

From futures literacy to strategic foresight

futurice

futurice

Futurice is an international digital engineering and innovation consultancy. We unleash a culture of innovation and build digital products and services to make our clients future capable.

Since 2000, we have helped our clients in industries ranging from energy, retail and construction to media, finance and automotive develop their business practices, ways of working and culture to meet the challenges of digital disruption. We experiment and co-create with our clients.

We are 500 people in Berlin, Helsinki, London, Munich, Oslo, Stockholm, Stuttgart and Tampere.

2017 Turnover: 50.2 million euros

2017 EBIT: 13.5%

Growth from 2016: 30.7%

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Introduction

Futures thinking and doing is a fundamental skill set for any employee now and in the future. Companies cannot afford to delegate the contents and outcomes of the future-proofing exercises to a few experts and top leadership alone.

We wanted to understand and find bottom-up practices, actions and attitudes for how you and me, or Jane/John Doe, consider futures in our daily decision and actions at work - **futures literacy** as we call it in this report.

Consider our survey findings as hypotheses of what we've found so far. The hypotheses are based on the survey sample (45) combined with qualitative interviews (6) and our experience.

We intend to provoke new thinking on how to make future doing a strategic differentiator for organizations. Futures literacy becomes **strategic foresight** when done systematically and coherently.

On Methodology

“This survey is not for professional futures thinkers or foresight experts.”

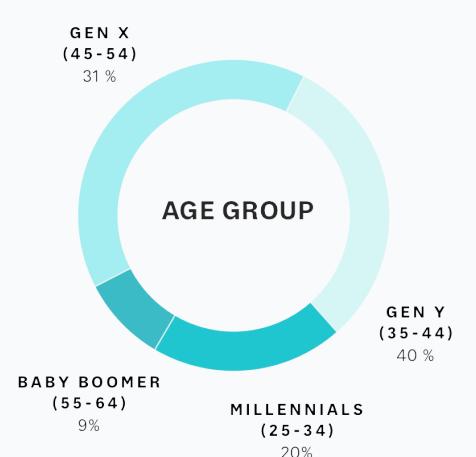
We wanted to understand with this study the ways non-futurists think, talk and work around futures. Therefore we refrained from using foresight concepts and terminology as far as we could. The challenge was twofold; first of all to establish a field of interest that might not have been familiar to our respondents, while at the same time trying to map their practices on it.

We used 15 academic, corporate foresight articles as background material to build the survey and questions. Within 1.5 weeks 45 informants answered the survey promoted in Futurice channels. Most of the informants (33) were from Finland, the rest (11) from Europe and one (1) from the US. To have an explanatory insight to support analysis we conducted 6 semi-structured interviews internally and with our client executives. To summarize findings, we had a workshop of 5 Futurice futures thinkers discussing the challenges and opportunities companies face regarding embedding futures thinking to the current way of doing business.

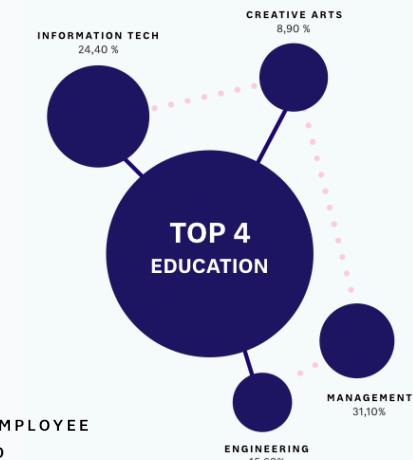
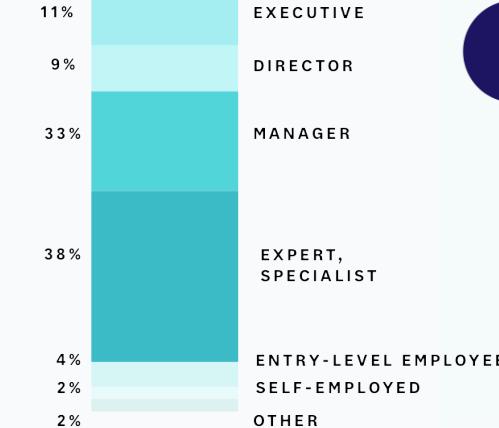
Our sample is small, and the results can be considered suggestive. We show you percentages, but those should be understood as a basis for hypotheses, that we all can now investigate further in a co-creative process that you are warmly welcome to participate in.

In a small way, the study expands the awareness of futures literacy, which we understand to be the widespread capability of people to imagine possible futures and resist the idea that the future is already made somewhere else.

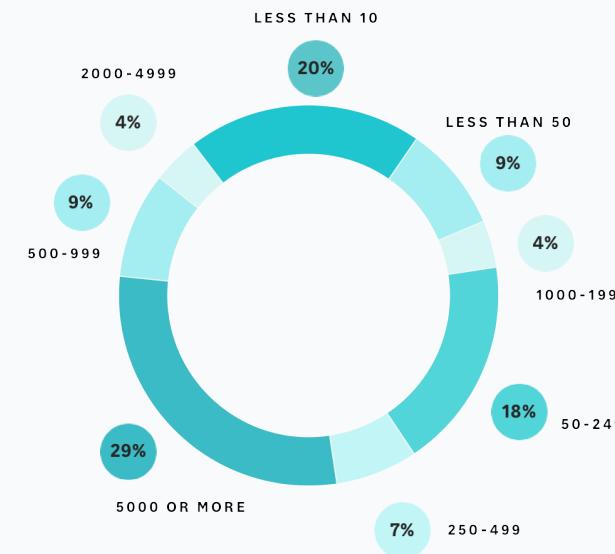
Who did we survey?



SENIORITY

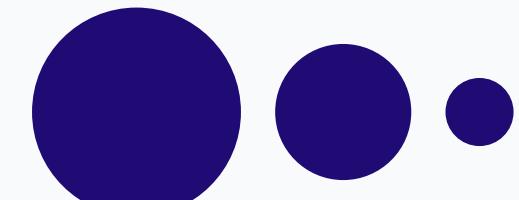


Where do they work?



INDUSTRIES

The 3 biggest industries were information technology (26,7%), business services & consulting (17,8%) & financial services (8,9%).



Key findings



When is the ‘future’ and how can we work on it?

- Only 15% in our survey think beyond 5 years in their daily work.
- Those at disruption risk think further into the future.
- Smaller companies (< 250 employees,) were more active with idea testing, data forecasting and risk mitigation.

What are futures made of- and by whom?

- In general, now is the era of the individual thinker and how they make us see the future.
- As could be anticipated, leadership (55,6%), technology (44,4%) and business (42,2%) promote futures in the organizations – with R&D and innovation only in fourth place (33,3%).
- In the bottom 3 of promoting the future are HR (6,7%) and Risk, Quality & Legal (4%).

What is the value of the future?

- Futures thinking is considered difficult, because it involves dealing with complex systems and processes that can seem impossible to map.
- **Yet, 95% of survey participants sees that futures thinking is an extra gear to perform better.**

Recommendations



Develop futures microhabits

Delve into scientific findings and pop culture speculations as a legitimate part of everyday working life.



Support a futures culture

Nurture a culture where a broad base of employees are happy to scan for influences, imagine possibilities and communicate their findings.



Reinvent your company core

Find your way into the future by experimentation, not only by strategy making.

1

When is “the future” and when should you work on it?

