



ElevatED:

Ascend and Transform Your World

**Empathy to Foresight:
Leading Resilient, Future-Ready Teams Through Change**

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This two-part session gives participants a practical leadership toolkit for supporting teams now while preparing for what's next. **Part I, *Managing with Empathy***, provides empathy-centered approaches to guide teams through change, challenge, and growth, especially when time and resources are limited.

Part II, *Future-Ready Managers*, introduces strategic foresight and a simple, repeatable model to scan the horizon, explore plausible futures, and turn insights into actions that strengthen decisions and drive proactive innovation.

Participants will leave with ready-to-use management tools and plug-and-play foresight resources they can apply immediately.

Managing with Empathy: Change, Challenge, Growth

Empathetic Leadership: Empathetic leadership is the capacity to understand others' needs and perspectives while recognizing and responding to their feelings.

- Creates environments where people and teams feel understood and valued
- Organizations see increased performance, greater stability and collaboration
- Instills a positive organizational culture and resilience

- *Source:* Center for Creative Leadership (CCL), "Empathy in the Workplace: A Tool for Effective Leadership," <https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/empathy-in-the-workplace-a-tool-for-effective-leadership/>

Never Felt This Way



Leading with Empathy = Clarity and Care

- Clarity: Here is what matters now, this is what changes, here is the ask...
- Care: I see you, I hear you, I get the impact...
- Care without clarity feels like confusion.
- Clarity without care feels like a threat.
- Empathy is the necessary combination.

What's at Stake

- Change is on constant repeat
- Doing more with less
- Uncertainty fatigue
- Organizational needs don't pause

Impact on the Team

- Confidence and morale dip
- Disengagement or conflict
- Decision fatigue
- Meaning erosion (Why does this matter if things keep changing?)

Leading While Being Human

- Leading through change + Life
 - Motherhood & maternity leave
- Carrying work + carrying home
- Lesson Learned: Needed tools that worked under pressure

Control the Controllables (and Reframe)

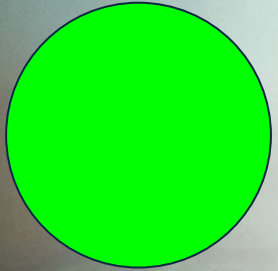
The Controllables

- Priorities (top 1-3)
- Communication cadence
- Boundaries and coverage expectations
- Decision pathways
- Identify what is stopped vs delayed

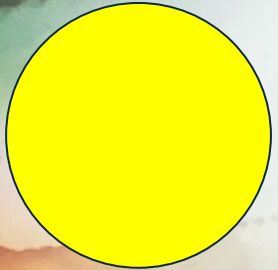
Mindset Reframe

- What else could be true?
- What's the next right step?

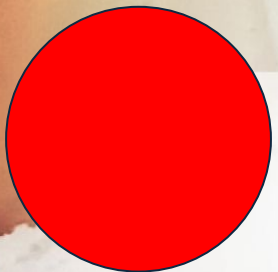
Stoplight Prioritization (Doing More with Less)



