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# From scanning to planning

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# *Activity One*

## Getting into a future- focussed frame of mind

(With thanks to Henley Centre Headlight Vision)





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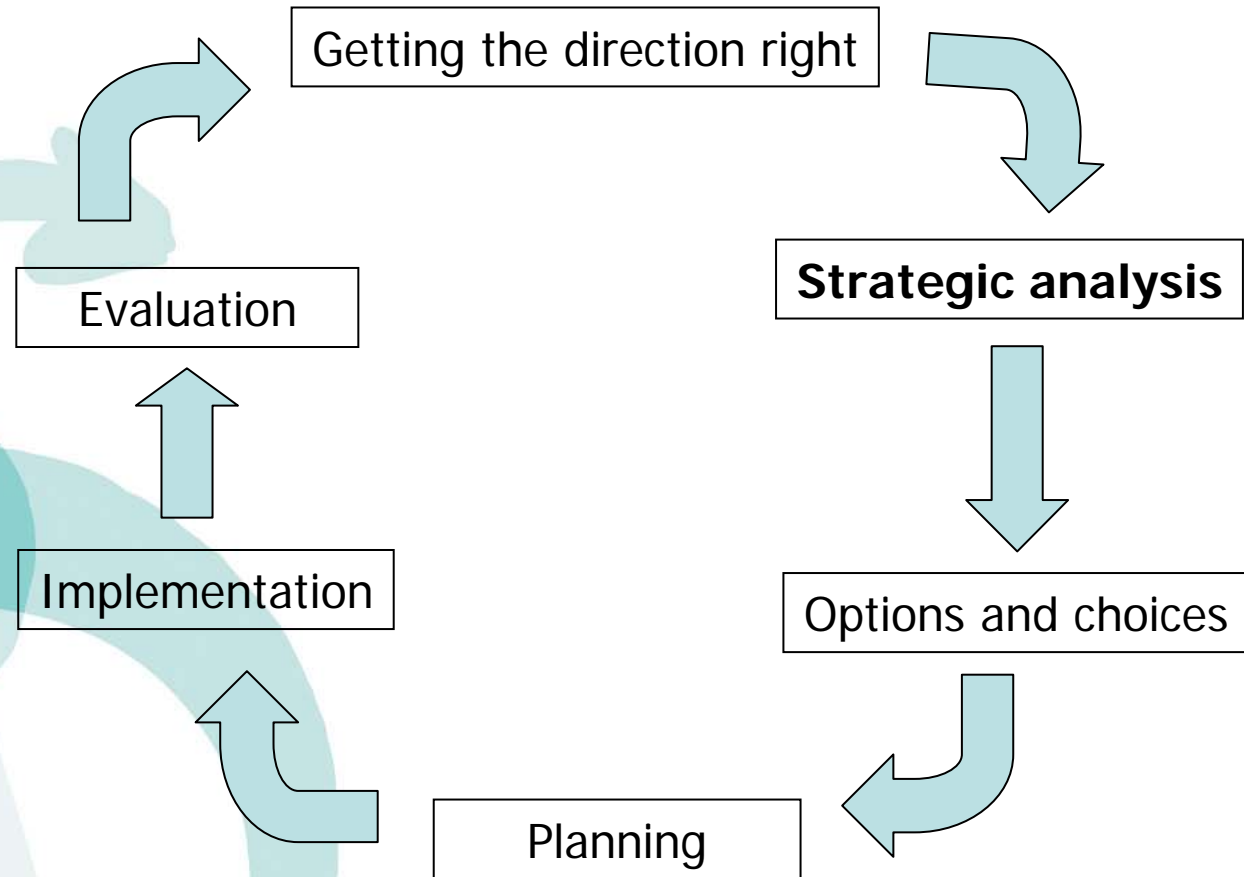
# Why do strategic analysis?

- It opens up your thinking about change
- It helps you to
  - **Improve** – do what you do better
  - **Innovate** – do different things
  - **Improvise** – manage risks and threats



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# A strategic planning cycle



The process...

**What?** (is changing?)

**So What?** (does that mean  
for my organisation?)

**Now What?** (should we do  
about it?)



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# What?

## Scanning the external environment





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# The skills...

