

Workshops

Strategic Foresight | SGR



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1.0 Exploratory Futures Workshop

Description

This half-day workshop is meant to help teams build their internal capacity for creative thinking while exploring relevant emerging trends. Through a range of activities, participants will learn how to break free from conventional thinking patterns about what the future holds and think creatively about how they envision the future for your organization. The workshop is designed to help participants develop a more creative and collaborative approach to creative problem-solving, both individually and as part of a team. By enhancing their creative thinking skills, making the future more approachable, and building stronger relationships with their colleagues, participants will be better equipped to tackle complex challenges and achieve their goals in a rapidly-changing world.

Notes

- Working lunch
- Clients will select 12 trends that they would like to explore from SGR's trend database.

Objectives

1. **Enhance creative thinking:** Participants will tap into their innate creativity and develop their ability to generate and explore new ideas.
2. **Make the future more approachable:** Participants will learn how to do creative visioning to explore and understand different possible futures, and to identify opportunities and challenges that may lie ahead.
3. **Strengthen teamwork:** Through a range of collaborative exercises and activities, participants will learn how to work together to generate and develop ideas, and to support one another in the creative process.

Staff

This workshop requires 2 SGR staff.

Supplies

- Hot glue guns
- Glue sticks
- Twine
- Paper
- Markers
- Scissors
- Play-doh or clay
- Popsicle sticks
- Curated objects

Cost

\$3,500 plus travel expenses.

Agenda

Day 1 - half day

9:00am | 10 min – Workshop Kick-Off

- Welcome participants and introduce the team
- Explain objectives of the workshop
- Review plan for the day

9:10pm | 20 min – Shared History Timeline

- Reflect on changes seen throughout your lifetime (group exercise)
- Discuss how change fits into our concept of what is “normal”

9:30am | 1 hr - Trend Review

- A quick review of the 12 selected trends

10:30am | 15 min – break

10:45pm | 15 min – Creative Warm-Up Exercise

- Improve > Extrapolate > Transform: Participants generate novel ideas based on 3 rounds of given prompts.

11:00am | 30 min – Scenario Building

- Participants work in small groups to build scenarios of the future using the pre-selected trends and various wild card elements.
 - o Trend Synthesis
 - o In this future world... exercise
 - o Hopes & Fears exercise

11:30am | 1 hr – Future Artifacts

- Participants work in small groups to think creatively about how their organization fits into the scenario they created. Each group will be tasked with creating a “prototype” future artifact for their organization, department, or community that addresses either a hope or a fear about the future.
 - o Brainstorming
 - o Idea Synthesis
 - o Prototyping

12:30pm | 30 min – Group Debrief

- Teams share their scenarios and artifacts
- Recap of the day
- Reflections and feedback from participants

2.0 Strategic Futures Workshop

Description

This 1-day strategic workshop will help teams analyze and respond to emerging trends that could have a significant impact on their organization. Through a combination of presentations, case studies, and interactive exercises, participants will learn how to evaluate emerging trends, assess their potential impact, and develop strategic responses. The agenda is designed to help participants assess the current state of affairs, envision a desired future, and take actionable steps to get there. By the end of the day, you'll have a concrete plan of action and a clear understanding of who will own it.

Notes

Clients will select a topic of focus from SGR's topic library.

Objectives

1. **Learn about specific emerging trends:** Participants will learn about emerging trends that could have a significant impact on their organization.
2. **Assess potential impact:** Participants will learn how to assess the potential impact of emerging trends on their organization.
3. **Develop strategic response:** Participants will learn how to develop a strategic response to emerging trends that enables them to leverage opportunities and mitigate risks.

Staff

This workshop requires 2 SGR staff.

Cost

\$7,000 plus travel expenses.

