What's Next? Foresight
Connie Williams

An excerpt from:

imagine
THAT!

Celebrating 50 years of **Synectics**
Edited by Vincent Nolan & Connie Williams

***Imagine* That!** celebrates the first 50 years of Synectics, a set of highly specific innovation techniques and behaviors that help individuals and teams work together in creative ways that are positive and action-oriented. Elements include strong collaborative approaches that invite speculation, fun, courage and idea development.

They originally derived from observational analysis of thousands of audio and videotape recordings of live invention sessions and meetings. They have been used successfully around the world in a wide variety of situations over the last 50 years.
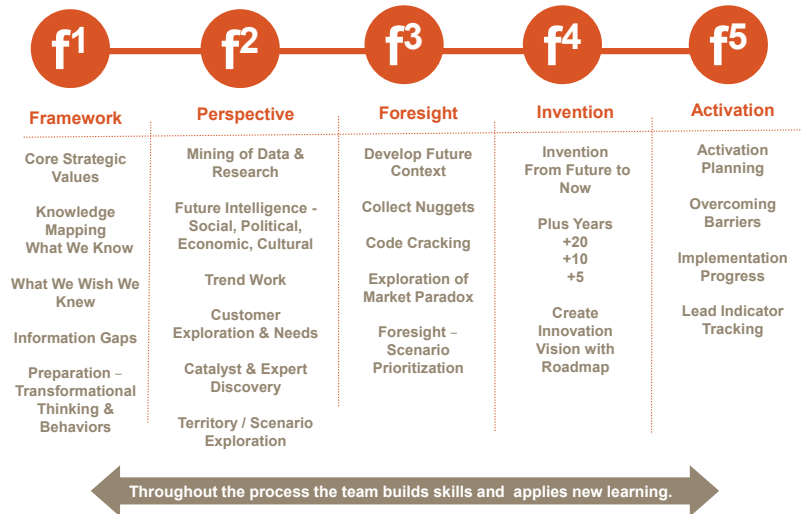
The book is a collection of stories and articles from current and former staff members, clients and other associates.

Synecticsworld

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Foresight Stages

f1	f2	f3	f4	f5
Framework	**Perspective**	**Foresight**	**Invention**	**Activation**
Core Strategic Values	Mining of Data & Research	Develop Future Context	Invention From Future to Now	Activation Planning
Knowledge Mapping What We Know	Future Intelligence - Social, Political, Economic, Cultural	Collect Nuggets	Plus Years +20 +10 +5	Overcoming Barriers
What We Wish We Knew	Trend Work	Code Cracking		Implementation Progress
Information Gaps	Customer Exploration & Needs	Exploration of Market Paradox	Create Innovation Vision with Roadmap	Lead Indicator Tracking
Preparation – Transformational Thinking & Behaviors	Catalyst & Expert Discovery	Foresight – Scenario Prioritization		
	Territory / Scenario Exploration			

Throughout the process the team builds skills and applies new learning.

I believe the next big opportunity on the horizon for Synectics is to build on its iPower5™ Insight model with an active practice area in Foresight. One of the biggest problems facing companies and other organizations is how to plan for the future. What to invest in? Where to place your bets? We don't have the ability to perfectly predict the future; but we do have the creative thinking skills and behaviors to build an imaginative look at the future and to help companies create powerful future scenarios and plan appropriate implications.

In Foresight, we need to determine new, advantaged knowledge – what others do not know but we discover through powerful designs. We also want to discover the unknown future opportunities – what we don't know we don't know. So if Insight is about current needs and wants of the market place, foresight is both

discovering and creating the longer term future needs and wants of the marketplace.

Our work in long term strategy for clients shows us that developing an advanced model for foresight requires treating it as much more than the prediction of futurists or a technology development exercise. It involves both analytical and imaginative thinking, which reaches beyond typical corporate approaches to strategic planning. And, it typically does not have a single answer – clients must consider multiple scenarios and make some collective bets to create a true shared Vision of the Future. Creating foresight should result from a rich creative exploration about where the future might lead and the output is a way to inform long term strategy, research and development investment and acquisition strategies. Organizations need to be inspired beyond pure trend extrapolation.

Consistent with Synectics heritage, the Synectics Foresight model is custom designed for clients to explore future scenarios in the marketplace that will have a powerful impact on future consumer or customer behaviors, thus profoundly changing the needs they may have for products and services. The Foresight process looks at long term trends both regionally and globally and also includes individual catalyst, expert and provocateur stimulus which are designed and selected to challenge and change future expectations. Senior leaders are facilitated in "force-fitting" disparate and emerging aspects of cultural, social, political and technological evolution to imaginatively create alternative future scenarios. The Foresight model explores the contradictions and paradox in market data to build unexpected future scenarios.

Foresight has the ability to be a significant game changer for our clients – to help the organization prepare for that future and to build comfort and reduce uncertainty about the future. While we can't completely predict the future – we can certainly be prepared with the right competencies and expectations.

Window to the Future
to identify what we don't know we don't know about the future

	Known to Company	Not Known to Company
Known to Others	Fundamental	Blind Side
Not Known to Others	Advantaged Knowledge	Unknown Future Opportunity