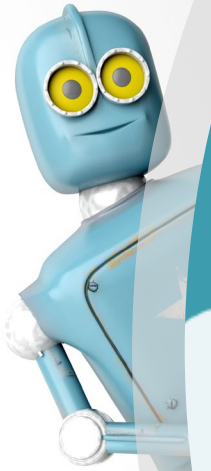
Advantage

We help organizations develop great people.

"Future Storming" takeaway tool

From our thought leader partners at BTS



Lead from the Future

with Peter Mulford, Chief Innovation Officer at BTS

[webinar 03.25.21]

*Part of **Together, We Create!** – An Advantage webinar series*

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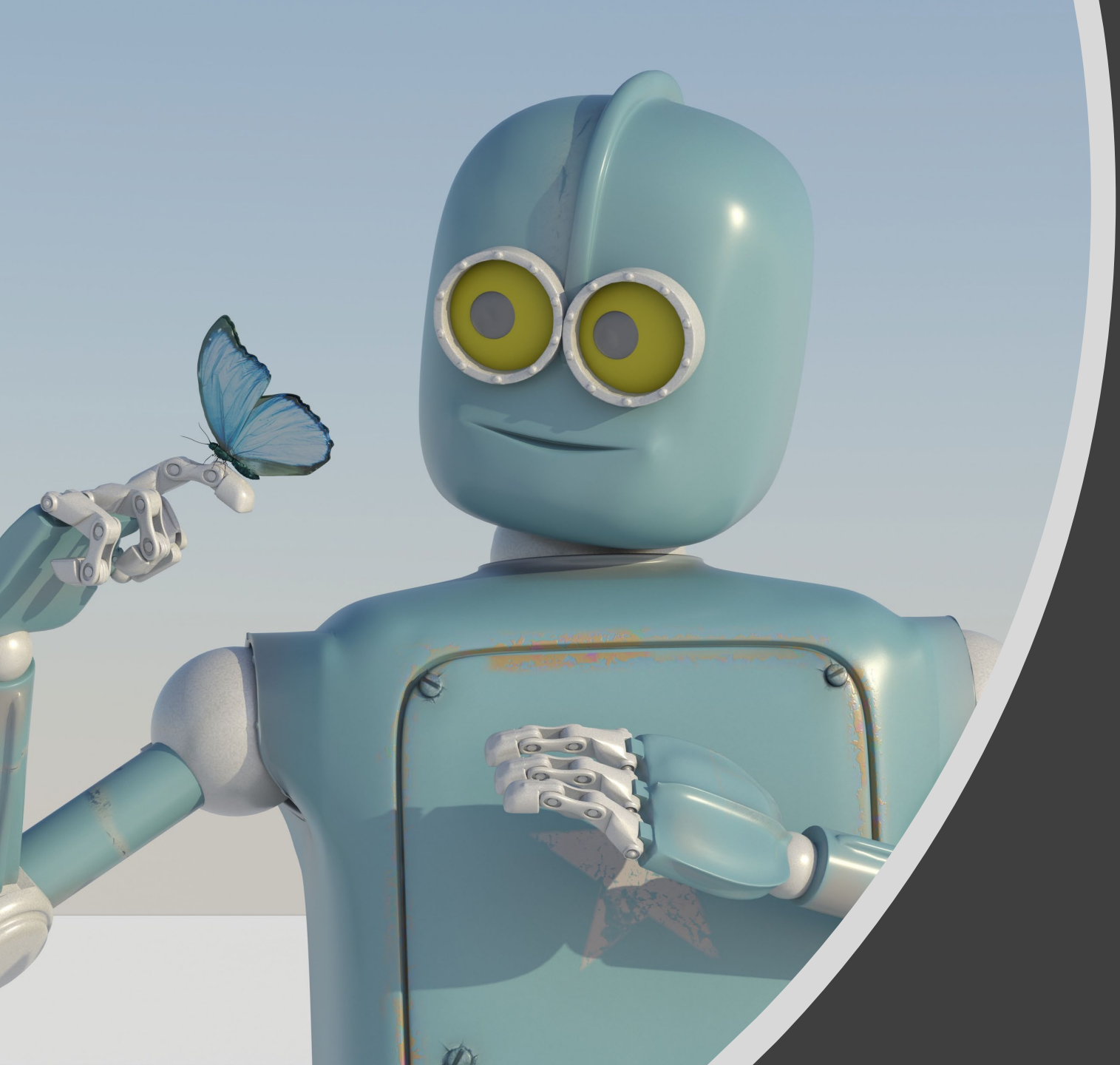


“In dealing with the future, it is far more important to be imaginative than to be right.”

