



FutureScape Issue 5 – August 17th 2009

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Welcome to Issue 5 of FutureScape

FutureScape is the fortnightly(ish) research and insights newsletter from Fast Future. We hope you find it of use and interest and look forward to receiving your feedback, contributions and suggestions for future issues.

In this issue we cover two topics - firstly a study on 'Jobs that don't yet exist'. We would really appreciate your help with this.

Secondly we are sharing some thoughts on key trends and challenges facing business, government and nonprofit organisations over the next two years.

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Study - Jobs that don't yet exist

We are currently undertaking a study on the kinds of jobs that will be created in 10-20 years' time through advances in science and technology.

We have created a list of 20 examples of jobs and have launched a survey to find out your thoughts on their potential value and impact.

We would really appreciate it if our readers could take a few minutes to complete the survey.

Please read the 20 job descriptions below first and then take the survey at www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB229HP2J3ALX

You can answer as few or as many questions as you want. We will send a copy of the final report to everyone who completes the survey and leaves their email address. We will donate \$1 to children's charities for every survey respondent.

Closing date for responses - midnight on August 20th 2009. We hope you'll enjoy taking part.

1. Body Part Maker

Due to the huge advances being made in bio-tissues, robotics and plastics, the creation of body parts - from organs to limbs - will soon be possible, requiring body part makers, body part stores and body part repair shops.

2. Nano-Medic

Advances in nanotechnology offer the potential for a range of sub-atomic 'nanoscale' devices, inserts and procedures that could transform personal healthcare. A new range of nano-medicine specialists will be required to administer these treatments.

3. Farmer of Genetically Engineered Crops and Livestock

New-age farmers will raise crops and livestock that have been genetically engineered to improve yields and produce therapeutic proteins. Works in progress include a vaccine-carrying tomato and therapeutic milk from cows, sheep and goats.

4. Old Age Wellness Manager / Consultant Specialists

Drawing on a range of medical, pharmaceutical, prosthetic, psychiatric, natural and fitness solutions to help manage the various health and personal needs of the aging population.

5. Memory Augmentation Surgeon

Surgeons that add extra memory to people who want to increase their memory capacity and to help those who have been over exposed to information in the course of their life and simply can no longer take on any more information - thus leading to sensory shutdown.

6. 'New Science' Ethicist

As scientific advances accelerate in new and emerging fields such as cloning, proteomics and nanotechnology, a new breed of ethicist may be required. These science ethicists will need to understand a range of underlying scientific fields and help society make consistent choices about what developments to allow. Much of science will not be a question of can we, but should we.

7. Space Pilots, Architects and Tour Guides

With Virgin Galactic and others pioneering space tourism, space trained pilots and tour guides will be needed, as well as designers to enable the habitation of space and the planets. Current projects at SICSA (University of Houston) include a greenhouse on Mars, lunar outposts and space exploration vehicles.

8. Vertical Farmers

There is growing interest in the concept of city based vertical farms, with hydroponically-fed food being grown in multi-storey buildings. These offer the potential to dramatically increase farm yield and reduce environmental degradation. The managers of such entities will require expertise in a range of scientific disciplines, engineering and commerce.

9. Climate Change Reversal Specialist

As the threats and impacts of climate change increase, a new breed of engineer-scientists will be required to help reduce or reverse the effects of climate change on particular locations. They will need to apply multi-disciplinary solutions ranging from filling the oceans with iron filings to erecting giant umbrellas that deflect the sun's rays.

10. Quarantine Enforcer

If a deadly virus starts spreading rapidly, few countries, and few people, will be prepared. Nurses will be in short supply. Moreover, as mortality rates rise, and neighbourhoods are shut down, someone will have to guard the gates.

11. Weather Modification Police

The act of stealing clouds to create rain is already happening in some parts of the world, and is altering weather patterns thousands of miles away. Weather modification police will need to control and monitor who is allowed to shoot rockets containing silver iodine into the air - a way to provoke rainfall from passing clouds.

12. Virtual Lawyer

As more and more of our daily life goes online, specialists will be required to resolve legal disputes which could involve citizens resident in different legal jurisdictions.

13. Avatar Manager / Devotees - Virtual Teachers

Avatars could be used to support or even replace teachers in the elementary classroom, i.e., computer personas that serve as personal interactive guides. The Devotee is the human that makes sure that the Avatar and the student are properly matched and engaged.

14. Alternative Vehicle Developers

Designers and builders of the next generations of vehicle transport using alternative materials and fuels. Could the dream of underwater and flying cars become a reality within the next two decades?

15. Narrowcasters

As the broadcasting media become increasingly personalized, roles will emerge for specialists working with content providers and advertisers to create content tailored to individual needs. While mass market customisation solutions may be automated, premium rate narrow casting could be performed by humans.

16. Waste Data Handler

Specialists providing a secure data disposal service for those who do not want to be tracked, electronically or otherwise.

17. Virtual Clutter Organizer

Specialists will help us organise our electronic lives. Clutter management would include effective handling of email, ensuring orderly storage of data, management of electronic ID's and rationalizing the applications we use.

18. Time Broker / Time Bank Trader

Alternative currencies will evolve their own markets – for example time banking already exists.

19. Social 'Networking' Worker

Social workers for those in some way traumatized or marginalized by social networking.

