

How to See Like A Futurist
“The Forces of Change”



The Forces of Change

The basic question of strategy is “Which future should we choose and how do we get there?” Looking at the Four Forces will help you answer that by revealing the foundations of change. Once you understand the foundation, you can build a future that is all yours.

DEVELOPING STRATEGY FOR A TURBULENT WORLD

CEOs and boards of directors want to know: How should we respond to emerging threats and new types of competitors? Where do we grow next? In a rapidly changing business environment, these questions have no “correct” answer—and it’s no longer possible to answer them using traditional tools like straightforward market analysis. But if we zoom out far enough to see our place in history, we can also see our place in the future. And that’s where the Four Forces come to our aid.

Perspective is powerful. Change is always present, so our ability to see it gives us the capacity to ride it. Studying and tracking the Forces of Change allows you to maintain perspective while you’re on that wild ride, and ensures the kinds of returns you need most: relevance, resilience, and revenue.

CHANGE IS PREDICTABLE, OUTCOMES ARE NOT

The Forces of Change is a tool for asking and watching where trends come from. Anchored in the constant and structural forces that shape every society, these force fields help us understand the changes around us and where they’re coming from. While dramatic changes roil on the surface, these forces are, themselves, unchanging. We use the Forces of Change to detect change below the surface, spotting ideas, technologies, models, and revolutions that are the emerging ground of your future.

By using the force fields, we’ll be able to know which trends will have the greatest impact on your organization, you’ll be able to better anticipate your customers’ needs, and then make shifts to your business model as needed to build out innovations that sharpen your advantage into the future.



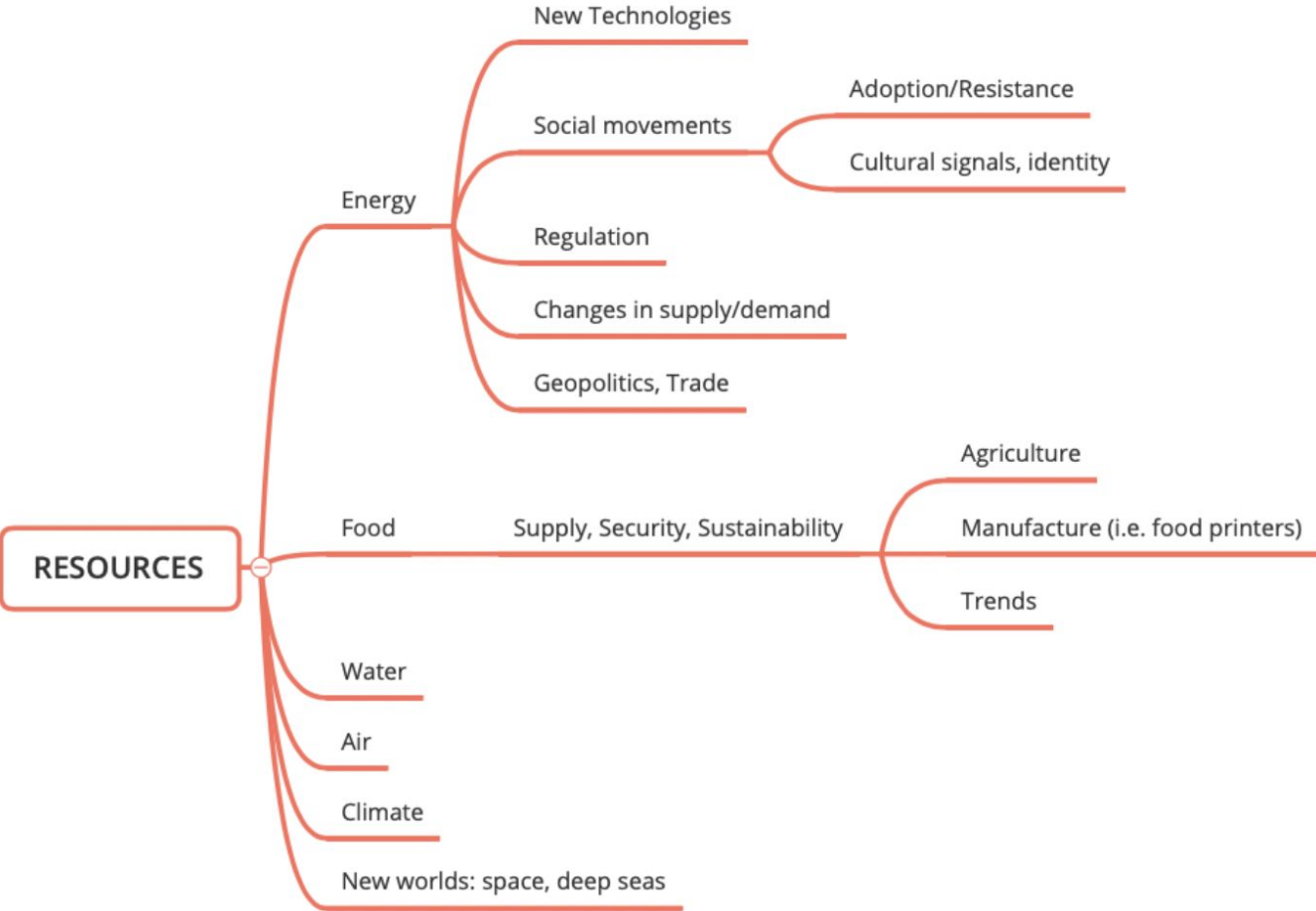
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RESOURCES

