

THE NEXT GOLDEN AGE OF TECHNOLOGY 2030-45

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FUTURE

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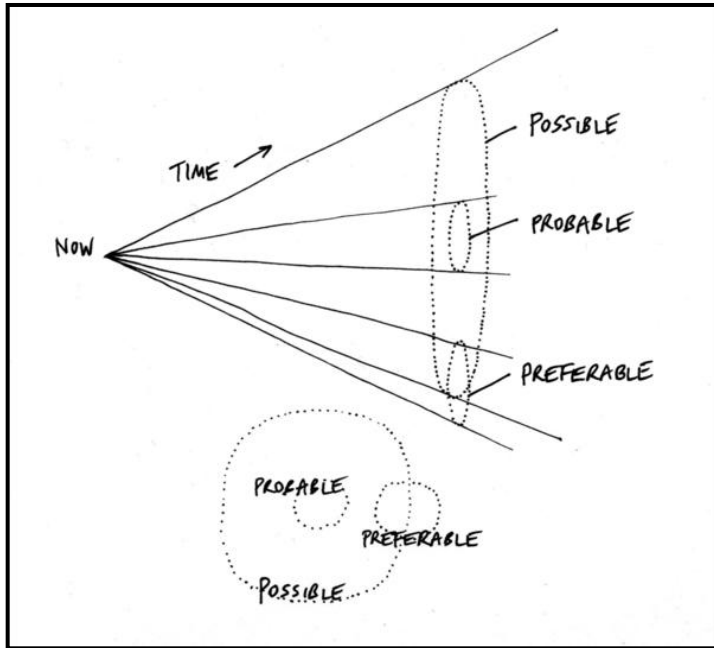
Director of Research

The European Futures Observatory

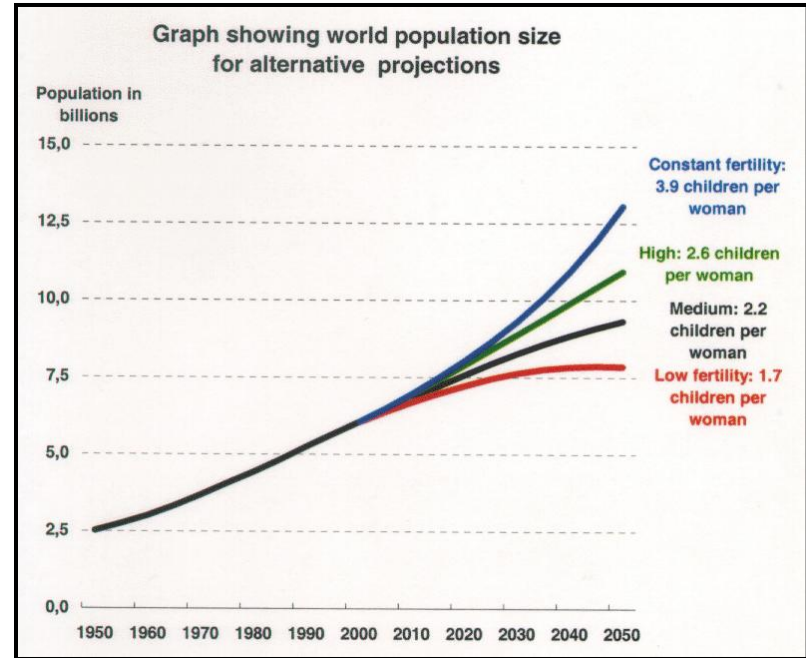
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A Key Concept: The Cone Of Plausibility



