the futures foundation
engaging all Australians in creating a better future...

Volume 18, No. 2, April 2018

FUTURE NEWS

TO CONNECT, TO INFORM AND TO INSPIRE

IN THIS EDITION

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7 CITIES THAT ARE STARTING TO GO CAR-FREE

Urban planners are finally recognizing that streets should be designed for people, not careening hunks of deadly metal.

by Adele Peters

After over a hundred years of living with cars, some cities are slowly starting to realize that the automobile doesn't make a lot of sense in the urban context. It isn't just the smog or the traffic deaths; in a city, cars aren't even a convenient way to get around.

Traffic in London today moves slower than an average cyclist (or a horse-drawn carriage). Commuters in L.A. spend 90 hours a year stuck in traffic. A U.K. study found that drivers spend 106 days of their lives looking for parking spots.

Now a growing number of cities are getting rid of cars in certain neighborhoods through fines, better design, new apps, and, in the case of Milan, even paying commuters to leave their car parked at home and take the train instead.

Unsurprisingly, the changes are happening fastest in European capitals that were designed hundreds or thousands of years before cars were ever built. In sprawling U.S. suburbs that were designed for driving, the path to eliminating cars is obviously more challenging. (And a few car-loving cities, like Sydney, Australia, are going in the other direction, and taking away pedestrian space on some downtown streets so there's more room for cars).

MADRID

Madrid has already banned most traffic from certain city streets, and this month, the car-free zone will expand even more.

Flickr user Mispahn

Madrid has already banned most traffic from certain city streets, and this month, the car-free zone will expand even further. Stretching over more than a square mile, the area will still allow neighborhood its own residents to drive, but anyone else who enters will be hit with a fine over $100. It's one step in a larger plan to completely pedestrianize central Madrid in the next five years. Twenty-four of the city's busiest streets will be redesigned for walking, not driving. Before the street layouts change, cars will also be discouraged in another way: Now the dirtiest, most polluting cars in the city have to pay have to pay more to park.many plausible scenarios, any of which could happen. Some futures may even have excellent empirical support. The present may be singular, but the future remains plural before it becomes the present. So let's stop the argument—there is a future with jobs and a future without jobs. Both scenarios are possible and we need take both of them seriously.

PARIS

By 2020, the mayor of Paris plans to double the number of bike lanes in the city, ban diesel cars, and limit certain high-traffic streets to electric cars and other ultra-low-emission vehicles.

Flickr user Luke Ma

Last year, when smog levels spiked in Paris, the city briefly banned cars with even-numbered plates. Pollution dropped as much as 30% in some areas, and now the city plans to start permanently discouraging cars. In the city center, people who don't live in local neighborhoods won't be able to drive in on weekends, and that rule could soon roll out to the whole week.

By 2020, the mayor plans to double the number of bike lanes in the city, ban diesel cars, and limit certain high-traffic streets to electric cars and other ultra-low-emission vehicles. The number of drivers in the city is already starting to drop. In 2001, 40% of Parisians didn't own a car; now that number is 60%.

CHENGDU

A new satellite city planned in Chengdu, China could serve as a model for a modern suburb: Instead of a layout that makes it necessary to drive, the streets are designed so any location can be reached by 15 minutes on foot.

Source: Adrian Smith and Gordon Gill Architecture

A new satellite city planned in Southwest China could serve as a model for a modern suburb: Instead of a layout that makes it necessary to drive, the streets are designed so any location can be reached by 15 minutes on foot.

The plans, designed by Chicago-based architects Adrian Smith and Gordon Gill, don't call for completely banning cars, but only half of the road area will allow motorized vehicles. The city will also connect to the larger, nearby city of Chengdu with public transit. Out of an expected population of 80,000 people, most will be able to walk to work in local neighborhoods. The project was originally planned for completion in 2020, but that may be delayed–it's currently on hold because of zoning issues.

HAMBURG

Though Hamburg isn't planning to ban cars from its city center (as has been misreported elsewhere), the city is making it easier and easier not to drive with a new green network.

Flickr user Peter Gutierrez

Though Hamburg isn't planning to ban cars from its city center (as has been misreported elsewhere), the city is making it easier and easier not to drive. A new "green network," which will be completed in the next 15 to 20 years, will connect parks across the city, making it possible to bike or walk anywhere. The network will cover 40% of the city's space. The city is also covering up sections of the infamously crowded A7 autobahn with parks–so neighborhoods that were once hard to cross on foot will soon be more inviting.