This is the first of the Forces of Change because resources are the foundational elements we rely on to stay alive and prosper. These include the raw materials in our environment: land, water, energy. As resources shift, we react; as resources deplete or grow, we adjust.

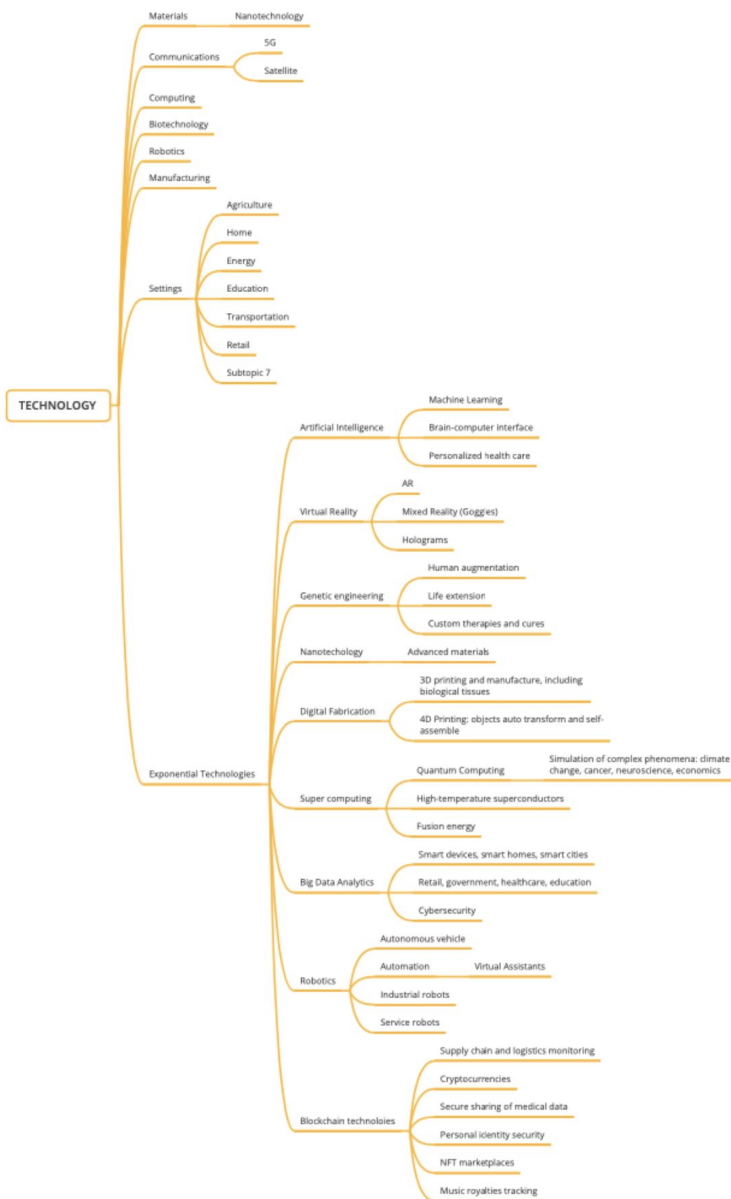


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TECHNOLOGY

Over time, humans have invented tools to harvest resources and take advantage of the world around us. Technology encompasses all the things we use to extract value from the raw materials around us and create new products, from hammers to wifi to rocket ships.