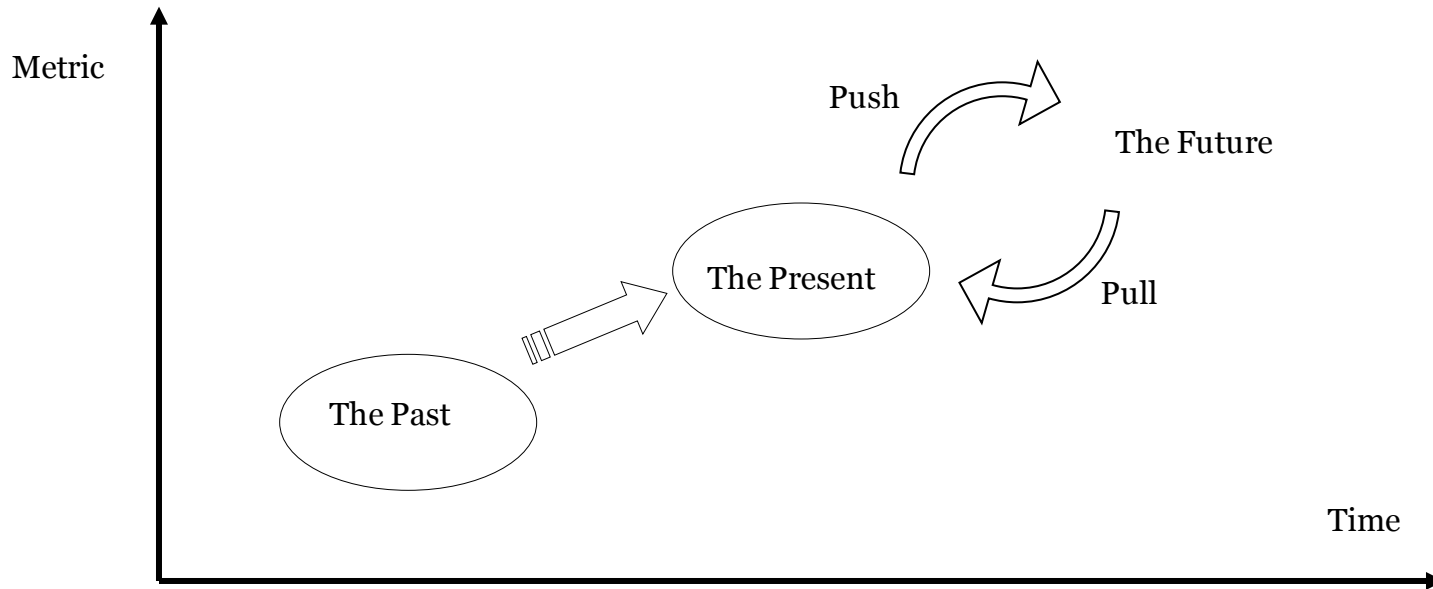
The Theory.



In Practice.

Push And Pull Futuring

Some techniques that study the future **push** out from the present into the future ...



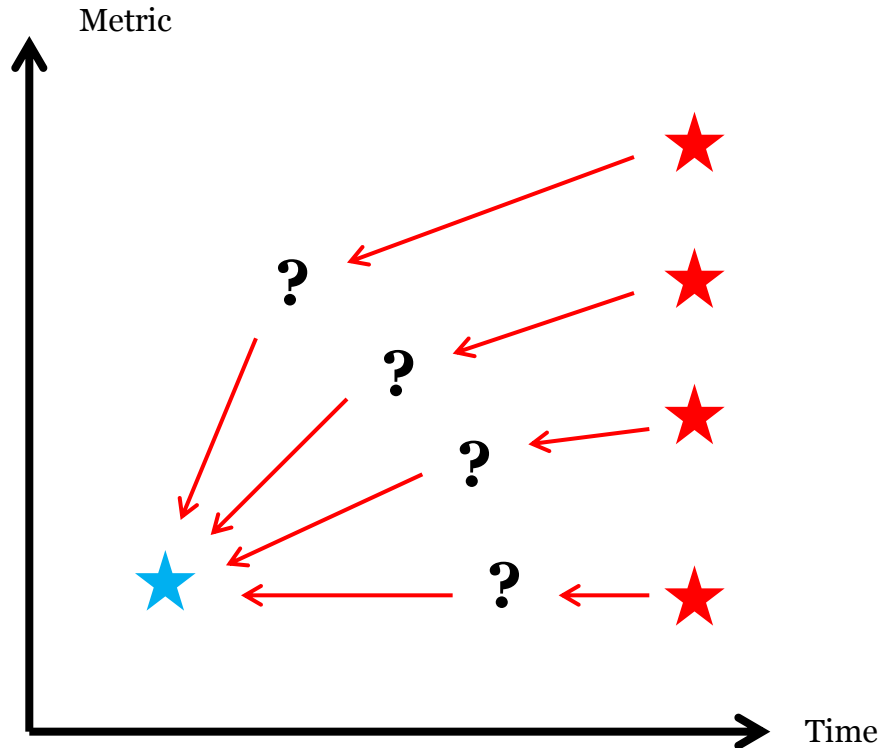
... whilst other techniques **pull** from the future back to the present.