Must Do



Delay or scale down

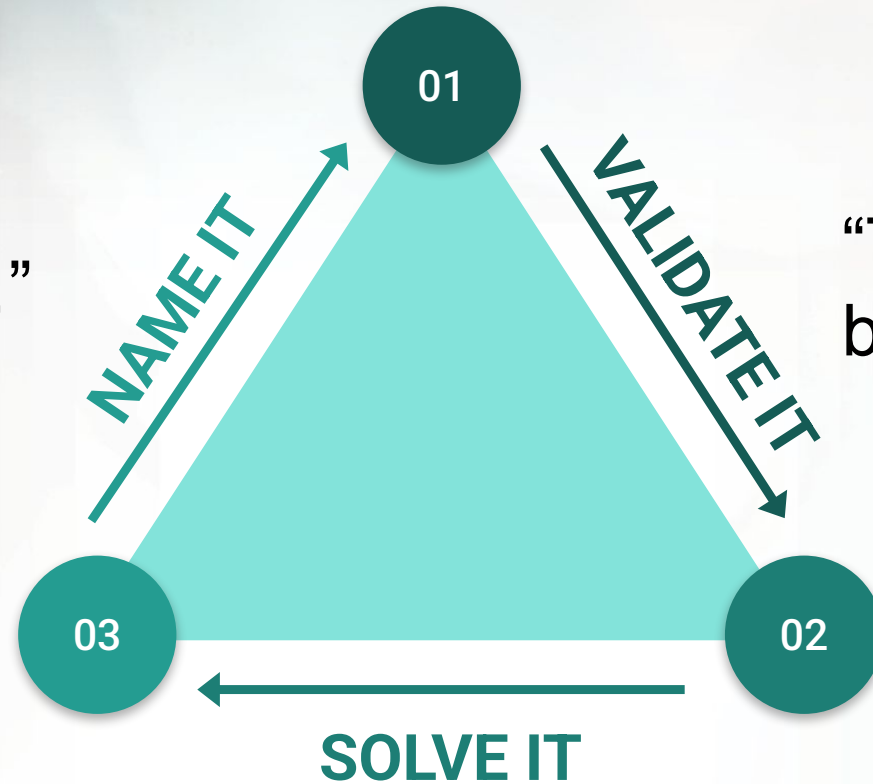


Stop or Park

If everything is green, nothing is

Empathy Loop

“I’m noticing...”



“That makes sense because...”

“What we can do now is...”

One Card Plan

- The biggest stressor on my team is:
- One controllable I will improve in 7 days:
- Empathy Loop sentence I will use is:
 - “I’m noticing...; It makes sense because...; Next step is...”

“I’m noticing the energy has dipped since the staffing changes. **That makes sense**, everyone’s carrying more and the ground keeps shifting. **What we can do now is** reset priorities and protect the top two outcomes for this month.”

Plan of Action

- Download the *Managing with Empathy Toolkit*
 - Deeper team tools for empathetic leadership + personal self-management
 - Printable worksheets + templates



Strategic foresight is a discipline that helps individuals and organizations explore and prepare for possible futures so they can make better decisions today.

Strategic foresight is about thinking ahead, not to predict the future, but to anticipate multiple possibilities and become more adaptable and resilient.

Why Foresight Matters

The Purpose of Foresight

- Not prediction, **preparation**
- Helps teams scan change, interpret signals, and imagine possible futures
- Builds adaptability, resilience, and strategic confidence

Why It Matters for Leadership and Management

- Normalizes uncertainty in a rapidly shifting landscape (global, U.S., higher ed, university, unit)
- Reduces anxiety about not knowing the future
- Helps teams anticipate evolving needs, expectations, and behaviors
- Supports designing future-ready programs, services, and policies

What Teams Will Gain:

- A shared framework to anticipate and adapt
- A replicable tool to move from **reactive** → **proactive** → **innovative** as a team
- Confidence exploring uncertainty

Comparing Strategic Foresight to Strategic Planning

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT	VS	STRATEGIC PLANNING
Explore possible futures and anticipate change	PURPOSE	Define goals and create a roadmap to achieve them
Emerging trends, risks, opportunities, scenarios	FOCUS	Organizational objectives, actions, resource allocation
Informs planning by revealing opportunities and threats	ROLE IN PROCESS	Uses foresight insights to set strategy and make decisions
Ongoing, continuous mindset	FREQUENCY /MINDSET	Formal cycles (e.g., every 3-5 years)
Scenario planning, horizon scanning, trend analysis	TYPICAL METHODS	SWOT analysis, timelines, budgets, KPIs
“What could happen?”	QUESTION ADDRESSED	“How do we get there?”

Strategic foresight helps shape the vision, while strategic planning puts it into action.

The Foresight Model

01

SIGNALS

Early hints of change (new behaviors, emerging tech, shifting alumni preferences)

02

DRIVERS

Larger forces shaping the shifts (social, technological, economic, environmental, political)

03

SCENARIOS

Short stories of plausible futures

04

IMPLICATIONS

"So what does this mean for alumni engagement?"