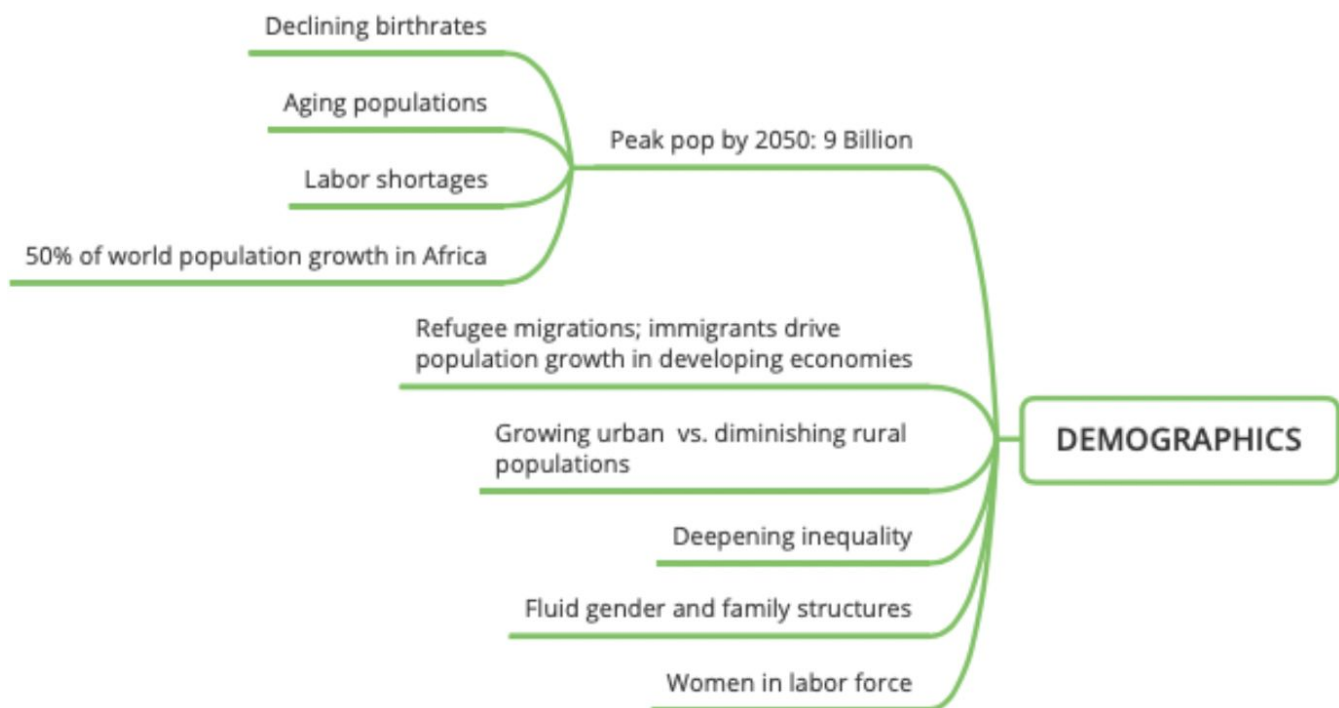
Technology is how we make and move about our world, so when technologies shift, our entire world does, too. Because they're additive and exponential, our technologies have an outsized effect on shaping the future.