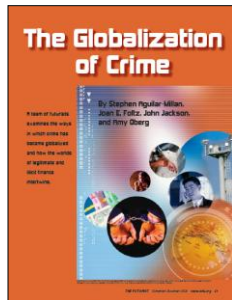
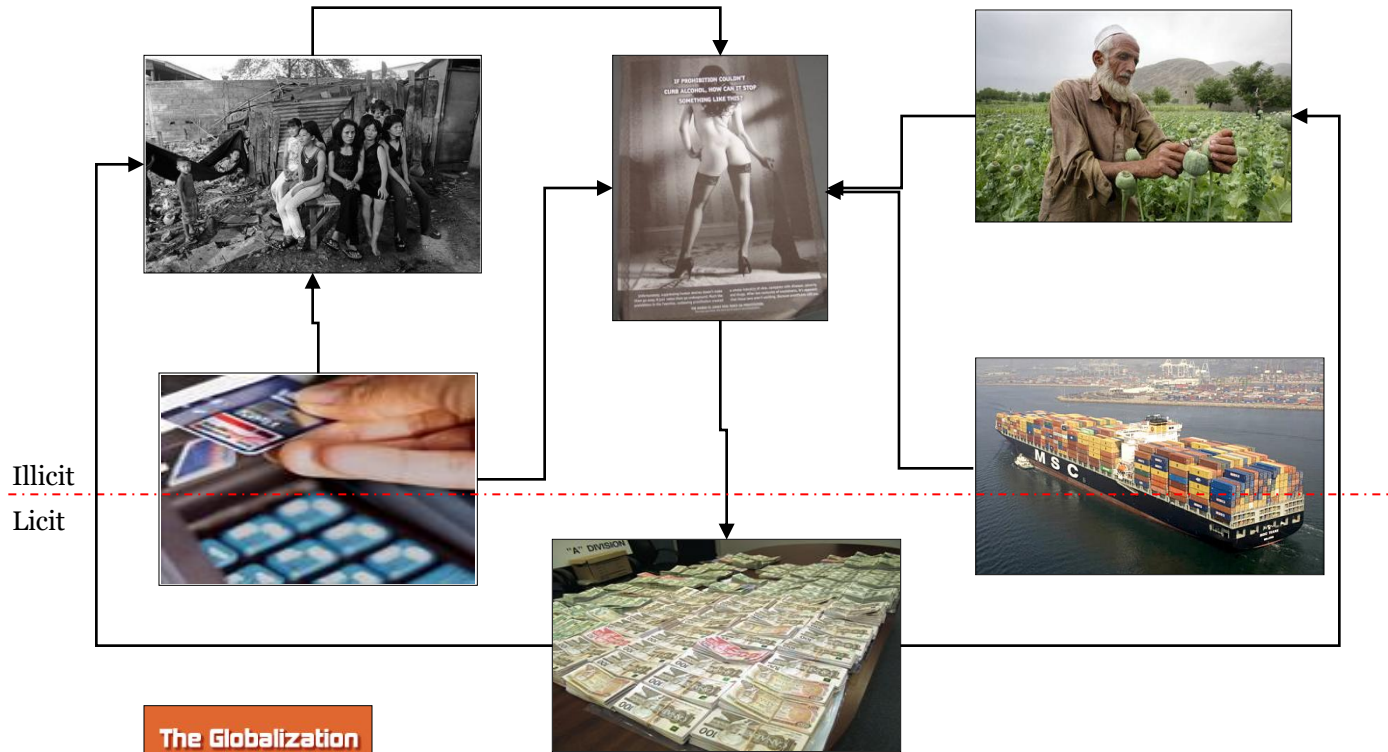
Pull Futurists: The Interpolators

1. Assess a current basepoint.
2. Determine the key uncertainties.
3. How might those uncertainties play out?
4. Retrace those future states back to the present.

This method lends itself well to those who like to model the future.



