

# Tools to Tame the Future

By futurist Richard Worzel, C.F.A.

www.futuresearch.com

## I. Scenario planning

A. Pick a time horizon:

B. What are the key drivers of change that affect you and your business between now and the end of the time horizon?

C. Rank the drivers of change from most important (#1) to least important

D. Underline those that are most predictable

E. Pivotal factors are those that are most \_\_\_\_\_  
and least \_\_\_\_\_.

F. Create trial scenarios

**Driver 1:**

	<b>Scenario A</b>	<b>Scenario B</b>
<b>Driver 2:</b>	<b>Scenario C</b>	<b>Scenario D</b>
		<b>Driver 2:</b>

**Driver 1:**

**H. If you knew today that Scenario A were to become “The Future” by the end of the planning horizon, what actions would you take, starting immediately? Scenario B? C? D?**

**G. Answer these questions:**

1. Does each scenario have a reasonable probability of happening?
2. If a given scenario were to become the future, would it suggest the kinds of actions you should take?
3. Are the scenarios different enough from each other?
4. Do they cover enough future possibilities?
5. Are they valuable?

## II. The Desired Future

**A. “Wouldn’t it be great if ...”**

1. “It would be really terrific if ...”
2. “I’d be really disappointed if we couldn’t...”

**B. “What would have to happen to cause...?”**

**C. “What could we do to cause...?”**

## III. Backcasting, as opposed to forecasting

**A. Start with the Desired Future, then work backwards to the present**

## III. Wild Cards

**A. A wild card is a low probability event that, if it happens, will have dramatic consequences to your life and your business.**

**B. “What event or development, if it occurred, would have a dramatic effect on your business?”**

**C. Then: “Is this worth worrying about? Can I do anything worthwhile to prepare?”**

## IV. Resources

**A. *The Art of the Long View*, by Peter Schwartz (Doubleday, 1991)**

**B. *Who Owns Tomorrow?*, by Richard Worzel (Penguin, 2003), especially Chapter 13.**