20. Personal Branders

An extension of the role played by stylists, publicists and executive coaches – advising on how to create a personal 'brand' using social and other media. What personality are you projecting via your Blog, Twitter, etc? What personal values do you want to build into your image - and is your image consistent with your real life persona and your goals?

Please share your thoughts on these jobs by taking the survey at www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB229HP2J3ALX

Key Trends and Challenges for the Next two Years

A lot of people have been asking us what we think are the critical trends, issues and developments that will influence our thinking over the next two years. While we have our views, we are also very conscious that these issues will differ significantly depending our personal outlook, sector, where we are in world, our stage of life and individual circumstances. So we'd like to hear your views - what do you think are the issues and developments that could have the greatest bearing on your thinking and behaviour over the next two years?

We will compile all the responses and share them in one of the September FutureScapes. Here are five ideas to get you started.

1. Embracing Complexity

The finance crisis has helped us understand that our world is increasingly made up of highly complex interconnected and adaptive systems whose behaviour is difficult to model or predict. Governments and businesses will increasingly start to embrace complexity thinking to help understand and plan for the world we now operate in. The real breakthrough will come when we start to teach our children about complexity and how to make decisions in an uncertain world with imperfect information.

2. Facing up to Ageing

In the developed economies, lifespan estimates are increasing by up to five months every year and there is up to a 90% chance that those under 50 will live to 100. These patterns will be emulated for citizens in the developing economies as their

incomes, lifestyles and health outlook improve. At the same time we know our pension systems cannot cope - they were not designed for people lasting 15 years past retirement let alone 35. In addition, with population decline in many developed economies, we know that the ratio of workers to retirees is shrinking - reducing the pool of pension funds available to serve a rising level of demand.

Governments, businesses, the media, society and the pensions industry all have to accept that this is a crisis of our own making - it is not something that's happened overnight. We have had warnings about an impending pensions crisis for over 20 years and have chosen to do little about it. Over the next two years we think the debate will move beyond the current search for blame as people begin to realise that their pension funds won't be able to cope. We will all be forced to think about how we can fund ourselves for a 100 year lifespan. This might mean working well into our 70's, looking at alternative financing and investment models, changing our lifestyles to reduce our spending, ensuring that we will be healthy enough to keep working and keeping our skills and capabilities relevant.

3. Accelerating Innovation

One of the most interesting responses to the downturn has been the rising focus on innovation. This has ranged from a wave of new product launches to radical rethinks of entire business models and operating systems. However, a lot of larger businesses have found their internal processes a barrier when it comes to turning ideas into reality. We think the focus of innovation initiatives will increasingly focus on streamlining decision making to allow more rapid testing of new ideas.

4. Dealing with Debt

The current – potentially temporary - respite in the financial crisis is allowing governments to take stock of the impact of rescue packages on public finances. We know that in 2010 the debt of the richer members of the G20 is expected to rise close to 100% of GDP. Tough choices will be required on how to service the interest payments and bring down the size of the debt burden. Policy options are limited and potentially unpopular. Cuts in public spending, reducing public sector workforces, higher taxes and encouraging inflation are the most likely instruments. These will have a dampening effect on the economy and slow the pace of recovery. It will be interesting to see the choices made by different nations.

5. Sustainability 2.0

While we expect a continued focus on environmental sustainability, we also think there will be a lot more debate about the long term sustainability of our governance and business models. What are the right set of processes, voter engagement mechanisms, funding approaches and controls required to manage a country in the 21st century? Is globalisation the right growth model for large corporations, what is an acceptable level of growth to target and what business and financing models should underpin these choices?

What do you think – please share your thoughts on what you think the key issues, trends and challenges will be for you over the next two years.

About Fast Future

Fast Future is a research and consulting firm which focuses on helping clients anticipate and develop innovative responses to the forces, patterns of change and ideas shaping the future. To book Rohit for a speech or workshop, or to discuss your research and consulting needs please contact rohit@fastfuture.com or call +44 (0)20 8830 0766

Forthcoming Dates for your Diary

This is a selection of 'future focused' events that we think could be of interest. Those marked with an R are the ones where Rohit is speaking and / or chairing the event.

September 3rd - 1st European Impact Angel Investing Summit, Geneva, Cost 100 Euros (members), 300 Euros (non-members) www.go-beyond.biz

September 14th- 15th (R), Driving Sustainability - The Future of Sustainable Transport Technology, Reykjavik Iceland. Cost - 69,000 Icelandic Krone (US\$550)

September 18th - 20th (R), Get Inspired - International Association of Facilitators European Conference, Oxford, England. Cost - IAF Members £592.25 / Non Members £649.75

September 21st (R) - Rise! - A debate for association leaders on the future of associations and association events, QEII Centre London, 17.30 - 19.00. Free for association leaders. email barbara.blow@figroup.com

September 22nd – 25th (R), The World Youth and Student Travel Conference, Manchester England. www.wystc.org

September 24th (R) - ASSOCIATION NEXT: Surviving the downturn and securing the future! Executlve Lunchtime Masterclass, Brussels. 15 Euros. Email ndevolder@kelleneurope.com

October 14th-16th (R), Visioning 20.20 – Escaping the Age of Stupid, 5th European Futurists Conference, Lucerne, Switzerland. Cost €1040 - 20% early bird discount for bookings before August 15th

October 21st -24th, Poptech 09 – America Reimagined, Camden Maine, USA. Cost US\$3,500

November 5th- 6th (R), Courage! – 7th Annual European Food Service Network CEO Conference, Cologne, Germany.