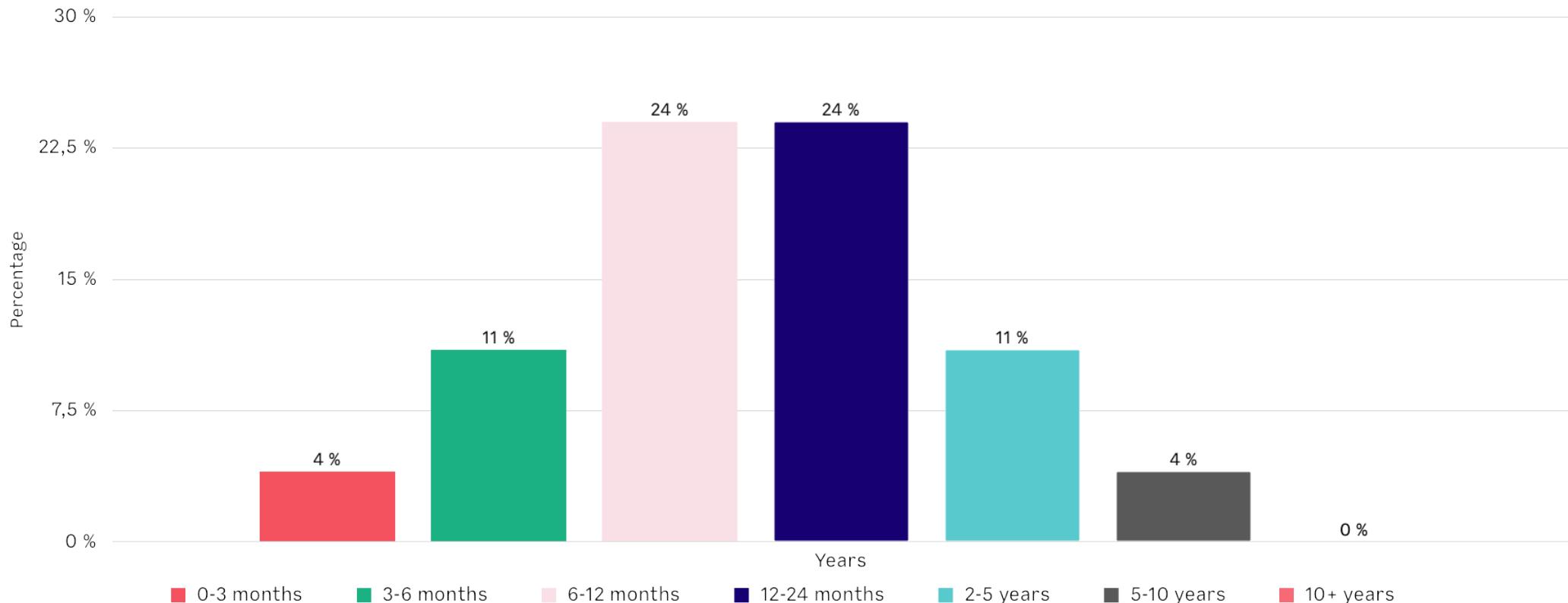
“

The reason it's hard to get people future thinking is that some are mired in the day to day, and also that many senior people are motivated by short term gains to please the market, who will replace senior leaders if they don't produce short-term gains. Vicious cycle.”

– FUTURE LITERACY AT WORK 2019, quote from the survey

Only 15% of our informants think beyond 5 years in their daily work

In the everyday life of a company, there are few operational necessities to inspire thinking farther ahead. Project deadlines, roadmaps, quarterly reports, the timeline of the current strategy form the thing we call future in a way that makes it hard to think beyond five years.



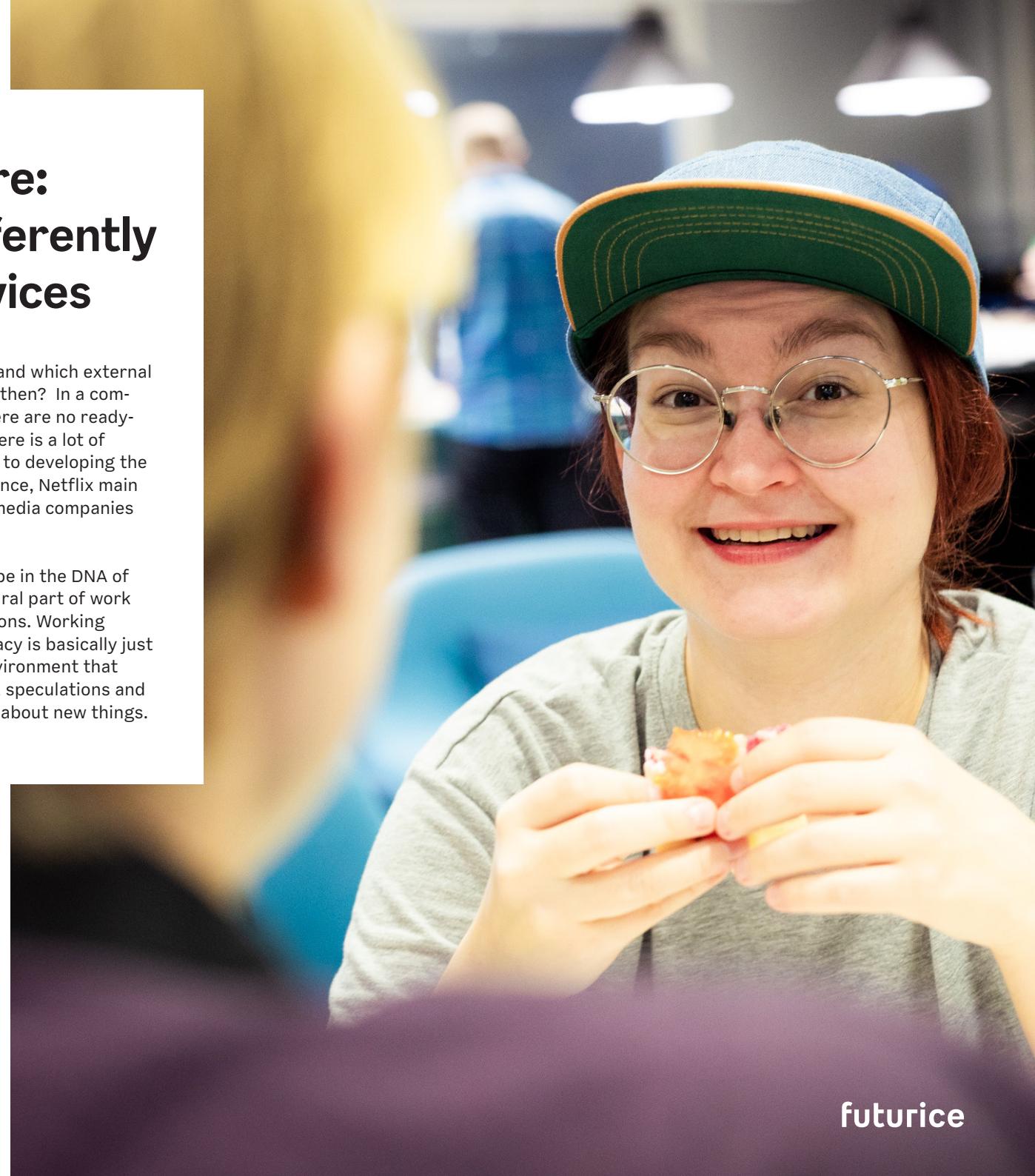
The way we tame the future: Make a strategy, work differently and end up improving services

So, what kind of future-related work have you participated in during the past month? As over half of the respondents in our sample are executives, directors and managers, results are not surprising: **they most often strategize and then make sure things work internally to succeed externally.**

What our respondents haven't done so much is crunching data to forecast the future, identifying external changes or testing ideas. Hopefully someone did. In our opinion, you need these less mentioned actions to feed the strategy work and internal development.

What data to crunch and which external changes are relevant then? In a complex environment, there are no ready-made answers and there is a lot of creative work related to developing the key metrics. For instance, Netflix main competitors are not media companies alone – but sleep.

Testing ideas should be in the DNA of a company and a natural part of work in all levels of operations. Working towards futures literacy is basically just that – creating an environment that nurtures futures talk, speculations and a spirit of finding out about new things.



QUESTION: What kind of future-related work have you participated in during the past month? % of all respondents

Top 3 Future-related actions



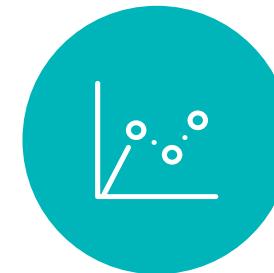
66,7%

CHALLENGING
CURRENT WAYS
OF WORKING



66,7%

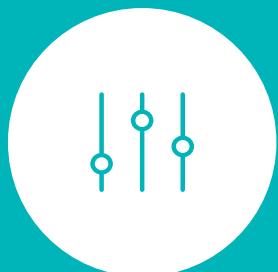
STRATEGY OR
VISION WORK



62,2%

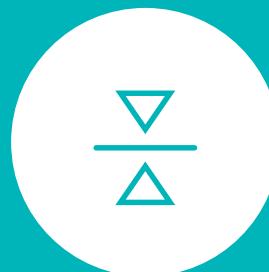
IMPROVING
SERVICES AND
PRODUCTS

Bottom 3 Future-related actions



35,6%

TESTING
IDEAS



33,3%

IDENTIFYING
RELEVANT EXTERNAL
CHANGES



22,2%

FORECASTING
BASED ON PAST
DATA

Smaller companies (< 250 employees) were more active with idea testing, data forecasting and risk mitigation

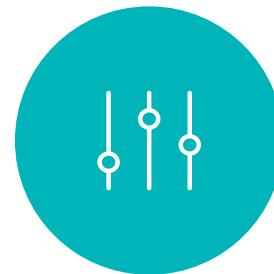
If we look beyond the total sum, our customers and partners from smaller companies (< 250 employees) were more active than their colleagues in the bigger companies (> 250 employees) with idea testing, data forecasting & risk mitigation. Here are the most significant differences:

