

# HFL Scenario Planning Webinar

Darin Fox  
Chief Research Officer & Principal Consultant  
22 April 2020

[Darin.Fox@hflleadership.com](mailto:Darin.Fox@hflleadership.com)



# What is Scenario Planning?

- A highly collaborative series of short distinct activities to capture and assess current events and existing trends and extrapolate these into a small number of plausible future scenarios which may influence or inform your existing strategy.
- Scenario planning is not new. It has been around since the 1950's and was first used by the American military. Industry started using it in the 1960's.
- Scenario planning is in the public domain. Various methodologies and alternatives are freely available via a Google search.
- However, scenario planning is best facilitated by an external resource

# The Value of Scenario Planning

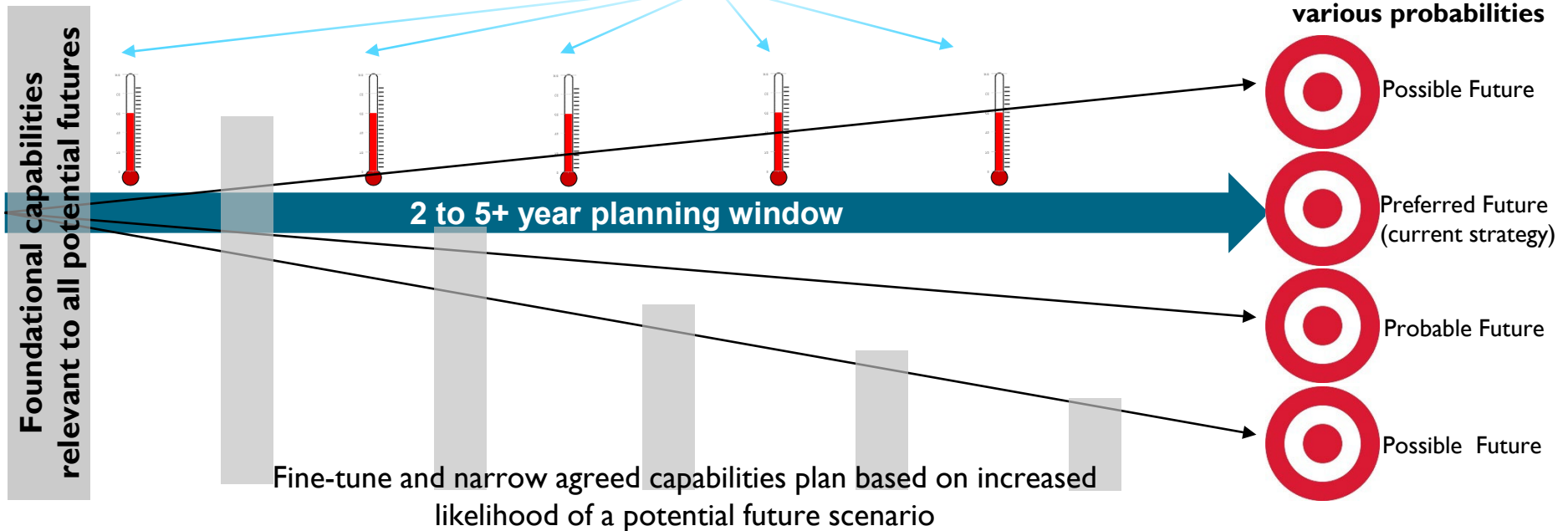
- Reduces uncertainty and ambiguity
- Strengthens your existing strategy and informs future strategy
- Increased adaptability
- Manages risk
- Not just informs about the future, but gives insight into “today”
- Exposes assumptions about current events and the future
- Builds skills in strategic thinking, planning and trends analysis
- Can be an effective team building activity

The most common feedback we get after facilitating a scenario planning workshop is:

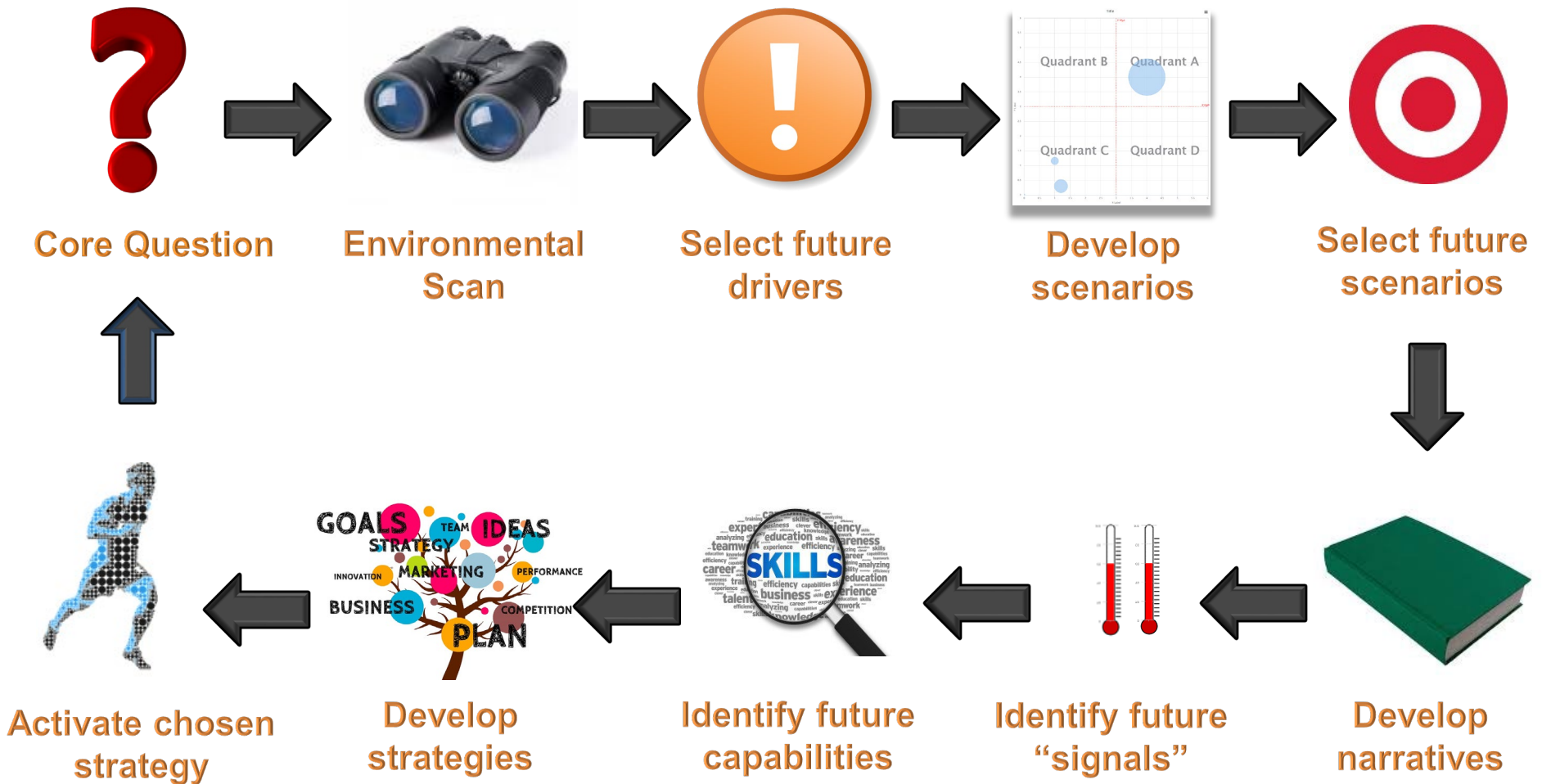
*“I wish we had done this before. We never get the time to come together and think about these things.”*

# Scenario Planning – Plausible Futures to Inform and Future-proof your Strategy

Agreed metrics to assess which future is becoming more likely every 6 months



# Scenario Planning – Key Steps





## Core Question

- A good question to narrow the scope is critical
- The core question is about a future event, not the impact of the event on the business.
- Select a timeframe to work in – 1+ year, 3+ years, 5+ years
- Select your participants & ensure there is a shared baseline understanding of current strategy



## Environmental Scan

- Pre-reading on relevant existing trends is helpful
- Choose a framework to structure the scan ie PESTEL (Political, Economic, Social, Technology, Environment, Legal). There are many others.
- Within the context of the core question, brainstorm the PESTEL factors which might occur and could influence the core question or be influenced by it.