HELSINKI

Helsinki expects a flood of new residents over the next few decades, but the more people come, the fewer cars will be allowed on city streets.

City of Helsinki

source: CITY OF HELSINKI

Helsinki expects a flood of new residents over the next few decades, but the more people come, the fewer cars will be allowed on city streets. In a new plan, the city lays out a design that will transform car-dependent suburbs into dense, walkable communities linked to the city center by fast-moving public transit. The city is also building new mobility-on-demand services to streamline life without a car. A new app in testing now lets citizens instantly call up a shared bike, car, or taxi, or find the nearest bus or train. In a decade, the city hopes to make it completely unnecessary to own a car.

MILAN

The smoggy city of Milan is testing a new way to keep cars out of the city center: If commuters leave their vehicles at home, they'll get free public transit vouchers.

Flickr user Chris Yunker

The smoggy city of Milan is testing a new way to keep cars out of the city center: If commuters leave their vehicles at home, they'll get free public transit vouchers. An Internet-connected box on the dashboard keeps track of a car's location, so no one can cheat and drive to work. Each day someone's car stays at home, the city sends a voucher with the same value as a ticket on the bus or train.

COPENHAGEN

Copenhagen started introducing pedestrian zones in the 1960s in the city center, and car-free zones slowly spread over the next few decades.

Flickr user Daniel

Forty years ago, traffic was as bad in Copenhagen as any other large city. Now, over half of the city's population bikes to work every day–nine times more bike commuters than in Portland, Oregon, the city with the most bike commuters in the U.S.

Copenhagen started introducing pedestrian zones in the 1960s in the city center, and car-free zones slowly spread over the next few decades. The city now has over 200 miles of bike lanes, with new bike superhighways under development to reach surrounding suburbs. The city has one of the lowest rates of car ownership in Europe.

None of these cities are planning–yet–to go completely car-free. And it's possible that may never happen; it's likely that future cities will have at least a small fleet of self-driving electric cars on hand that can eliminate some of the current challenges around parking, congestion and pollution. But it's also clear that urban planners are finally recognizing that streets should be designed for people, not cars.

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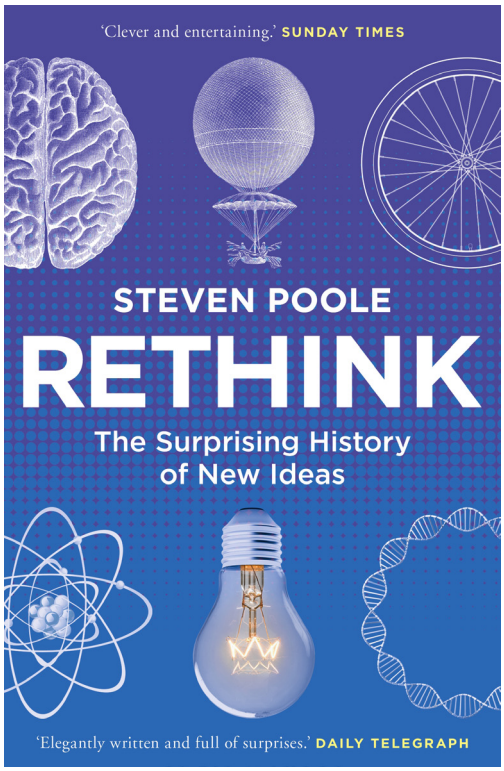
Book Review

by Charles Brass – Chair, futures foundation

Rethink:
The Surprising History of New Ideas
by Steven Poole



One of the mantras of any competent futurist is: 'before you venture into the future, first take the time to understand how the past brought you to the present'. Although this book has not been written by a futurist (Poole is a journalist who has written on a variety of topics), and even though this mantra doesn't appear anywhere, it is clear that Steven Poole understands the importance of learning lessons from history.

Poole describes the purpose of his book this way:

> "This book is about ideas whose time has come. They were born hundreds or thousands of years ago. But their time is now. Many of them spent a lot of time being ridiculed or supressed, until someone saw them in a new light. They are coming back at the cutting edge of modern technology, biology, cosmology, political thought, business theory, philosophy and many other fields. They are being rediscovered, and upgraded. Thought of again, and thought about in new ways – rethought"(p3).