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DEMOGRAPHICS

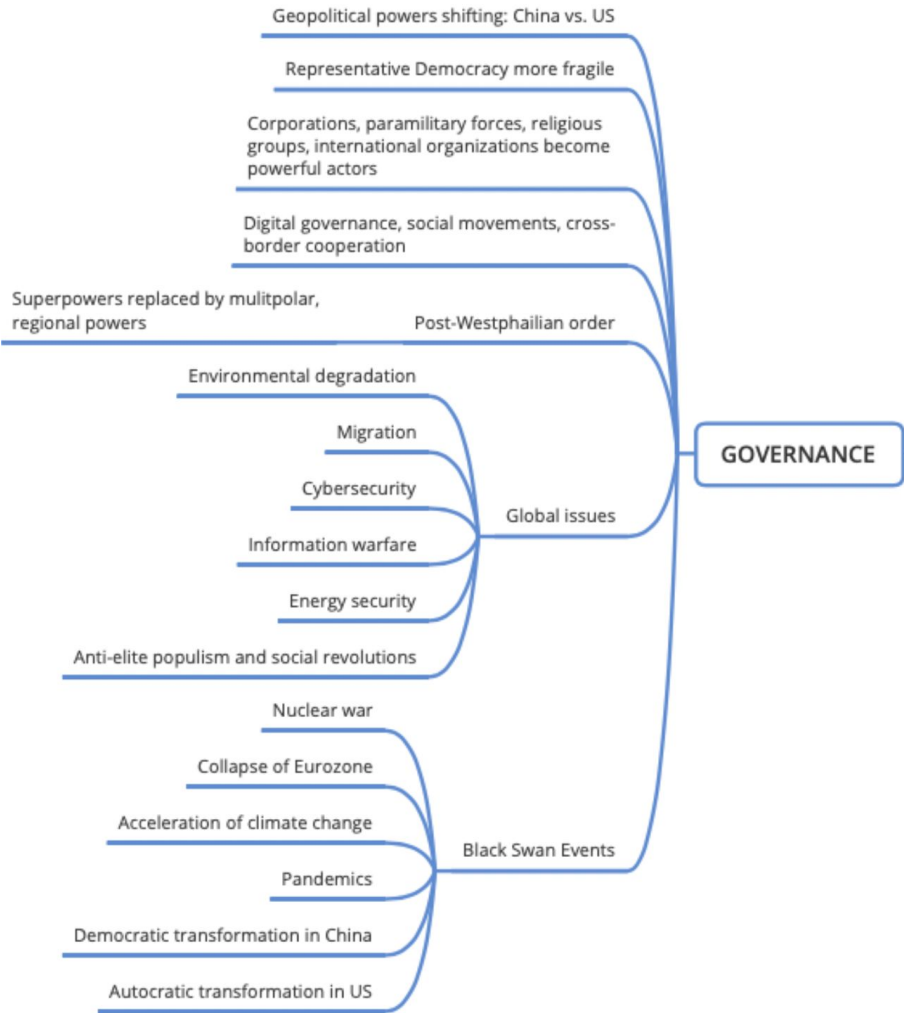
Societies need groups of people that can continue to build and develop the world around them. Sex, ages, talents, ethnicity, and skills all impact our stability. When demographics shift, economics, workforces, and family structures all shift, too.



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GOVERNANCE

Governance is the set of rules that determine how we cooperate together. Policies, laws, mores, and norms all shape how people, organizations, and groups interact and behave. These intricate systems can help or hinder how we anticipate and plan for change. Ultimately, our system of governance manages how we adapt and respond to changes within the other three force fields.



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WHEN YOU CAN BENEFIT FROM THE FORCES OF CHANGE

The Forces of Change help us gain perspective: they allow us to see a bigger picture, to see that everything right here and now is part of a longer game. This, in turn, helps us understand our current moment with an eye on that long game, so we're doing more than reacting--we're responding. They show us:

- Where we should be looking to understand an issue or opportunity more fully
- How to challenge our cultural assumptions and biases
- Where we're likely to uncover important perspectives and opportunities

In the end, one of the benefits I've found in using these forces is that it lets us off the tender hook of feeling the need to get it right, of the idea that everything hinges on a single decision or moment that's cataclysmic. The game we're playing ultimately has a wider scope than that, which reminds us of that view. It takes us from fright to phew.

Achieve Long-Term Success with R³.O.I. (Relevance, Resilience, Revenue).

[Connect with Cecily](#) to explore the impact of The 4 Forces of Change on your future and develop your Maximum Value Scenario (MVS).

Dive deeper with [Cecily's book, *Think Like a Futurist*](#). Explore The Forces of Change, R³.O.I, MVS, the innovation process, and how to effectively implement this approach in your corporate setting.

Learn about the Six Fluencies of 21st Century Leadership at [Lead Like a Futurist](#)