**Select future drivers**

- Assess the factors from the environmental scan
- Assessment can be re: likelihood of that factor occurring, its impact, the length of time for the factor to have an impact, etc
- There will be far too many factors to utilise in the next steps
- Choose up to 8 factors you focus on in the next step



**Develop scenarios**

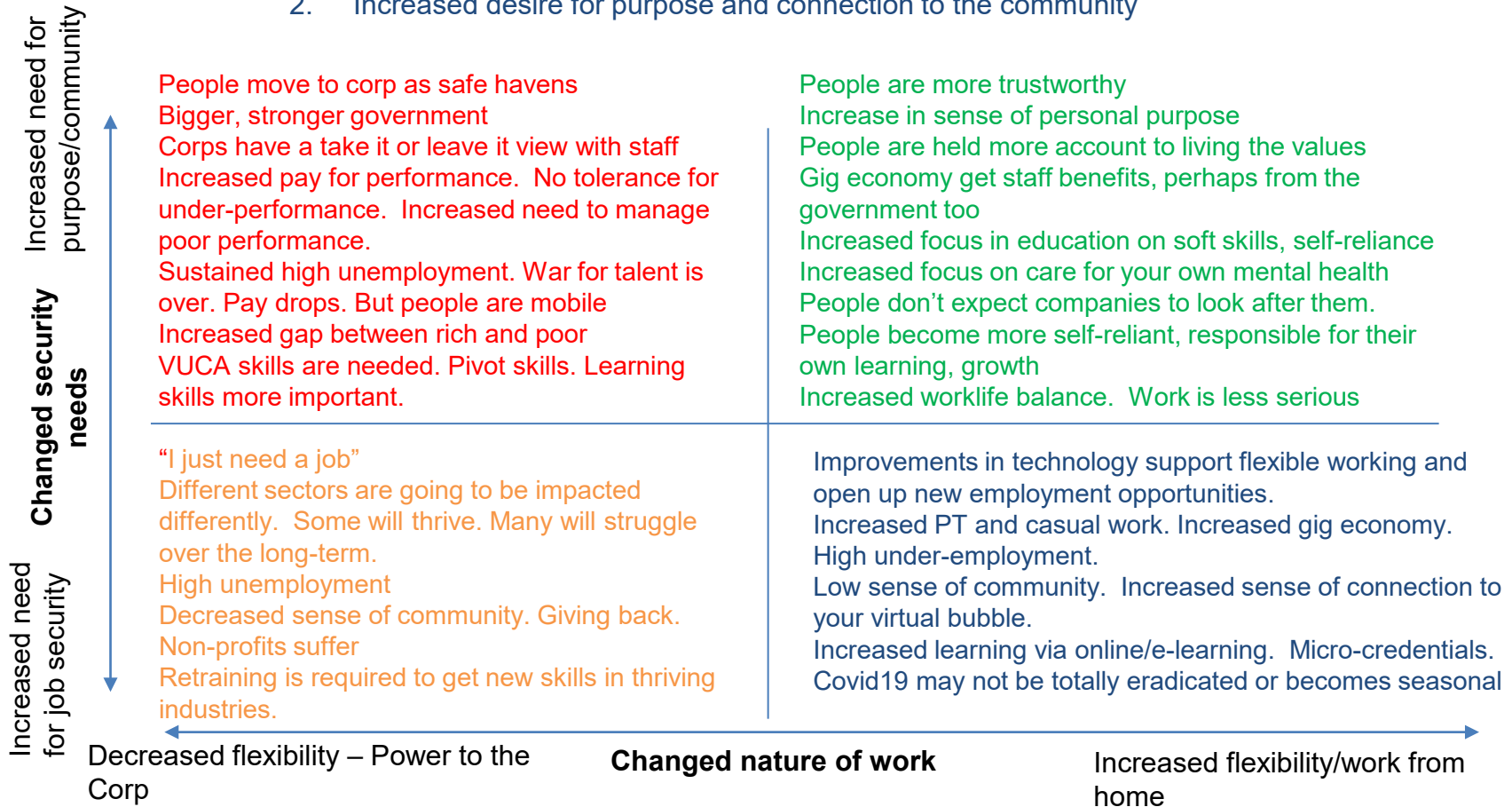
- Combine the 8 factors into pairs
- Extrapolate each factor into two extremes and map each factor onto a 2x2 grid.
- Each one of the 4 boxes represents a potential new scenario
- Each future is then described in brief detail as to what is happening in that future.

