

# Why Foresight Matters More Than Ever

A skillset for navigating complexity and uncertainty

## Industrial Age

1800s – 1980s

*Slow, Linear Change*

Change happened gradually and was primarily physical (mechanization, infrastructure).

### 1700s-1800s: Steam Engine

Enabled mass production

### Late 1800s: Electricity

Powered factories and transportation

### 1900s-1920s: Automobile Revolution

Transformed logistics and mobility

### 1960s-1980s: Computers & Early Automation

Data processing begins, but slow adoption

## Digital Age

1990s – 2020s

*Faster, Networked Change*

The rise of software, data, and internet-driven innovation.

### 1990s-2000s: Internet Boom

E-commerce, globalization of communication

### 2005-2015: Social Media & Cloud Computing

Data explosion, digital transformation

### 2010s-Present: Big Data & Mobile Tech

Data-driven business models emerge

## AI & Exponential Change

2020s – Future

*Unpredictable, Exponential Growth*

Change is no longer just fast—it's exponential and unpredictable.

### 2020s-Future: AI & Machine Learning

Automated decision-making, generative AI

### Emerging: Quantum Computing

Potential for massive computational breakthroughs

### Future: Biotech & Personalized Medicine

AI-driven drug discovery, health data-driven treatments


### Potential Future: AGI

Artificial General Intelligence disrupting traditional economic models

The curve represents the increasing rate of technological change over time

Linear Change   Accelerating Change   Exponential Change

# Risk (data available) vs. Uncertainty (data unknown)

Dimension	 Risk	? Uncertainty
Definition	Known probabilities	Unknown or unknowable outcomes
Can be Modeled?	Yes – with data, stats, and simulations	Not reliably – requires judgment, foresight
Example	Forecasting car accidents based on historical data	Predicting the impact of an unknown technology
Decision Tools	Risk matrices, expected value models	Scenario planning, sensemaking, safe-to-fail experiments

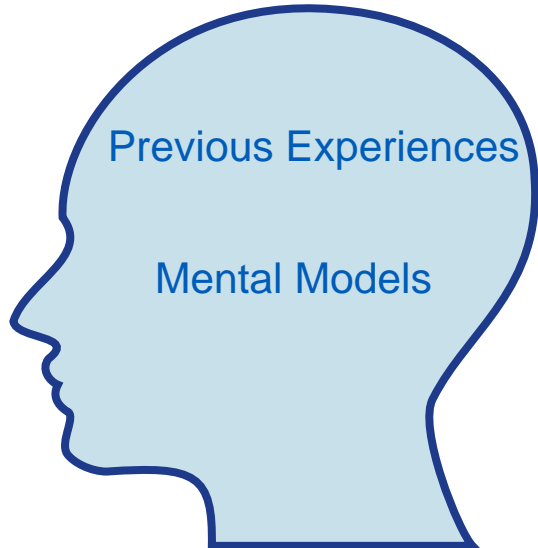


Risk and uncertainty show up in every part of life—even in decisions like changing jobs, buying a house, or trying something new in your role. The key is knowing which one you're facing—so you can apply the right kind of thinking

# Dealing with Uncertainty

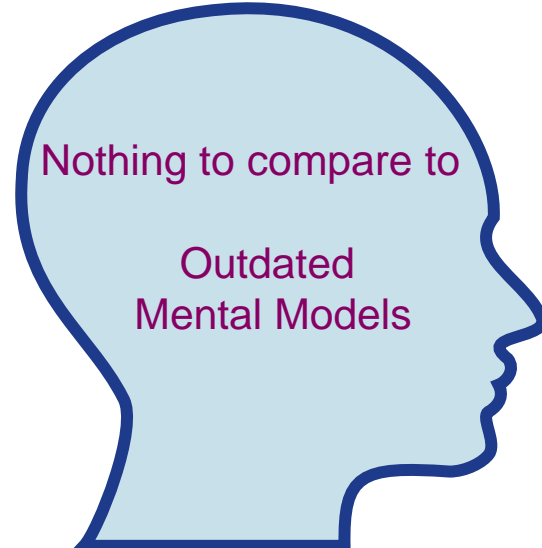
Think about a recent decision you made at work—big or small  
Would you say it involved risk (where you had data or knew the likely outcomes), or  
uncertainty (where you didn't have enough information or couldn't predict what  
would happen)?