- **Searching** – finding out what information to look for, opening up thinking, thinking laterally and creatively
- **Sifting** – Narrowing down, making decisions about what is and isn't relevant
- **Sorting** – Categorising, then checking out to make sure that all the bases have been covered
- **Selecting** – Discriminating between what is vital, what is important and what is merely interesting



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## *Activity Two*

# Mapping out drivers of change



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# PEST (Third Sector Foresight)

## **Political**

Changing nature of political engagement

Shift from government to governance

Increasing regulation of civic life

A new PM

## **Social**

Ethical living and consumerism

Individualism

Rising expectations and assertiveness

Time and energy deficit

## **Economic**

Levels of public spending

Emphasis on efficiency and value for money

New philanthropists

## **Technological**

Always on '24/7' society

Democratisation of the media

Mobile technology and technological convergence





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# PEST (West Berkshire Mencap)

## **Political**

Individual choice

The personal agendas of local councillors

National policies on localism

## **Social**

Medical advances lead to more people with learning difficulties

Greater integration of people with learning difficulties

Increased demand for independent living from service users

## **Economic**

Impact of unemployment on pay and recruitment

Individualised budgets and purchasing

## **Technological**

Pace of access for people with learning difficulties

Rural transport

# Tips

- Is it P, E S, or T? – It doesn't really matter as long as its on the list!
- Interplay between drivers – consider relationships and interdependencies
- Tap into others – staff, volunteers, users and beneficiaries, funders etc.



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# Availability of information

- **Already known** – your organisation's knowledge bank (documents and what's in people's heads!)
- **Readily available** – information from outside of your organisation already collected, analysed and stored.
- **Needs effort to seek out** – new knowledge that needs to be sought out

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- Economic**
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  - 2 corporateresponsibility
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  - 5 directpayments
  - 3 disaster
  - 3 disposableincome
  - 154 Economic
  - 5 educationspending
  - 6 Efficiency
  - 2 engagedfunders
  - 5 environmentspending
  - 1 ethicalconsumerism
  - 4 funding
  - 7 fundraising
  - 4 GDP
  - 44 giving
  - 14 Globalisation
  - 4 Growth
  - 13 healthspending
  - 3 inflation
  - 4 interestrates
  - 1 investment
  - 4 livingcosts
  - 2 loanfinance
  - 1 membership
  - 9 Pensions
  - 4 philanthroop



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# Creating a knowledge bank: Tips