# Example - using two factors from the scan to develop 4 initial scenarios.

**Core Question: What might be the impacts of Covid19 after the crisis is over?**

**Two factors chosen from the scan:**

1. Increased acceptance of flexibility/working from home
2. Increased desire for purpose and connection to the community







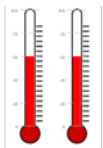
### Select future scenarios

- You will have more scenarios than are manageable.
- Immediately remove scenarios which seem impossible or the least plausible. But keep these for future.
- Select the order of scenarios you will flesh out even further.
- Apply a descriptive title to each scenario.



### Develop narratives

- Start with the scenario that is most probable. Or most preferred ie aligned to current strategy.
- For each scenario, draft a short about the how and why your organisation thrives in that future scenario.
- An effective tool for this is called “future back”



### Identify future “signals”

- Identify the observable and/or measurable signals in the future that may suggest each scenario is becoming more likely to occur. Or less likely.

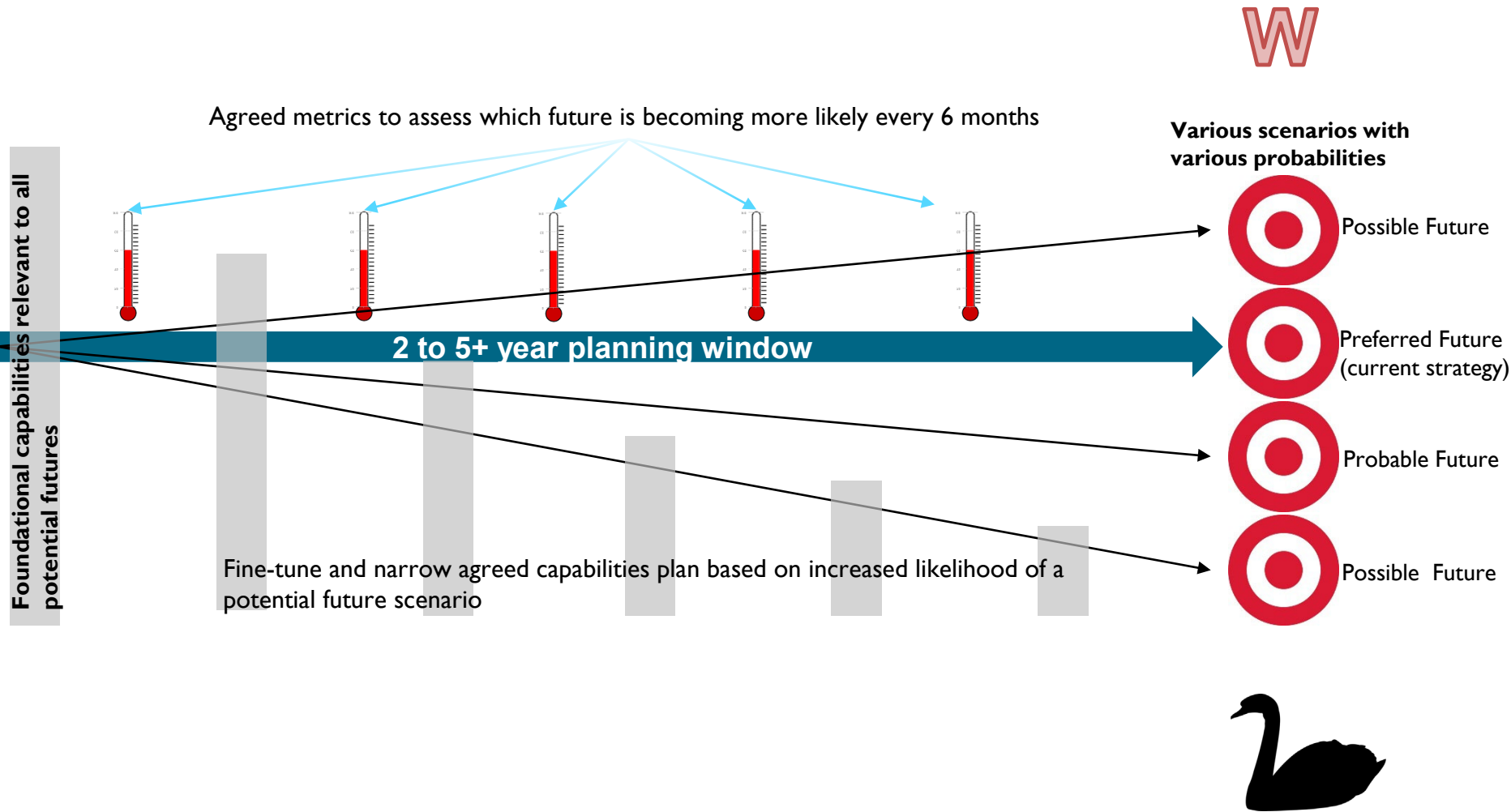


- **Identify the capabilities the organisation will need.**
- **To what extent are they more or less than required now?  
Are any of them completely new to the business?**
- **Identify both people and business capabilities.**
- **Are there other changes required – structure, technology, culture, leadership, etc**



- Identify the high level strategies the organisation may need to undertake to implement the changes identified in the previous step.
  - Identify any capabilities, changes or strategies which may be common to all or most of the scenarios.