Poole's chapter headings highlight the different ways in which rethinking old ideas might benefit us today. The first four focus on what might need to happen for an old idea to become valuably new:

- circumstances might change – for example new medical awareness is highlighting reasons why leeches might be used as medical interventions in certain cases
- a new piece might be found to complement the old idea – such as modern battery technology reimagining electric vehicles, which were first commercially produced in the late 1880s
- attitudes change – such as the introduction into Western diets of insect based cuisine centuries after it became a staple in other parts of the world.

The next five chapters look at less obvious reasons for rethinking old ideas:

- perhaps because an apparently novel idea actually owes more to past thinking than is immediately obvious – for example the idea that we live in just one of an infinite number of universes (the multiverse theory), an idea which was actually first proposed in ancient Greece by the father of atomic theory, Democritus

- perhaps because ideas may still be useful, even if they can't ever be proven, or even if they aren't true – these thoughts lead to a fascinating exploration of both the so-called mind/body problem and the surprising value of the placebo effect

- perhaps because 'zombie' ideas never die – a quick Google search will confirm there are sizable numbers of people who still in the twenty-first century believe that the earth is flat, a fact that Poole uses to highlight how much of what we call 'knowledge' is actually something most of us just take on trust (a commodity that seems to be shrinking in the modern world)

- and finally perhaps because apparently wrong ideas are sometimes actually useful – here Poole combines the 'morphic resonance' ideas of Rupert Sheldrake with Lamarkian evolution (the idea that traits acquired during the life of a parent can be passed to offspring) and the mysterious apparent existence of dark matter and dark energy.

In his final four chapters, Poole turns to thinking about how to actually put old ideas to modern use – he calls Utopia Redux. He builds, for example, on his earlier examination of the history of economic ideas to consider the notion of a basic minimum income, and idea which is easily traced back to Thomas Paine in 1796. The fourteen pages Poole devotes to this analysis is fascinating for what it tells us both about why some old ideas keep resurfacing and why and how they fail to gain a foothold each time they emerge.

In this same context, Poole also looks at the modern science of gene editing and explores its early history in the historically disgraced science of eugenics. As he says: "Some ideas seem to be right or wrong in a moral sense, and in a timeless, objective way. But we also know that ideas have been accorded varying moral evaluations in different contexts throughout history" (p239). Eugenics was first promulgated by Darwin's cousin Francis Galton in response to the idea that natural selection promoted survival of the fittest. Galton, perhaps not unreasonably, wanted to ensure the survival of the fittest humans, but the moral and theological questions these ideas raised, together with appalling implementation in sterilising the 'feeble' in nineteenth and twentieth century America and by the Nazis during second World War pushed them out of popular favour. The emergence of such gene editing technology as CRISPR/Cas9 and increasing research into manipulating human embryos have reawakened them.

Poole is to be particularly commended for his efforts throughout the book in returning to the original sources of ideas rather than relying on modern perceptions of them. This is particularly true in the case of Galton's original eugenics ideas.

Finally, even Poole acknowledges that his book is a "highly selective snapshot of the looping evolution of ideas" (p238) but it is put together in a highly engaging and informative way. It is also a useful reminder of what Poole himself concludes: "Declaring anything unthinkable is an insult to all thought" (p261).

