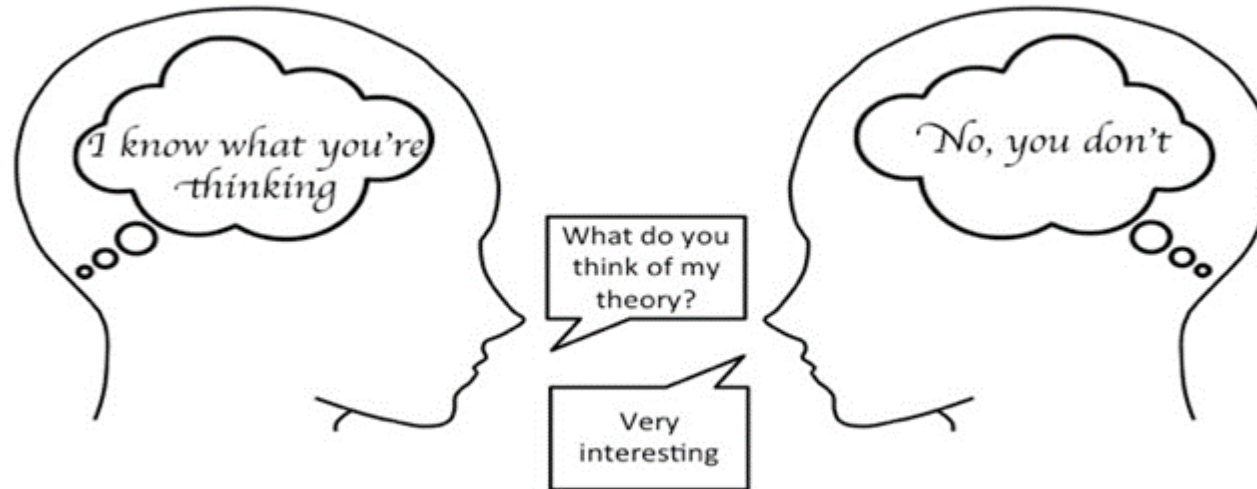


Scenario planning

Megatrends process – decadal timeframe



Strategic Conversation - skills and horizontal capabilities



| Conversation... | Discussion |
|---|--|
| A dialogue during which people freely and creatively explore issues, listen to each other and suspend their own views in search of new ideas and learning. Something new emerges. | In a discussion, people want their own views to be accepted by the group. The emphasis is on telling, selling, winning rather than on learning. Only the loudest voices are heard. |