-Alvin Toffler-

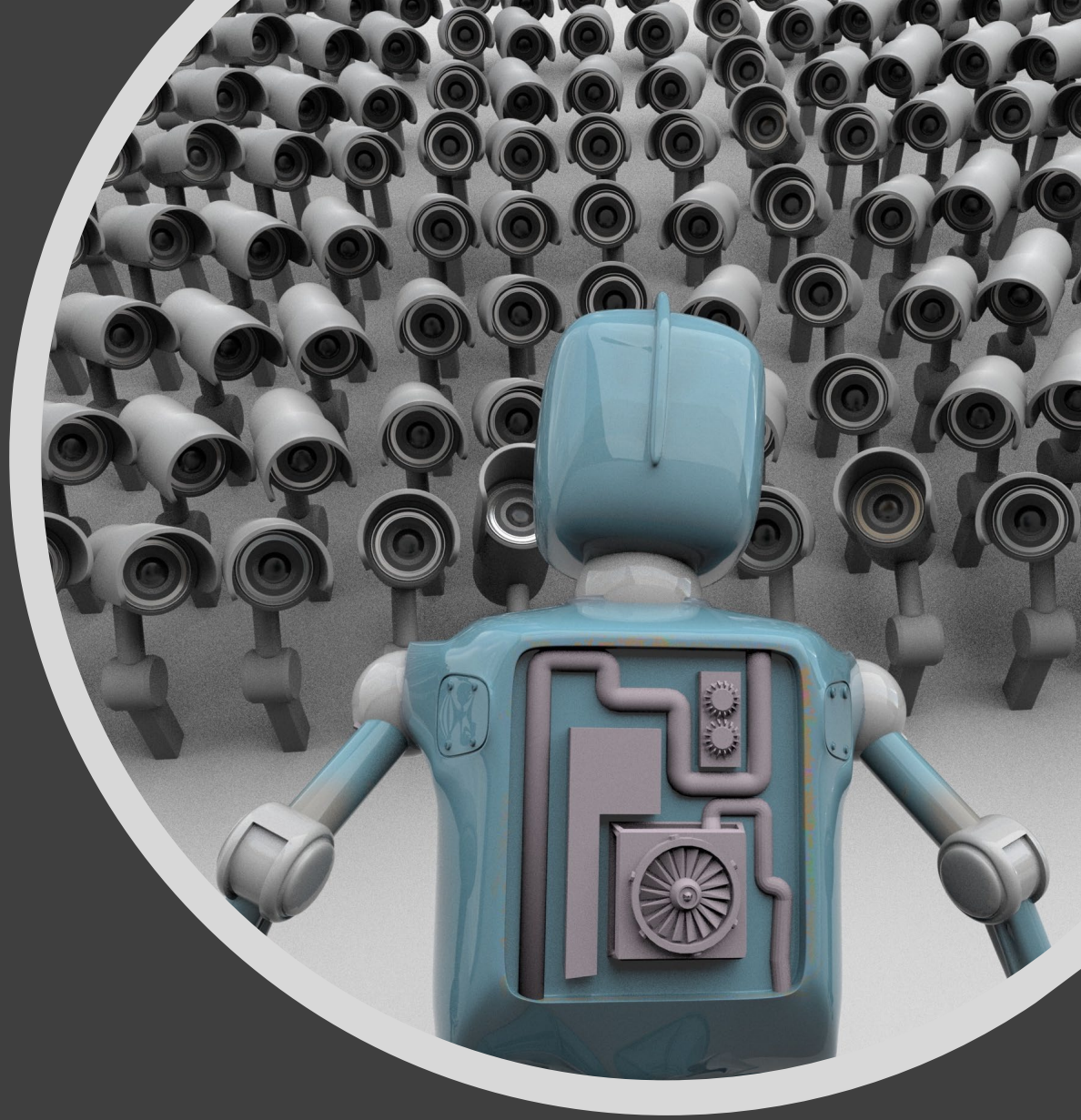
Future Storming

WHY IT IS RELEVANT

Smart thinkers tend to miss emerging opportunities and threats because of practical present-day biases. “Future-back”-techniques, such as Future Storming, help us gain clarity about possible future states by seeing past the noise and distractions of the present to spot possible opportunities and threats.

A provocative future-state scenario doesn’t need to come true to be relevant and exciting for present-day thinking. It’s a possibility, not a promise.

Remember: **A future state is a possibility, not a promise**.



“Constellations” Future Storming Tool

WHEN TO USE

Future Storming is a repeatable process leaders can use to evaluate seemingly unrelated events and future states in the market to determine which, if any, represent potential problems or prospects for the business. It helps to identify the future of X, where X could be shopping, governing, logistics, banking, health service, journalism, insurance, orchestras, education, home entertainment, etc.

Creating future states will play an important role when using this process. The technique’s power comes *from forcing you to use lateral thinking* and to think in *contradictory* ways. Without such process, as a business leader, you will be impaired by deep perceptual biases that make it hard to explore how the future might unfold.