Agenda

Day 1 - full day

9:00am | 15 min - Workshop Kick-Off

- Welcome participants and introduce the team
- Explain objectives of the workshop
- Review plan for the day

9:15am | 15 min - Why This Matters

- Client spokesperson presents the topic we will be investigating and why it is important for their organization

9:30am | 45 min - Trend Review

- Review of emerging trends and examples of innovations related to the selected topic

10:15am | 30 min - 3 Horizons

- Learn about the 3 Horizons Framework and how to think about the future in terms of changing systems

10:45am | 15 min - Break

11:00am | 1 hr – Business As Usual

- Use strategic questions from the 3 Horizons Framework to discuss business as usual, what's not fit for purpose, and what needs to be carried into the future (group exercise)

12:00pm | 1hr – Lunch**1:00pm | 1 hr – Visions of the Future**

- Use strategic questions from the 3 Horizons Framework to discuss what is disruptive, what is changing, and what the future might hold (group exercise)
- What if you do/don't scenarios exercise
- Hopes & Fears exercise

2:00pm | 1 hr – The Triangle of Choice

- Discussion of how the vision of the future relates to the current Strategic Plan (group discussions)
- Use strategic questions from the 3 Horizons framework to discuss action steps and how to navigate the "horizon 2" space (group exercise)
 - o What will we do about it?
 - o Who is going to own it?

3:00pm | 15 min – Group Debrief

- Teams share their plans
- Recap of the day
- Reflections and feedback from participants

3.0 Foresight Skill-Building Intensive

Description

This jam-packed two-day workshop is designed to equip participants with the necessary foresight skills to effectively integrate foresight into strategic planning. The workshop will begin with an introduction to the concept of foresight and its relevance in strategy development, followed by exploration of various foresight methods. Participants will learn a range of foresight tools and techniques, such as horizon scanning, driver analysis, and scenario planning, and practice using them in small groups. They will also learn how to develop foresight-informed visions and goals for the future. By the end of the workshop, participants will have developed a solid understanding of foresight and gained valuable skills that they can immediately apply to their work.

Objectives

1. **Develop a solid understanding of foresight:** Participants should come away from the workshop with a clear understanding of what foresight is and how it can be used to anticipate and prepare for future opportunities and challenges.
2. **Learn how to use various foresight tools and methods:** Participants should understand different types of foresight techniques and how to effectively apply them in a strategic context.
3. **Enhance strategic decision-making:** Ultimately, the goal of the workshop is to help participants make better strategic decisions by incorporating foresight into their decision-making process.

Staff

This workshop requires 2 SGR staff.

Cost

\$18,500 plus travel expenses.

Agenda

Day 1 - full day

9:00am | 15 min - Workshop Kick-Off

- Welcome participants and introduce the team
- Explain objectives of the workshop
- Introduce the concept of foresight and why it is important
- Review plan for the day

9:15am | 1 hr 15 min - Understanding Foresight

- Define foresight and explain its key features
- Present case studies of foresight in action
- Discuss the benefits and challenges of using foresight

10:30am | 15 min - Break

10:45am | 30 min - Shared History Timeline

- Reflect on changes seen throughout your lifetime (group exercise)
- Discuss how change fits into our concept of what is "normal"

11:15am | 45 min – Thinking About Change

- Review the 3 Horizons Framework
- Learn about the concepts of Baseline Futures and Weak Signals
- Understand how different perspectives about change influence behavior
- Discuss which perspectives you identify with and how it impacts your organization (group exercise)

12:00pm | 1 hr – lunch**1:00am | 45 min – Mapping Your Domain**

- Learn about topic domains and how to map them
- Learn how to set the scope of a foresight project
- Work together to map and categorize topics within a selected domain (group exercise)

1:45am | 1 hr – Horizon Scanning

- Learn about horizon scanning and how to analyze scanning hits
- Learn how to identify weak signals
- Discuss how sources for foresight are different from traditional research sources
- Work individually to find 2-3 scanning hits and share with the group (group exercise)

2:45am | 15 min – Group Debrief

- Recap what was learned
- Participants share any insights, ah-ha moments, questions, or points of interest

Day 2 - full day**9:00am | 15 min – Day #2 Kick-Off**

- Review what we accomplished on Day #1
- Review plan for the day

9:15am | 1 hr 15 min – Trend Review

- Presentation of emerging trends
- Review how trends become drivers of change
- Discuss which trends are most relevant to your organization (group exercise)

10:30am | 15 min – Break**10:45am | 1 hr 15 min – Scenario Building**

- Learn about how to create future scenarios using the Four Archetypes method
- Use trends and scanning hits to develop mini-archetype scenarios (group exercise)
- Learn about how to create future scenarios using the 2x2 method
- Use trends and scanning hits to develop mini-2x2 scenarios (group exercise)