DATA FORECASTING



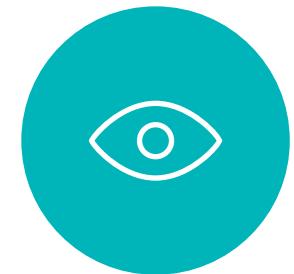
**Small 39%
vs. Big 9%**

TESTING IDEAS



**Small 51%
vs. Big 19%**

MANAGING
POTENTIAL RISKS



**Small 46%
vs. Big 24%**

With such a small data set we can only say, that this is in line with what you could expect from a small company within Futurice's network. **They invest in learning-by-doing and have above average understanding about the role of data in business.**

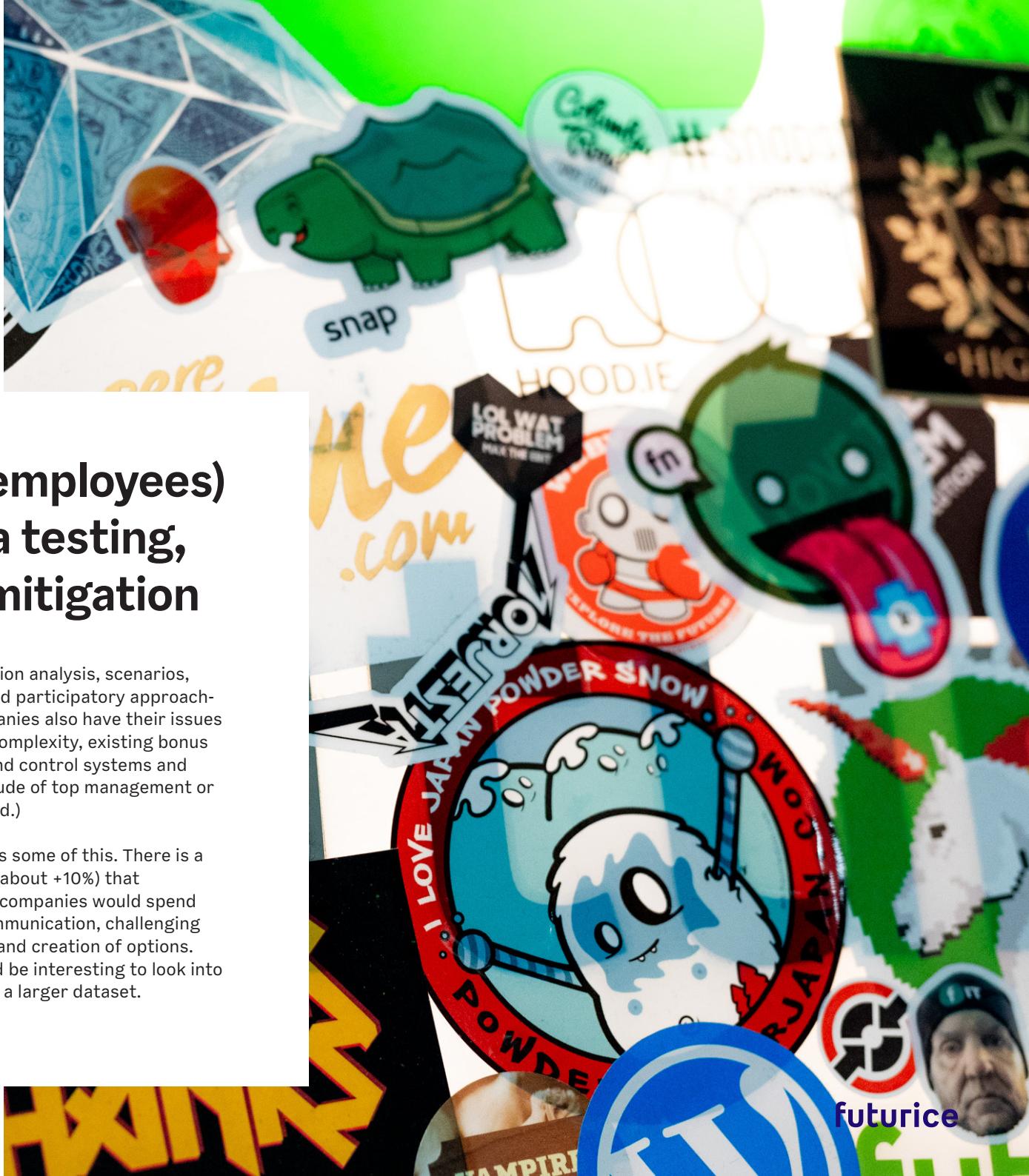
Smaller companies (< 250 employees) were more active with idea testing, data forecasting and risk mitigation

Finding is well aligned with existing research. In small and medium-sized companies future foresight is typically situational, based on spot analysis, using existing knowledge and adaptation to a changing environment. In future making this means actions like monitoring/scanning, brainstorming, expert interviews, desk research. Simplicity of methods is driven by lack of money, people and time. (Vishnevskiy, & Egorova, 2015.)

Big companies, on the other hand, can engage several organization departments to their future related work. They often focus on creating more consistency and systematic methodology, using for example trend

analysis, publication analysis, scenarios, road mapping, and participatory approaches. Yet, big companies also have their issues that come from complexity, existing bonus models, career and control systems and non-serious attitude of top management or stakeholders. (Ibid.)

Our sample shows some of this. There is a slight indication (about +10%) that employees in big companies would spend more time on communication, challenging current thinking and creation of options. However, it would be interesting to look into this in detail with a larger dataset.



2 What are futures made of and by whom?

The era of the individual thinkers and how they make us see the future

In our data, the top 3 key sources of futures thinking are:

GLOBAL NEWS
AND MEDIA

INDIVIDUAL THINKERS,
BLOGS, SOCIAL MEDIA

CONSULTANTS,
PARTNERS, VENDORS



73,3%



71,1%



62,2%

Most of us follow global news media such as Economist, Wired, TechCrunch to make sense of the future in our day-to-day work. Maybe it is not surprising that the **individual thinkers, bloggers and other social media channels are considered nearly as important**.

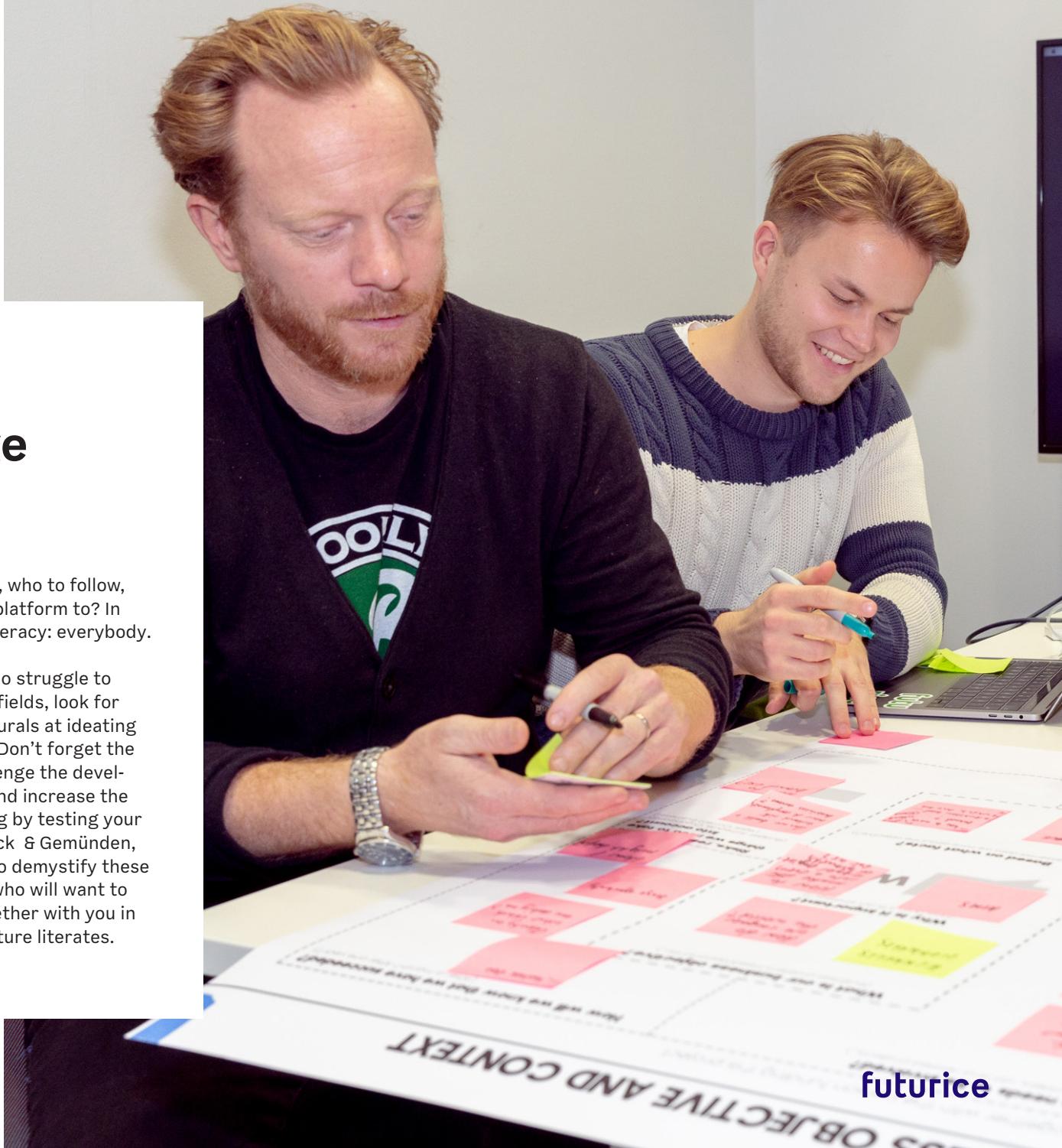
The era of the individual thinker, and how they make us see the future

