Creating a More *Future-Proof* Association

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| Random | Routine |
|---|---|
| Unpredictable | Repetitious |
| Sometimes volatile | Predictable |
| Can change rapidly | Fairly constant |
| | |
| **Weather-like** | **Machine-like** |

Think of the world in which we live, which is it becoming more like?

Weather and machines concept: Dr. Kathleen Allen

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**We still use machine-like principles to manage an increasingly weather-like world.**

Weather and machines concept: Dr. Kathleen Allen

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**V**olatile
**U**ncertain
**C**omplex
**A**mbiguous

Organizations that thrive in VUCA environments are consistently better at exploring impactful trends and recalibrating their efforts in light of changing conditions.
*In short, they get better at generating insight & foresight.*

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"We like to say that the flexibility of our strategy and our business should directly correlate to the level of uncertainty."

**Linda Hasenfratz**
CEO, Linamar
Canadian auto parts manufacturer

INSIDE THE MIND OF THE CEO

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**"What we see is most influenced by who we have decided to be."**
Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, biologists

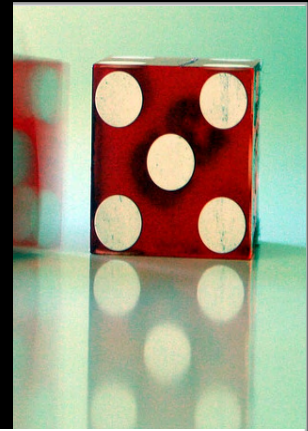Jeffrey Cufaude, Idea Architects • info@ideaarchitects.org • @jc46202

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**5 Why Process**
(root cause analysis)

**What is a VMA exec's work in a VUCA world?**

Why does this work matter?

Why is this work important?

What meaning or value does it help create?

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When we know your **why**, we know the essence of what you believe and stand for … and that inspires connection.

START WITH WHY
HOW GREAT LEADERS INSPIRE EVERYONE TO TAKE ACTION
SIMON SINEK

THE GOLDEN CIRCLE
WHY HOW WHAT
by SIMON SINEK

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SECURITY

**"Purpose is your bouncer."**

"It is a tool, a filter that helps you determine all the details, grand and trivial."

THE ART OF GATHERING
HOW WE MEET AND WHY IT MATTERS
PRIYA PARKER
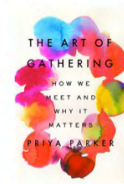
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**Perspectives on Leading in a VUCA World**

Stand by the # corresponding to the one on the top right of your handout.

Review the quote matching that # (on the wall poster & on handout, page two.

Identify one implication (*so what?*) of your quote for a VMA executive and one implication for a VMA.

Note it large and legibly in the space provided on the wall poster.

Select a reporter to briefly share.

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turning to one another
margaret j. wheatley
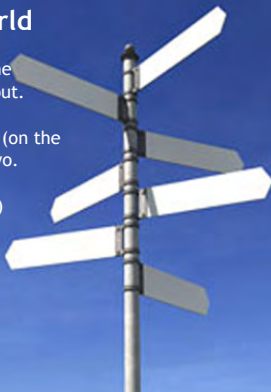
"The primary way to prepare for the unknown is to attend to the quality of our relationships, to how well we trust one another. It is possible to prepare for the future without knowing what it will be.
*Margaret Wheatley*

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"Breaking an old business model is always going to require leaders to follow their instinct. There will always be persuasive reasons not to take a risk. But if you only do what worked in the past, you will wake up one day and find that you've been passed by."

*Clayton Christensen*

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"In the unfair way in which life operates, the moment at which you have the richest, most trustworthy information is often the moment at which you have the least power to change the story told by that info."
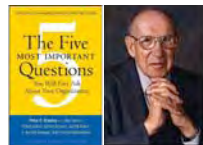
*Rita McGrath*

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"Do we produce results sufficiently outstanding for us to justify putting our resources in this area? Need alone does not justify continuing. Nor does tradition."

Peter Drucker, *The Five Most Important Questions*

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"Ultimately, the one sustainable competitive advantage that a company can have is a **culture that enables its people and the entire organization to learn faster.** Fast learning has to come from a place of people feeling safe to talk about what's working and not working, of recognizing that their job is not to appear perfect but to get better."

