This BEAM ebook outlines a time honored process of transformational change that has evolved through our work with a full cross-section of industries and sectors and the people that shape and create their future.

*A Guide for Designing the Future* will benefit all enterprise leaders preparing the field for transformational and innovative change. In addition, BEAM’s guidance serves as a valuable resource for current and future clients wishing to gain a deeper and more profound understanding as we enter into our work together.

Dan & Meredith Beam
Set Up for Success...
Intention, Passion & Openness

If you accept Buckminster Fuller’s statement that “the future is a design problem” and recognize that a problem is really an opportunity in disguise, then the future is a design opportunity that we can create for ourselves.
If you want to design the opportunity that the future holds for you and your enterprise, it is important to look at it as a journey, a creative adventure. It is not a dispassionate exercise in intellectual, analytical cleverness. It is an all-in, full commitment journey that you and your co-creators take together. The future has to be won. It is a hero’s journey into the unknown, requiring all of your collective skills and experiences. This journey should be creative, exciting and intrinsically rewarding. At the end of it you should be able to say...“Wow, that was powerful and amazing!”

Future thinking and future decision-making creates a fundamental challenge: all of our knowledge is based on the recorded past and yet all of our decisions are about the unknown future. Certainly, we can draw from past learning to inspire us but we must let go of the past to be open to what the future will hold.

To add to our growing design challenge, we have to design the future while the whole world is going through a major transformation/fundamental shift. We know this 21st Century shift is a transformational one by the size of the simultaneous Big Breakdowns and Big Breakthroughs occurring in all sectors, industries and societies today. The old business models of the 20th Century, that appeared to serve us so well, are breaking down and becoming less relevant every day.

There is little doubt we are moving into a radically different, emerging New Era, an era we simply call 3.0.

The current 3.0 Era has too many labels under consideration to be agreed upon right now. Here are just a few of the potential labels being considered—the age of: Co-creation, Conscious Capitalism, Innovation, Sustainability, Hybridization, Collage and Social Collaboration.
This new 3.0 Era was preceded by the Industrial Age 1.0 (which lasted about 100 years) and it was followed by the Information Age 2.0, which lasted about 26 years. Time is speeding up so no one knows how long the 3.0 Era will last. Obviously, we need to deeply understand the emerging aspects of this future era if we hope to design our success in it.

Beliefs and Assumptions about Designing the Future

Before we take this path, let’s first check for beliefs and assumptions about how we design or create anything. This is especially necessary when we are placing big bets on the future of our enterprises (big resource commitments—capital, people, time, energy) and the stakes are sometimes quite high (winning big or losing all together).

First of all, “Designing the Future” sounds a bit presumptuous but it is exactly what is needed to make a difference. Those who make a difference in any field do not accept the status quo, in fact they screw it up, by making old models obsolete and replacing them with newly designed models that are more relevant for the future.

To successfully lead or participate in this journey, it is necessary to take account of your own attitudes, beliefs and assumptions about change and leadership.

There are three types of people in the world...

- Those who make things happen
- Those who observe what happened
- Those who wonder what happened

Our primary focus in this e-book is “Designing the Future” for an enterprise (profit or non-profit). However, this same planning pattern has been successfully used for many other types of future designing projects including: personal and professional plans for leaders, developing future plans for communities, cities, associations and even family vacations. The products, results and benefits of the design journey for various endeavors may differ but the pattern of the journey remains the same.

So how do you design a future for yourself and your organization when the old models are no longer working and the future is unpredictable?
If you are in the first category, or wish to be, this journey into designing the future will be a valuable guide in fulfilling your passion and bringing it to life. If you are in the second category, you will have an interesting read. If you are in the third category, you probably won’t read this monograph.

“Those who make a difference in any field do not accept the status quo, in fact they screw it up, by making old models obsolete and replacing them with newly designed models that are more relevant for the future.”

For first category people who are driven by the desire to create, there must be a solid intention behind all creative design to make an impact. There is something you passionately want to manifest, make happen, change, build or bring alive. Or perhaps more correctly, there is something that wants to emerge through you and your unique, creative gifts (we all have them, even if they may not be clear to you now). Most of the time, what emerges when you design the future is as surprising and inspiring to you as it is to those who benefit from and admire the results.

The great visionary, inventor and entrepreneur of the 20th Century, Thomas Edison, is a good example of a designer of the future...his passion for learning and creativity shines through all of his work. He fundamentally shaped much of the infrastructure of the modern world. He is well known for the things he invented, like the light bulb and phonograph, however his greater creations were larger in scope and impact. His larger system changes include the R & D Lab that ushered in a flood of innovation in all fields and the electrical grid system that now lights up the world. His radical future-shaping creations came from his open-minded, whole systems, passionate, connected and “leap” design thinking. Here is what Edison had to say about creating—“People say that I created things. I have never created anything. I get impressions from the Universe at large and work them out, but I am only a plate on a record or a receiving apparatus—or what you will. Thoughts are really impressions we get from the outside.”
In case you think Edison is just being modest or perhaps even metaphysical, you might want to read about other great minds who speak about received information, consciousness and creativity. Here are just a few heavy hitting, no nonsense, future-shaping scientists who align with Edison’s notion of received creativity—Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, David Bohm, Erwin Schrödinger, Freeman Dyson, Sir Arthur Eddington. To round out the picture, we’ll drop a few more big names—William James, Gregory Bateson, Carl Jung, Buckminster Fuller.

Why are we pointing to this notion of received information and emergent insights? Because in order to design the future, you have to be open to receive input from the outside and be open to the idea that all future thinking is not contained in the skull cavity. The brain is only the receptor, like a radio or TV. The mind, unlike the brain, is not contained. The mind goes beyond the confines of our body and it is interconnected to all that is around us. That interconnectedness around us is what Edison called the Universe. If your explorations in life have led you to this conclusion or if you intuitively know this to be true, then you are good to go, ready to start the journey of designing the future. If this idea of interconnectedness and big mind doesn’t immediately work for you, then you may need to suspend doubt for a bit until the “prove it to me” part of you is convinced through our examples of success and/or your own willingness to experiment. You don’t need faith, you just have to be open to see that connected and intuited reception actually works and is absolutely necessary for good design and creativity.

A summary of successful personal beliefs and mental conditions necessary for designing the future using Intention, Passion & Openness

1. Designing the future is a journey...that requires a thoughtful plan for the journey itself. We must plan the timing, contributions, forums and the way we will capture learnings gained along the way as well as the results achieved.