## Risks



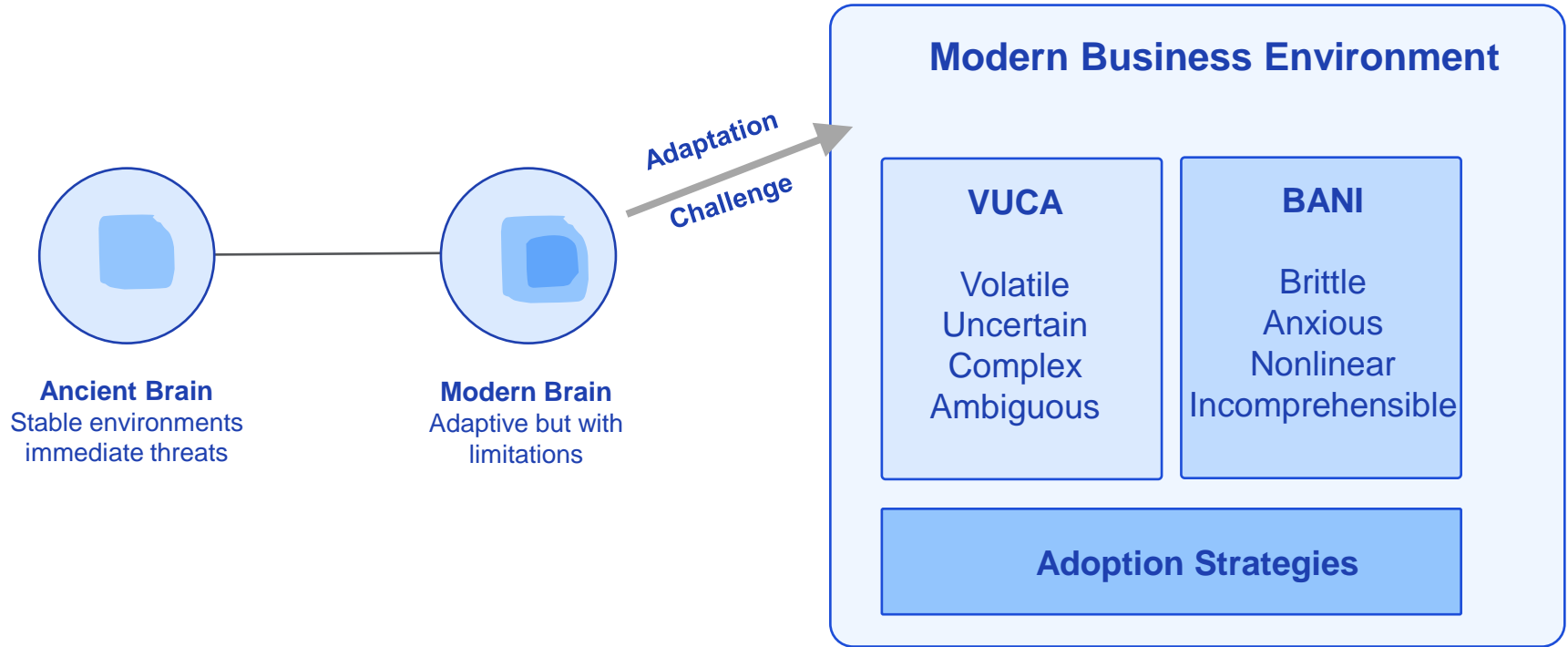
Knowns, Predictable Outcomes

## Uncertainty



Unknowns, No Playbook

# Our Brains Were Not Built for This



# Adapting our Thinking to Modern Complexity

## Evolution of Context & Thinking

Dimension	Past World	Modern World
Threats & Risks	Immediate threats	Long-term, complex risks
System Dynamics	Stable systems	Rapid, global shifts
Success Metrics	Physical survival	Strategic foresight
Social Structures	Social hierarchies	Fluid networks & teams
Change Pace	Generational	Exponential
Decision Approach	Experience-based	Multi-scenario planning