*Amy Pressman*
president and co-founder of Medallia, a provider of customer service technology. "Corner Office," *New York Times*

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"To foster innovation and transformation, leaders should . . . identify unsolved problems, map the wider system influencing results, and determine weak links to strengthen or gaps to fill. But to do all that effectively, they must first jump out of the box and leave the building."

*Rosabeth Moss Kanter*
Harvard Business School

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## Who We Are vs. What We Do

**"Leadership is a matter of how to be, not how to do.**

We spend most of our life mastering how to do things, but in the end it is the quality and character of the individuals that defines the performance of great leaders."

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**Slide 1:**

"Values are core beliefs or desires which guide or motivate attitudes and actions."



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**Slide 2:**

In a VUCA world, which values do you think VMA executives and board members will need to increasingly call upon to guide their discussions and decisions?

Collectively select up to five. Note *other*.

"Values are core beliefs or desires which guide or motivate attitudes and actions."



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**Slide 3:**

Thinking of your association the next 10 years, what will the issues you face and/or the programs or services you offer most likely reflect?

| 10 … 100 | 20 … 50 | 10 … 100 |
|---|---|---|
| **40%** | **30%** | **34%** |
| CONTINUITIES | CYCLES | NOVELTIES |
| Those things that were part of the pas, are important now, and will be part of the future. | Economic, technological, generational, professional, or other kinds of cycles where things that happened before will be important again. | Those things that are (almost) completely new, that were not part of the past and may only be emerging now, but will be important in the future. |

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**Slide 4:**

**Step One: Individual Work (5 minutes)**
Note a trend **supporting progress** on a YELLOW Post-It.
Note a trend **impeding progress** on a BLUE or AQUA Post-It.
*Technology & science, economic, politics, society, business, association areas.*

**Step Two: Group Work (15 minutes max) • join A,B,C,D groups**
Individuals read their trend (round-robin style) and post on map.
*If the trend relates to one already posted, place your Post-It adjacent to that item. These are called affinity clusters.*
Repeat until all trends have been placed on the map.
Now draw a line around clusters of topically similar trends and write a name for that cluster.

**Step Three: Individual Work (5 minutes)**
Using a pen or marker, place/draw **five DOTS** on the individual trends you believe VMA leaders most need to attend to and consider action. You may allocate your sdots among any number of trends.

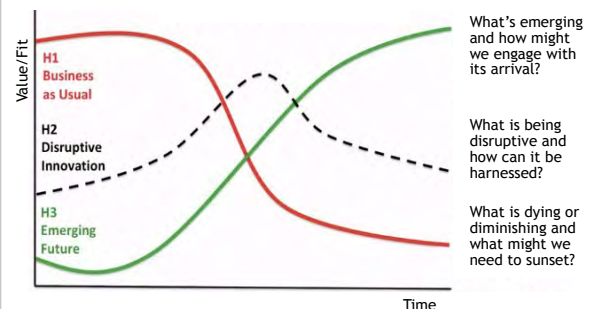Jeffrey Cufaude, Idea Architects • info@ideaarchitects.org • @jc46202

**Slide 5:**

## Focus on the Job(s) to Be Done (JTBD)
### Clayton Christensen, Harvard Business School



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**Slide 6:**

Trends and Three Horizons Thinking • Bill Sharpe



What's emerging and how might we engage with its arrival?

What is being disruptive and how can it be harnessed?

What is dying or diminishing and what might we need to sunset?

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**Zoom out**
What do our environmental scanning efforts suggest our profession and the market might look like 10 to 20 years from now?

What kind of organization will we need to be then in order to be successful? What changes are required?

**Zoom in**
What are a few initiatives we could pursue in the next 6-12 months that would most accelerate our transition to becoming that kind of organization?

What metrics could help us understand how successful these initiatives are?

**Zoom Out and Zoom In**
is a concept from
*John Seely Brown and John Hagel,*
Deloitte Center for the Edge

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Partner with one or two people with whom you've not interacted much yet and share a takeaway or two from our morning session … what stands out most for you right now?

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## Scenarios are compelling stories about possible futures.

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## Scenarios Planning:
### *What It Is*

- A way to explore possible futures.
- A tool to improve the quality of decision-making.
- A way to help people think about the unthinkable.
- A means for helping create a sense of urgency.