As FAANG (Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Netflix and Google) are busy transforming our everyday lives and businesses, we seek for forward-thinking individuals to translate the meaning of these changes to us. What the Elon Musk-stories of our time have taught us, ideas about futures are not simply trickled-down any more – there are self-made visionaries who can simply just imagine futures that will have a tremendous impact on the way we perceive our possibilities.

The challenge, based on our experience is, how to build a diverse, healthy basis for futures thinking that surpasses the cult of hero innovator? Where to find

good food for thought, who to follow, who should we give a platform to? In the spirit of futures literacy: everybody.

Follow **strategists**, who struggle to explore new business fields, look for **initiators** who are naturals at ideating and concept building. Don't forget the **opponents**, that challenge the development as expected and increase the quality of your thinking by testing your assumptions. (Rohrbeck & Gemünden, 2011.) Most of all, try to demystify these skills and seek peers who will want to co-create futures together with you in an open network of future literates.



“My thinking”

Open comment to the question
“What sources have you used in the last
month to look into the future?”

Academia and pop culture – seen as less important sources for future?

Bottom 3 sources of futures thinking are:

LOCAL NEWS &
MEDIA

POPULAR SCIENCE
MAGAZINES, ARTICLES

SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES
& PUBLICATIONS



31,1%



33,3%



33,3%

We seldom seek for traces of future in the **local news media**, as their resources to focus on speculation and scenario-building are limited. One retail executive interviewee told that he follows the developments in Sweden, as in his business area Finland still is a couple of years behind in trends.

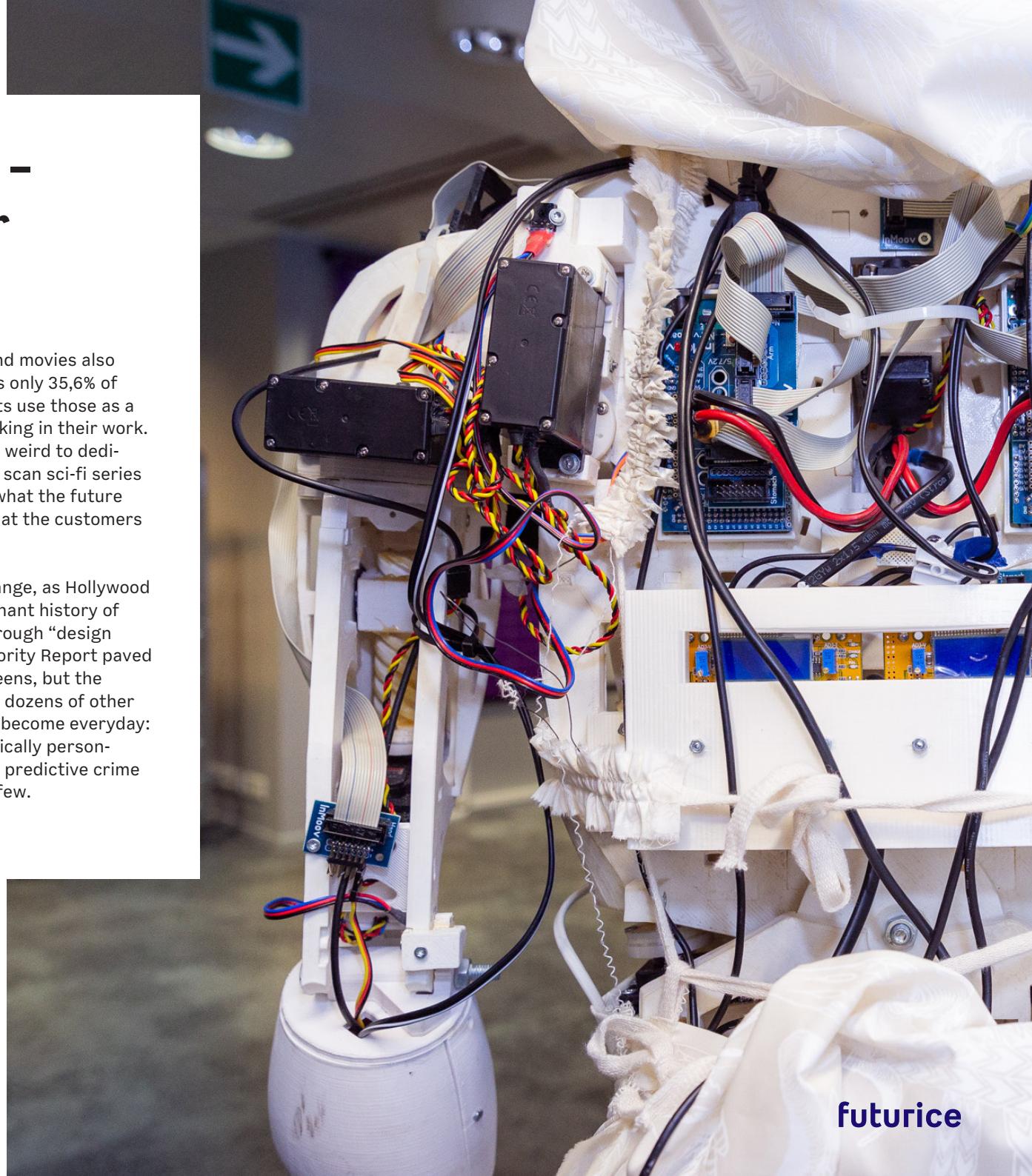
Academia and pop culture – less important sources for future?

It is surprising that only third of our respondents scan scientific findings – either in the format of popular or academic articles in our data. Popular science tidbits are easy to find through social media channels, but scholarly articles are often behind paywalls. To dig into scientific findings seldom seems to make any kind of business case unless you are a hardcore specialist.

Our interview data affirms, that while R&D delve into academic sources, on management level, this is rare. In an executive event in Futurice Risto Siilasmaa however insisted, that to be able to do business from machine learning or AI, the leaders need to understand the basics of the methods firsthand.

Popular culture, art and movies also score relatively low, as only 35,6% of our survey participants use those as a source of futures thinking in their work. It could be considered weird to dedicate working hours to scan sci-fi series – just to get a feel of what the future might look like and what the customers might expect from it.

Hopefully, this will change, as Hollywood has a long and triumphant history of formulating future through “design fictions”. In 2002, Minority Report paved the way for touch screens, but the movie also showcased dozens of other innovations that have become everyday: facial recognition, radically personalised advertising and predictive crime fighting to mention a few.



“It (sci-fi) shapes the understanding of the public on things like artificial intelligence and biotechnology, which are likely to change our lives and society more than anything else in the coming decades.”

It's not only technologists who are hyped about sci-fi and design fictions. According to historian Yuval Noah Harari, science fiction is the most important artistic genre today.



Executives look for future in their customer base

Surprisingly, only executives and directors have customers in their top 10% sources for futures information. It seems that at least in the companies in our sample, executives and directors are firm believers in user-centricity as a critical factor of success.

Entry-level employees rely on individual thinkers, social media sources and their colleagues as fully 100% quote them as key sources. Half of them regularly use

scientific articles in their work, which is clearly above the average. It could be that they still have access to costly article databases from their schools.

Professional futurist sources are not used broadly. Some free trend reports such as Trend Watch, CB Insight and a few consulting companies are mentioned in the data. They are mostly used by executives, experts and specialists. No paid reports are named.

Sources of future for different employee groups

FRIENDS, COLLEAGUES,
GLOBAL NEWS & MEDIA,
INDIVIDUAL THINKERS,
BLOGS, SOCIAL MEDIA



100%
of entry level
employees

CUSTOMERS



80% 75%
Executives Directors
vs. 41% of experts and
specialists

PROFESSIONAL
FUTURIST SOURCES



40%
of all

SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES
AND PUBLICATIONS



33,3%
of all

“Engineering”

Informant comment in the survey to a question “Who promotes future-related topics within your company?”