- Keep it relevant
- Consider credibility
- Good enough is good enough



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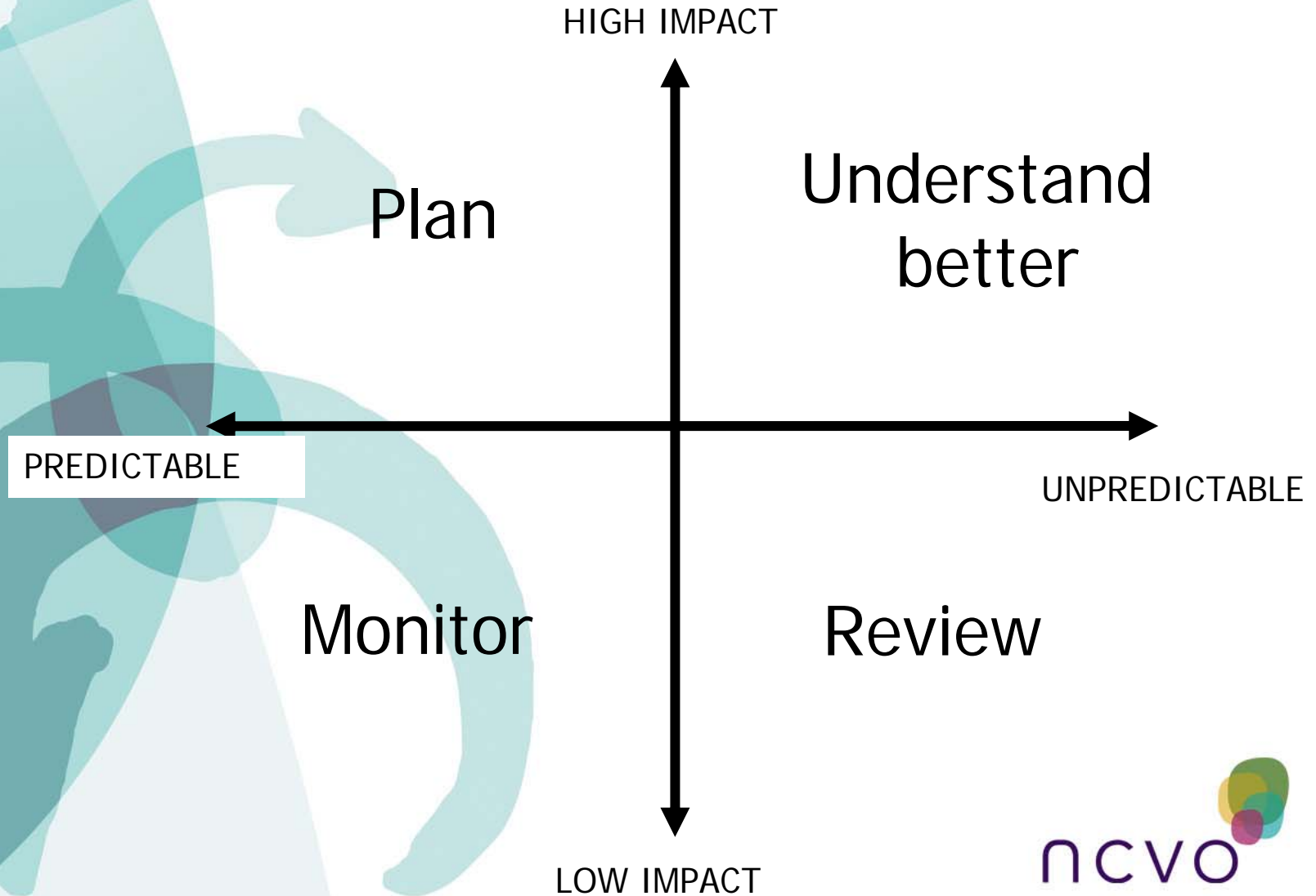
# *Activity Three*

A sifting technique:  
Importance and  
predictability



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# A Sifting Technique





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# So What?