Example: It is important that each participant clarifies his or her unique role in making the journey a success. A senior team we recently worked with engaged each of their functional groups in special ways to explore the future zeitgeist. The resulting contributions exceeded the team’s expectations. The entire company was more deeply engaged and the unleashed employees gained more insights...
impacting the business than what had been previously achieved by subscribing to quarterly trend reports.

2. **Research and recognize major sea changes**... what is creating the Big Breakdowns and Big Breakthroughs occurring in all sectors, industries and societies today? The first step in beginning the journey is to explore what is happening in the broader world and to discover the implications to your world and enterprise.

*Example:* A large billion-dollar apparel brand assumed that social media could not reach their older “boomer” customer. They included social media in their sea change/zeitgeist study and were convinced to try a few social media experiments with their current customers. Today they are actively engaging their boomer customer on Facebook, Twitter and their web site and reaping huge rewards in terms of sales, loyalty and the introduction of new categories of products.

3. **To make a true, transformative change you need to screw up the status quo.**

*Example:* Wikipedia screwed up the encyclopedia publishing business by creating a transformative platform with open, collaborative involvement. Apple screwed up the whole concept of MP3 players and the music industry model with its transformative iPod system.

4. **Intention and Passion: behind all creative design there must be a big intention driven by passion.** If you are going to embark on the journey of designing the future, you must have a big goal of creating or achieving something of importance, even if that goal is fuzzy and ill-defined at first. And the drive to shape and reach that goal must be fueled by a passion, something of strong purpose or creative expression that comes from what you truly value.

*Example:* When we worked with Apple years ago, they set the goal of going beyond “shrunken desktop” computers to create a whole new world of personal mobile computing. The result was the development of the first Powerbook laptop that set a record by achieving a billion dollar brand introduction in one year. The Apple team had the intention to create a breakthrough in computing and they had the design
passion to deliver a category defining “cool” product that set the pace for mobile computing for years.

5. **Openness: you must be open to receive input, ideas and insights from the interconnected world around you.** This means we must have a prepared mind ... looking for opportunities in every challenge, building our intuitive muscle and being open to receive. Ideas often come when we are doing something disconnected from the answer we are seeking. How many great ideas have you recognized when showering in the morning? Research shows that we need to release our brain from the task at hand by changing the environment, relaxing or engaging in a creative flow state to gain greater insights and ideas.

6. **Surround yourself with people who are open to new opportunities.** As research shows, innovative leaps into the future are never done in isolation. They come from knowledge gathered by staying well connected to creative people and by reading and following the latest leading edge ideas, then putting the ideas together into new configurations that create new possibilities.

*Example:* **O’Reilly Media** is an innovative company that keeps its leadership edge by virtue of its openness and connection to all parts of the tech and innovation world. Growing from a tech book publishing company, it has leveraged its core competency of connecting the best of innovative, edge thinking to go beyond publishing. O’Reilly has created the highly successful Web 2.0 and Gov 2.0 conferences, built a creative edge tech investment company and even broken open new territory in the Do It Yourself (DIY) field with its wildly successful **Makers Faire and Make magazine.** These are living examples of staying connected and open to a broad array of input and using that input to design future businesses.

Intention is everything. Whether your charge is to create a new enterprise, a new era strategic plan, a future business model, a category defining product or brand, these starting conditions need to be in place. If you don’t have the clear intention, passion and openness, you will waste your time and create something too tiny to have much impact on the future. In that case you are better off just making a list of to-dos and continuing to run the status quo enterprise, which will eventually die out without periodic transformational renewal that comes from the journey of designing the future.
On the other hand, if you do have the true intention, passion and openness to take the journey, your pay-off can be surprisingly rewarding on many levels. In our twenty-seven years of work with amazing people and organizations, we have found consistently that people who make these leaps are surprised by the powerful outcomes and often use the term “magic” to describe their experience. In many ways they are right, the human’s ability to create the future is like magic.
Be Clear on What You Want from Your Journey

We once took our family on a driving vacation through France that started in the Riviera, wandered through several provinces, spilled over into Italy and Switzerland ending in Paris. Despite having a purse stolen in Antibes, we had a wonderful time...
Our teenage daughter’s high school French kept us reasonably conversant with wonderful French families and merchants all along our route. She and her younger brother’s sparring humor kept us laughing even when things went awry (humor is always valuable on any journey). And, is often the case, the little unexpected mishaps and detours turned out to be some of the most valuable memories of the trip. Our destination was Paris but our objective was to have fun family experiences that we could learn from and carry with us for a lifetime.

“At the end of the future design journey, you must have the final experience of true alignment, high impact and commitment.”

Your destination is often to arrive at the agreed upon vision, business model, strategy and action plans but it is often the experience of the planning journey itself that people carry with them into the future. The papers documenting these strategic agreements become reinforcement of the experience and, later, tools for communicating and measuring success. But the focus needs to be placed on making the future designing experience as rich, creative and compelling as possible.

The top ranking military leader and strategist in WWII, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, once said—“Plans are nothing, planning is everything.”

Eisenhower was communicating an important message to all who wish to influence a significant outcome in the future — it is the energized, co-creative act of planning together that produces the greatest benefit. It is in the journey of designing the future together where we reap insights, use each other’s ideas to spark more ideas, explore possibilities and build agreements, alignment and commitments that will carry us into the future.

Again, there is something to be learned from our family trip story that parallels a good organization future-designing process for an organization...

1. **Set aside time for a planning “Vacation”**—you have to break from the everyday to create new ideas about the future. You can’t fit it in around your everyday routine and hope to produce breakthrough future plans. Honor your team and the importance of this future planning work by setting aside a special time and place for an “Innovation Vacation”, a time to get creative together.
2. **Envision the experience**—Before we booked our trip, we first took time to identify what we all wanted from the experience and even envisioned what we would be doing and how we would be with one another. In your journey of designing the future, you will want to clearly picture how you want the creative planning process to operate so that your team breaks from the status quo, opens up the lens of new possibilities and co-creates and crafts future plans.

3. **Use a roadmap**—Obviously, we needed a good roadmap (pre-GPS) to travel the back roads of France. You will need a roadmap for your planning that allows you to avoid the big pitfalls and dead ends that often plague conventional planning (see Chapter 3).

4. **Make it creative, fun, educational and intrinsically rewarding**—Can you imagine wanting to have a great family vacation that wasn’t filled with highly creative, fun, educational and personally rewarding experiences? That’s what anyone wants from any journey, including one of designing the future. If your planning processes are not delivering this then they need to be broken apart and rebuilt. You can only get hot results from a hot process. Your process of planning has to generate heat and excitement. Real creativity requires real play and the emergence of real passions and high impact. The planning process should be so enticing, creative and intrinsically rewarding that people wouldn’t dare miss it.

At the end of every great journey there is a final destination. While it is true that our European journey was the reward, there were two things we needed to complete our trip... have a wonderful Paris experience and make our return flight back home. We met wonderful people in the neighborhoods of Paris and we flew back home with our photography, writing and drawing journals filled.

At the end of the future design journey, you must have the final experience of true alignment, high impact and commitment. And, of course, you must document the final essential agreements of your planning process (Vision, Business Model, Strategy).

On the following page is a “Menu of Deliverables”. As you undertake your “Designing the Future” Journey, you want to be as clear as possible on the desired outcomes. The Menu chart outlines three categories of deliverables: 1) Hard Products, 2) Soft Results and
3) Ultimate Benefits. You will want to define as specifically as possible the deliverables in each of the three categories before you begin the journey. You design your planning process based on producing these deliverables and then at the end of the journey you evaluate success.

Aristotle called happiness the only goal “we always choose for its own sake and never as a means to something else”.

You may note that Happiness is at the bottom of the Deliverables Menu. As Aristotle points out, in his quote, happiness is the ultimate goal. Why do we want anything... money, power, success? Because we believe they will bring us happiness. So is this not what we want as well from all of our planning and creating? In 1776 in the United States Declaration of Independence, our Founding Fathers declared that we all have a right to “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”. Perhaps it is time we caught up to this big idea.

Ultimately happiness is what we all want: humans, creatures and even the living Earth itself. Mathieu Riccard, the French scientist/monk who is a top advisor to the Dalai Lama, describes eternal happiness as — “A Deep Flourishing...not a mere pleasurable feeling, a fleeting emotion, or mood, but an optimal state of being.”
Think about it—perhaps it is a good idea to include Happiness when you make the list of deliverables that will come from your future designing journey. When you hold the picture of flourishing happiness, you hold an uplifting, whole systems vision of a better future and the optimal state you want to create for yourself, your people and the people who benefit from the success of your enterprise. Think big, go for the real goal you and they want.

For decades, business has set a one dimensional, all-important deliverable—bottom line profit to maximize shareholder value. This simplistic goal is too small and it makes us small in return. It leaves out all the other stakeholders, like employees, partners and community. It ignores the impact on the natural resources that make the operations of every enterprise possible. And it also limits our field of innovation possibilities.

In Sweden, the word for business is Naringsliv—which means Nourishment for Life. Can you imagine how redefining the role of business as the “Nourishment for Life” would change what we make and how we operate our businesses? We would not only ensure that our operations don’t do harm (pollution, resource depletion, etc.), but we would also be working to find ways to replenish and rejuvenate our world. This is what more and more 21st Century businesses and leaders like Ray Anderson of Interface and the architect/eco-designer William McDonough have worked to do. And China is setting up long range plans to create more regenerative, beyond sustainable, innovations in business and public operations.

If we take Naringsliv one step further, we will not only ensure nourishment for life through regeneration, we will also have to question what we make in the first place. We could be making green, eco-friendly products but if they are still useless, low value junk do they really nourish our lives? At some point we have to ask ourselves if there is something else we could be doing with our resources, skills and innovation that could truly nourish life.
Challenge yourself to set goals and deliverables for your “Designing the Future” journey that are worthy of who you are and reflect the value you want to add to the world.
Understand the Connection of Future Design and Effective Decision Making

Once the journey of designing the future is complete, you can use your experience, insights and plans to make the big decisions that will enable you to start building the envisioned future or respond to opportunities that arise.
If you don’t use the plans to inform critical decision-making and execution of the changes, that all plans demand, then you have wasted your time. More importantly, this failure will negatively impact the participants in the planning process and they will feel let down and cynical about any subsequent planning efforts.

Remember — The primary reason you need the future plans is so that you can use them to make good decisions about the future.

These things may seem obvious but it is not unusual to find future plans gathering dust, while decisions are made with little or no reference to them. Michael Doyle, an old friend and successful consultant, used to call these plans “SPOTS” (Strategic Plans On the Shelf).

The future plans should be put to use right away and integrated into decision making on a regular and ongoing basis. If this is not the case, the planning journey will not be robust enough to be valued once the journey is over (“well, that’s done, now let’s get back to our regular work”), the planning will not create impactful agreed upon results nor the documents and managing processes needed for structured, disciplined decision making.

There are two big issues that we see with most future plans and planning documents. First, the plan documents and communications materials themselves are not compelling or engaging and they cannot be easily remembered or understood. Too often they look like lifeless, dry, corporate-speak, jargon-laden things that no human with a spark of life would want to read.

The second issue is that plans are inadequately or inappropriately utilized as decision-making tools. It is important that we address this issue now because knowing how to use your future guidance documents for decision-making is critical to making the most of both your planning experience and the written plans. In addition, understanding how your future plans will be utilized later helps you to do a better job of shaping the plans and their communications in the first place.

We have found that a one page set of decision filters helps ensure that people understand the role the future plans play in their ongoing decision-making. It also helps them see how to best utilize the plans to take on big opportunities and challenges. This chapter is an exploration of decision-making utilizing the BEAM
Decision Filters framework we have successfully used with enterprises in all sectors.

Look closely at the Decision Filters framework on the next page. Think of each of the vertically stacked boxes on the chart as a filter through which a future idea or opportunity must pass. If you drop the opportunity (like expand to new territory or launch a new product line) at the top, the opportunity will first have to pass through Essence Filters, then the Strategy Filter, and finally the Business Opportunity filters.

**Essence Filters**

If the opportunity under debate doesn’t move you closer to your Vision, is out of alignment with your Brand or does not help you build your future Business Model, then it must be rejected at this point. If it doesn’t meet the demands of the Essence Filters, don’t
**Strategy comes in two forms...** Deliberate and Emergent. In your future designing process, you lay out Deliberate Strategies. In your planning sessions you design strategies about an envisioned future. But as an open, receiving creator you are also very aware of new information coming in (e.g., the market you thought was going to grow slowly all of sudden takes off like a rocket). With this new information, you have to rapidly create an Emergent Strategy, one that emerges from the insight the new information provides, that is synergistic to your overall Deliberate Strategy. So, using our example, you may allocate added resources to the hot market and make adjustments to the timing of your overall Deliberate Strategy game plan. Strategy is, like many things, inherently paradoxical. You must plan long-term strategies that keep you on course to your destination AND you must be responsive to the environmental changes all around you. To do this well, you must rely on your experience, intuition and judgment...not everything can be reduced to calculated formulas and analytics.

even bother considering the Business Opportunity filters lower on the chart (like the money it can make or the resources it will need). Anything that mismatches with your Vision/Values, Brand or Business Model takes you to a place you don’t want to go—it wastes your time and resources and may damage your relationships and reputation.  