Innovation, design and marketing could take a bolder role in promoting the future

As could be anticipated, leadership, technology and business promote futures in the organizations – with R&D and innovation only in fourth place (33,3%). In the bottom 3 of promoting the future are HR and Risk, Quality & Legal. In our sample, the role of external consultants is close to none.

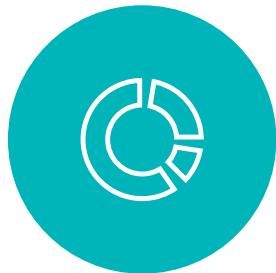
It is very understandable why legal people are considered a less forward-looking function. Where disruptors take risks and bypass regulatory framework altogether (think of Airbnb), established companies have to be really careful with compliance issues. Even if they wanted to be revolutionising the business ecosystem, their risks are in a totally different level as of those whose business it is to push the boundaries. They think through risks, it is their job.

Similar kinds of reasons probably apply to HR. It is a function that should future-proof organizations' leadership, culture and talent. However, they also deal with the other side of digital upheavals and automation. Maybe this is the problem: when we think of the future, we believe more about technology and efficiency than social behaviors and opportunities for a good life. Futures thinking should not be equated with technological innovation or digital transformation alone.

A most recent trend in corporate foresight is context-based "open" foresight. It based on a belief that the future is shaped through interaction. Interactive by nature, Innovation, Design and Marketing could take a bolder role in promoting the future in the companies.

QUESTION: Who promotes future-related topics within your company? Choose 1-5 options

Top 3 functions promoting the future



55,6%

MANAGEMENT
& LEADERSHIP



44,4%

IT, DIGITAL,
DATA SCIENCE



42,2%

BUSINESS,
SERVICES,
PRODUCTS

Bottom 3 functions promoting the future



6,7%

HR



4%

RISK, QUALITY,
LEGAL



2%

EXTERNALS

(6,7% of informants say that nobody is promoting future, #nobody)

4 What is the value of the future?

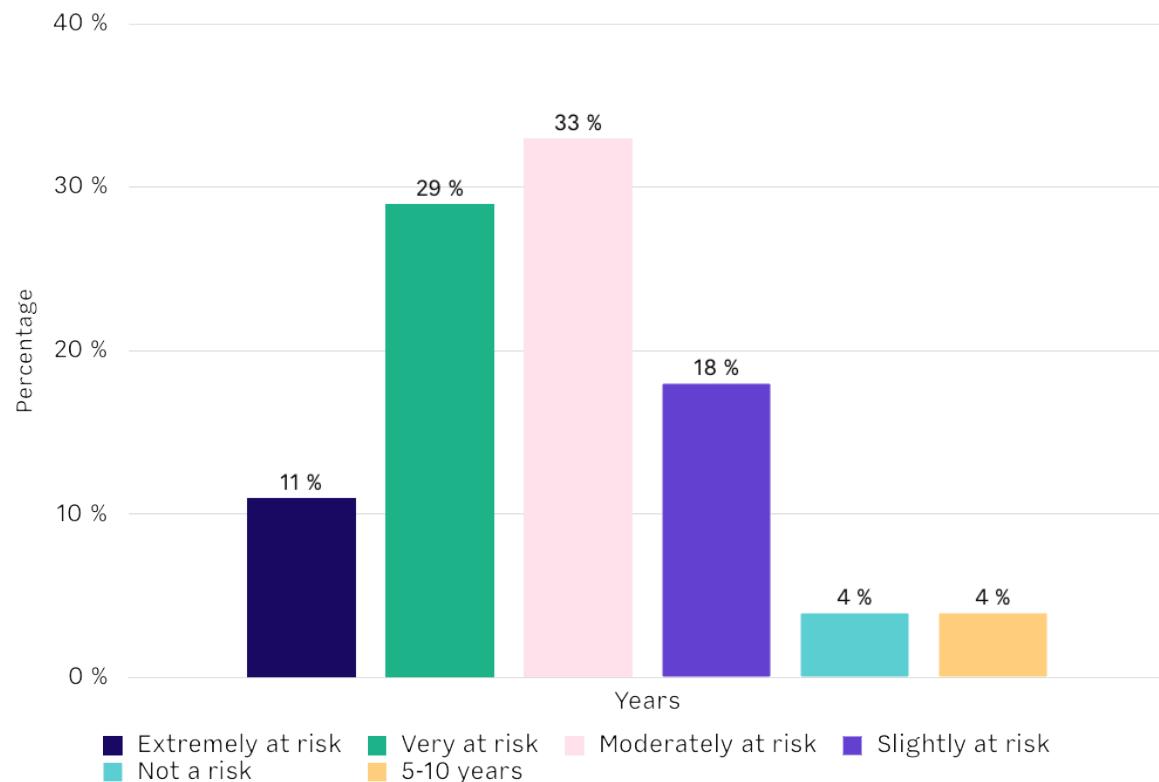
Disrupt: to prevent something, especially a system, process, or event, from continuing as usual or as expected.

Risk of disruption by emerging technologies / competitors seems high to 40% of respondents

Disruption is something that differentiates between companies – we have the stereotypes of agile disruptors and the big establishments trying to cope with the change. Our finding is well aligned with State of Innovation report by CB Insight (2018) stating that that 41,4% strategy executives think their business is extremely or very at risk.

Just like in our sample, most of the companies that we deal with are moderately or slightly at risk. This means that they have to prepare, but are not sure precisely for what.

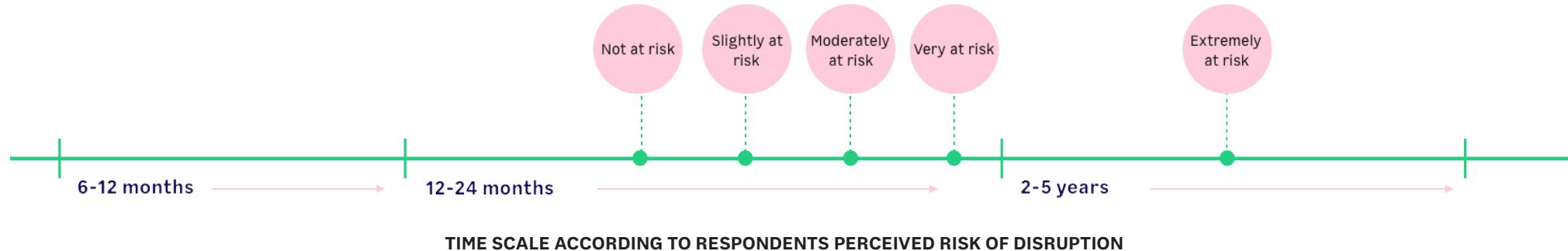
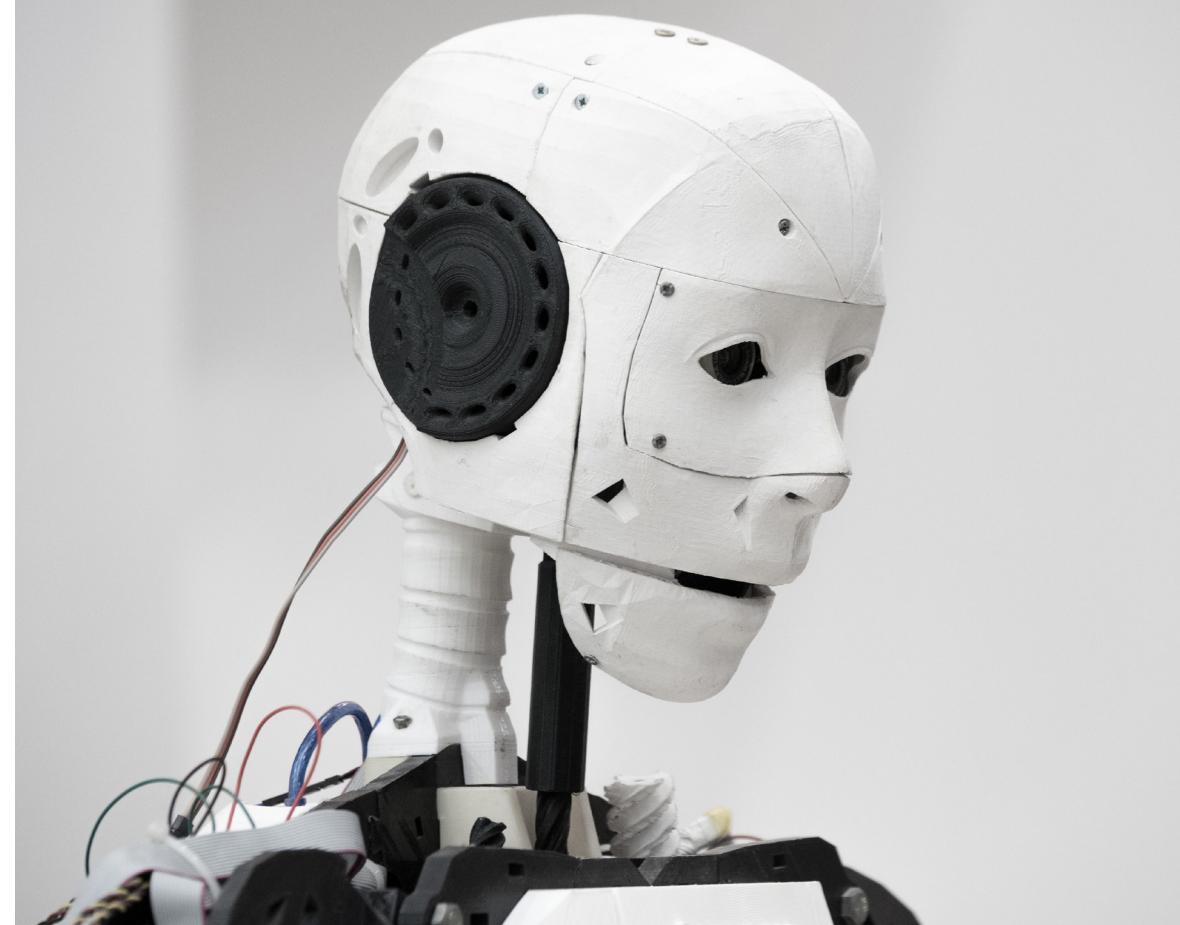
QUESTION: How at risk is your company to disruption by emerging technologies / competitors?