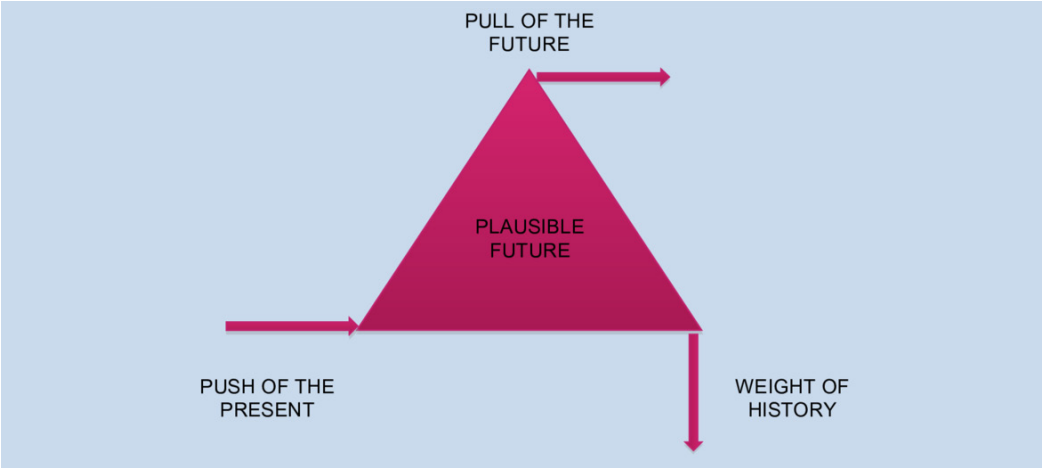
FUTURISTS IN ACTION

How Can We Predict Plausible Futures?

The Three Power Vectors of the Futures Triangle Explained

by Tuomo Kuosa

"Do we have a shared vision of the preferred future and of the futures we want to avoid?



The Futures Triangle is a foresight method that is used to identify plausible futures that emerge in riptide between three pushing and pulling corners, each with their own set of drivers and inhibitors. The math between the power vectors of each corner define the plausible future. In other words, if the power of one corner changes, that will impact the dynamics of the entire triangle, affect its angles, and therefore result in a probable change of direction for the plausible future. The original method was developed by Professor Sohail Inayatullah with the end-goal of mapping the overall game situation before a transformative foresight process may begin.

The competing dynamics of the Futures Triangle are the past, present and future contexts. Each of these three corners of the triangle has their own set of trends, drivers and inhibitors, which the users of this method need to list and rank. The Futures Triangle method can be used in table-desk foresight work where one foresight expert or a group of users map all the current settings where a plausible future gets formed.

This method has other applications, too. It's particularly well-suited as a structured brainstorming tool in participatory foresight workshops. It is a simple tool and quick to use, and can be utilized anywhere, with access to few resources. All you need is whiteboard or a large sheet of paper to draw the triangle and write up different ideas, drivers, inhibitors, etc. You can use sticky notes for these, and map them into the corners of the triangle, and then move onto a more interactive process.

So what do the three corners of the trial consist of?

1. Pull of the future

The process begins with naming the pull of the future, which contain one dominant visual image or vision. That becomes the issue or context that is being examined in the next steps. There are naturally many competing optional images for the future, but only one shall be put here, together with all beliefs and ideas that a group thinks are linked to the image.

There is a group of **nine archetypal logics** how people tend to believe the future gets formed or what people wish for. That can be used as a starting point for preparing the image, but the image can be much more specific and visual too. The group shall name also pulling things that help in formation of the image. Useful questions to detect the future image and its pulls are:

What would be the ideal future for this issue or topic?

- Do we have a shared vision of the preferred future and of the futures we want to avoid?
- Do we have a shared image of the logic behind how the future gets formed in this specific case, or are there competing logical beliefs?
- If we were adrift in a river, where do we end up in the issue?

- What tools and resources do we have that can affect the direction and lead us towards that future?
- What do we lack to influence change? What are our limits?
- Is it possible to impact the futures? Or is it needed at all?

2. Push of the present

The present contains many forces that are currently pushing change forward. These pushes are trends, drivers, technologies and decisions or acts of agents that make new things happen. The things that are counted as pushes of the present should be quantitative in nature, meaning that we should at least in theory be able to showcase the exerting influence on the direction of change. As an example, one of the most well-known pushing driver was the John F. Kennedy´s decision in the early 60s to send a man to the moon.

Useful questions to detect pushes of the present are:

- What trends and technologies are changing the future right now?
- What things are pushing change forward?
- What already known new policies, procedures, laws, budgets, decisions and technologies will start to push changes forward in the near future (like in the Kennedy case)?

3. Weight of the past

The past contains weights, for example, those structural barriers that inhibit change and prevent us from achieving a particular pull or push of the future. These historical weights can be understood as being organisational structures, policies, laws, regulations, procedures, knowledge structures or historical narratives that limit or prevent us from moving forward. They can include existing investments in infrastructure, technology, education, and all the societal contracts, achieved benefits, debts, and demographic structures.