12:00pm | 1 hr – lunch**1:00pm | 1 hr – Implications of the Future**

- Learn about Implications Wheels and how they can be used to think through the implications of key changes
- Using one of the previously developed scenarios, note the key changes between that future state and today (group exercise)
- Identify 3 key changes to explore and use Implications Wheels to brainstorm the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd order implications (group exercise)
- Discuss how some of the implications identified could impact your organization (group discussion)

2:00pm | 45 min – Strategic Development

- Return to the 3 Horizons Framework and discuss how it can be used as a tool for strategic thinking
- Using one of the changes previously identified, develop a strategy that either mitigates risks or moves your organization toward a preferred vision of the future

2:45am | 15 min – Workshop Wrap-Up

- Recap the main takeaways of the workshop
- Discuss continuing to develop foresight skills and applying foresight to your work
- Feedback and insights from participants

4.0 Challenging Assumptions Workshop

Description

Today's challenges can't be solved with yesterday's solutions. To create new strategic options, we need new ways to think about the problems we face. In fact, the way we frame problems limits our understanding of the issue as well as the solutions we can bring to the table. This 1-day workshop surfaces deeply held beliefs that prioritize certain approaches over others and unconsciously reinforce current practices. Exploring alternatives to current issues at various conceptual levels frees participants to create empowering solutions to persistent problems.

Objectives:

1. **Unpack an issue:** Get to the heart of the topic and understand deeper systemic issues.
2. **Uncover blind spots:** Incorporate a variety of perspectives and surface unconscious assumptions about how things work.
3. **Generate genuinely distinct strategic options:** Create practical strategies that drive functional alternatives to “business as usual.”

Staff

This workshop requires 2 SGR staff.

Cost

\$7,000 plus travel expenses.

Agenda

Day 1 - full day

9:00am | 15 min - Workshop Kick-Off

- Welcome participants and introduce the team
- Explain objectives of the workshop
- Review plan for the day

9:15am | 30 min - Introduction to Casual Layered Analysis (CLA)

- Review the CLA framework
- Discuss why CLA is useful in reframing challenges
- Learn to apply CLA with an example

9:45am | 50 min - CLA Deconstruction (small group exercise)

- Choose an issue or opportunity to analyze and discuss why it is important
- Use the CLA framework to discuss all layers of the issue

10:35am | 20 min - Break

10:55am | 50 min - CLA Reconstruction (small group exercise)

- Use the CLA framework to reconstruct the issue from a new perspective

11:45am | 1 hr - Lunch

12:45pm | 1 hr - Reframing Strategy (small group exercise)

- Apply the outputs of the CLA Reconstruction exercise to your organization or department's current plan for addressing the topic

- Discuss where the biggest differences are and what needs to change
- Share-out

1:45pm | 1 hr – Taking the Next Step (small group exercise)

- Determine what steps your team can take to move towards implementing this new strategic vision
 - o What are we going to do about it?
 - o Who owns it?
- Share-out

2:45pm | 15 min – Workshop Wrap-Up

- Recap insights from the day
- Feedback from participants

5.0 Systems Mapping

Description

In this 1-day workshop, participants will learn how to create and use systems maps to gain a deeper understanding of complex systems and identify leverage points for change. Through a combination of presentations, hands-on exercises, and group discussions, participants will learn how to visually represent complex systems and identify the relationships between different components. They'll also learn how to recognize feedback loops and dynamic relationships and understand the underlying structures that shape system behavior. By developing a systems-thinking mindset, participants will be better equipped to understand complex problems and develop more effective solutions.

Objectives:

1. **Develop a systems-thinking mindset:** Participants will shift their mindset from a reductionist, linear way of thinking to a more holistic, systems-based approach.
2. **Apply systems thinking to real-world challenges:** Participants will apply their systems thinking skills to real-world challenges.
3. **Foster collaboration and innovation:** Participants will learn how to leverage their collective knowledge and expertise to understand the innerworkings of a system and identify new insights and opportunities.

Staff

This workshop requires 2 SGR staff.

Cost

\$7,000 plus travel expenses.