Those at disruption risk also think further into the future

In our small sample, very few can manage thinking beyond 5 years in their daily work.

Interestingly, our sample suggests that the more at risk the company considers itself to be in, the farther they focus on the future. There are two possible explanations for this. Either the risk awareness grows when stretching the timespan or the risk of disruption forces companies to really reinvent themselves. It would be interesting to look into this in detail with a larger dataset.



Futures thinking as an extra gear to perform better?

Only one person in our sample expected no benefits from focusing more on the future. Our sample agrees: it would be a wise thing to do.

What kinds of benefits does our sample expect? “Focusing more on the future” naturally suggests an innovation path, leading to new product and service offering. This can, in turn, translate into a deepened interest in customers and point the way to new positioning, vision and strategy.

As this is something that reasonable companies already do, it seems that they are expecting futures thinking to provide them with extra gear for performing better.

But it's not about immediate results. Very few would do futures thinking in hope of direct investments. Surprisingly only one in four see futures thinking as an

essential basis for technology choices or risk management.

These expectations of non-futurists resonate well with researchers' findings of the benefits of investing in a dedicated, specific futures actions or functions. “Overall, these examples show that running corporate foresight activities can be a good investment. But it was also frequently commented that the return on investment often only happens in the long run.”
(Rohrbeck, 2012, see also, e.g. Rollwagen, Hofmann & Schneider, 2008).

Longitudinal analysis done by Rohrbeck & Kum (2018) indicates that future-prepared firms have a 33% higher profitability and 200% higher growth to average.

Future work pays off in the long run.



QUESTION: Where would you expect benefits if your company focused more on the future?

Top 3 benefits



60,0%

INNOVATION



60,0%

PRODUCT AND SERVICE OFFERING



57,8%

VISION AND STRATEGY

Bottom 3 benefits



26,7%

TECHNOLOGY CHOICES



24,4%

RISK MANAGEMENT



8,9%

MONEY FROM INVESTORS

“Have the predictions been accurate?”

VS

“Did our futures research create value?”

VALUE QUESTION OF FUTURES THINKING HAS SO FAR BEEN LARGELY IGNORED
(Rohrbeck, 2012)

Executives expect people related benefits

In our sample, executives would expect people related benefits such as customer engagement and employee satisfaction, from future work. Surprisingly they expect less benefits in regard to strategy and planning.

How seniority impacts on expected futures thinking benefits

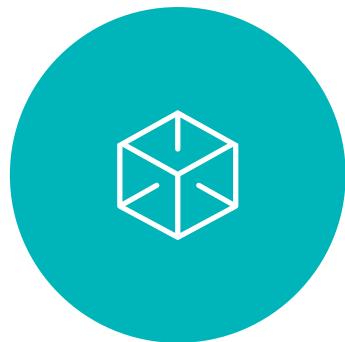


100% Entry level employee
(vs. 40% executives)
(vs. 25% directors)

(vs. 20% Executives)

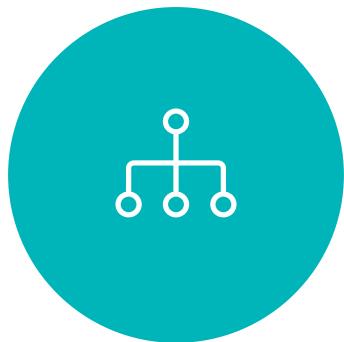
Entry-level employees, as well as experts, think that the value of futures work would be precisely in strategy and planning. All entry-level employees expect results in customer engagement innovation, revenue and profit and far more than others, in sustainability. However, the data sample is so small that these kinds of finding are merely suggestive.

Futures thinking is considered difficult because it involves dealing with complex systems and processes that can seem impossible to map



Complex business environment

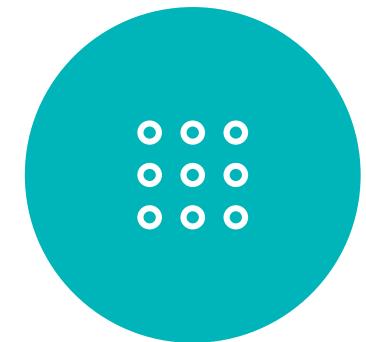
Complex business environment was selected as a key difficulty by half of the respondents. It's a more severe problem than budget constraints, mentioned only by one in three. Three people feel that they don't face any challenges.



Organisational silos

Organisational silos that are mentioned as the second most significant issue in our study, are known nuisance in company foresight activities.

Daheim and Uertz (2008) did a qualitative analysis of the role of corporate foresight in 40 companies. They found the key challenges to be organisational and political barriers, insufficient legitimization and (perceived) high costs.

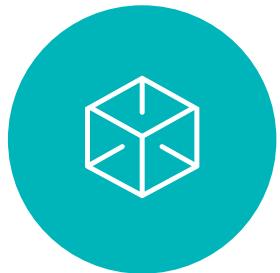


Lack of methodology or process

Insufficient legitimization, a fundamental problem in Daheim and Uertz study, does not score high in our sample, as **only three respondents felt that there is a lack of support, rewards or recognition** related to future thinking. It could be that the idea of focusing on future has matured a bit in 10 years – or that our respondents have no real life experience of what it is like to drive this kind of longer time span thinking in the organization.

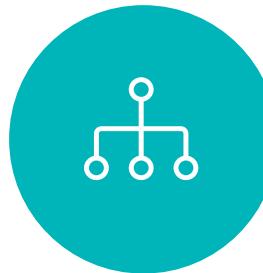
QUESTION: What challenges do you face within your company when focusing on the future?

Top 3 challenges expected



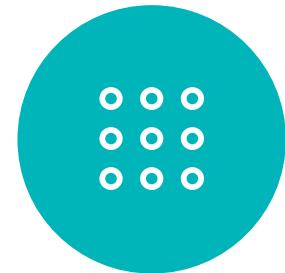
51,1%

COMPLEX
BUSINESS
ENVIRONMENT



37,8%

ORGANISATIONAL
SILOS



37,8%

LACK OF
METHODOLOGY
OR PROCESS

Bottom 3 challenges expected



8,9%

LACK OF TOOLS



6,7%

LACK OF
SUPPORT



6,7%

NO REWARD OR
RECOGNITION

Executives are more aware of budget and skills limitations

How seniority impacts on experienced challenges in future



More than others, **executives seem to worry about the return on investment** and budget constraints. They also mention a lack of skills as a critical barrier.

Experts and specialists worry less about the budget constraints and more about the lack of methodology and process. In general, it seems that there is a market for a user-friendly set of tools and step-by-step instructions for making futures more tangible.