HOW TO USE

CHOOSE YOUR TARGET (Before the session)

1. Decide what you want to explore. For example, *“The future of E-sports”* or *“The future of precision agriculture,”* etc.
2. Prepare a set of **6 possible future states** to explore at the session. These can come from your internal strategy/marketing teams, or simply by Googling **“The Future of___”** and collecting ideas.

DIVERGENT THINKING: IDEATE NEW POSSIBILITIES (30mins)

1. Take 2 of **the 6 Future States** and place them on a map. Imagine how these Future States might interact with each other. What if you experienced both in the future? What new opportunities or threats might emerge?
2. Write down possible threats or opportunities. Don't forget to suspend judgment—that comes later.
3. Add a 3rd Future State and repeat Step 2 from above
4. Continue to add Future States as time allows.

CONVERGING – DECIDE WHAT MATTERS (30mins)

1. Prioritize each future state by assessing the potential business impact and likelihood of occurrence. Place the sticky notes on the **Likelihood-Impact matrix.**
2. Discuss what are some implications for us today based on the possibility of these future states coming to pass. What would our customers do in the future? Competitors? Suppliers? Etc.

PRO TIP: This can be done solo, or in groups. But you will typically get better results with diverse groups.

Future State 1

Everything goes virtual
Lockdowns have forced people to get great at virtual, fast. And this new baseline level of comfort will spark both new applications of virtual tools and new expectations for these tools themselves.

Possible opportunities or threats

Future State 2

All industries are tech
Several tech giants expand their reach by entering your industry, disrupting supply chains, stealing top talent, and connecting with customers and consumers in entirely new ways.

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Future State 3

Redefined Expertise
Knowledge lives in AI rather than in individuals. Expertise is defined by those who can best leverage the power of AI, rather than who has the most individual knowledge or experience.

