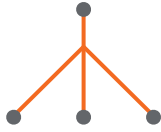




# TREND DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS

# TD





*These diagnostic tools are a complimentary gift from The Future Hunters. Email [info@TheFutureHunters.com](mailto:info@TheFutureHunters.com) to inquire about working with The Future Hunters on effectively incorporating these dynamic tools.*

# Tool #1: Implications Wheel

An implications wheel is a valuable tool for evaluating the implications of current trends, and identifying other trends that could impact the organization down the line. On blank paper, write in the center the trend you think is interesting (in very few words). Draw a circle around that trend. From that circle, branch out and identify a set of "1st order" implications that you think would happen if the original trend took shape. Draw a circle around each of those 1st order implications. From there, branch out from each 1st order implication, and identify a set of "2nd order" implications that you think would occur if the 1st order implication took shape, and so-on and so-forth.

- There are unlimited ways to design an appropriate implications wheel.
- Each bubble can have as many implications built off of it as necessary.
- Most implications wheels should go out to at least 2nd order implications, although if useful, they can be executed to as many orders out from the center as necessary.
- Implications can be open-ended, or forced into a set of pre-determined parameters, such as:

**BY TYPE OF IMPLICATION, E.G., "STEP"**

1 Social; 1 Technological; 1 Economic; 1 Political implication

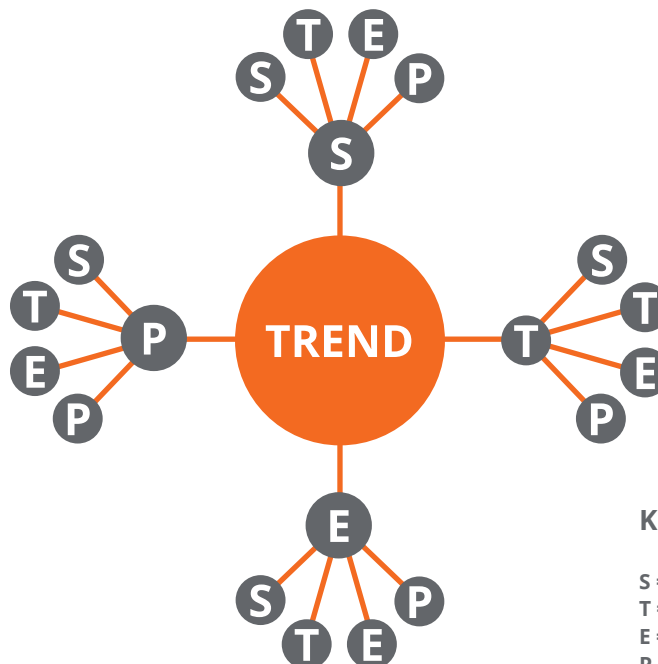
**BY BUSINESS FUNCTION, E.G.**

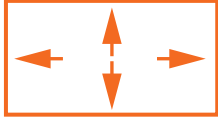
1 Corporate Strategy; 1 Marketing; 1 Operations; 1 HR implication

- When the implications wheel is completed, look for common themes emerging at the farthest-order consequences.
- There are four main benefits to an organization and/or team engaging in the implications wheel exercise:

**BENEFITS:**

1. Gets the team thinking both **strategically** and **creatively**.
2. Gets the team to structure their **thinking in a visual framework**.
3. Gets the team to **identify common threads** among the farthest-order consequences. This can be an "early-warning"/"early-opportunity" system for strategic planning.
4. Gets the team to see how **some trends** that may initially not seem strategically impactful to the organization, **can lead to 2nd, 3rd, etc. order consequences** that have direct impact on the organization's future.





## Tool #2 : Impact/Probability Grid

An impact/probability grid is a valuable tool for prioritizing current and prospective trends for strategic purposes across all business units of the organization. On blank paper, draw a standard X/Y-axis grid, with 4 quadrants. *\*Note that each axis should be on a scale of 0–10. Left-of-center on the X-axis, and below-center on the Y-axis are NOT negative numbers.*

- Identify as many trends as is appropriate for the exercise. Assign each trend a number (e.g., if you identify 8 trends, assign each trend numbers 1–8, respectively). Write each trend, in as few words as possible, beneath the grid in a numerical list.
- This exercise can be done individually or as a team. If done in a team, this exercise can be completed by a cross-functional team, or by specific business unit teams.
- Assign each identified trend a numerical score between 0–10 on each of the following 2 criteria:

### IMPACT (X-AXIS)

If this trend were to occur, how much of a direct impact would it have on the organization or business unit? 0 = no perceived impact; 10 = maximum perceived impact.