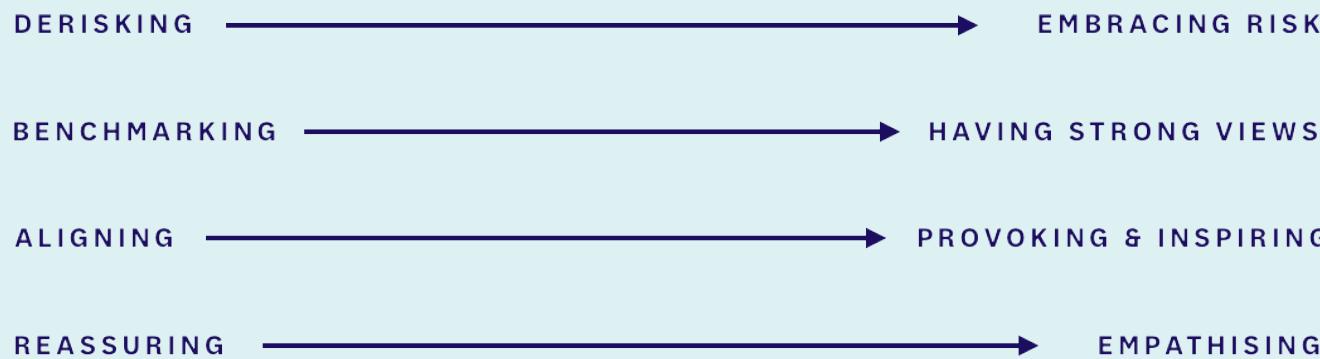
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Recommendations

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Recommendation 1:

Develop futures microhabits – delve into scientific findings and pop culture speculations as a legitimate part of everyday working life



To make the future, we need to be able to shift from one end to the other when needed. It is challenging but not magic. Better future means not just making better predictions (strong views) but also gathering data afterwards about which predictions were right and wrong (benchmark).

On a personal level employees benefit from futures training. Collecting of signals and cues can develop into information overload and confusion, if not organised carefully. It is vital to discuss collectively what is knowing concerning futures, what can be called justified expectations, what biases and ungrounded beliefs.

What are futures microhabits?

Microhabits are a means of doing something very often but in small sequences. They are small practices geared to train your brain to work a little bit differently. Here are some practice-based ideas of how to do futures microhabits:

Speculate to de-risk

One of our client executives has a boss who encourages scenario type of thinking. “What if this happens, how are you preparing yourself for it?” He makes evidence-based decisions, but those are always based on broader, speculative discussions. This way of working encourages his team to be open and imaginative about the ever-changing business environment.

Petri (one of the authors in this report) had a supervisor who in monthly meetings used the company’s shareholder price trend as a starting point and used that to open a conversation about market changes and

what might be ahead. The simple trend visualisation worked as a visual cue to spark discussion about bigger industry shifts.

Think backwards to see forward

Petri has a colleague who thinks in odd years when making strategies. Instead of 1, 5, 10 years he uses 3, 7 and 14 years. The reasoning is that it was easier for him to internalise how different the world was 3, 7, or 14 years ago and use this experience to think further. A simple mind shift, but it works really well. Play with timeframes, use your knowledge of past change to concretize the pace of changes.

What are futures microhabits?

Empathize future outside your own field

One famous TV chef in Finland explained that he watches music videos. In those, you can sense food trends. He mentioned this whole organic, near food trend as an example. Food taste is very much habit, we like things that we are used to. Music videos seed new ideas and tastes. Whatever your field, be amazed by cool stuff you encounter elsewhere, everywhere – because your customers will, and they will expect the same kinds of wow effects from your offering.

Focus on social changes

Mia (co-author in this paper) used to train futures thinking in Media Lab at Aalto University. When going through old film clips and futures projections, it became tangible how conspicuous mistakes futurists make just because they skip the social. In films, you have the basic family structure, or your basic housewife

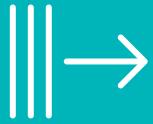
from the fifties – only with a futuristic hairdo and a spacey-silvery dress. Therefore, force yourself to really think what commonplace ideas like “parenthood”, “household pet”, “contract” or “community” could function and feel like in the future.

Don't stop wondering

Children are the best teachers for futures, because they still have the innate capability to wonder and speculate. Look at the fork in your hand, the coffee machine, your salad in a bowl. What will these objects become? What will they be made of? Where will they come from? What will be instead of them? What will our everyday look like, watched from the future? It's not essential to guess right. It is important that you do the guesswork and based on that find out about developments around your everyday, business, culture.

What are futures microhabits?

SPECULATE TO
DE-RISK



THINK BACKWARD TO
SEE FORWARD



EMPATHIZE FUTURE
OUTSIDE YOUR OWN FIELD



FOCUS ON THE
SOCIAL CHANGES

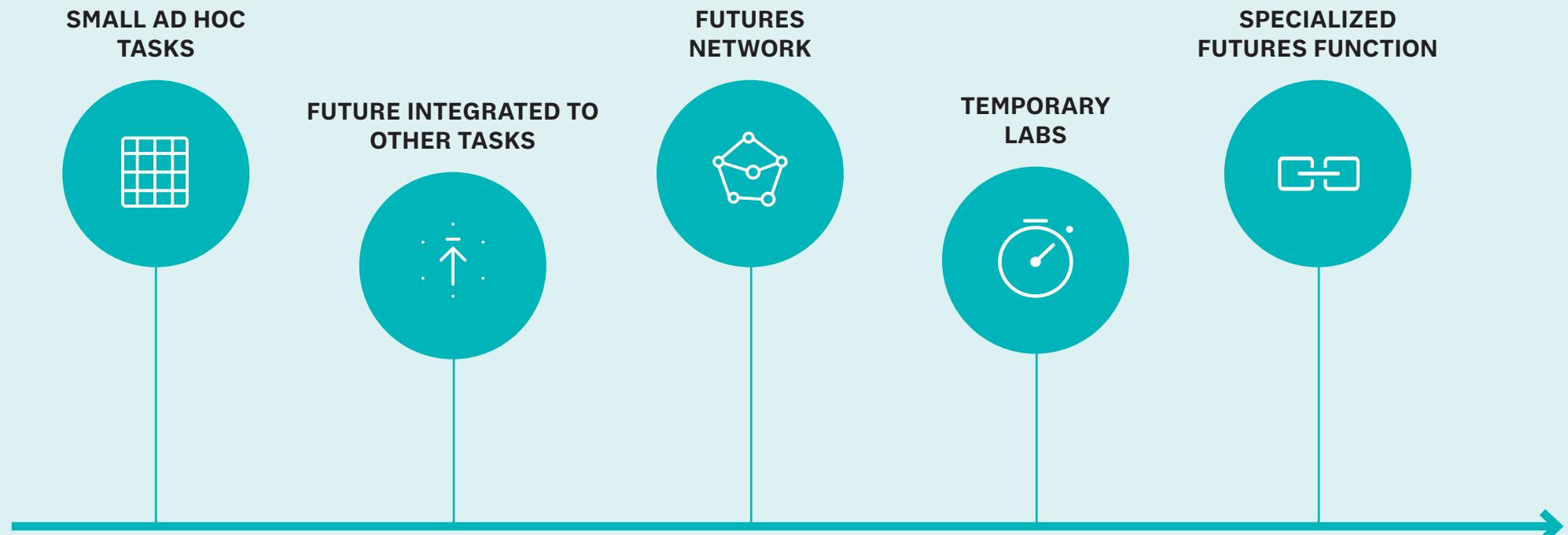


DON'T STOP
WONDERING



Recommendation 2:

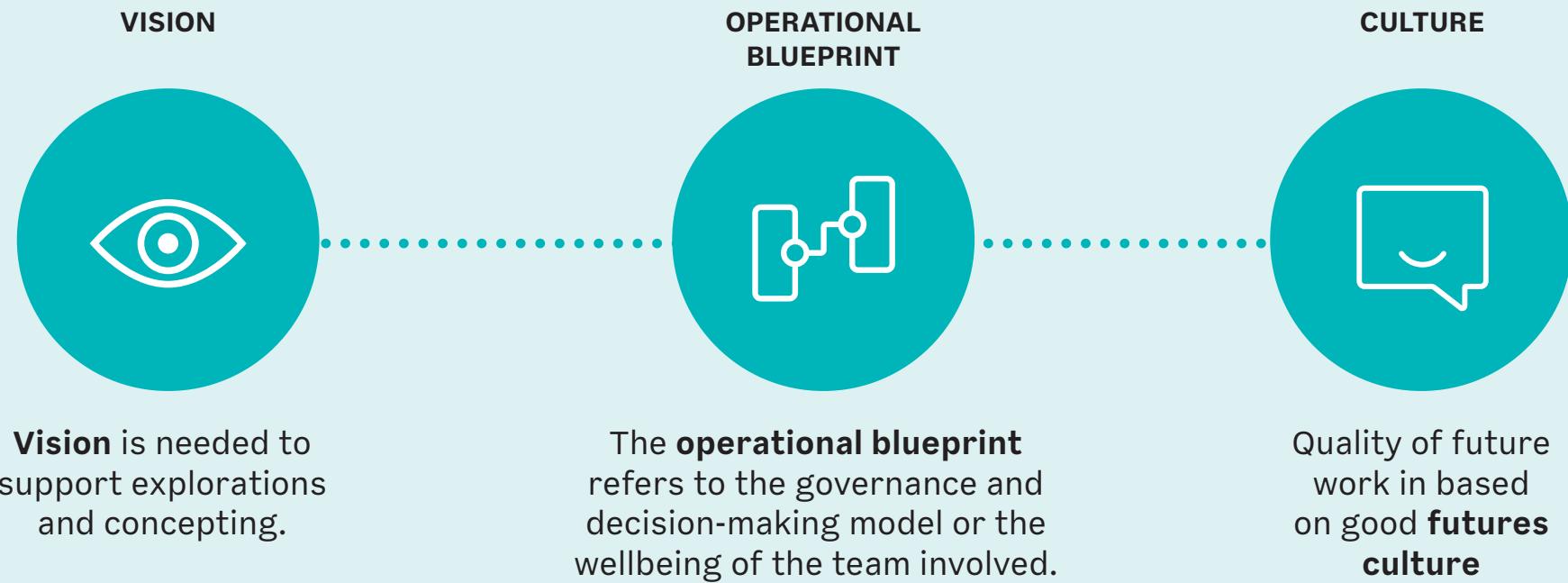
Support a futures culture where a broad base of employees are happy to scan for influences, imagine possibilities and communicate their findings