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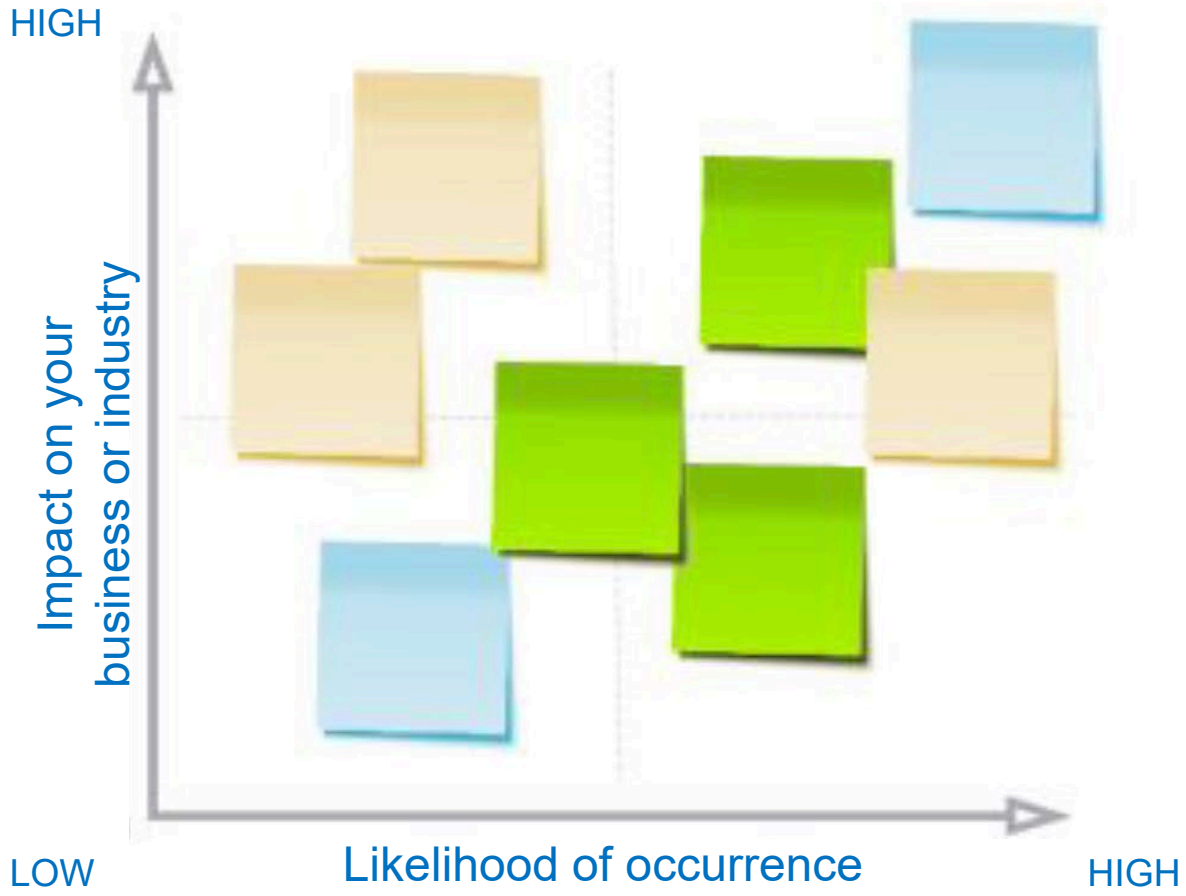