  - But keep it high level!
- 
- A strategy for a particular scenario is only activated if the scenario closely aligns to the existing strategy or preferred scenario. Or if the scenario appears to be more likely than the preferred scenario.
  - However.....

# .....Scenario Planning can lead to a more adaptive, multiple strategy approach



# Next HFL Webinar – “Virtual Stage Presence”

8AM Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April



*Theatre, TV and presentation experts ActReal help you create "virtual stage presence", keep audience attention, and focus on an enthralling story, not PowerPoint.*

# Recommended Support Materials

## Examples

- “Planning for uncertain water futures” – an example of scenarios and their use in public utilities - <https://watersource.awa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/002-Moglia-Magnus.pdf>
- [“Scenario Planning for Coronavirus”](#)

## Books

- [“Think Like a Futurist: Know What Changes, What Doesn't, and What's Next”](#)
- [“Scenario Planning in Organizations: How to Create, Use, and Assess Scenarios”](#)

## Articles

- [“Scenario Planning and Strategic Forecasting”](#) – Forbes, 2015
- [“What is Scenario Planning?”](#)

## CONSULTANT BIOGRAPHY



ACCELERATED  
LEADERSHIP  
EXCELLENCE



**DARIN  
FOX**

**Executive  
Coach**

### Summary

Darin is a purpose-driven leader in organisational capability, workforce strategy and transformation who is passionate about building environments for people and teams to bring the best versions of themselves. Leading teams for most of his 20 year career, he has developed a reputation for combining pragmatic commercial solutions and the latest HR innovations to build resilient, future proof learning organisations.

Prior to joining HFL in 2020, Darin was a senior HR leader in large complex organisations in banking, finance, telecommunications and utilities. He worked closely with the C-suite, senior management and employee groups to develop and embed future-ready enterprise strategies to lift organisational capability, transform culture and improve ways of working. Not content to simply implement interventions, Darin's methodology allows him to quickly and deeply assess an organisation's internal and external drivers, short and long-term commercial requirements and global workforce trends to develop holistic strategies which have led or supported M&A, divestments, workforce transformation, new business and enterprise-wide IT implementations.

### Qualifications

Darin has a Masters in Management (Organisational Change) and graduated with Distinction. His masters thesis explored the role of political skills in successful organisational change. He is also accredited in a wide range of psychometric and organisational assessment tools.

His first degree was a Bachelor of Fine Arts obtained in Canada. Darin's qualifications and background provide him with the skills and mental models to help leaders and organisations develop innovative but pragmatic solutions to address their issues and opportunities.

### Facilitation Style

Coming together as a group is a rare luxury in business and Darin treats it as such. Each group event is designed bespoke to meet the unique needs for each group and each situation. However, he has the experience and toolkit necessary to throw away the design and plans on the day if the group discussion needs to go in an unexpected but important direction.

Darin focuses on achieving outcomes while ensuring the day is fully collaborative and enjoyable. When required, he is also able to share his extensive knowledge in global workforce trends and data into the discussion.

### Facilitation Experience

Darin started his career as an organisational development and training specialist and has been progressively leading and facilitating more complex and senior groups for 20 years.

### Facilitation Specialisations

Darin facilitates sessions on skill development, problem solving, innovation, strategy and leadership development. Furthermore, often called an "organisational heretic" and a well regarded public speaker, he is regularly invited to speak on the changing nature of work, strategic workforce planning and organisational learning in a world of increasing globalisation, rapid disruption, heightened competition and instantaneous access to knowledge.

### Passions Outside Work

Darin champions the role of "lifelong learner", undertaking self-paced study in complexity science, nutrition and neuroscience. He also started to learn his first musical instrument last year – the acoustic guitar. His own Purpose in life is to make the world a better place by embedding the curiosity, skills and systems to achieve life-long learning in individuals, teams and organisations.

Darin is currently writing his first book to help leaders shift from Purpose being a poster on a wall to a fully embedded way of working.

### INSIGHT

*"In an increasingly uncertain and complex environment, the only real competitive advantage for individuals and organisations is the capability to learn, unlearn and learn again. Therefore, the role of leadership is becoming less about setting a destination and more about direction. Less about the How and more about the Purpose. Less about telling and more about nurturing."*

Darin Fox

### Favourite leadership quote:

*"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away!"*

- Pablo Picasso

We know real leaders when we see them. They embody a purpose that drives them, that is bigger than them. It is their north star and by sharing their gift they become a light for others, who in turn become inspired to seek their own gift to share.

### Most recommended book to my clients

*The Innovator's Dilemma,*  
Clayton Christensen.

"Rated globally as one of the most influential business books of all time".

### Testimonial

"Darin is a true thought leader in leadership, capability & high performance. While at Sydney Water, he inspired the organisation to think differently about building capability. The leadership framework Darin developed positioned the organisation to meet not only the needs of today, but those of the future. Darin is also a provocative & engaging public speaker, a team player & someone with utmost integrity."

**Angela Tsoukatos,**  
Executive, General Manager

# HFL: We help leaders lead better



## Sydney

Level 4, 53 Walker Street  
North Sydney  
NSW 2060  
+61 2 9927 3000  
[info@hflleadership.com](mailto:info@hflleadership.com)



## Melbourne

Level 50, 120 Collins Street  
Melbourne,  
Vic 3000  
+61 3 9225 5156  
[info@hflleadership.com](mailto:info@hflleadership.com)



## Singapore

10 Anson Road  
#26-04 International Plaza  
Singapore 079903  
+65 6509 1566  
[info@hflleadership.com](mailto:info@hflleadership.com)

[www.hflleadership.com](http://www.hflleadership.com)

[www.fastlead.com](http://www.fastlead.com)

[www.kleader.com.au](http://www.kleader.com.au)



ACCELERATED  
LEADERSHIP  
EXCELLENCE