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## Scenarios Planning:
### *What It Isn't*

- A tool designed to predict the future.
- A method for single-point forecasting.
- Something that is right for every strategy session.

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## Scenarios Planning:
### *When to Use It*

- When the future is VUCA.
- When the present is very well-managed or plateaued.
- To explore how significant trends could play out.

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## Scenarios Planning:
### *When Not to Use It*

- When trends or critical factors are unknown or unclear.
- When time is very constrained.
- With a group prone to "analysis paralysis."

Strategy is "an integrated set of choices that results in a unique position with lasting advantages."

**Two key questions:**
(1) where to play and
(2) how to win.

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**Williams Bridges: Transition and Change**

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*New beginnings:* individuals are asked to commit to new behaviors

*NEUTRAL ZONE*

*Endings:* letting go of something

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"We resist transition not because we can't accept the **change**, but because we can't accept letting go of that piece of ourselves that we have to give up when and because the situation has changed."
**William Bridges**

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**Slide 1:**

# Futures Wheel



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**Slide 2:**

VMAE • Questions as Catalysts

What are some of the questions surfacing for you about what executives, boards, and business partners might need to do (could do) to future-proof VMAs?

Note Your Individual Responses in this Box

Questions Others At Your Table Share

In the box at the top of your card, note a few of the questions about future-proofing an association that are surfacing for you.

Now go around your table and have each person share one question. Feel free to note them in the space provided.

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**Slide 3:**

VMAE • Questions as Catalysts
Takeaways from Others' Giveaways

For the final segment, mix and mingle with others NOT at your table, sharing a question from your card.

Use the back of your card to capture any others share that you want to remember.

Three Perspectives on Questions as Catalysts

Q-Storming • Inquiry Institute
(like brainstorming, but for questions)

The Goldilocks Principle • Tim Brown, IDEO
"Neither too abstract, nor too specific ... just right."

A More Beautiful Question • Warren Berger
"An ambitious yet actionable question that can begin to shift the way we perceive or think about something and that might be a catalyst for change."

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**Slide 4:**

# Q-Storming® • Inquiry Institute



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**Slide 5:**

The Goldilocks Principle:
Questions as Conversation Catalysts

Example:
Abstract & Systemic
How might we improve air travel?

Example:
Just Right
How might we make air travel more delightful and convenient for parents and children?

Example: Specific & Uninspiring
How might we get passengers to use their own tech instead of bothering flight attendants?

IDEO

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**Slide 6:**

"A beautiful question is an ambitious yet actionable question that can begin to shift the way we perceive or think about something—and that might serve as a catalyst for change."

A More Beautiful Question
THE POWER OF INQUIRY TO SPARK BREAKTHROUGH IDEAS
WARREN BERGER

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**Slide 1:**

How might we design a large convention registration and check-in area to provide a **more welcoming experience** and accelerates attendee connections to (1) the community, and (2) the conference content?



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**Slide 2:**

($) Sponsor opportunity

**Community (counters in a gentle semi-circle)**
- Check-in stations by region instead of alphabet
- Stantons along lines spotlight regional award winners
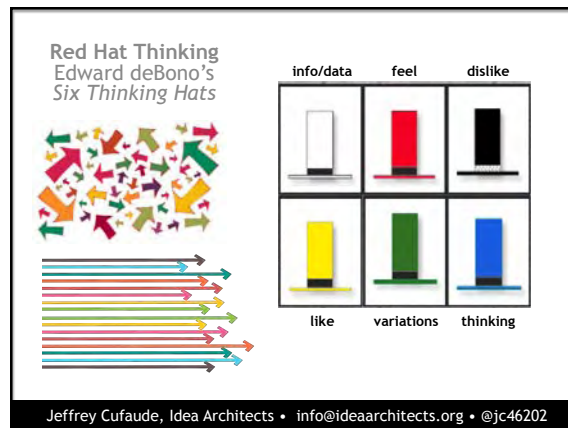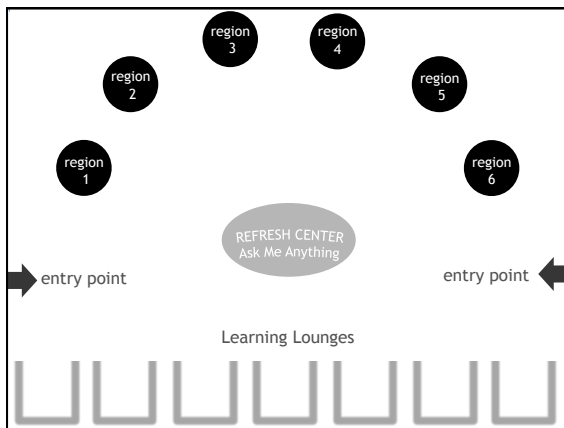- Regional officers work the lines as greeters