05

ACTIONS (and MONITORING)

No-regret moves, experiments, and pilots; watch for updates and adjust strategy as needed

Quick Management Example #1

- **Signal:** More team members ask to adjust schedules or disclose side gigs/consulting, and internal availability becomes less predictable.
- **Driver:** Rising cost-of-living and perceived job insecurity are increasing interest in portfolio careers to diversify income and professional identity.
- **Scenario:** Within 2-3 years, a substantial portion of the team maintains ongoing outside work, and “full-time” looks more like a flexible portfolio of commitments.
- **Implication:** Team management will need clearer capacity planning and boundaries (conflict-of-interest, IP, confidentiality) while redesigning roles for resilience (cross-training, documentation, shared ownership) to avoid single points of failure.
- **Action (and Monitoring):** Launch a transparent “portfolio work” policy and a quarterly capacity check-in (declared availability ranges + backup coverage plans); monitor delivery predictability (missed handoffs/late milestones) and retention/engagement trends.

Strategic foresight helps us explore possibilities, prepare for change, and create more resilient teams.

Quick Management Example #2

- **Signal:** Students increasingly ask for support outside 9-5 (evenings/weekends) and express frustration with waiting days (or hours) for answers.
- **Driver:** Students' expectations are shaped by always-available digital services and more complex, time-sensitive support processes.
- **Scenario:** Within 2-3 years, students expect near-real-time help for routine questions and faster escalation paths for urgent issues, treating student services as an “on-demand” resource.
- **Implication:** Team management will need a sustainable coverage and triage model (rotations, tiered support, clear response-time commitments) to meet expectations without increasing burnout or sacrificing quality.
- **Action (and Monitoring):** Pilot evening virtual “rapid response” hours plus a tiered triage queue for 8-10 weeks; monitor student satisfaction and/or impact and response times alongside staff workload indicators (after-hours work, PTO usage, pulse survey).

Strategic foresight helps us explore possibilities, prepare for change, and create more resilient teams.

Actual Team Examples (Alumni Engagement)

EMPLOYEE #1

Fragile Healthcare Access/Reduction in DEI Support

By 2030, alumni rely on flexible learning and strong networks to thrive amid unstable work, AI-driven change, and diminishing benefits, making community and continuous upskilling essential for career, connection, and well-being.

EMPLOYEE #2

Desire for Meaning/Intergenerational Communities

By 2030, U-M alumni foster purpose-driven, intergenerational communities, anchoring fulfillment and support in a rapidly changing, AI-influenced world while relying on the Alumni Association for human-centered guidance and connection.

EMPLOYEE #3

Rapid AI Adoption/Scrutiny of Higher Ed ROI

By 2030, alumni constantly reskill and adapt with AI-driven learning in an unstable, credential-focused job market, relying on U-M as a trusted lifelong partner to navigate inequality, misinformation, and the need for transparent, career-ready outcomes.

MANAGER

Portfolio Careers/Intergenerational Communities/
Scrutiny of Higher Ed ROI

By 2030, graduation launches alumni into a multi-year “extended launch” of fragmented work, income, and identity, with universities judged on how they support this fragile transition.

Foresight Resources

- **Strategic Foresight Workbook**
 - **5-day mini-course plan to learn the fundamentals of strategic foresight and prepare to guide your team through learning and integration**
 - Detailed facilitator guides with three workshop format options (4 hours, 3 hours, or two 2-hour sessions)
 - **Sample participant agendas using a WHAT–WHY–HOW structure (tailored to each format)**
 - Workshop tools + participant handout templates
 - Post-rollout team integration ideas
 - **References + additional resources**
- **Sample workshop presentation slides**
- **Sample workshop facilitator script**

*Items **highlighted in bold** are included in your handout. Scan the QR code (next slide) for the electronic version and to schedule a complimentary one-on-one exploratory conversation about additional materials.*

Plan of Action

- Download the abbreviated *Strategic Foresight Workbook*.
- Schedule a complimentary one-on-one exploratory conversation about additional materials and planning your workshop.





Thank you!