Agenda

Day 1 - full day

9:00am | 15 min – Workshop Kick-Off

- Welcome participants and introduce the team
- Explain objectives of the workshop
- Review plan for the day

9:15am | 1 hr – Introduction to Systems Thinking

- An overview of systems thinking, including basic concepts and principles
- Examples of systems maps of real-world issues

10:15am | 15 min – Break

10:30am | 1 hr 30 min – Mapping Systems

- Learn how to map out complex systems using tools such as causal loop diagrams
- Learn how to identify feedback loops and leverage points in systems
- Learn about systems archetypes

12:00pm | 1 hr – Lunch

1:00pm | 2.5 hr – Applying Systems Thinking (group exercise)

- Apply systems thinking skills to a real-world problem and identify key systems, feedback loops, and leverage points
- Systems stories
- Develop potential solutions using leverage points

3:30pm | 30 min – Workshop Wrap-Up

- Solutions share-out
- Recap insights from the day
- Feedback from participants

6.0 Special Topics Deep Dive

Description

This workshop is designed to help participants develop a deeper understanding of the potential impact of future changes on their organization, highlighting both critical risks and opportunities. The workshop will begin with a review of selected emerging trends and a presentation of mini-scenarios that describe how those trends could play out in the future. Participants will then break into small groups to investigate future changes and identify key implications. In the afternoon, participants will build a shared vision of the future and develop strategies to work toward that vision. By the end of the workshop, participants will have gained valuable insights and skills that they can apply to their work, enabling them to better anticipate and prepare for future challenges.

Objectives:

1. **Learn to map implications:** Participants will learn to map the impacts of change in order to identify unintended consequences and discover opportunities.
2. **Build a shared vision of the future:** Participants will use trends and implications to build a shared vision of the future.
3. **Create a high-level strategy:** Participants will create a plan to achieve their visions of the future informed by a deep understanding of emerging change.

Staff

This workshop requires 2 SGR staff.

Cost

\$7,000 plus travel expenses.

Agenda

Day 1 - full day

9:00am | 15 min – Workshop Kick-Off

- Welcome participants and introduce the team
- Explain objectives of the workshop
- Review plan for the day

9:15am | 30 min – Trend Cluster #1

- Presentation of 2-3 trends
- Presentation of mini-scenarios

9:45am | 30 min – Implications Mapping

- Learn about Implications Wheels and how they can be used to think through the implications of key changes
- Using one of the previously developed scenarios, note the key changes between that future state and today (group exercise)
- Identify 3 key changes to explore and use Implications Wheels to brainstorm the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd order implications (group exercise)

10:15am | 15 min – Share-Out

- Discuss how some of the implications identified could impact your organization (group discussion)
- Key risks? Opportunities? Surprises?

10:30am | 15 min – Break**10:45am | 30 min – Trend Cluster #2**

- Presentation of 2-3 trends
- Presentation of mini-scenarios

11:15am | 30 min – Implications Mapping

- Using one of the previously developed scenarios, note the key changes between that future state and today (group exercise)
- Identify 3 key changes to explore and use Implications Wheels to brainstorm the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd order implications (group exercise)

11:45am | 15 min – Share-Out

- Discuss how some of the implications identified could impact your organization (group discussion)
- Key risks? Opportunities? Surprises?

12:00pm | 1 hr – Lunch**12:45pm | 1 hr – Vision Building**

- Using the implications and trends from the morning, create a preferred vision of the future for your organization.
 - o Hopes & Fears exercise
 - o Mitigating risks
 - o Seizing opportunities

1:45pm | 1 hr – Strategy Development

- Use the backcasting technique to create a roadmap for change
 - o Assumptions & Questions exercise
 - o Monitoring change

2:45pm | 15 min – Workshop Wrap-Up

- Recap insights from the day
- Feedback from participants

7.0 Generative AI

Description

This workshop is designed for teams that are curious about the potential of artificial intelligence to enhance their work and generate innovative solutions. Over the course of the workshop, participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of what generative AI is and how it can be leveraged effectively in the public sector. During the workshop, we will explore a wide range of use cases where generative AI has demonstrated its value in local government. In addition to theoretical knowledge, participants will have hands-on opportunities to engage with generative AI tools and platforms. Our expert facilitators will guide you through how to use text and image generation AIs, teaching you how to effectively use generative AI to complete specific tasks. Participants will also explore the impact generative AI may have on their organizations and communities as adoption of these tools continues to grow. By the end of this workshop, participants will have a solid understanding of generative AI, a toolkit of practical skills, and the confidence to apply generative AI techniques to their daily work.