Circular/Oval Refresh Station with "ask me anything" workers in center of room facing both community and content areas ($)

**Content (disciplinary "learning lounges")**
- Color-coded signage and tablecloths correspond to program track colors ($)
- Disciplinary poster session winners around each lounge
- Oversized schedule spotlighting sessions for their discipline
- Disciplinary "rock stars" acting as informal hosts

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**Slide 3:**

region 3 region 4
region 2 region 5
region 1 region 6

REFRESH CENTER
Ask Me Anything

→ entry point    entry point ←

Learning Lounges

**Slide 4:**

**Red Hat Thinking**
Edward deBono's
*Six Thinking Hats*

info/data    feel    dislike

like    variations    thinking

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**Slide 5:**

**Take it as a given that the decision or process is …**

Aligned with mission, vision, and strategic plan; and

Consistent with legal responsibilities, by-laws, and other operating rules or procedures.

An effective decision or decision-making process for a VMA is one that:

1. ???????
2. ???????
3. ???????

**You and your board colleagues should have this same conversation.**

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**Slide 6:**

**GOAL:**
Informed and timely decisions based on data, policies and/or process, *not* ind. opinions, politics or personalities.

DECISION
RIGHT
WRONG

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**Slide 1**

- Higher ed, assoc mgmt
- Biz owner/entrepreneur
- Single, white, GenX male
- "Senior" prof/consultant
- Midwesterner; intl. traveler
- Urban dweller
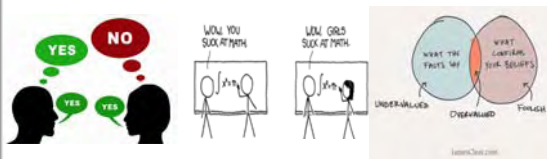- Facilitator, consultant

**What lenses/roles/perspectives/filters might inform or influence your thinking during a decision-making process?**

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**Slide 2**

What are a couple of potential blind spots or biases that your lenses or filters might produce?

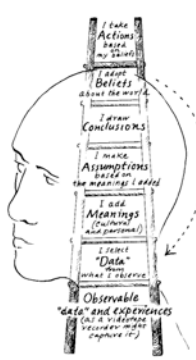Jeffrey Cufaude, Idea Architects • info@ideaarchitects.org • @jc46202

**Slide 3**

| Groupthink | Implicit bias | Confirmation bias |

**Guard against these for effective decision-making**

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**Slide 4**

**Managing the Ladder**

Stick with observations.

Check out your inferences.

When others infer, ask them to connect to observations.
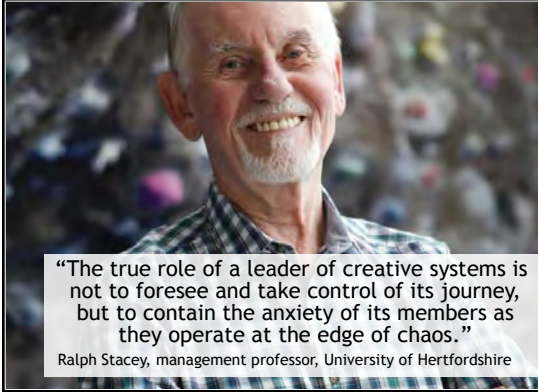
Source: *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*

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**Slide 5**

|  | **Fiduciary** | **Strategic** | **Generative** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Goal** | Oversight | Foresight | Insight |
| **Info Needs** | Snapshots & Current Status | Background & Context | Patterns & Meaning |

*Governance as Leadership: Reframing the Work of Nonprofit Boards*
By: Richard Chait, William Ryan, and Barbara E. Taylor

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**Slide 6**

"The true role of a leader of creative systems is not to foresee and take control of its journey, but to contain the anxiety of its members as they operate at the edge of chaos."
Ralph Stacey, management professor, University of Hertfordshire

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