Agricultural Era

Industrial Era

Digital/AI Era

## Tools we explore in the course



### Strategic Foresight

Systematically exploring trends, signals, and emerging issues to anticipate possible futures and make better decisions in the present



### Scenario Planning

Systematically exploring multiple plausible futures to prepare for various outcomes rather than betting on a single prediction



### Systems Thinking

Understanding interconnections, feedback loops, and emergent behaviors to avoid unintended consequences of decisions



### Enterprise Thinking

Viewing the organization holistically, ensuring alignment between strategy, culture, and operations across all functions and levels



### Lateral Thinking

Breaking out of habitual thought patterns to generate creative alternatives, reframe problems, and discover innovative solutions



### Adaptive Decision-Making

Creating flexible strategies that can evolve as conditions change, favoring experimentation and iterative approaches

Moving from simplistic, linear forecasting to dynamic systems understanding and multiple scenario preparation. The tools we'll explore help bridge this cognitive gap between how our brains naturally work and what modern complexity demands

# From Strategic Thinking to Future Readiness

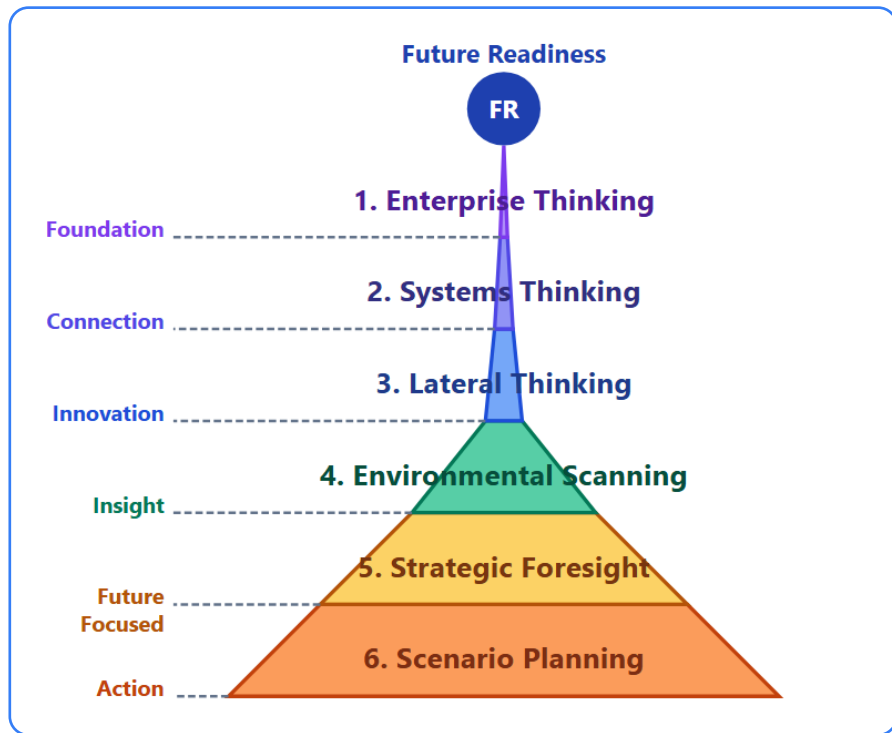
Traditional forecasting assumes linear change—but reality is unpredictable