Increase in time and effort when moving to more structured futures work

How to set-up a foresight/futures function?

There are three key components: **1) vision**, **2) operational blueprint** and **3) culture**.



How to set-up a foresight/futures function?

Vision

Vision is needed to support explorations and concepting. Futures work vision can be about e.g.:

- improving predictability, quantifying of successful future insights to support decision-making
- enhancing creativity, quality of ideas in the innovation pipeline
- building bold future statements that engage customers and potential employees

Operational Blueprint

Whatever your vision, be sure to have the right metrics in place from the beginning. Operational blueprint refers to the governance and decision-making model, e.g. how you want to track business value, deliveries (future reports, customer insight collection, etc.) or the well-being of the team involved. It's wise to define methodology and tools repository, and to keep developing them throughout the learning path.

In the ideal case, the future work isn't based on a few bright individuals, but a documented process that you can trust to deliver quality results.

Culture

Quality of future work is based on good future culture. In our opinion future shouldn't be owned only by a function, since at its best it's a multidisciplinary and networked activity.

We have come a long way from an expert- and model-based foresight that was dominant in 1970. Future is not anymore just calculated, simulated or extrapolated from weak signals by specialists. The most recent trend in corporate foresight is context-based "open" foresight, a belief that the future is shaped in communities through interaction. (see e.g. Daheim & Uerz, 2008.)

Recommendation 3:

Reinvent your company core by experimentation – not by strategy making

The companies that really have to deal with change, will have to reinvent themselves fundamentally. It takes time, skills and effort to deep dive into the future. And just like you cannot do user-centred service design without getting out of the building and meeting the actual customers, you cannot “do futures” as a desktop exercise.

So when you want to reinvent your organisation and future-proof its value for the customers of tomorrow, think beyond strategy meetings. (See e.g. Noda & Bower, 1996.)

Start a process of experimentation, iteration and continuous learning.

Recommendations 1-2: Create a platform to solve the challenge based on our experience: **How to build a diverse, healthy basis for futures thinking and initiative building?**

Where to find good food for thought, who to follow, who should we give a platform to in futures? In the spirit of March 1st & International Futures Day: everybody.

What kind of experimentation can we make?

Experiments, tests and try-outs are a key part of the maker culture. You learn by doing, and your next iteration is typically closer to your goals. This also applies to futures work.

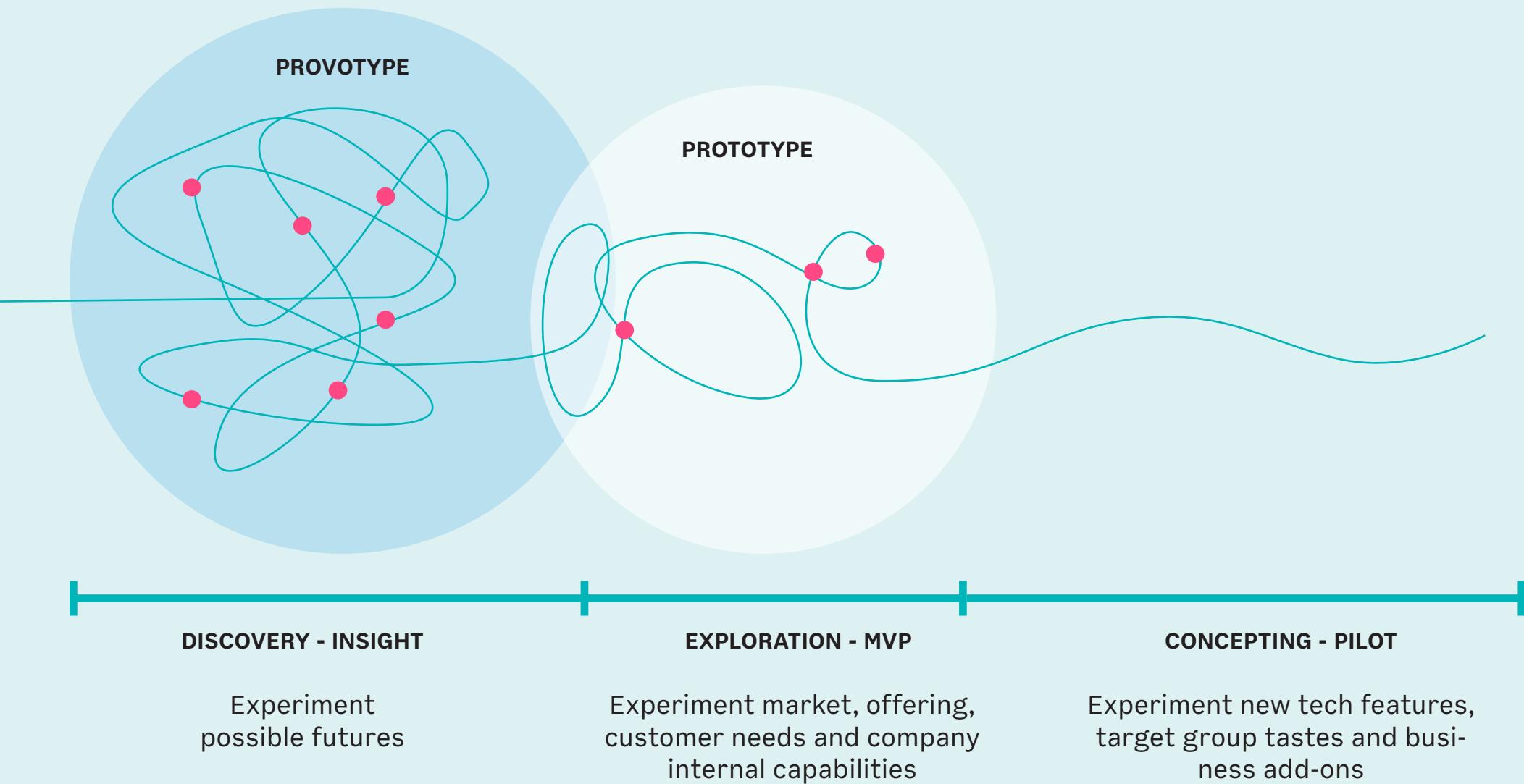
We call **provotyping** the act of creating pieces of future to be experienced already today. Some of our examples are a robot teaching sign language to autistic kids or a mathematical model for increasing competitiveness and well-being inside the EU.

By creating a provotype, we open a new discursive space - simply put, something that didn't exist before and would not exist without our initiative. There is something new to

react to and deliberate on. Through these kinds of speculations or provocations we already become more knowledgeable of what people expect, prefer, would value as an ingredient of their future.

Just like in prototyping, the discovery phase is always fuzzy, and complexities can seem overpowering. We do a careful background analysis, but when it comes to the future, you really cannot know. Creating a provotype entails the legitimization of guesswork. The movement between guessing, reflecting and researching will move us from the area of uncertainties and hazy expectations to the realm of making future, taking the initiative.

What kind of experimentation can we make?



If the future is boring, we are in trouble

We believe that futures literacy is a strategic differentiator in today's busy business landscape. We see it as an essential but often overlooked first step of innovation and strategic decision making.

Our survey findings open into new hypotheses, new questions and new ideas of how to future proof your business. You are warmly welcome to collaborate with us on these explorations.



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Want to Know more about the survey? Or just get to know us better?



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