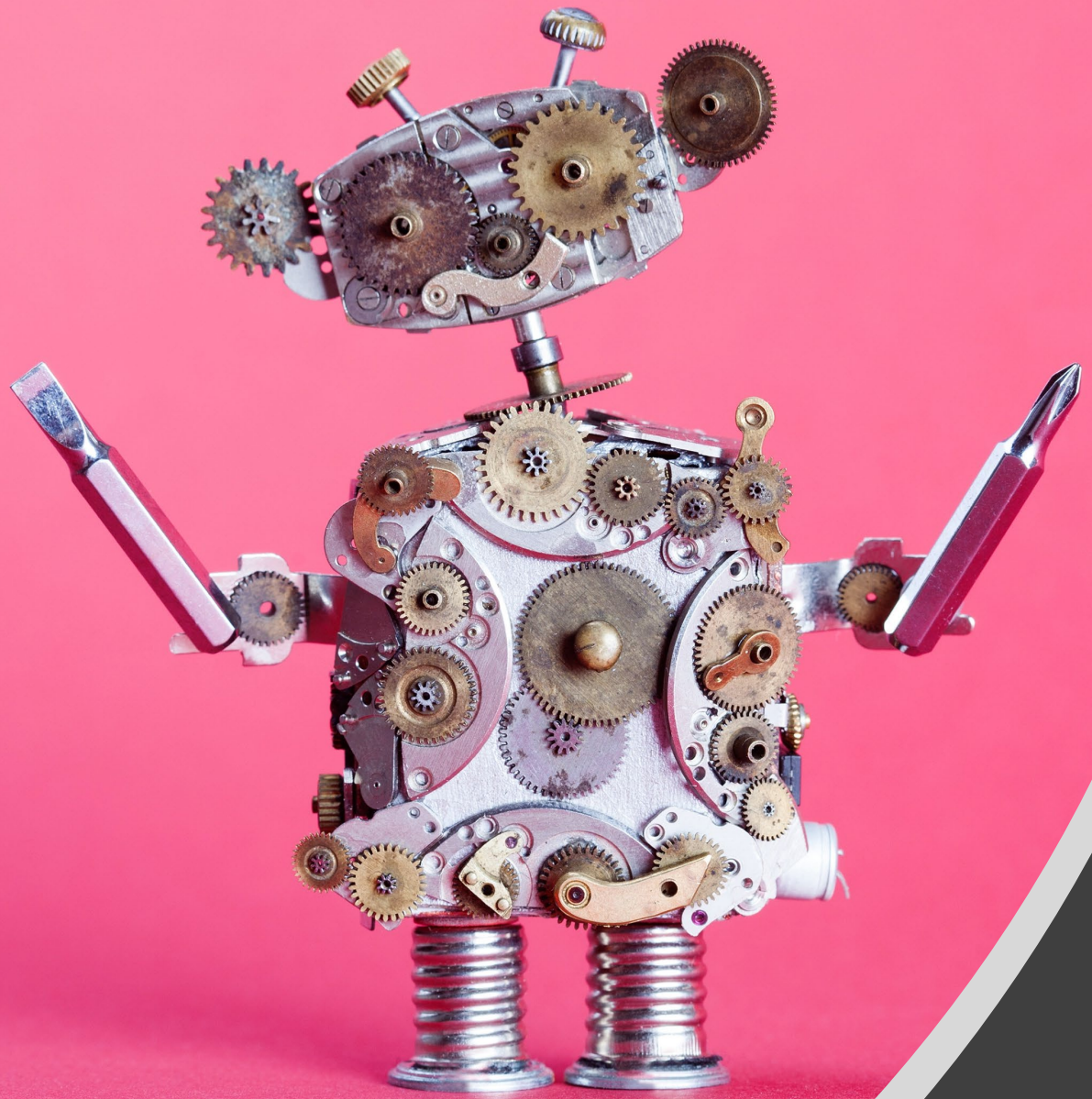
Future State 4