## Building Future Readiness

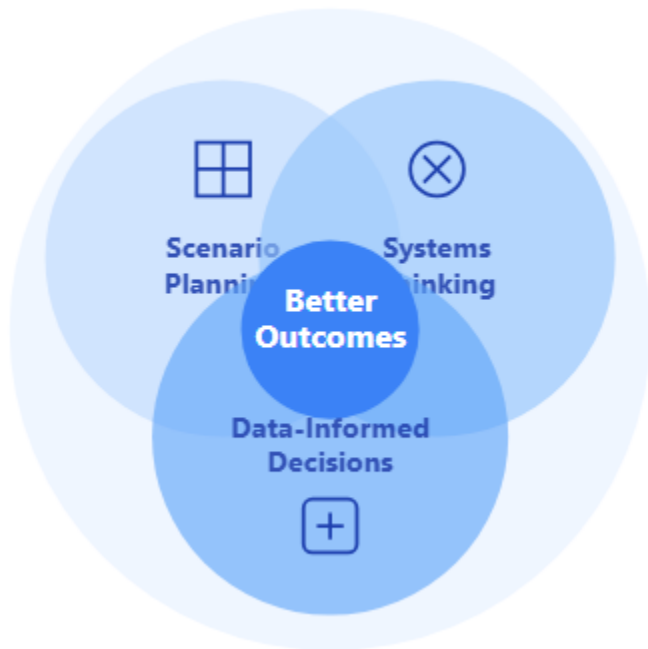
Each level builds upon the last

1. **Enterprise Thinking** – Big-picture view of the organization and how strategy, culture, and operations align
2. **Systems Thinking** – Understanding interdependencies, feedback loops, and the broader system dynamics
3. **Lateral Thinking** – Generating novel, creative solutions and reframing assumptions
4. **Environmental Scanning** – Gathering insights and signals from the external world (PESTEL, trend spotting)
5. **Strategic Foresight** – Making sense of signals and trends to explore plausible futures
6. **Scenario Planning** – Creating detailed narratives and strategic responses to different possible futures

## Future Readiness Pyramid



# What to Take With You



## Mindset Shifts

### Embrace Complexity

Linear thinking no longer works in our VUCA/BANI world

### Rewire Your Thinking

Unlearn old habits and embrace new cognitive models

### Cultivate Thinking Models

Combine enterprise, systems, and lateral thinking



## Strategic Approaches

### Plan with Scenarios

Map uncertainties for better strategic agility

### Scan & Classify

Categorize signals as Knowns, Unknowns, and Wildcards

### Build Resilience

Prepare for multiple futures, not predict a single one



## Decision-Making Skills

### Think in Systems

See interdependencies to avoid unintended consequences

### Consider Ripple Effects

Make decisions that account for system-wide impacts

# Need a Tailored Data Literacy Program for Your Team?



## Tailored Training for Your Goals

We design interactive sessions aligned with your industry, use cases, data maturity, and learning needs — whether you're just starting out or ready to go deeper



## Built for Real Impact

Practical. Engaging. Actionable  
Workshops, simulations, assessments, micro-learning & more  
Delivered in-person, virtual, or via recorded learning modules



## Popular Personas Served

- Data Consumers
- Leaders & Managers
- Technical Data Influencers
- Business Professionals
- Hybrid Roles



## Training Topics Include

- Data-Informed Decision-Making
- Data Literacy Fundamentals
- Interpreting & Communicating Insights
- Mitigating Bias & Challenging Assumptions
- AI for Business Professionals
- Analytical & Critical Thinking with Data
- Storytelling & Visualization
- Strategic Thinking with Data
- Data Analytics
- Program Assessment and Evaluation with Data
- ...and more, customized to your use cases

## Let's Design the Right Learning Path for You and Your Team

*"What stood out was how personalized the content was. Kevin took time to understand our industry and designed training that actually fit our workflows."*

*"This was the first time our team really got what data literacy means. The way Kevin broke down complex ideas made it easy to grasp and apply."*

*"We've sat through a lot of training. This one stuck. People understand the concepts and they were applying them in conversations the very next day."*

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- Proven methodologies for success

### Quick Reference Guides

- Fast, actionable insights
- Easy-to-follow cheat sheets
- Perfect for business professionals

### Hands-On Activities

- Interactive exercises
- Scenario-based learning
- Immediate application of concepts

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