**Strategy Filters**

If the opportunity you are considering passes successfully through the Essence Filters, then you need to see if it matches your strategies and their timing. For example, you may have an enticing opportunity to open new territory in Europe but if your strategy calls for Europe to be put on the back burner until you have built a better infrastructure in the USA, then you may want to pass on that opportunity for now. Of course you can choose to override the strategy but consulting the filter chart forces you to make a clear, deliberate decision. 
Strategy is about core maneuvers and objectives set to a specific timing. If the opportunity is out of sync with the strategic maneuvers, objectives or timing, then it is likely to take you off of your game plan and create problems of execution, (e.g., overextending your resources, making it impossible to execute other components of your strategy thus creating confusion and debilitating loss of time and energy).

**Business Opportunity Filters**

Okay, let’s say that your potential opportunity (or challenge) has passed through the Essence and Strategy filters. Now you are ready to explore and debate the relative business/enterprise merits of the opportunity under consideration by using the Business Opportunity Filters. To do this, you will have had to use the Essence and Strategy plan agreements to create the specific action plans and budgets to be achieved. These metrics tell you the boundaries within which you can consider the merits of the opportunity. Of course most managers understand this part of the decision making fairly well. Whatever opportunity they are considering, they check to see if it will give the kind of Marketplace Advantage their plans call for (market share, scalability, etc.); Significant Pay-off (margin, profit, etc.); Resources Match (“Do we have money/people/time to pull it off?”); Trade-offs (“We may have to delay our investment in project X if we want to take on this project”).

All of this talk about Decision Filters has a strong logical, somewhat linear aspect to it, which it should — it is forcing a level of disciplined consideration when making important decisions, which many organizations are hungry for. Without this degree of discipline in decision-making, many decision sessions soon degenerate into religious debates, filled with “I believe” statements. Does this sound familiar?

John—“Well, I believe we can make a lot of money in the big discounter market”.

Bob—“Well, I believe it could hurt our brand to go into the discounter market”.

As you can see by this example, John and Bob are talking on two different levels. Bob is expressing his beliefs at the Essence (Brand) level and John is expressing his beliefs at the Business Opportunity level. The results are discouraging—there is no chance to give either viewpoint adequate consideration and, as a result, Bob and John will most likely get “positioned”
in an “I believe” religious battle. By following the discipline of the Decision Filters, they can both explore each level together and keep the discussion focused on the merits of each filter level consideration.

Several of our clients place copies of the Decision Filters chart on the wall in meeting rooms as a reminder to stay on point in decision-making discussions and ensure everyone is debating on the same level (Essence level or Business Opportunity level but not at the same time).

**Suggestion** — If you find your decision discussions around a business opportunity are overly conflicting, push the discussion back up the chart to find out where the debate disconnects and where you have common ground. For example, the reason you may be experiencing disagreement about Marketplace Advantage and Pay-off is that you actually have disagreement about the interpretation of the Strategy. So push the discussion up to the Strategy level, check for agreements and explore the differing interpretations of the strategy. Sometimes you have to push up into the Essence Filters before you find common ground and then work your way back down to Strategy and Business filters, building common ground as you go.

You can’t possibly use the Decision Filters framework for decision making if you haven’t developed the defining agreements for each of the filters. When we hear from a potential client that they have difficulties with decision making, we often find that they have not a) adequately defined their Vision in sufficient depth, b) truly defined the essence and core tenets of their Brand, c) laid out the future Business Model they are
working to build, nor d) developed their uniting Strategies that will carry them into a future of success. And sometimes none of these critical future decision agreements have been adequately communicated to the point that people are actually using them. This point seems like a blinding flash of the obvious and a no-brainer but you might be surprised to see how often this is the case.

Frequently we find that enterprises are trying to operate with an “air sandwich”. They have a vague, fluffy Vision statement at the top (some version of “We will be #1 in our field, make a lot of money and people will love us”). At the bottom, they have a long list of initiatives and actions. And in between, there is just air...no information-rich Vision, no Brand definition, no future Business Model, no Strategy...no meat! They offer their people an air sandwich of no substance and wonder why people don’t feel empowered to lead and make great strategic decisions.

On the other hand, our experience has shown us that clear future plan agreements, well embedded in the decision-making process, empowers people to make the right decisions at the right time. People at all levels of the organization need clarity on the Essence, Strategy and Business Opportunity agreements to be successful. The top of the house needs them for making key decisions that steer the total enterprise. People in middle management need the agreements to shape the department plans that enable them to direct their department decision-making. And everyone in the enterprise needs the inspiration, context and clarity that the agreements provide to see the value of their role and understand how their contributions add to enterprise success.

Making Decision Choices – Head, Heart, Belly

The Decision Filters framework provides a rational, logical, disciplined decision making approach that is clear and defensible. This creates a great advantage over conflicting “I believe” debates or personality/power posturing decision-making. However, we all know that the world doesn’t let us
work only from logic and data. Particularly now, with a global economy, we are operating at a time of great complexity. As a result, we are operating with incomplete information (few enterprises function in a predictable industry or sector) and the world is paradoxically “ordered and chaotic” at the same time. So to be truly effective, we must draw upon the full power of human decision-making ability, combining Head (rational) Heart (emotional) and Belly (intuitional) decision-making.

The Heart is all about passion, Eros/creativity, and what is true, beautiful and good. Sometimes a decision makes great logical sense but it doesn’t feel good or right. Sometimes we need to listen to that which is sweet, tender, caring or beautiful, even in the “hard nosed” world of business.

At our consulting firm, we fill our world with art, photography and poetry that comes from our passions. Our office walls and virtual Beam Art Wall are filled with pieces created in the painting studio we have at our office. Where there is not a painting on the wall, there is a photograph, sculpture or poem created by one of our staff consultants. Our clients regularly receive poetry we’ve written or compiled along with staff generated artwork. We could rationally operate our business without these expressions of beauty and creativity but our lives and the lives of our clients would be deprived, less joyful. Remember—we have a goal of happiness.