Many strong societal organisations are dedicated to maintain status quo such as labour unions, religions, the army, and so on. Useful questions to detect such weights of past are:

- Who benefits from the status quo or loses if it is changed?
- What are the barriers to change?
- What is holding us back, or getting in our way?
- What are the deep structures that resist change?

By using these three corners of the triangle—the weight of the past, the push of the present, and the pull of the future—it is possible to create plausible futures, an essential component of foresight work.

Before the Futures Triangle, however, you may want to use the Future Signals Sense-Making Framework. It shares many of the same elements as the Triangle, such as pushing and pulling drivers and the weights of history, but instead of assessing the power vectors of change to see the plausible future, it is developed for mapping and further differentiating different types of futures into six categories. That way, one is better able to identify true anomalies from all the futures' data.

These two methods together, and further combined with the Futures Landscapes and Shared History method are a powerful mapping toolkit for identifying the current setting or "game situation" from which the plausible future can start to emerge. After that, the right step would be Horizons scanning for emerging issues and for prioritising the most powerful and crucial phenomena regarding the issue or topic.

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He is a futurist specialising in strategic foresight, futures research methodology, and anticipating societal transformation. Author of the book "The Evolution of Strategic Foresight". Tuomo has extensive experience of customer needs with regards to strategic foresight, having worked in Finland and Singapore advising organizations in future focused planning processes.

Signals in the Noise

TWELVE CRITICAL SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

In the early 1990s, psychologist Robin Dunbar studied the social connections within groups of monkeys and apes. He theorized that the maximum size of their overall social group was limited by the size of their neocortex.

Based on our neocortex size, Dunbar calculated that humans should be able to maintain relationships of no more than roughly 150 people at a time. He also found that many businesses and military groups organize their people into cliques of about 150. This has led to the now often disputed Dunbar Number of 150.

There are indeed limits to the number of relationships we can maintain, but with today's online tools, we are not restricted to just 150. Yet we all have limited attention spans and the quality of every relationship depends on the amount of attention we dedicate to it.

Managing relationships will be a critical skill both today and for decades to come, regardless of the overall size of your network. But being a successful person in the future will require far more than just forging meaningful relationships.

In case you hadn't noticed, the concept of "office as a place" has also been evolving. For untethered workers, any place with Wi-Fi where you can sit (or stand) in relative comfort is where work happens.

The age old "office" has transitioned from being a necessary place to go to being more of a power tool for making big things happen. The sterile confines of office buildings have morphed into something that is part-hotel, part-restaurant, part-coffee shop, and part-impromptu meeting space.

Offices with heavy wood desks, file cabinets, and chairs are holdovers from an era of paper, books, and briefcases. The office phone has come and (mostly) gone, much like fax machines, copiers, desk-top PCs, and printers.

Sitting desks have morphed into sit-stand workstations, walk-stations, and even no-stations. Features like workout rooms, bike lockers, showers, and sleep-stations have all entered the employee lexicon, along with massage rooms, happy hours, beer taps, and gourmet-chef kitchens.

Workers are no longer defined by the size and location of their cubical but by the pedigree of thinkers they hang out with.

