

Broadening the client's view of possible futures – testing an approach from future studies

Marika Tammeaid, with Suzanne Burgstaller, Leah Davcheva, Annie Bordeleau, Ciska de Pillecyn, Liselotte Baeijart, Janine Waldman

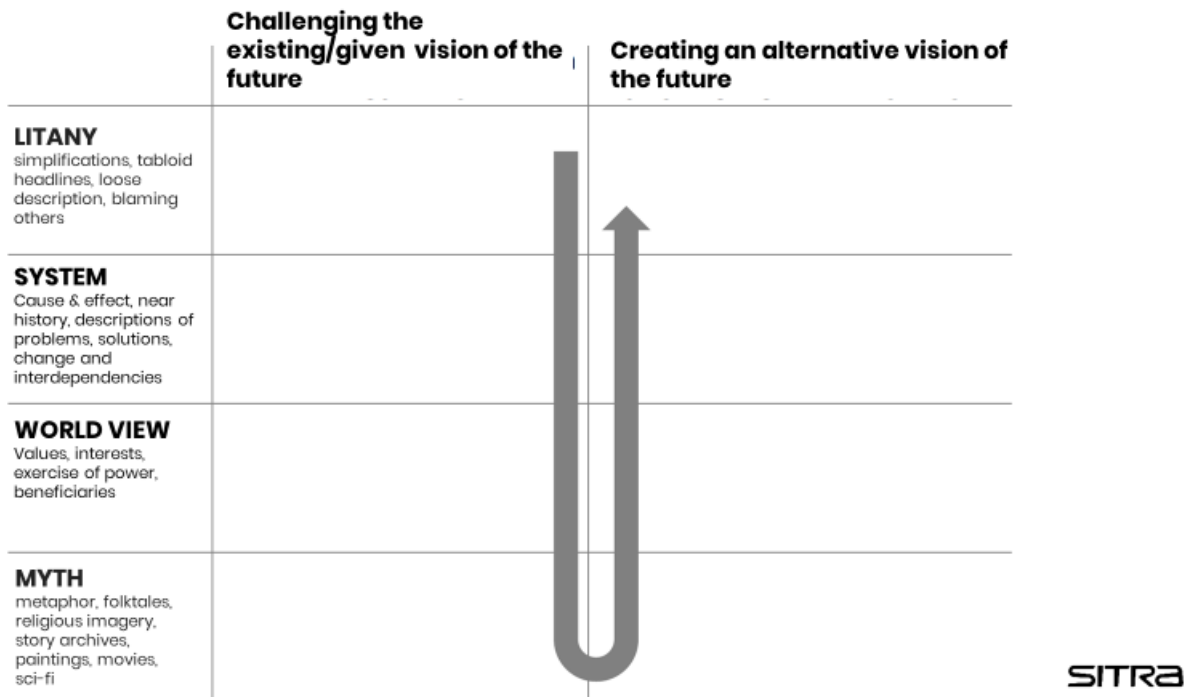
SF and Future studies have a possibility to make a beautiful pair, since both are future oriented approaches. In the workshop we tested a model of future studies in SF use.

First the group was divided in two and both groups chose a megatrend to work on.

Thinking of common megatrends is a typical way in future studies to broaden every day thinking of emerging futures on personal and societal level. Megatrends were chosen from Sitra's megatrend cards:

<https://media.sitra.fi/2016/11/03142417/megatrendcardswebeng31-08-2018.pdf>

One group worked with, 'New organizational models challenging the employer - employee relationship' and the other group on, 'Citizens losing their trust in institutions'. A model based on causal layered analysis was used for challenging given truths of the future.



The work started by challenging the existing or given vision of the topic as it is portrayed in news or in common discussions. Then the discussion was led to common explanations of the situation and thinking of what kind of world view lies behind the explanations. Both groups chose a character, metaphor or myth symbolizing the world view behind the explanations – in these cases dead Moses and a three-headed dragon!

In order to get the building of an alternative future ongoing, the groups were asked to choose another, preferable symbol to replace the first myths. Starting anew from Woodstock and Abraham the groups climbed to future perfects and great visions of open, welcoming and daring organizations as well as enabling community governments were co-created.

The experiment awaked two creative processes with lots of emotions from despair to laugh and joy. The model is very good in awakening agency in creating a preferable future instead of taking future visions as granted. In what extend it is needed to go deeper in the common existing explanations remained a question from Sf point of view.

The working of the original exercise suits to academic environments but is far too complicated and descriptive for many other environments. So, it is important to adjust the working according to the clientele and one possibility could be formulating the 2 x 4 stages of the model as questions.

With thanks for note writing to: Marika Tammeaid