At the offices of our strategic partners and friends, Pompei A.D. (world famous innovators and designers of experiences and spaces like Anthropologie and Urban Outfitter stores), provide an art gallery and cultural events space. At the Gap, the founders Don and Doris Fisher, designed their headquarters to house their incredible modern art collection. Each of these companies could rationalize their decisions to bring art and beauty into the business environment as a way to build their brands but the truth is these decisions really come from their passions and choices of the heart.

Sometimes we make choices that at first blush appear to work against conventional, rational decision-making. Years ago we had the privilege to work with a board on which James Burke served. We asked him about his controversial decision as CEO of Johnson & Johnson, to pull hundreds of millions of dollars of Tylenol off the shelves on the slight chance that some
of it had been tainted. He said that people thought he was crazy but he did not hesitate because he knew in his heart it was the right thing to do, the risk to anyone’s life was not worth the money lost. He also attributed his decision-making process to the great ethics course he took when he went to Harvard. This course prepared him to consider what is true and right to do, not just what makes financial sense. In the end, his morale decision turned out to be a smart brand building decision that haloed the brand for many years. Learning to listen to the heart when it comes time to make the final decision choices is as important as having a disciplined process for rational decision-making. When we work with our clients we always make the heart check an important part of the decision process (“Do you feel that this is the right decision?”). We firmly believe that enterprises everywhere need to ensure that they take time to honor the heart by validating passions, eros/creativity, beauty, truth and goodness in their decision making choices.

“The heart has its reasons which reason knows nothing of” —Pascal
decision-making. In fact, studies at Tufts University show that we, in fact, do not just use our brain to make logical decisions. There is actually a looping process that sends a signal down from the brain to the body, the belly, and back to the brain before a decision is made.

Dealing with human behavior is especially challenging when it comes to decision-making. Humans have a habit of being inconsistent and unpredictable and the old models based on rational decision assumptions (inductive, deductive thinking) just don’t hold up in this complex world. New models of understanding human decision-making have given rise to new fields e.g., Behavioral Economics and explorations in neuroscience to understand the complex patterns of consumer decision-making have given rise to Neuro-marketing. These are the new fields of marketing that study consumers’ sensory, motor, cognitive and affective response to advertising and brands. These new approaches underscore the need to open our understanding beyond rational decision-making.

When the situation is complex, with many variables, and solutions are not immediately visible, you need to pay attention to your intuition. A great example of using intuition is the story of the Director of City Operations at Long Beach, Gary Varink. He called us with a problem. He told us that in a few weeks he had to make a go/no-go decision to build a new Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center. Gary said that each time he thought about the design of the new Center, something in his gut bothered him. He didn’t know specifically why but he just knew he didn’t feel right about the proposed Center.

Within two weeks, we pulled together a Convention Center “charrette” (a term architects use for an intensive, co-creative assess-design process involving multiple inputs). Attending the Charrette were top designers, architects, convention and entertainment experts, city leaders and potential clients for a new Center. In the day and a half Charrette, the participants analyzed the proposed Center design that was keeping Gary awake at night, rejected the design, re-thought the purpose and outlined a totally new approach. The Charrette team had unequivocally concluded that the original design would be “obsolete before the build out is finished”. After the Charrette, new architects were engaged, and a new Center was designed and built.
Shortly afterward, Gary thanked us saying, “That amazing Charrette just saved me and Long Beach from making an $80 million mistake”. Today the Long Beach Convention and Entertainment Center is considered one of North America’s premier Convention Facilities. All because one person said that his gut, his intuition, told him something was not right.

**Commitment to Decisions**

How do you know if you are really committed to a decision once it is made? The advice we use and give our clients is to do a Head-Heart-Belly check in the physical body. If all feel aligned and at peace you know it is a good decision. If one of these major body centers is in turmoil (or just uncomfortable) it is a huge indicator that a decision may need to be personally reviewed. It calls for a personal inquiry to see what, if any, sticking point needs to be addressed. Do not overlook this lack of alignment…it will come back to bite you.

**Agility of Decision-making**

One more very important factor that runs through any consideration of decision-making is agility. If all of the tools for decision-making we have outlined here are used well, your odds of making good decisions will expand exponentially. However, a slow ponderous culture and an old 20th Century business model can handicap the best of Head-Heart-Belly decision-making.

Companies designed on 3.0 (21st Century business models and cultures) have the agility to run circles around their 20th Century counterparts. Just compare [Threadless.com](http://Threadless.com) with more traditional t-shirt companies. Built into their business model is the constant flow of design and input from customers. They don’t have to guess what to make, keep in inventory or sell. They have a culture and business model whereby customers design the T-shirts, vote on the ones that most people like, and sell them to this pre-pleased audience. The decision-making is integral to the way they operate.

**Summary of Decision-making**

Let’s put this all back together now. To do solid, strong, creative, effective decision-making about the unpredictable future, we need to:

1. Design and develop all the agreement plans required on the Decision Filters framework.
2. Utilize the Decision Filters for any significant opportunity/challenge decisions.

3. Formulate Deliberate strategies while being open to new and Emergent strategies.

4. Draw upon Head, Heart and Belly to both design the plans in the first place and use all three in making the final decision choices and for checking on the level of commitment and alignment.
Use the Right Roadmap for your Journey

“If you don’t know where you are going, any road will take you there”

— Lewis Carroll
Well, we do know where we are going. We are beginning a journey to the future, therefore just any old road will not do. The journey of designing the future is very specific and it looks like this:

This 3.0 Future Design Guide appears to be a simple model, and it is, but it also contains important guidance for the journey of designing the future. It is an unusual planning map in that it doesn’t flow in a linear fashion. It starts with the Now (1), leaps into the Future (2) and then bridges the Now and Future with Strategic Action (3). Following the sequence and specific process of the three stages is important because it avoids three big mistakes we often find people make when trying to design their future.

**Mistake #1—Skipping the Now or Getting Stuck in the Now**

Sometimes when people start planning they are in such a hurry to get a picture of the future that they skip, or only lightly touch on, the current realities of the Now stage. This is a big mistake because a deep exploration of the Now (the realities/challenges/opportunities) most often contain hidden clues to the future. Not thoroughly exploring the Now, limits your ability to imagine the future because the future has a habit of showing up in odd
places in the Now. The opportunities that emerge from the challenges often become the source of the future design.