TWELVE CRITICAL SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

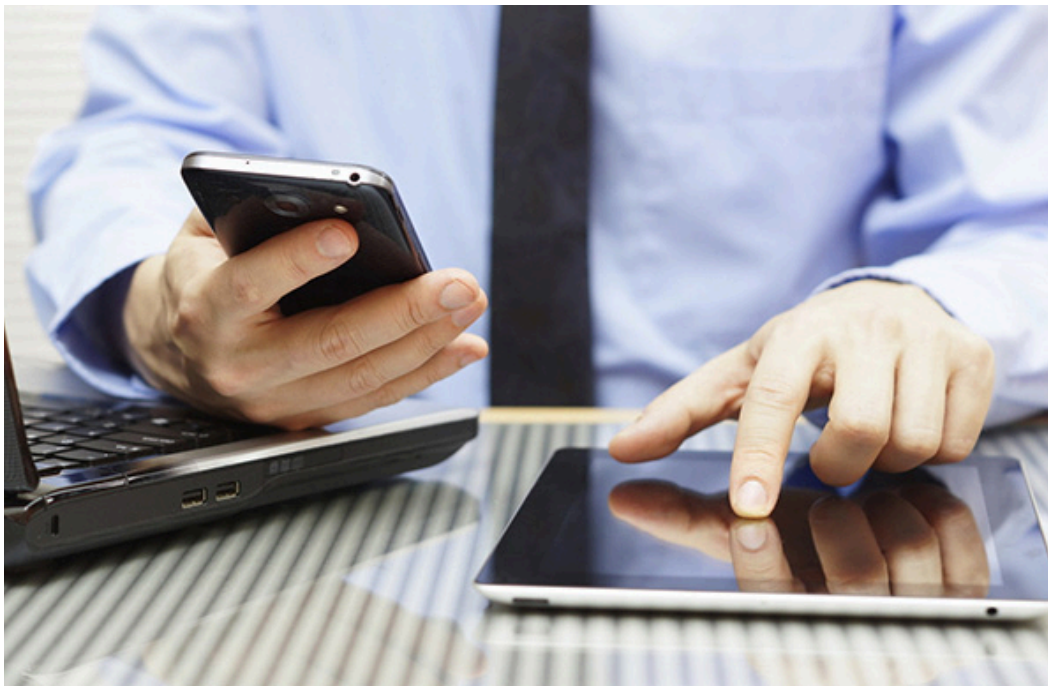
Equally as important as our Dunbar number or the place we call an office are the rules we live by. We currently have very few rules for how to live our lives in a fully immersive world where explosive amounts of information and technology are flowing around us on a second by second basis.

Since neither colleges nor traditional schools have come to grips with the unusual number of challenges lurking, like landmines, in the world ahead, it is up to us to master the "new rules of engagement."

Signals in the Noise

TWELVE CRITICAL SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

For this reason I'd like to help you think through twelve critically important skills you would do well to manage in your future:



Sorry but your next distraction already happened!

1.) Distraction Management – The average smartphone user checks their phone over 220 times a day. During peak times this jumps up to once every six or seven seconds. Total addicts will actually jack-in over 900 times in a day and several reports have revealed incidents where young drama-junkies have been hospitalized from exhaustion because "fear of missing out" caused them to stop sleeping altogether.

Texting is the most frequently used app on a smartphone, with 97% of Americans using it at least once a day. The average Millennial exchanges 67 texts a day. It takes 90 minutes to respond to email, most will respond to a text in less than 90 seconds.

An average person has five social media accounts and spends around 1 hour and 40 minutes a day perusing these networks, accounting for 28% of the time they spent on the Internet.

In the U.S., YouTube is currently the most popular social network, with a visitation rate 8% higher than Facebook. Since both Facebook and YouTube claim well over a billion users worldwide, this is not a U.S. only phenomenon.

But let's not forget television time. During peak hours, over 70% of the bandwidth for the Internet is dedicated to video streaming with Netflix and YouTube sucking up over 62% of the entire bandwidth in North America.

The average American spends over 5.5 hours a day consuming some form of video content.

So after all of that, how much time do you really have left for your job, your family and friends, and actually experiencing the world around you? Distraction management will be a critical skill for successful people to master over the coming years.

2.) Emerging Skills Management – How long will it be before you need to know how to pilot a flying drone? If you flippantly say "never," how will your thinking change when you've just been laid off from your job and all your friends are getting high paying jobs as drone pilots?

But maybe it's not drones. Perhaps the hot new career will be designing parts for 3D printers, or working as an aquaponics technician, crowdfunding consultant, material specialist for contour crafting, sensor engineer, data analyst, game designer, or apps expert for smart clothing?

What are the skills that will be required for your next job? Will you need to know how to operate a driverless car, communicate with your boss over a smart watch, merge spreadsheets on a smart phone, be conversant on the latest Internet of Things devices, use a telepresence room, perform actuarial breakdowns on your new client list, or find Wi-Fi hotspots in the middle of a desert?

If you think you'll have time to plan your next career move after your job goes away, chances are you'll be struggling with this issue until the day you retire, and with some of the latest plans for indexing retirement dates, that may be several decades of tortured living.

3.) Communication Management – Where do you get your news today? Yes many of you are still reading newspapers, watching TV, reading books and magazines, and listening to radio.

But a growing number are finding digital substitutes for traditional news. For young people, Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, Twitter, YouTube, Vine, and Instagram are their only news sources.