Analysing the impact of  
external drivers



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# *Activity Four*

## Considering strategic implications

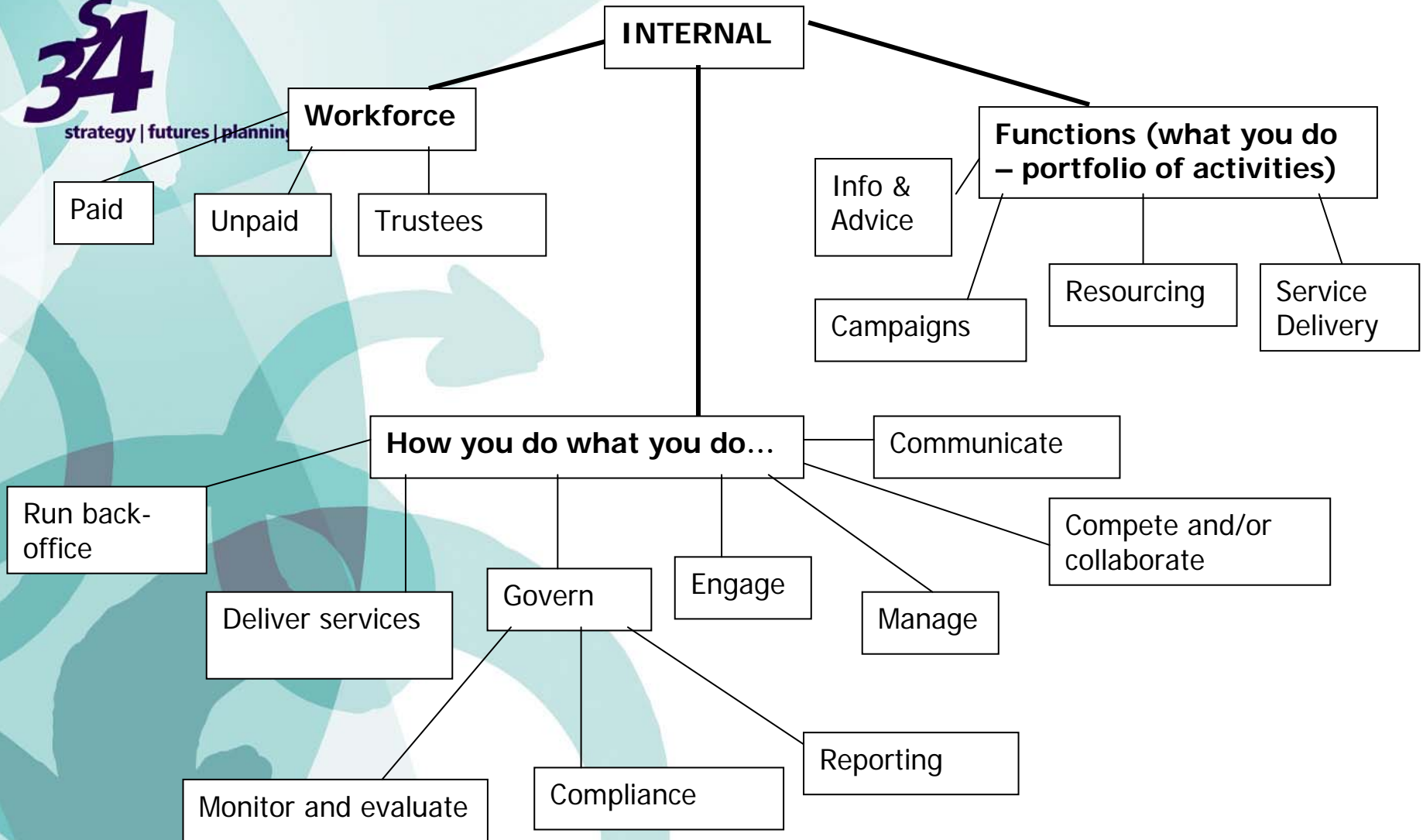
# Considering strategic implications: Frameworks

6 key areas:

1. Service users/beneficiaries
2. Aspirations and mission
3. Strategies and governance
4. Relationships and influence
5. Product/service portfolio
6. Systems, skills and technology