A corollary mistake made with the Now stage, is that people can get stuck there and think that the future comes from problem solving the Now. They start identifying long lists of current issues and problems and then try to solve and fix them. You will never repair your way to the future. It might feel good to fix a few broken things but it won’t allow you to create the greater potential that the future holds. In fact, just fixing things keeps you in the status quo...the last place you want to be when the world around you is significantly changing.

Mistake #2—Failing to Leap Into The Future

In many organizations future planning looks like “this year plus 10% ”, which is a big mistake. If you want an exciting, inspiring future (and who would want anything less?), you must take a big leap into an imagined future. Bobbi Silten, former President of Dockers, made a statement about this mistake that is worth repeating, “Typical company planning stops at the edge of imagination and goes no further.” Inexperienced or fearful leaders often stop their planning at the edge of imagination and never go past it. As a result, the plans are lifeless and have no energy to move the enterprise into the future that could await them. On the other hand, creative leaders are facile at leaping into the future and using their imaginations to envision new possibilities and opportunities that in turn capture the imaginations of others.

Mistake #3—Not Crafting a Strategic “Story” Bridge Between Now & the Future

The “Designing the Future” process always has an important result in mind...to make a significant change that will enable future success.

That change only happens if there is a healthy Push from the Now, and an enticing Pull from a desired Future, connected by a strong bridge of Strategic Action. A good strategy is really a good story that connects the Now and the Future. Therefore the bridging actions must come together in a coherent and compelling story.

Sometimes when people make long-range plans, they do a good job of exploring the Now and a creative job of imagining the Future but it falls apart when they try to bridge them together. Too often they make long lists
of initiatives and actions. Instead, they need to have the discipline to tell their strategic story on one page with just four or five strategies that synergistically weave together to form the bridge.

“Typical company planning stops at the edge of imagination and goes no further.” —Bobbi Silten, Former President, Dockers

Seeing, Creating, Collaborating

When taking the journey of designing the future and leading/managing in the future, we need to be especially skilled at three major competencies—Seeing, Creating and Collaborating. In the not so distant past, the three-word mantra was Analyzing, Problem Solving and Controlling. These old competencies were the cornerstone skill sets most of our business schools taught for decades and they worked pretty well for enterprises operating in predictable, machine-like environments but they alone will not suffice in the 3.0 world. The trick in the future is to “transcend and include”… go beyond Analyze, Problem Solve and Control to add Seeing, Creating and Collaborating to your capabilities.

While the Seeing, Creating and Collaborating competencies will always be important to all parts of future success, each one is uniquely critical to each of the three stages in the 3.0 Planning Guide.

Stage 1…See the Now

To design the future, we must first See what is currently happening and what is emerging, then identify the key insights and opportunities in the coming era. By clearly seeing the Now realities both inside and outside the enterprise, we open up the pathway to the future. Seeing means seeing the whole system and the relationships within the system. In the whole systems perspective, an enterprise looks like Russian nested dolls ...

Within the enterprise are all the functional areas, resources and operating/cultural dynamics.
- The enterprise is nested within its industry, market and economic environment.
- The economic environment is nested within the society and culture.
- The society is nested within the environmental ecosystem.

Some 20th Century thinkers still try to frame the environment as a resource subsidiary of economic activity but this is a distortion of reality that is and will be creating barriers to clear, 3.0 future designing and ultimate well-being. Behind all of our economic growth is energy—and all sources of energy (light, fuel, food, water) come from nature, the environment. Therefore our society and economy are a subset of the environment and are dependent on a healthy environment for the sustained and long-term health of the global economy. When we look to problem solve or create anything in our economy or enterprises, we must take the whole systems view that includes the environment that holds it all.

When we see current realities and emergent possibilities we also need to look at the world through the eyes of artist as well as the analytical observer. In other words, use both the left brain and right brain to receive insights. Dr. Leonard Shlain in his book *Art & Physics* shows that artists’ perspectives have often been decades, if not centuries, ahead of the physical sciences in seeing the coming insights and laws of reality. He points out that science has historically been analytical, breaking down reality into its component parts. “An artist, on the other hand, often juxtaposes different features of reality and synthesizes them, so that upon completion, the whole work is greater than the sum of parts.”

To design the future, we need to be able to see the world through both the analytical, reductionist observer lens and through the eyes of the synthesizing artist. This means as we enter the first stage, we need to take in the whole system, all the things happening in each part of the enterprise’s world, examine the facts, see the connections and synthesize the uniting story of Now. In our work with clients that story is told with the tools of artists...words, images and metaphors portrayed on large wall charts. When people actually see the Now realities pictured, they get new connections and insights that inform their designs for the future.
In this first stage of *See the Now*, expect to See glimpses of the future already here. As the writer William Gibson points out “The future is here now, it is just not widely distributed.” Part of the challenge of Seeing and assessing the surrounding realities and possibilities, is to discover the bits and pieces of the future that are already showing up. For example, exploring the emerging social network phenomenon of MySpace and Facebook, just a few years back in a *See the Now* assessment session, might have opened up new possibilities by savvy enterprise leaders ready to see the whole system connections of social-media-brand-collaboration-commerce. And of course, that is exactly what Facebook saw and it is now one of the highest valued companies around.

As you can imagine, the approach we are describing goes way beyond the simple SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) assessment analysis that was taught in our business schools for decades. A highly creative assessment process uncovers the original energy and spirit of the organization, travels into the emerging future economic/technological/cultural zeitgeist to reveal undiscovered possibilities, and taps into the values and passions of its people. Only in a rich soil of deep *See the Now* assessment will the seeds of a healthy vision, business model and strategy grow. When this happens, the transformational results look like magic.

### Stage 2: Create the Future

Once we have done a thorough job of *See the Now* assessment, it is time to use the insights we have harvested to create the future. In this stage you create pictures, stories and plans that capture the logical-passionate-intuitive messages of the future that want to manifest through you and your enterprise. These are eventually expressed in the powerful and practical components of the future Essence Plans—Vision, Brand and Business Model. Together these three components set the end purpose and the core long-term guidance to the future.

> “Imagination is more important than knowledge”—Albert Einstein

This process of creation is an act of surrendering to what comes through you, through your imagination.
Future creation does not come from forced, logic driven problem solving. At the highly respected Rotman School of Management in Toronto, they place particular emphasis on Design Thinking and planning to allow the power of imagination to take hold. Their research and experiences have shown them that this is a more effective way to innovate and plan the future. In design thinking, you leap from the first stage of See the Now assessment platform into the unknown of the future and imagine what can be created. This Design “Leap” Thinking is called Abductive Thinking (vs. Inductive or Deductive thinking). Designers don’t worry about fixing the Now, they leave the status quo of today and leap with their imaginations into the future world.

Imagination is just what the word says—it is a mix of images, symbols and metaphors that represent a new idea, a new solution, a new way of operating and being. When we hold future vision creation sessions with our clients, we have them leave the everyday world and imagine what the future could be. To do this, you have to suspend the realities of today long enough to imaginatively move about in the yet unrealized realities of tomorrow. You allow your imagination to move about in the future, exploring it as if it already exists — see it, smell it, hear it, touch it and experience it in all of its full dimensions.

The envisioned future has its genesis from many places. As we said earlier, a large part of it comes from our explorations and insights from the See the Now stage. The seeds of the future from this first stage come to fruition in the exercise of envisioning the future. The things we see as opportunities in the first stage are taken hold of by the imagination, synthesized and expanded into new areas of possibility. For example—the opportunity to use the new technology, identified in See the Now stage, to extend the direct connection to customers may lead to envisioning a whole new social media approach that completely transforms the company’s marketing and enables it to make a deeper and more expansive relationship to a broader base of customers (this is actually what happened when one of our clients envisioned the future and put it into action).

The envisioned, imagined future also comes from the deeply held passions and values we all carry within us. The things we are most passionate about and value come alive in our imagining of the future. If we are
passionate about making a positive difference in the world with our work, this will be expressed when we take the abductive leap into the future. If we value creative collaboration, then we will envision new ways of working together in the future. If aesthetic expression is important to us, then many of the elements in the future vision will emphasize beauty or artistic qualities. We find that after a future vision is created, it is easy to “deconstruct” it and readily identify the passions and values of the group that created the vision. Often these deconstructed values resonate more deeply with people than the so-called “Official Values Statements” in their company brochures. In fact we encourage leaders to wait until the Vision is created to write their official values statements because they will be much more real and alive for people.

Sometimes people say...“that image of the future just came to me”. They are not sure from where it came. Again, this is received information that we just seem to intuit. This often comes when we are relaxed and open to receive. Sometimes it comes in a fun, creative session and sometimes it comes to us awhile later. When we create a vision of the future with a team, we encourage them to let the images and ideas keep coming after the vision session is over. The day after a Vision chart is created we open the session with “Overnight Thoughts”. The image creating process of the first day tends to “work” people overnight — at dinner, in their dreams, or in the shower the next morning. We invite people to share their overnight thoughts and most of the time several people will offer new insights or ideas for the future vision.

The imagined future also comes from the interplay and exchange that happens when a group of people co-creates a shared vision. In the process of each person sharing their images of the future, their ideas spark new ideas in others. In a robust, open vision creation session, ideas grow virally. The excitement accelerates with new ideas, people can't wait to build on other’s ideas, the energy of the room becomes charged and there is playful, good spirited laughter. Creative things grow best in an environment of authentic, respectful humor, nurtured by the joy of bringing one another’s ideas to life.

Creativity is fundamentally fun and vitally important to the development of a compelling, vibrant vision of the future. It is the life force, the Eros coming through us.
We can feel the charge in our body when we ride the wave of creativity. Without exception, all of the great vision sessions that have produced the best visions were catalyzed by fun creativity. If a future imagining session is not playful and creative, the vision will be lifeless and uninspiring. At the end of a vision creation session, everyone should be saying “Wow, that was great! I loved what we created and I am excited to make it happen.”

Within the scope of this Create the Future stage is the translation of the Vision into the specifics of the Business Model and the Brand. The Business Model takes the big ideas of the Vision and steps them down to the specifics of the Business Model you will build to achieve the vision. A business model is not a financial pro forma per se, although financial projections may be developed in shaping the model. A Business Model is a specific picture of all the major components of the enterprise’s activities (inside and outside in the market) that together enable you to create value and succeed in the New Era. Depending on the industry and market, the Business Model could be created to last three to ten years or sometimes more (but not likely in today’s rapidly changing world). In some fast-paced industries, the Business Model will morph even more rapidly. Creating a robust Business model is critical to designing success in the future.

The Brand and how it is framed is also shaped by the Vision going forward. At the center of a brand is a continuing essence that is expressed in new ways as the market shifts, new tools for communicating are developed and the role the brand plays in the market grows and expands. We have found that a clear, well developed set of brand core tenets are essential to keeping the brand on track over a long period of time. However, the way tenets (character, personality, archetype, brand promise/value) are expressed has be adjusted for each new era, vision and business model approach. Part of the Create the Future stage work should be dedicated to exploring how the new era vision and business model modify and shape the brand positioning and communication.

The rich, compelling future era Vision combined with the new era Business Model and Brand become the final end point to the future designing and planning. By creating these three future pictures, leaders can use them to tell the story of change and future success that inspires people to reach new heights of
accomplishment and purpose. Together they provide the end state toward which the Strategies are targeted.

Stage 3…Collaborate on Strategy

This is the final stage in our journey of designing the future and it calls for a greater emphasis on the third future competency, Collaboration. In this stage, we are bridging Now realities with strategy plans that will deliver to the Future — Vision, Business Model and Brand. Initially, we are collaborating to design the strategies. Later we will be collaborating to implement the strategies.

Collaboration begets collaboration. If you want a highly collaborative innovation culture then it must be birthed in a strategy developed in a highly collaborative and innovative way.

The more the strategic implementers participate in giving their input and collaborate in shaping the strategies, the more they will understand the strategies and enthusiastically take ownership of implementing them.

In the 3.0 Era, this means not only collaborating within the four walls of the enterprise but also across industries, markets and geographic lines. Eventually, it means collaborating with the people we serve and sell, as well as our co-contributors (suppliers, strategic partners, government, unions, associations) and even competitors.

Companies are taking down their walls and inviting in creative collaborators. Take Proctor & Gamble for example. They have exchanged their marketing people with Google’s marketing people to collaborate, learn and open new insights. P&G also has been collaborating with scientists and entrepreneurs around the world to develop innovative products and strategies, utilizing new web groups such as InnoCentive.com. Yesterday P&G was like most 20th Century companies that were vertically integrated, trying to get their new innovations from their insular R&D labs. Today well over 50% of all new innovations at P&G come from outside collaborations.
P&G’s journey to 21st Century 3.0 Innovation began in earnest when the new CEO, A.G. Lafley, invited in radical new thinking, including new approaches to innovation introduced by Stephen Martin, the Dean of the Rotman School of Business at Toronto. Over time, they and many others worked together to design a whole new innovation strategy built on high collaboration. And that spirit of open collaboration and exploration of new approaches to innovation continues today. Steve Meller, P&G’s Chief Innovation Catalyst, spends as much time in Silicon Valley collaborating and exchanging ideas and insights with technology leaders as he does back home at P&G’s Cincinnati headquarters collaborating with his teams.