When it comes to talking to your family and friends, are you more likely to use Skype, send a text message, or video clip, chat with them while playing Destiny, send photos, use Facetime, or Google hangouts?

Yet all these options, when it comes to doing business, one-to-one or one-to-many verbal communication is still a company's most prized skill.

On average, women speak around 7,000 words a day compared to only 2,000 for men. With a 3.5 times as much practice, women have a natural advantage in this area.

Communication is an essential ingredient in all of our lives, but too much or too little can have devastating effects.

With new communication channels springing to life in games, social media, and smartphone apps on a regular basis, people suffer great anxiety over not keeping up with their friends and family. And when they turn things off, they suffer even greater anxiety over feeling left out.

Effective ways of managing our communication channels is a critical skill currently not being taught in school.

4.) Reputation Management – By 2020, one study estimates that more than 40% of the American workforce, or 60 million people, will be independent workers—freelancers, contractors, and temporary employees. Exactly how we define 'freelancer' will increase or decrease that number substantially.

Recent surveys confirm the biggest challenges facing freelancers is poverty-level income that comes erratically and keeping the project pipeline full.

Signals in the Noise

TWELVE CRITICAL SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

No one is actually born to be an entrepreneur, but according to LinkedIn Founder and Chairman Reid Hoffman, we would all be better served if we managed our lives as if they were a business.

In Hoffman's latest book, "The Start-Up of You," he goes on to explain many of the intricacies of living your life as your own personal brand, and how your online reputation has become a foundational piece of every person's success.

Our reputations are no longer something that builds up around us that we have little or no control over. With highly personal online content being generated about us from many different sources, it is now up to us to exercise control over what people are saying, the images of us that appear online, videos we're in, bylines of our work, and virtually every other indicator of who we are and what we stand for.

If you don't think your online reputation is important, consider the following stats:

- 88% of those online will avoid doing business with companies that don't protect their privacy.
- 80% of divorce lawyers use Facebook to find evidence.
- 65% of recruiters frown on job seekers who frequently use profanity in social media.
- 68% of hiring managers have made a decision to hire a candidate because of something they saw on social media.

Clearly this is another critical skill that schools have yet to come to grips with.

Wouldn't it be great if privacy could be reduced to something as simple as a button on a keyboard?

5.) Privacy Management – Privacy and transparency live on opposite ends of the same social spectrum, but they're both part of the huge ethical issue that falls under the banner of privacy.

Drone privacy is different than social media privacy, which is different than online retailer privacy, Internet of Things privacy, big data privacy, email privacy, and snooping-around-in-my-business privacy.

People can often derive significant benefits from sharing their personal details as they take advantage of relevant and useful services online. However, once collected, businesses often exploit and monetize personal information, leaving people exposed and placing their information in predatory danger.

Yes, protecting and enforcing privacy is an added burden for business, but a lack of privacy creates risk for users and reduces trust. Trust plays a key role in virtually every form of innovation.

The free flow of personal information that respects privacy will do just the opposite, fuel and cultivate innovation. Optimizing the risks and rewards across the stakeholders may lead to new forms of innovation and the release of new economic value. The big challenge ahead will be to establish legal frameworks that foster innovation and facilitate information sharing across jurisdictions in global business environments.

Understanding both sides of this equation will be a critical skill for future generations.

6.) Information Management – In 2008, Roger Bohn and James Short, two researchers at the University of California in San Diego did a study to determine the amount of information people have entering their brains on a daily basis.

As it turns out, the average American spends 11.8 hours every day consuming information in 2008, and that number has been increasing 2.6% every year since then. Other countries are posting similar numbers. People today are being exposed to far more information than ever in the past.

How can we manage all this information better? How can we be smarter about the information we consume and the sources we're getting it from?

Our ability to effectively manage our personal information inputs and outputs will greatly determine our ability to compete in the global talent marketplaces of the future.

7.) Opportunity Management – Currently 54 million Americans are now freelancers.

A 2014 study done by Field Nation concluded that 88% of freelancers think of themselves as highly engaged small business owners and 97% of them love the idea of working independently.

Being a freelancer is a form or entrepreneurship.