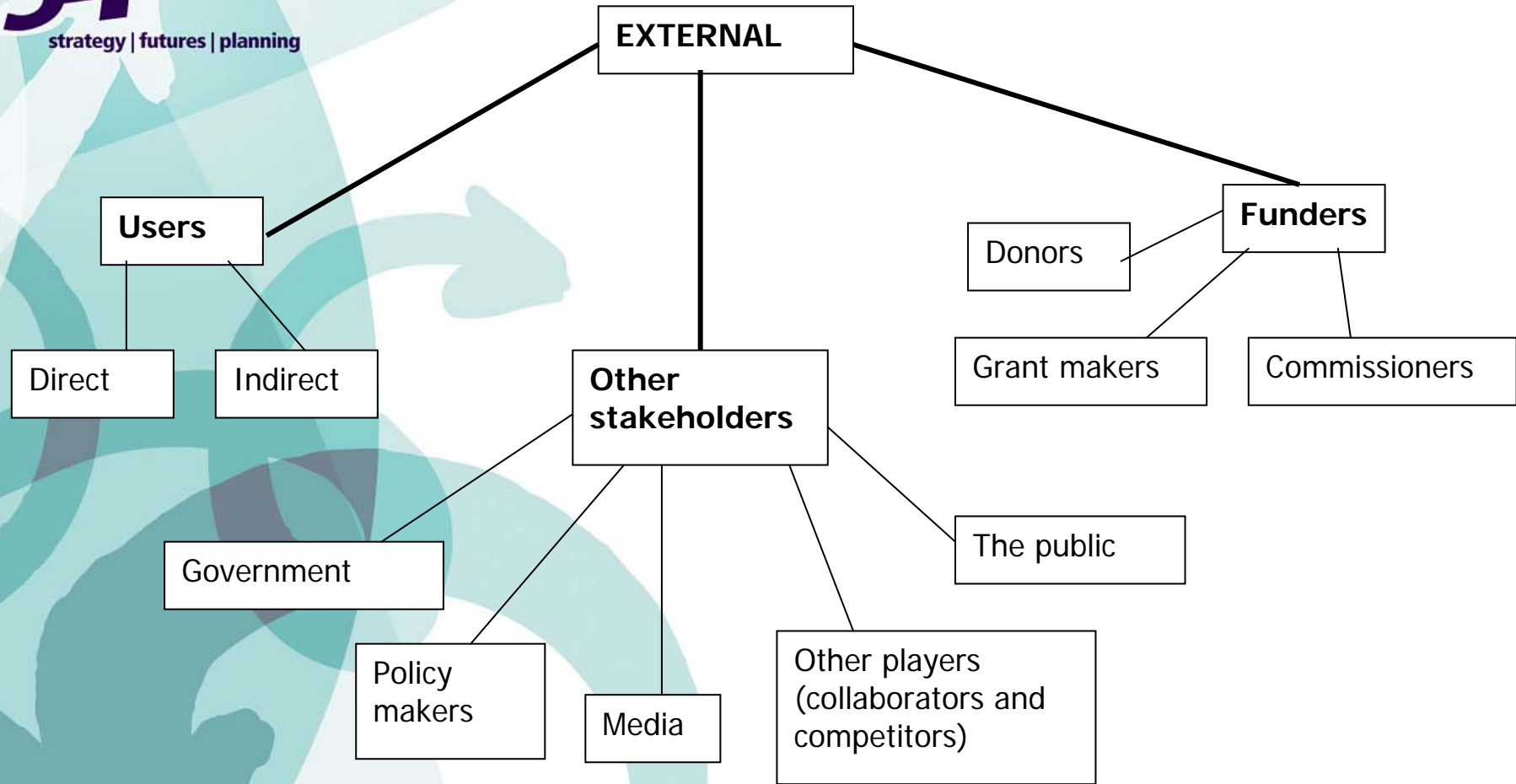


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# So What? (about unpredictable drivers?)

## Creating visions of the future



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# What is scenario planning?

## Scenarios are...

- Descriptions of alternative coherent and plausible futures
- “Narratives” of the evolving dynamics of the future
- Specific strategy-focused views of the future

## Scenarios aren't...

- Predictions
- Variations around a midpoint/base case
- Generalized views of feared or desired Futures



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# Why try scenario planning?

- If you have a number of high impact/unpredictable drivers to consider
- To stimulate creative activity across your organisation – focussed on the future
- To open up really big, new opportunities and ideas for improvement
- To draw in new perspectives (from external and internal sources)





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# Scenario planning: 8 steps

1. Pre-plan
2. Get your focus question

# Scenario planning: 8 steps

1. Pre-plan
2. Get your focus question, e.g.

Broad:

- What will the world be like in 10 years time?
- What will be the role of the VCS in 10 years time?

Or specific:

- What will our service users needs be in 10 years time?
- What will volunteering look like in 10 years time?



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# Scenario planning: 8 steps

1. Pre-plan
2. Get your focus question
3. Determine the driving forces
4. Isolate the critical uncertainties
5. Select two axes for the scenario matrix



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# Scenario axes

Trusted

Doubted



Voice

Services



Remote

Face to face



Adequate funding

Insufficient funding



Centralised state

Neighbourhood governance



Active society

Passive society



Integrated society

Polarised society





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# Scenario planning: 8 steps

1. Pre-plan
2. Get your focus question
3. Determine the driving forces
4. Isolate the critical uncertainties
5. Select two axes for the scenario matrix
6. Create relevant and plausible stories
7. Look for patterns and insights
8. Incorporate in strategies and plans



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# Some benefits of scenario planning

- It can dispel fear about a future threat or challenge and create new energy and hope
- Can inspire a more creative and open approach to day-to-day working
- Its liberating – you realise there is no single answer – it generates options and choices for future strategy



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# Now What?