The art and skill of collaboration permeates all areas of strategies and actions in enterprises that have awakened to the promise and power of collaboration. Collaboration begets collaboration. If you want a highly collaborative innovation culture then it must be birthed in a strategy developed in a highly collaborative and innovative way.

“Be the change you want”—Gandhi. This brilliantly simple imperative is true for all things, from goals of high purpose to strategies of high practicality. If you want peace, then be peaceful. If you want to have a highly innovative, collaborative enterprise, then be highly collaborative and innovative in the way you design it.

As we stated earlier, strategy comes in two forms—deliberate and emergent. The Deliberate Strategy is created in an enterprise’s strategy planning process. For overall enterprise strategy guidance, the strategy should form a clear, coherent story of what will be accomplished to deliver on the promise of the Vision. We recommend that an enterprise’s over-aching strategy story be stated on one page with no more than a handful of core strategies (not a laundry list of initiatives and programs). This means that with the many functional areas in most enterprises, the uniting enterprise strategies by necessity have to be cross-functional and collaboratively developed and crafted.

As the Deliberate Strategies are activated throughout the enterprise, the actions give rise to new possibilities and new Emergent Strategies that support the overall Deliberate Strategies. It is in the Emergent Strategies that we often find significant opportunities for collaboration.
For example, let’s say you have a consumer product business and you have developed a Deliberate Strategy to reach out directly to your customers. Within this overarching strategy you may have several supporting sub-strategies that call for utilizing the new tools of social media to reach people through the Internet. Within a short time of putting the direct outreach strategy in motion, you discover that not only are you finding this great for marketing by setting up a true conversation with your customers, but you can see the potential for collaborating with customers to develop new products and even innovate a new product category.

This is exactly what happened when Lands’ End began implementing its collaboratively created long-term strategies for entering the field of social media marketing. They had the idea for co-creating product via social media at the birth of their Deliberate Long Term Strategies but they soon discovered an Emergent Strategy for developing a whole new category, Products for the Home, by collaborating with their customers. They created an Internet advisory council of customers to help them collaboratively innovate the new category. Dozens of customers sent in photos of their homes and wrote about what they liked and what they wanted. They gave ideas for new products. They responded to new product ideas proposed by the Lands’ End designers. Together the customer advisory council and Lands’ End merchants used the social media tools to shape a whole new category of successful Lands’ End home products. This is a good example of taking an overarching Deliberate Strategy, discovering the Emergent Strategy within it and using the power of collaboration to shape a new way of operating and new ways of delivering on the promise of the enterprise.

**Goals & Conditions for Strategy Success:**

Strategies should always communicate a strong compelling story that leads to the achievement of a collective end result, a goal. The goal provides a picture of success for a given period of time (e.g. three years) and is expressed with tangible, measurable results.

For example, the overall goal for an enterprise might be to successfully usher in a new era for the business, complete with a new business model and re-branding effort to reflect the new era. As part of this overarching goal, the enterprise aspires to achieve a 20% increase in sales and profitability and a 35% increase in market share. The four or five core deliberate strategies for the three year plan should work together, creating a
strong compelling story of what will be achieved in order to reach the goal. This is a basic frame on the relationship of strategies to a long-term goal.

A three part series of three-year goals then combine to tell a nine year story of success in the future that enables the enterprise to approximate its ultimate Vision. Even if enterprise leaders feel that the future territory is so volatile and unknown that longer term planning is highly speculative, it is still important to tell the longer term story. The longer-term vision and goals provide a compass heading and a sense of destination, much like the pioneers going “West to California”. The pioneers often had to change course in their journey to adjust to changes in weather or terrain and not everybody landed at the same place. Some set up homes in the Valley, others homesteaded in the Sierra foothills and many settled in San Francisco. The point is that the sense of direction and destination provides the attractor, the draw to the future of opportunity, even if the journey has to be modified as it progresses or the final landing spot is adjusted based on what is discovered along the way.

And yet, despite the importance of the strategies and goals, they are not the total expression of bridging the Now and the Future. It is also important to define the conditions under which these strategies and their initiatives and actions will take place.

With every set of strategies, there also should be a set of well-defined principles or conditions for executing the strategies. Using our previous example, the set of Ideal Strategy/Action Conditions might read, “We will execute these strategies and achieve the goals in such a way that we...”

- Reach our goals together and are better for it—We strengthen our culture, sense of common purpose and unity of commitment and action.
Courageously challenge the status quo—We are willing to be open, vulnerable and take risks in the fundamental change of our enterprise.

Become exemplars of strategy based, disciplined decision making—We use our heads, hearts and bellies to optimize the guidance power of our future plans.

Exponentially expand collaboration, conversation and connection—We deeply connect to our customers and partners, creating a new era of co-creation that benefits everyone in our network.

Many of our clients have found that the Ideal Strategy/Action Conditions are as important to identify and implement as the actual strategies themselves. The Conditions provide the “guide rails” for driving the strategy forward. They communicate how we want to be with one another as we take action. They tell us what is important to pay attention to as we execute. Without the Ideal Conditions, a leader theoretically could deliver the strategic results “at any cost”, optimizing the immediate pay-off but endangering the longer range well-being of the brand and business.

The combination of Strategy, Goal and Ideal Conditions completes the story of what will be done to move into future success. Together they weave a story of “What” will be created and achieved in the coming time period (e.g. three to five years).

Note—Strategies, by themselves, cannot be directly implemented; they have to be translated down into specific actions and timetables. But if the strategies are clear and understood, most organizations have no trouble creating the specific actions because it is in the world of actions that most of the people in any enterprise live.

Summary:

So if you want to design the future...use the right roadmap for your journey. If you use the three-stage roadmap of Now-Future-Strategy combined with the power of the new competencies of See-Create-Collaborate, you will dramatically expand the creativity and results of your future designs and plans.

We provide this guidance because we know first hand that it works. It has successfully worked with over 150 client enterprises from multi-billion dollar Corporations to International Non-Profits to Cities to Chambers of Commerce to small start-ups to award...
winning social change projects. The 3.0 Future Design Guide as we have described it here is a universally applicable roadmap for designing and bringing the emerging future into the reality of today.