Notes

- Working lunch
- Participants must bring their own laptop
- Participants will need to register for OpenAI, Google, and/or Midjourney accounts

Objectives:

1. **Understand the fundamentals of generative AI:** Participants will develop a solid understanding of what generative AI is and its underlying principles.
2. **Explore use cases for local government:** Participants will explore a variety of use cases where generative AI can be applied effectively within the local government context.
3. **Gain practical skills in using generative AI tools:** Participants will gain hands-on experience using generative AI tools and platforms.

Staff

This workshop requires 1 SGR staff.

Cost

\$4,000 plus travel expenses.

Agenda

Day 1 - half day

9:00am | 15 min – Workshop Kick-Off

- Welcome participants and introduce the team
- Explain objectives of the workshop
- Review plan for the day

9:15am | 30 min – Generative AI

- Presentation on the basics of generative AI, including possibilities and risks

9:45am | 15 min – Local Government Use Cases

- Presentation of real-world uses of generative AI within the local government context

10:00am | 15 min - Using Generative Chatbots

- Walk through how to prompt an AI chatbot, like ChatGPT or Google Bard, to complete a specific task
- Best practices, methods, and inspiration for creative prompting

10:15am | 15 min - Using Generative Image AIs

- Walk through how to prompt an AI image generator, like Midjourney or Dall-e, to create a specific image
- Best practices, methods, and inspiration for creative prompting

10:30am | 15 min - Account Set-up

- Set up accounts for OpenAI, Google, and/or Midjourney

10:45am | 15 min - Break**11:00am | 30 min - Personal Project**

- Each participant will use generative AI tools to complete a personal project, with guidance and support from the facilitator

11:30pm | 15 min - Share-Out

- Participants share what they created, how they did it, and any challenges or insights they uncovered

11:45am | 30 min - Implications Mapping

- Use Implications Wheels to brainstorm the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd order implications for the use of generative AI and its impact on local government (group exercise). Choose 3 of the following to explore:
 - o Generative AI is used to spoof the voices of your co-workers and it sounds real
 - o Generative AI is used by bad actors to create fake news about your community
 - o Generative AI automates the majority of knowledge-worker jobs in your organization
 - o Generative AI is used create a chatbot for your local government
 - o Citizens primarily engagement with the local government through the use of a personal AI

12:15pm | 30 min - Share-Out

- Discuss how some of the implications identified could impact your organization (group discussion)
- Key risks? Opportunities? Surprises?

12:45pm | 15 min - Workshop Wrap-Up

- Recap insights from the day
- Feedback from participants

8.0 Custom Futures Workshop

Description

SGR can design custom workshops at the request of clients. Clients may work with SGR to develop a completely custom agenda or may choose elements from the list below to populate an agenda.

Workshop Types:

Workshops can be designed to achieve 1 of 3 different areas of focus.

- **Strategic** – focused on answering key questions regarding the future of a specific topic, trend, problem, or domain
- **Exploratory** – general exploration of the future of a given domain or topic
- **Skill-Building** – focused on building foresight skills within a team

Workshop Elements:

- **Foresight Frameworks**
 - o 3 Horizon Framework
 - o Futures Triangle
 - o Casual Layered Analysis
 - o Futures Cone
 - o Multi-Level Perspective
 - o Manoa Wheels
 - o Speculative Design
 - o Speculative Stories
- **Foresight Games**
 - o Thing from the Future
 - o Disruptus
 - o Polak
- **Foresight Methods**
 - o Domain Mapping
 - o Horizon Scanning
 - o Driver Development
 - o Archetype Scenarios
 - o 2x2 Scenarios
 - o Systems Mapping
 - o Implications Mapping
- **Design & Innovation Methods**
 - o Journey Mapping
 - o Stakeholder Mapping
 - o Empathy Mapping
 - o Brainstorming
 - o Bodystorming
 - o Collaborative Competition
 - o Futures Artifacts
 - o Hopes & Fears
 - o Assumptions & Questions
 - o Mild-to-Wild
- **Strategic Planning Methods**
 - o Backcasting
 - o 3 Horizons Framework
 - o Strategic Workbooks

Cost

TBD based on selected elements, plus travel expenses.