When they start out, most freelancers will try to increase their income simply by working more hours. But once they've quit their day job and start dedicating 30 or 40 hours a week to their business, there are really just two ways to make more money – either by becoming more specialized so they can charge higher rates, or by engaging other freelancers to work under their project umbrella, giving them the freedom to tackle bigger, higher-level projects.

Over the coming years we'll see more freelancers cultivating specialties and forming teams that let them earn bigger revenues than ever before.

At the same time, sharing economy companies are opening the door for new kinds of "gig economy" professionals like Uber drivers, Zaarly pros, Task

Rabbit workers, or managers of AirBNB properties. All fall into a transition category for new age job hoppers where the barrier to entry is relatively painless and they can manage their own schedule and job performance without a hovering boss nearby.

8.) Technology Management – The very first Apple iPhone entered the world in 2007. Since then, new tools have been appearing on a daily basis.

What should we be paying attention to, and what can we dismiss?

With sensors becoming a ubiquitous part of everyday living we will soon be wearing smart shoes, sleeping on smart pillows, eating smart food, with smart spoons, while watching our children play with their smart toys.

Our choice of technology defines who we are and our ability to function in an increasingly technology-dependent world.

Very soon we will be downloading apps for our drones, our smart houses, our pets, our cars, our clothes, and even our imaginary friends.

Our relationship with our personal technology will continue to be an ongoing challenge and improving skills in this area will be highly advantageous.

What are the most valuable relationships in your life?

9.) Relationship Management – In a world immersed in social media, we know lots of people, but what kind of relationship do we have with them? Yes those that go beyond the Dunbar number. How do we qualify and quantify the value of those relationships?

As the size of a person's social network increases, it becomes difficult for someone to have meaningful conversations with each person. Different rules apply to those we have strong ties with versus those who only know by face or name.

The way relationships are managed in the digital age is changing, especially when it comes to our emotional ties like love and marriage. The traditional marriage, which has been a foundational piece of societal structure since the beginning of recorded history, has been reduce to little more than a ceremonial contract of declining importance with each new generation.

Our understanding of the shifting nature of relationships will be one of our most critical skills in managing our future.

10.) Legacy Management – How will future generations remember you? How will they perceive your successes and failures, your accomplishments and misguided efforts, your generosity and perseverance?

While many still view inheritance as the primary way to leave a legacy, people now have the ability to manage the information trail they leave behind. In fact, they can very easily communicate with their own descendants who have not even been born yet.

The body of work we leave behind will become increasingly important. So if we chose to let future generations know who we are and why we set out to achieve the things we did, we can do that today with photos, videos, and online documents.

However, future generations will have far more tools at their disposal to preserve the essence of their personality, using avatars with AI engines to answer questions about issues only future generations will know to ask.

As all of us age, the notion of leaving a legacy becomes critically important, and furthering our skills in this area will indeed serve us well.

11.) Money Management – Banks and credit card companies have been unusually resistant to making the flow of money transparent, mainly because the opacity of our accounts is directly proportional to the unscrupulousness of fees and charges they assess.

In fact the entire money world has become a rich playground for those wanting to pilfer and poach from it. But that will soon be coming to an end.

Silicon Valley's latest crop of fintech (financial technology) startups, numbering well in excess of 8,000, and funded with billions from VCs and crowdfunding, are out to make the bloodletting stop.

In addition, blockchain technology, the crypto-engineering tech behind Bitcoin, is quickly being implemented throughout the mainstream monetary system and driving the underlying transaction costs of the entire system to zero.

That said, even with total real-time transparency, we will still need to keep very close track of our money. This means every Apple watch purchase of Starbucks coffee, every Go-Fund-Me donation, Spotify subscription fee, Uber ride, Amazon delivery, in-app purchase, Facebook boost, and IoT micropayment will have to be accounted for along the way.

When was the last time you really felt you had control of your time?

12.) Time Management – The most precious commodity in everyone's life is still time. You can ponder it, over-schedule it, spend it with others, account for every second of it, make others account for it, squander it, or simply act as if it doesn't exist. But so far we've not found a way to stretch it, reverse it, or buy extra bags full of it when we run out.

Time management systems of the past will need to morph, shift, and change to accommodate lifestyles and business demands of the future.

Every item on the list above boils down to creating efficiencies, and we can't possibly create these efficiencies without finding better ways to manage our time.

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