### PROBABILITY (Y-AXIS)

What is the likelihood that this trend will fully materialize as stated? 0 = 0% perceived likelihood that the trend is real; 10 = 100% perceived likelihood that the trend is real and will fully materialize.

- If the exercise is completed by a team, use a data collection app or paper ballot to collect each team member's feedback, before open discussion begins. Once values are collected, average them together to get the "team" value to be plotted on the grid. This prevents individual team members from being influenced by others.
- Plot each trend on the grid, based on the assigned impact/probability values. Draw a small circle or box for each trend, and include the corresponding trend number within the box. The trends will fall into one of the 4 quadrants as follows:

### QUADRANT 1 (High Impact, High Probability)

For these trends, it is essential to remain: Aggressive; Anticipatory

### QUADRANT 2 (High Impact, Low Probability)

For these trends, it is essential to remain: Alert

### QUADRANT 3 (Low Impact, High Probability)

For these trends, it is essential to remain: Aware

### QUADRANT 4 (Low Impact, Low Probability)

For these trends, it is essential to remain: Agnostic



**THE “MUSTS”:**

Trends in Quadrant 1 must be accounted for in any forward-looking strategic plan. Chances are, any competitor engaged in minimal scanning is aware of these trends, and will strategize around them.

**THE REAL “OPPORTUNITIES”:**

Trends in Quadrants 2 and 3 are important to account for, and can differentiate between a forward-thinking organization and competitors.

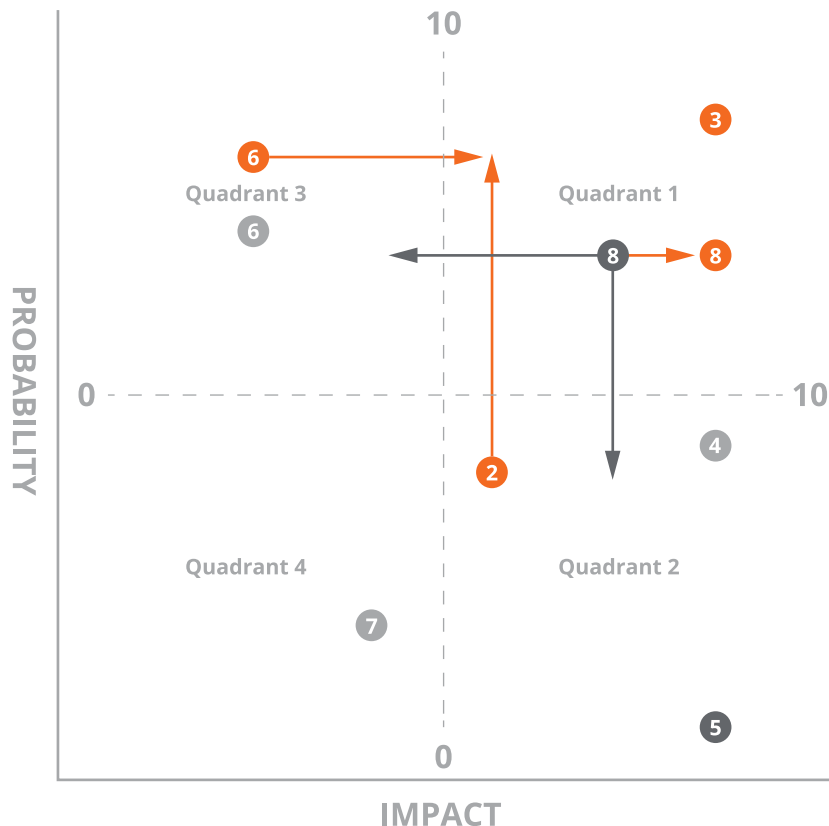
Trends should be assigned a “positive,” “negative,” or “neutral” value, based on the perceived impact on the organization should the trend materialize. The best way to depict this is with a color key (orange for positive, dark gray for negative, light gray for neutral).