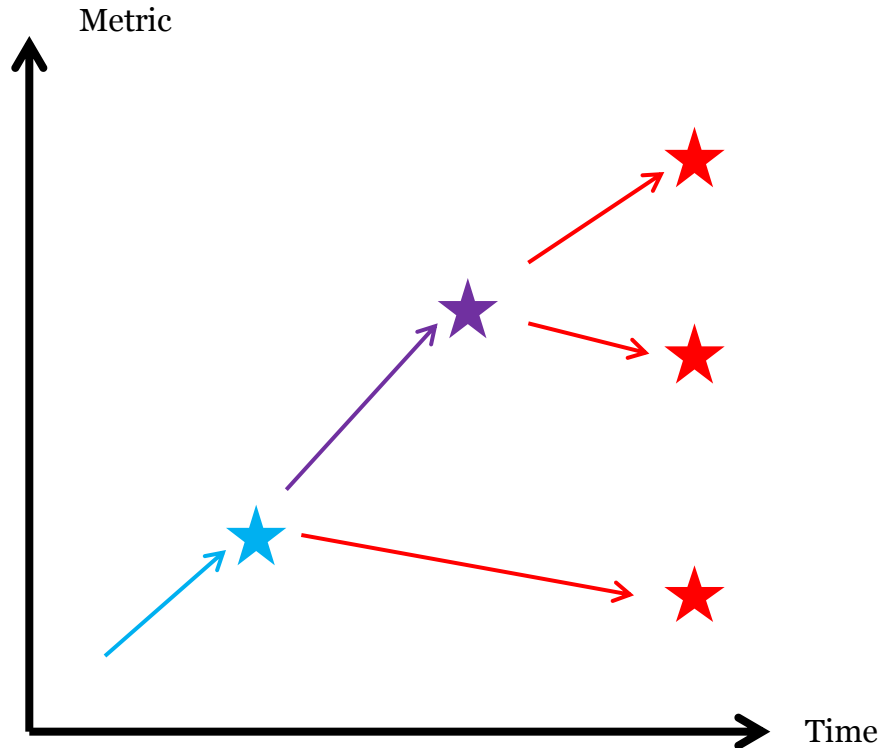
Pull Futuring: An Example



Push Futurists: The Extrapolators

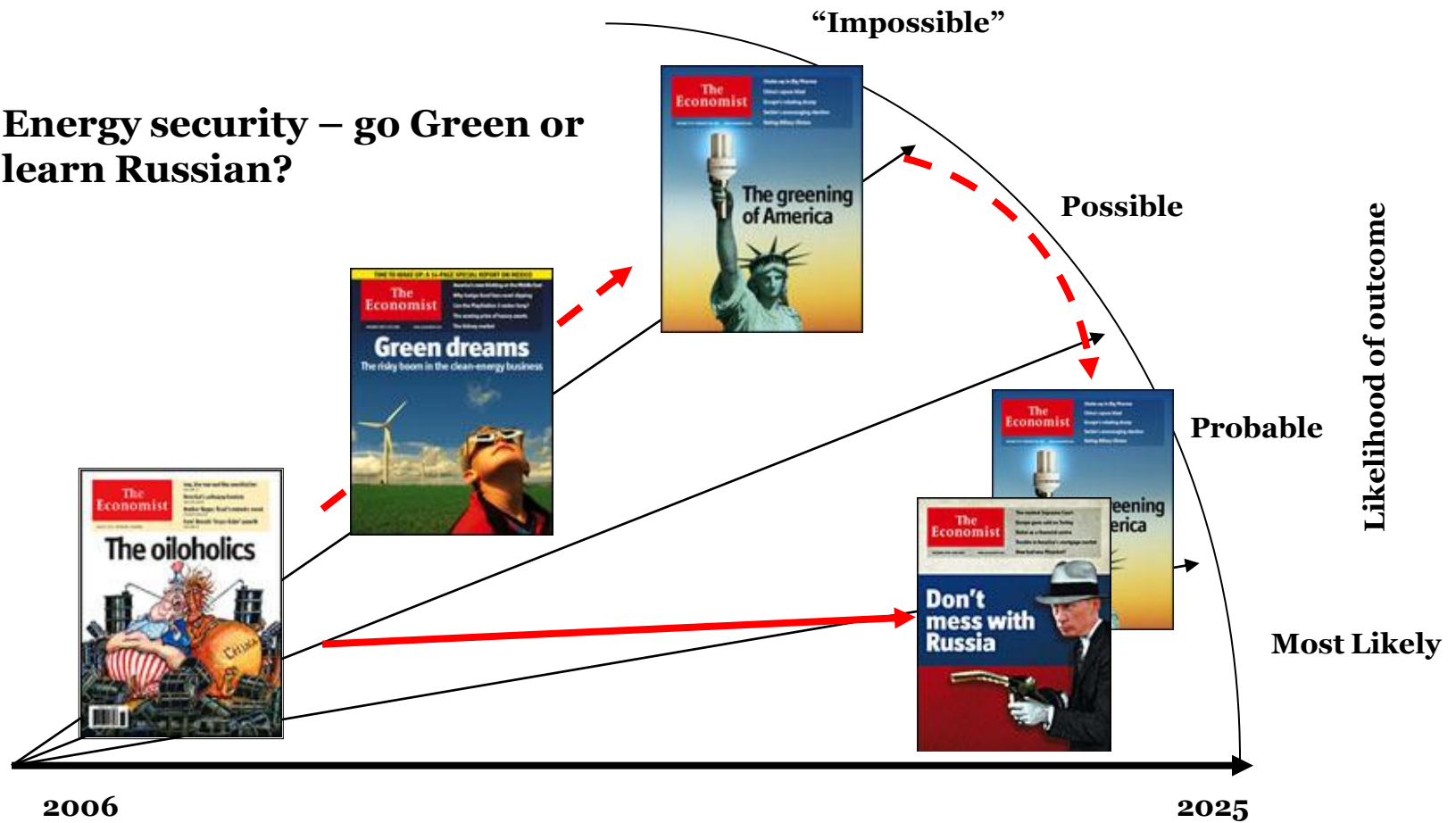
1. Take a metric.
2. Roll it into the future.
3. Add one or two alternatives.
4. And you get a set of alternative futures.