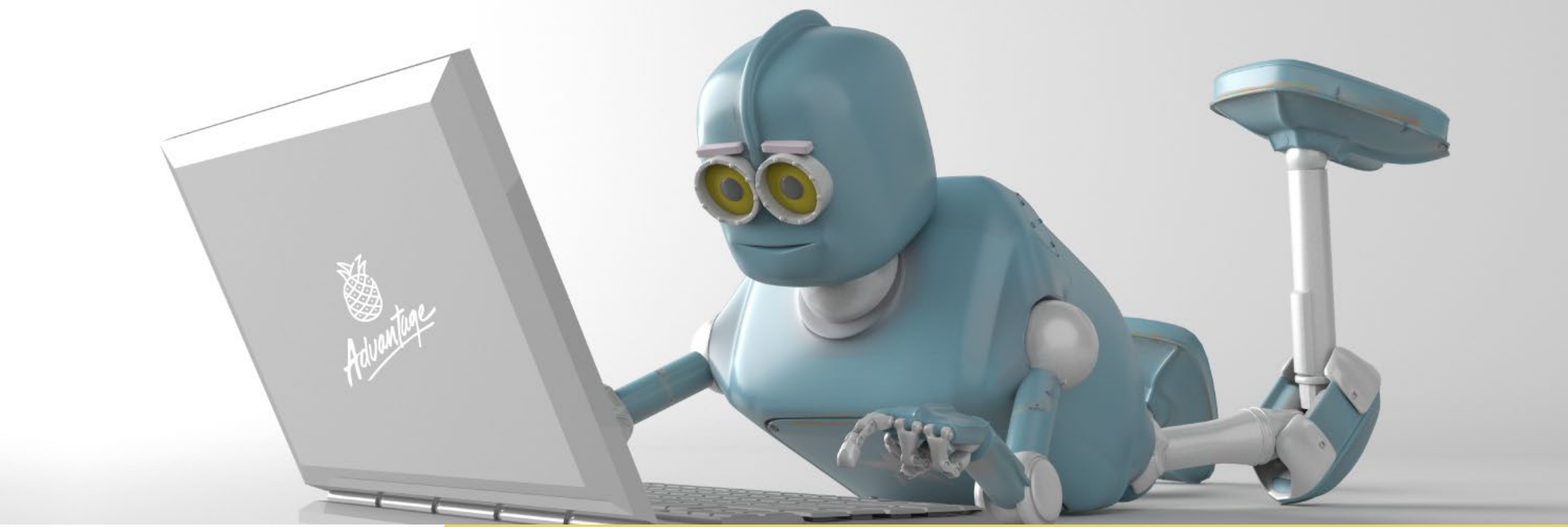
Explorucation
Though people will spend mindless hours online during this extended at-home period, many will also yearn to use some of that time productively, and will embrace platforms that connect them with instructors, experts, and mentors in their quest to learn new skills.


HIGH
Impact on your business or industry
LOW
Likelihood of occurrence
HIGH



“One thing a person cannot do, no matter how rigorous his analysis or heroic his imagination, is to draw up a list of things that would never occur to him.”

-Thomas Schelling-
Economist, Nobel Prize winner



Advantage

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Thank you for your interest in our "*Lead from the Future*" webinar. The following slides are designed to provide you a little more context **on future-back leadership** and how we might partner to bring this thinking to life within your organization.

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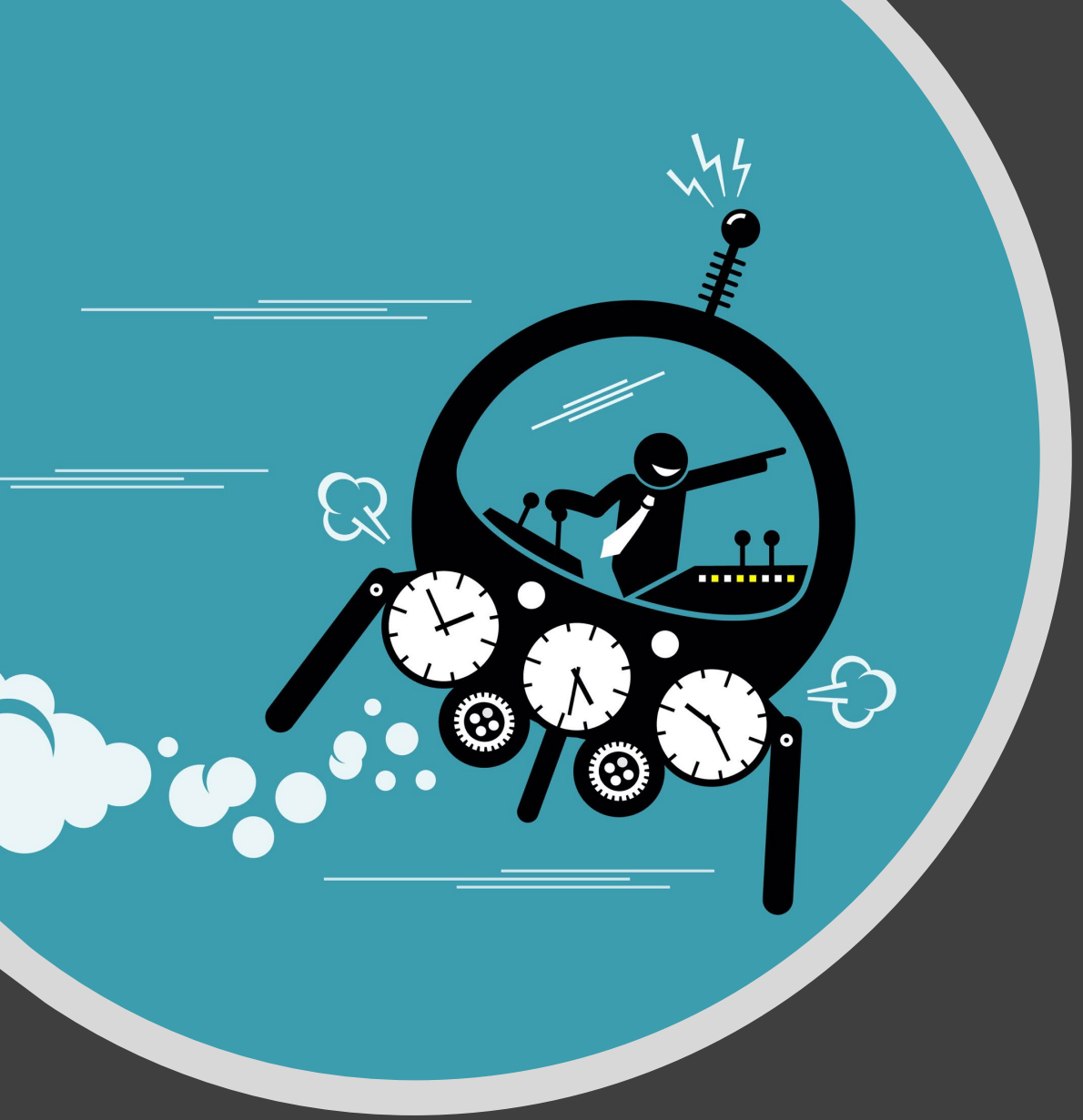