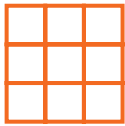
Organizations should consider ways to do the following 3 things. Note that these strategies have been visually depicted in the following sample grid:

1. Take positive (orange) trends from quadrants 2 and 3 and strategize ways to “move” them into quadrant 1 opportunities.
2. Take negative (dark gray) trends from quadrant 1 and strategize ways to mitigate their organizational impact by “moving” them into quadrants 2 or 3.
3. Take negative (light gray) trends in quadrant 1 and strategize ways to “turn” them into positive (orange) opportunities in quadrant 1.

The following sample grid plots 8 made-up trends, numbered 1–8, respectively:

- Trend with a perceived positive impact on the organization, should it occur
- Trend with a perceived negative impact on the organization, should it occur
- Trend with a perceived neutral impact on the organization, should it occur





# Tool #3 : Effreshency Scorecard

**A PROPRIETARY TOOL FROM THE FUTURE HUNTERS**

This user-friendly 1-page worksheet can serve as a universal scorecard for all initiatives. Have each member of the executive leadership team, and/or the team charged with developing an initiative, *independently* support and evaluate the initiative on each of the following eight (8) criteria (using a standard 1-10 scale). Upon completion of the exercise, average the composite results to see whether the initiative scores highly on most (or preferably *all*) of the measures below. While this is a somewhat subjective evaluation, the *effreshency* scorecard allows leaders to systematically evaluate initiatives across a critical spectrum of categories – in the process, identifying where there may be strategic or tactical need-gaps (e.g., any criterion scoring lower than 7).

**IS THE INITIATIVE**

**Effective**

(Does it truly accomplish what it was meant to do and even more?)

**Efficient**

(Does it do as much or more with the same or fewer resources?)

**Innovative**

(Does it have a new and competitively differentiated aspect to it?)

**Adaptable**

(Will it be able to conform to technological advances, competitive breakthroughs and unanticipated consequences and crises?)

**Sustainable**

(Will it be able to last and renew its potential over and over again with a predictable investment of resources?)

**Accountable**

(Is it answerable to concerns of regulators, customers, employees, the environment and the general public at large?)

**Inclusive**

(Has it enlisted the inputs of minority and majority stakeholders in the entire process from beginning to end, and will it continue to do so in an ongoing way?)

**Profitable**

(Will its financial return to shareholders meet or even exceed expectations?)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10





## Tool #4 : The Change/Risk Matrix

### A PROPRIETARY TOOL FROM THE FUTURE HUNTERS

Technology and society are changing so rapidly, that the calculation and identification of risk (first-order, second-order, third-order risk, etc.) is becoming almost prohibitively difficult. Not only are things changing too quickly for risk assessment to ever fully catch up, but much of the risk we now see emerging is what we call *risk in the white space*: risk where it may not have been predictable beforehand and/or risk that does not tie back to any clearly liable entity. For example, if a new technology changes the way that our brains operate – to the eventual detriment of our performance of other real-world tasks – then is there tangible “risk” associated with that technology? If so, are the developer and distributor of that technology liable? In a world dominated by big data, predictive modeling, actuarial tables, business forecasting and scenario generation, it seems inconceivable that calculation of risk could be such an imperfect “science.” While insurance companies may have an easier time calculating risk as it relates to their traditional line products, how will all businesses in the future account for dynamic, unforeseeable or less tangible risks they may face? In order to catalog the risks arising from unprecedented change, we have developed a simple, new matrix that we call the “Change/Risk Matrix”:

### X-AXIS – CHANGE

Is the risk linked to Technological Change or Societal/Cultural Change?

### Y-AXIS – RISK

Is the risk, or set of risks, Tangible or Intangible?

Tangible risks, in this framework, are more straightforward. They are generally more directly measured or quantifiable. Intangible risks, in this framework, may involve a murky correlation of liability. Or, they may involve subjective, cognitive or “perceptual” risks that are not as clear-cut as many traditionally calculated risks. As we move ahead, we need to specifically examine the high volume of emerging activity in the “white space”: Intangible risks precipitated by highly disruptive...and fast...technological or societal/cultural change.