This method lends itself well to trend analysis.



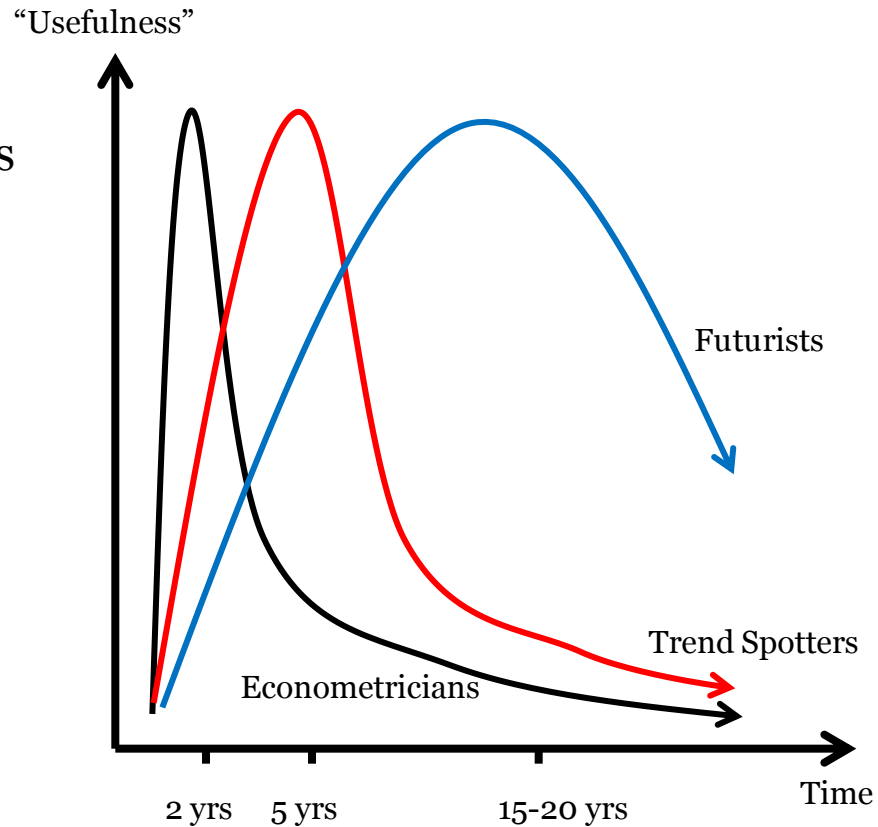
Push Futuring: An Example

Energy security – go Green or learn Russian?



Horses For Courses.

The various professions who operate in the futurescape have differing levels of usefulness, depending upon the time horizon a project is taking.



The Different Schools Of Futuring

The choice of methods used by various futurists tends to be determined by the school of futuring that they tend to follow.

We like to think of there being three different schools of futuring:

1. The trend analysts and horizon scanners. We like to think of these as the North American School because North American futuring tends to be trend heavy.
2. The modellers and systems thinkers. We like to think of this as the European School because European futuring tends to rely quite a lot on systems thinking and modelling.
3. The values based thinkers. We like to think of this as the Australasian School because Australasian futuring tends to focus on a more holistic approach to future issues.

We must not be too dogmatic in our thought – good futuring combines all three approaches.