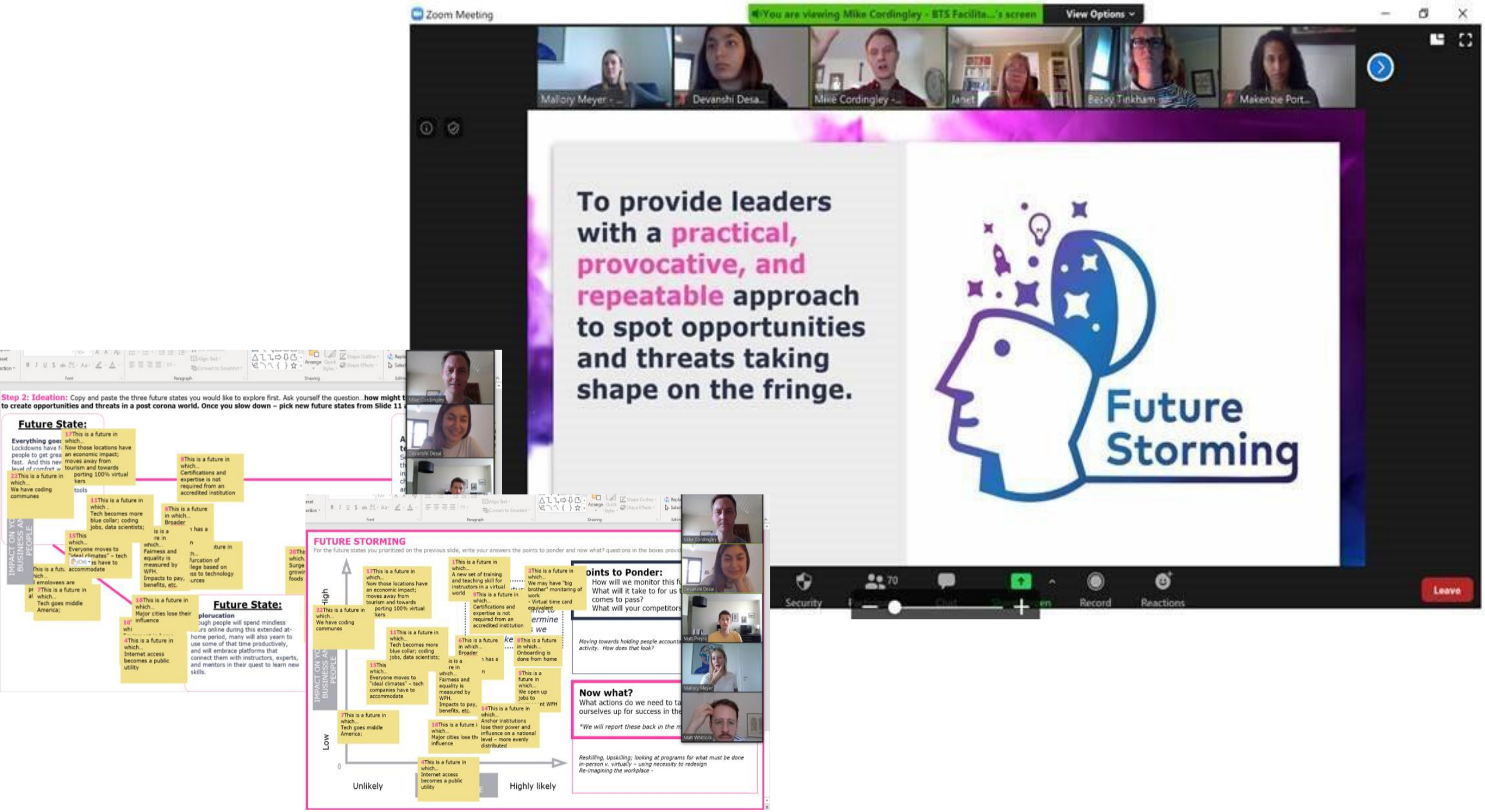
Future-back leadership

Tomorrow will be different than today. Smart people tend to miss what will make tomorrow different because of practical biases that anchor them to today. Or they have a difficulty imagining futures that, at first glance, appear too far fetched to be of use in the present.

With our thought leader partners at BTS, Advantage can provide powerful experiences that teach the essential principles, techniques, and tools people need to discover possible future states for themselves, and then decide what to do about the future, starting today.

Specifically, **we offer 3 types of solutions** to help your leaders and organizations **disrupt their old ways** of working and embed new approaches for the future.

1. **FUTURE STORMING** helps people spot future trends, consider how those trends might interact with each other, and then develop strategies to capture opportunities from the future, back.
2. **RISK STORMING** helps people imagine possible failures from the future, back; and then develop strategies for minimizing and mitigating those possible failures starting today, forward.
3. The **DISRUPT EXPERIENCE** combines Future Storming, Risk Storming, and Design Thinking to help people discover user insights and innovate solutions—but from the perspective of a digital disruptor who is trying to put you out of business. *(Whoa.)*


Zoom Meeting
You are viewing Mike Cordingley - BTS Facilita...'s screen
View Options
Mallory Meyer
Devanshi Desa...
Mike Cordingley
Janet
Becky Tinkham
Makenzie Port...
To provide leaders with a practical, provocative, and repeatable approach to spot opportunities and threats taking shape on the fringe.
Future Storming
Security
70
Record
Reactions
Leave
Step 2: Ideation: Copy and paste the three future states you would like to explore first. Ask yourself the question...how might
to create opportunities and threats in a post corona world. Once you slow down – pick new future states from Slide 11
Future State:
Future State:
FUTURE STORMING
For the future states you prioritized on the previous slide, write your answers the points to ponder and now what? questions in the boxes provid
Points to Ponder:
How will we monitor this
What will it take to for us
comes to pass?
What will your competitors
Moving towards holding people accounta
activity. How does that look?
Now what?
What actions do we need to ta
ourselves up for success in the
*We will report these back in the n
Reskilling, Upskilling; looking at programs for what must be done in-person v. virtually – using necessity to redesign
Re-imagining the workplace -
High
Low
Unlikely
Highly likely
IMPACT ON YO BUSINESS AN PEOPLE

“Amazin’s” Disrupt

“This program is **awesome.** I’ve never seen this level of engagement from the executives… this experience is second to none.” – Lamont Young, Executive Vice President, Head of Digital, Citizens Financial Group, Inc.

amazin.com

What’s this? It’s a meeting…

- …where leaders think differently and seek to disrupt their own thinking
- ..where leaders lean-in to ambiguity and take the future for a test run
- …that encourages different thinking and re-imagination

(Wait? Is this really about Amazon.com? No. “Amazin’ is actually a synthesis of what we’ve learned a cocktail of great digital natives and disruptors that BTS works with do, including:

All of experiences can be delivered **VIRTUALLY** or **IN PERSON**. They can be experienced contiguous 1- or 2-day sessions, or **IN A JOURNEY OF 2-HOUR EXPERIENCES** spread out over time.

These solutions work because they provide people with the opportunity to **practice and internalize** not just the methods themselves, but the **practical leadership moves required** to create an environment in which their people can do the same.

