



Question the Future Framework

1. **What don't we know?** (What aren't we seeing? Who aren't we hearing? How can we broaden our lens to see the world more clearly?) The purpose of this question is to humbly accept the notion that there is an idea, concept, product, behavioral change, technological advance, etc. "out there" that could affect your business and its customers in a material way in the near future.
2. **To what trends might your company pay closer attention?** Are there signals that an existing trend (e.g. Blockchain, the sharing economy, etc.) is moving faster than expected? Discuss the implications of this trend.
3. **How might your company stay on top of new, emerging trends and issues?** (Seek to identify at least one new informational sources (e.g. a book, a website, a new magazine, etc.) that could shed new insight on how the world is changing.
4. **Who might your organization learn from?** Is there someone on the "fringe" that your company could bring in to: 1) Discuss a new issue; 2) Stimulate new thinking; or 3) Help you see the world from a different perspective?
5. **What assumption(s) about your company's business, business model, competitors, customers, etc. might you want to challenge?** Have every member of the group share at least one article they read (since the last meeting) that seriously challenged their thinking.
6. **How might the world change faster than we expect?** Ask every participant to identify a headline from the past month (e.g. "Uber Now More valuable Than General Motors", etc.) that surprised them. Consider how these rapid changes could affect your company and its customers.
7. **How can your organization keep an open mind to the future?** (Playing off the last "headline" exercise, ask participants to construct a fictional future headline that might stretch people's thinking.)
8. **How might your company go out of business within the next 5 years?** (This question should be asked on an annual basis).
9. **What should your company do even if it might fail?** (The purpose of this question is to identify possible experiments or pilot project your organization might consider conducting.)
10. **What won't change?**
11. **What questions aren't we asking?**

Action Items:

- 1) List all of the questions generated during the session.
- 2) Ask if anyone wishes to add additional questions to the list.
- 3) Ask participants to identify--from their perspective--the most important question.
- 4) Task everyone with the responsibility for thinking further about "their" question and, at the next meeting, share their insights on how your company/organization might want to begin answering the question.