

Using Strategic Foresight 2.0 at Work: The Foresight Mentality and Its Core Tools

A Foresight Canada strategic foresight training program
In cooperation with SCN, HRIA and CPA Alberta

To Register: go to www.scnetwork.ca

Background

By now, we all know that we need to be better prepared to cope with an increasingly complex and ambiguous future. However, this is easier said than done. The facts are that we in Alberta, as organizations and a province, have been surprised far too often by unforeseen twists of history.

The root trouble is this: Our imagination and what we think we know run counter to reality – we don't even think about, much less prepare for, any future we can't or won't imagine. And, this blindness to potential emerging futures is costing us billions as it harms our reputation and erodes our lives, businesses, communities and environment.

Vision Served

We envision a time when Albertans have learned to foresee and consciously shape their future; a time when, while there is still time to do so, we avoid the steepest costs of change and capitalize on the opportunities hidden in a tumultuous world; a time when we are leading future-makers; no longer future-takers.

Strategic Intent

Our strategic intention is to achieve this vision (1) by stretching our imaginations, hearts and minds until we can foresee and encompass the full range of potential futures and (2) by developing our personal, organizational and societal capacities to see and shape futures that embody our deepest desires and highest aspirations.

This Program

This program – *Using Strategic Foresight at Work: The Foresight Mentality and Its Core Tools* provides a solid grounding in the most current version of strategic foresight – Strategic Foresight 2.0. It is taught and facilitated by Ruben Nelson, Canada's most widely-experienced teacher and practitioner of Strategic Foresight 2.0.

Strategic Foresight 2.0

Strategic Foresight 2.0 is a personal, group and societal capacity/culture – one that enables its practitioners (a) to make and live by the wise and context-sensitive commitments that lead to the co-creation of a deeply desirable future and (b) to do so while there is still time to act and make significant differences.

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Program Objectives

By the end of this program, you will:

- Understand the nature of and case for practicing the most current version of strategic foresight.
- Have begun to develop the mentality and capabilities of a practitioner of strategic foresight.
- Be able to use and work with these four core foresight tools:
 - Paradigmatic Analysis,
 - Causal Layered Synthesis,
 - Causal Relationships Mapping,
 - Strategic Background Conditions.

Features:

- Title: *Using Strategic Foresight at Work: The Foresight Mentality and Its Core Tools.*
- Timing: Six morning sessions: one a month for six months.
- Time Commitment: Six morning sessions 08:30 to 12:00. Plus 2-4 hours of preparation between each session.
- Dates: January 13, February 17, March 16, April 13, May 18, June 15. These dates may change, but only with the agreement of the participants of the training program.
- Focal Question: *What mentality and tools will enable me to use Strategic Foresight 2.0 at work and do so routinely and effectively?*
- Assumptions:
 - The Boy Scouts have it right: In a dynamic, complex and human world, surprises are inevitable. One must *be prepared* for almost anything.
 - Being blindsided is always worse than mishandling something you see coming.
 - Notionally, we know this. None of us disagrees.
 - However, in practical terms, as organizations and a culture, we are still organized for yesterday. Most folks and firms still rely on inherited and embedded insights, metaphors, attitudes, aspirations and structures – habits of hand, heart and mind that no longer connect us with or alert us to emerging realities.
 - Therefore, as persons, organizations and a whole society, over and over again, we have been surprised by events in the 21st Century. Most of these *surprises* have cost us dearly – financially, physically, psychologically and environmentally. Consider the cost of: not seeing BSE coming to Alberta, the recent “discovery” that we need pipelines through others’ territories to get oil/gas to market, the “surprise” of American resistance to and rejection of the XL pipeline, the “surprise” of the 2013 flood, the timid response to climate disruption, the “surprising” end of the PC dynasty, the “surprise” that this time the price of oil may not rebound for years, and the emerging reality that Canadian aboriginals are full citizens with real rights.
 - In hindsight, we can see that these *surprises* and their costs are self-inflicted wounds. The enemy truly is us. We have been unwilling to take seriously that we live in profoundly changing times; to invest the money and effort to see where the puck is

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going. Rather, we have let ourselves off the hook by claiming that “no one could have imagined, much less foreseen” the realities that have overrun us.

- As it turns out, this latter claim is false. We simply have not made the efforts and investments required to learn to read the signs of the times, and thereby reduce the shock and cost of that which surprises us.
- Failures of operation planning can cost us millions. Failures of strategic planning can cost us hundreds of millions. Failures of strategic foresight typically cost us billions. Yet we invest most on operational planning and least on strategic foresight.
- We need to invest in and utilize strategic foresight. And do so routinely.
- Participation: Each session will include some formal teaching and a good deal of minds/hearts/hands-on practice. Each session will end with an assignment – something to think about before the next session. A Google group will also be formed among participants to nurture shared learning.
- Project: In May, in order to reinforce digestion and learning, each participant will be required to capture and present his/her key strategic insights to his/her home organization or some other appropriate group.
- Price Reduction: Members of SCN, HRIA, CPA Alberta and Foresight Canada’s network may register and participate at a cost that is 1/3 off the normal price.

Thematic Focus of Each of the Six Sessions

1. An Introduction to Strategic Foresight 2.0 and the mentality it requires.
2. Developing your foresight mentality and capacities by using *Paradigmatic Analysis* and *Causal Layered Synthesis*.
3. Developing your foresight mentality and capacities by using *Causal Relationships Mapping*.
4. Developing your foresight mentality and capacities by working with *Strategic Background Conditions*.
5. Developing your foresight mentality and capacities by using Foresight Canada’s *Whole Systems Governance Onion*.

Note that between sessions 5 and 6 each participant will prepare her/his key insights into Strategic Foresight 2.0 and present them to a suitable group.

6. Developing your foresight mentality and capacities by a reflexive review of the training sessions and the presentations.

Fees:

- Fees include a light continental breakfast, morning breaks, course material, instruction and Fuze-based tutoring between sessions. (Fuze is a group communications software.)
- **Members of SCN, HRIA, CPA Alberta and Foresight Canada’s network are eligible for a 1/3 reduction of the fee.**
- Fees to be paid to and administered by SCN.
- Normal fee: \$2,400.00 + 5% GST
- **Reduced fee for the persons indicated above: \$1,600.00 + 5% GST**
- **To Register go to: www.scnetwork.ca**

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Facilitator: Ruben Nelson

Ruben Nelson is a big picture strategic thinker and advisor. A Canadian pioneer of serious futures work, Ruben has spent his life exploring and seeking to understand and respond to the forces that are now re-shaping our lives, our world and our future. Today, he is Canada's leading researcher, practitioner and teacher of Strategic Foresight 2.0 – the new cognitive work of whole systems governance and leadership.

Ruben challenges those with whom he works to commit to the creation of an economy and society that are truly aligned with the emerging conditions of the 21st Century. He does so because he believes that the 21st Century is a rare hinge of history – a time during which we must learn to evolve beyond our Modern/Industrial cultures and aspirations. Ruben calls this breathtaking task the *Core Challenge of the 21st Century*.

Ruben is the only Canadian who is a Fellow of the *World Academy of Art and Science*, the *World Business Academy* and the *Meridian Institute on Leadership, Governance, Change and the Future*. He is a past President of *The Canadian Association for Futures Studies* and the *International Association for Humanistic Psychology*. Ruben is a member of the *Association of Professional Futurists*, the *World Futures Studies Federation* and *SCN*. He is Executive Director of *Foresight Canada*.

See also www.foresightcanada.com

For Information about the Training Program, please contact

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