Challenges where future-back leadership may apply

When considering:

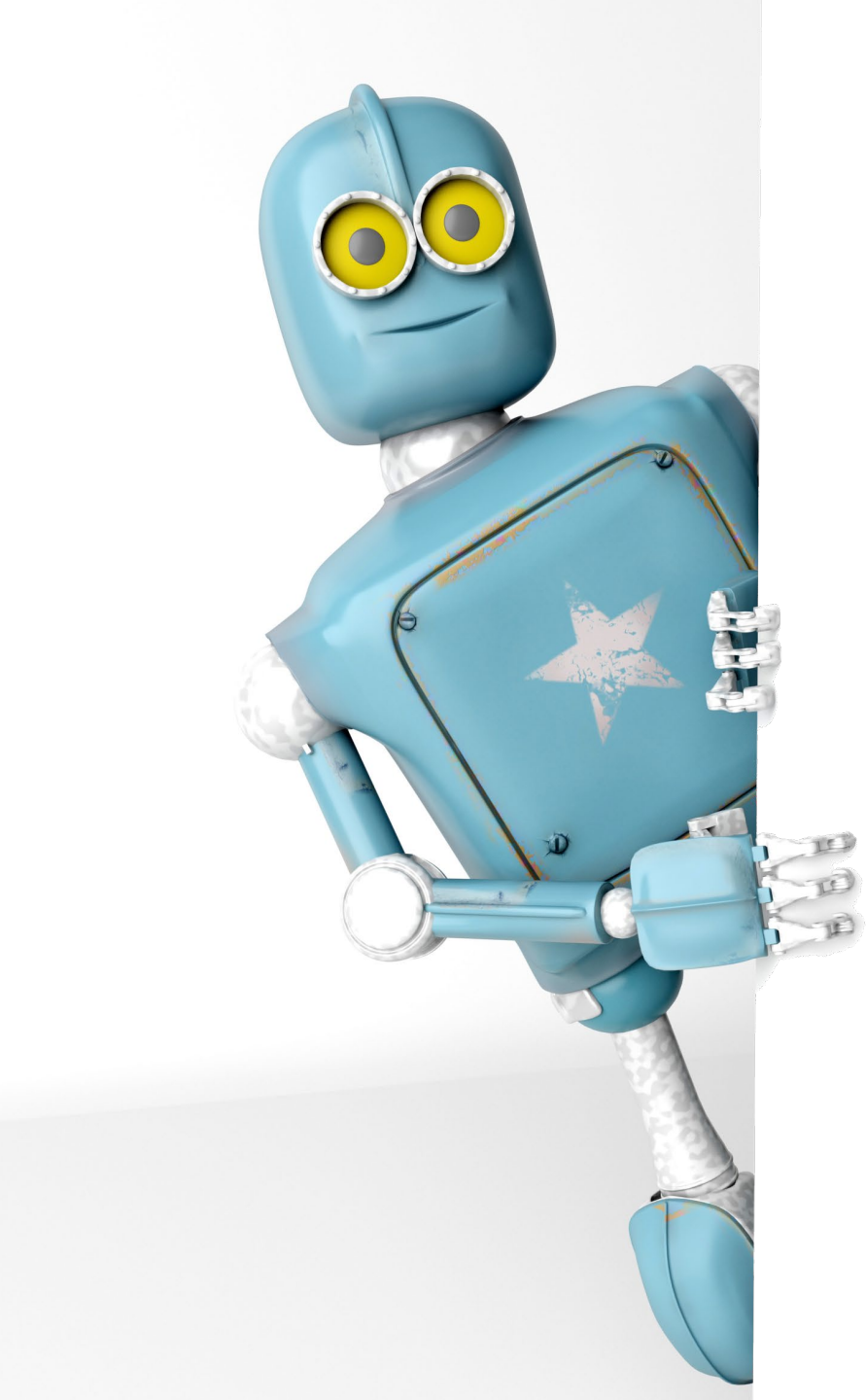
- *What the world/your business may look like after COVID-19…*
- *What your industry might look like after a significant disruption…*
- *How globalization may transform your business…*
- *A major strategic or cultural shift…*
- *How different consumer trends might affect your business…*

And **any time you're feeling that the future is ambiguous,** and you'd like more clarity around what you should be doing today to set yourself up for success tomorrow.

Mindset shifts associated with future-back scenario planning

We know that a lot of companies get stuck in a today-forward mindset. They operate on the unchecked assumption that the existing business can simply be extended into the future. So, the current state of the business dominates planning discussions, and we wind up with strategies of incremental improvement. A future-back planning approach helps to mitigate this problem by encouraging the following shifts:

FROM	TO
Strategic plans happens once a year or maybe once a quarter. From today forward.	Strategic plans are sets of hypotheses that are constantly tested and revisited. From future back.
Change is a constant and we can't predict when change will disrupt our business.	Change is a constant and we can use creativity to explore the future for ourselves.
I'm only interested in future scenarios that I am confident will come true.	I recognize that a provocative assumption about the future doesn't have to come true for it to be useful in the present.
I have to manage an initiative from start to finish and measure success only through launch and success.	I can stop an idea or a pursuit without tarnishing my reputation, particularly given the right data and pre-identified market trigger points.



Contact your Advantage partner for more information

We'd love to collaborate with you to **activate future-back leadership** in your organization.

www.advantageperformance.com

contact@advantageperformance.com

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