

Strategic Alignments that Shape Global Futures

The World Economic Forum and other organizations have put tools and resources together that will help and keep your business in global alignment with the massive changing landscapes.

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- **Governments, businesses and non-profits today face myriad emerging risks, both known and unknown.**
- **When there is such uncertainty, preparedness is key and strategic foresight becomes an essential asset for businesses.**
- **A capabilities view of strategic foresight includes perceiving signals, prospecting impacts and testing innovative solutions to navigate the future proactively.**

Many leaders today feel they are navigating a world changing faster than their organizations can adapt. From geopolitical shocks and technological disruptions to mounting climate risks and economic uncertainties, the pace and scale of transformation are stretching organizational resources and operations to their limits.

Yet amid this volatility, a new class of organizations is emerging – whether government or business, they anticipate change, explore emerging risks and opportunities and adapt their strategies before disruption hits. Part of what sets these organizations apart is not luck or size but their ability to anticipate using what we call strategic foresight.

Strategic foresight is the capacity to explore multiple plausible futures and develop strategies that remain robust across a range of scenarios. For the most advanced organizations, it also involves shaping narratives that align long-term objectives, visions and value creation with broader societal and environmental goals.

However, plausible futures are not what will happen but what might happen. So, how can leaders know if their organization is future-fit? How do you benchmark a capability that is intangible yet essential for long-term success?

“Organizations with foresight capabilities don’t just react to change, they shape it.”

These questions are why the [EDHEC Business School](#) and the [Dubai Future Foundation](#) are launching a new [Organizational Future Fitness self-assessment tool](#) in collaboration with the World Economic Forum’s [Global Foresight Network](#). The research-based framework and best practices are one way organizations in the private, public and non-profit sectors can reflect on their capabilities, benchmark against peers and identify opportunities for improvement.

Strategic foresight in the private sector

Strategic foresight is no longer a “nice-to-have” for businesses but an essential asset. Leading companies are already demonstrating how foresight capabilities can enable resilience, drive innovation and create sustainable value:

Shell, for example, has been using scenario planning since the 1970s to anticipate geopolitical risks such as the oil embargo imposed by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries. It continues to use this strategy to navigate the energy transition.

Cisco, meanwhile, employs technology foresight to spot emerging tech trends, guide research and development investments and position itself in markets of the future.

Organizations with foresight capabilities don’t just react to change, they shape it. They are more agile in crises, better prepared for disruption and more consistent in their long-term commitments to stakeholders.

Strategic foresight in the public and non-profit sector

Strategic foresight is also gaining ground in the public sector, where uncertainty is particularly difficult to respond to due to long planning cycles, political pressures and systemic interdependencies.

Governments and multilateral institutions are using foresight to:

- Design future-oriented policies that anticipate demographic, technological and environmental trends.
- Make decisions that remain robust under uncertainty.
- Build resilience into infrastructure, food systems and supply chains.
- Engage with stakeholders in co-creating desirable futures.

The Finnish Parliament, for example, has institutionalized foresight through its Committee for the Future, which systematically integrates future thinking into national policy debates.

“In an era of increasing complexity, future fitness is the foundation of resilient, sustainable and purpose-driven organizations.”

Singapore’s Centre for Strategic Futures focuses on government policy foresight and the Dubai Future Foundation enables Dubai’s future readiness.

Similarly, the European Commission, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and various UN agencies have established foresight units and developed foresight tools and guides that contribute directly to strategic planning and cross-governmental and global coordination.

Future fit public and non-profit sector organizations are enabled to benchmark their capabilities, advance cross-sector learning and connect with a global community of foresight practitioners working toward more adaptive approaches to public sector management and societal impact.