Strategic choices and  
decisions



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“While the future is uncertain and much of it is beyond our control, we can control many aspects of it. **We choose our future: we create it by what we do or fail to do.**”

Wendy Schultz, “Defining Futures Fluency”

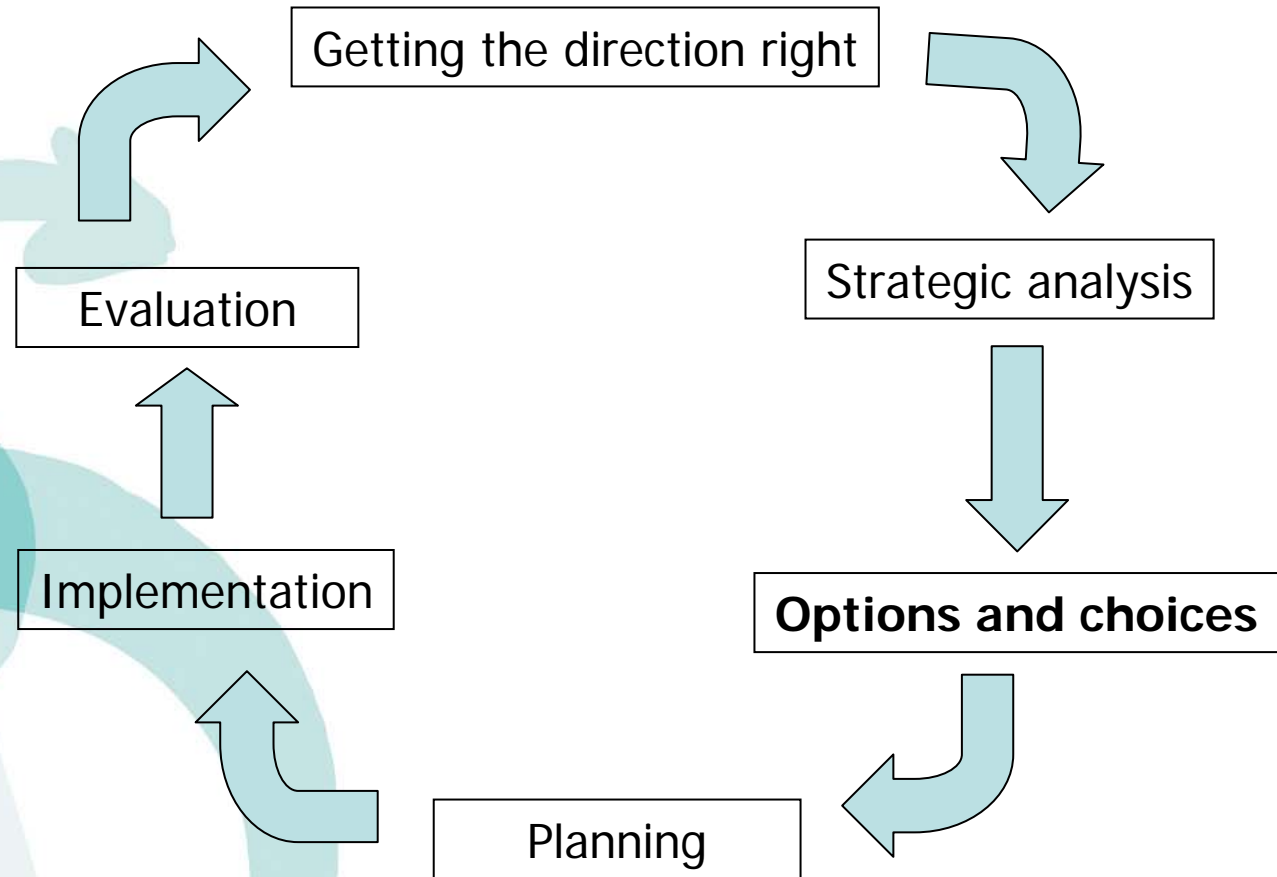
<http://www.infinitefutures.com/essays/ff/ChFiveView.pdf>





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# A strategic planning cycle



# Strategic options and choices

Strategic analysis is all generating new ideas about how to...

- **Improve** – do what you do better
- **Innovate** – do different things
- **Improvise** – manage risks and threats

# Further information

Third Sector Foresight:

[www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/3s4](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/3s4)

Publications:

- *Voluntary Sector Strategic Analysis 2006/07*
- *Picture This: a guide to scenario planning for voluntary organisations*
- *Tools for Tomorrow: a practical guide to strategic planning for voluntary organisations*

All from: [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications)