





Criticise your utopia

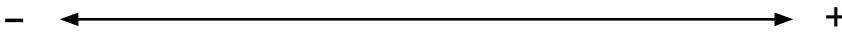
Develop a realistic future



Work on concrete ideas for digital futures related to one of the 7 clusters of the *Makings sense of the digital society* compendium. Follow the principle of the *Future Workshop* method and generate an idea lab.

	2 hours – 2 days	★★☆	intermediate
	group of at least 4 or larger		printouts and diverse utensils

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<p style="text-align: center;">“What problem does digitalisation solve?”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">— Nassehi, A. (2019) <i>Making sense of the digital society</i>.</p>		
<p>The <i>Future Workshop</i> has proven a popular method in many fields in recent decades. It is applied by companies, in politics, and in the social field. It is a technique used to shed light on a common problematic situation, generate visions of the future, and discuss how these visions can be realised. The method was established in the 1980s by Robert Jungk, Rüdiger Lutz and Norbert R. Müllert, becoming one of the most widespread methods in future studies. A bottom-up method, it is based on the principle of participation and follows the guiding ideal of (all!) citizens shaping their own future.</p> <p>The method follows the following scheme: criticism of the current state, vision of a desired state, and planning of ways to achieve the desired state. The <i>Future Workshop</i> refers to the present society in a playful way, pointing towards a collective, political perspective for action.</p>		
ASSIGNMENT	Work on concrete ideas for digital futures related to one of the 7 clusters of the <i>Making sense of the digital society</i> compendium. Follow the principle of the <i>Future Workshop</i> method and generate an idea lab to develop realistic ways into the future.	
LEARNING GOAL	The aim of this exercise is to create a framework in which to discuss and evaluate the opportunities and risks of the digitalisation of our society. The aim is to engage in an exchange about what desirable digital futures might look like and what is needed to achieve it.	
PREPARATION	Technical equipment for research, flipcharts, moderation cards, pens and paper; if necessary, materials or tools to elaborate the utopia (such as painted posters, photos, videos, audio contributions and role-plays)	

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LET'S START	<p>The <i>Future workshop</i> technique</p> <p>The Future Workshop is divided into three phases through which the group passes. The intended goal is the development of a concrete, desirable future.</p> <p>I Critique phase make an inventory > Goal: Identify and understand challenges, describe the status quo, use your own subjective concerns as a starting point</p> <p>II Imagination & utopia phase develop an idea of the future without the problem > Goal: Enable innovation, develop ideas, consciously break with the current reality</p> <p>III Realisation & strategy phase find ways to implement the goals from phase II > Goal: Decide and plan</p>	
STEP 1	<p>Introduction to the subject. Research.</p> <p>Form small groups of 3–4 people. In each group, one participant should take on the role of moderator. This person should mediate in discussions and document results, e.g. by writing them on a flipchart.</p> <p>Choose a digital issue or challenge that interests or concerns you. For inspiration, you can also choose an area from the 7 clusters of the <i>Making sense of the digital society</i> compendium and select a problem that is as concrete as possible.</p> <p>Research the topic (the podcast episode of the respective cluster can help for an overview) and follow up with more concrete research on your specific problem. While researching your topic, investigate the opportunities and risks for society and position yourself accordingly.</p>	
	<p>EXAMPLE</p> <p>Cluster: Digitalisation infrastructures</p> <p>Digitalisation and mobility</p> <p>To what extent could digital applications and artificial intelligence contribute to sustainability and climate protection in cities through route optimisation, shared journeys and networked transport planning? What ideas are there for this and how can they be implemented?</p>	

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<p>STEP 2</p>	<p>Work through the three phases of <i>Future workshop</i>.</p> <p>I Critique phase</p> <p>Identify the problems related to your issue and name them as precisely as possible. Take notes and write down the most important arguments.</p> <p>Discuss the outcomes of your research and look for the positive and negative aspects of your topic. For example, you could create a scale to collect and visualise the positive aspects (+) and negative aspects (-).</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 10px;"> <p>What bothers you; what are you afraid of; what makes you angry? Why?</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 10px;"> <p>Where do you see opportunities; what developments have excited you and improved your life?</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>All comments and ideas are relevant and will be collected. Try to be as specific and concrete as possible with your criticisms.</p> <p>II Imagination & utopia phase</p> <p>Imagine a future in which the problems identified in the critique phase no longer occur. This phase tackles the big question – What does our imagined and preferred future look like?</p> <p>No idea, no matter how unrealistic, should be held back – in this phase, nothing has to be tested for its feasibility! Everything is possible!</p> <p>As a starting point you could try to reformulate the criticisms from phase I in a positive way. The scenarios can also be designed visually, medially, or in any other ways that clarify the idea of ‘where we want to go’.</p> <p>III Realisation & strategy phase</p> <p>Think of strategies to implement the goals from phase II.</p> <p>Now utopias meet realities. The task in this phase is to find answers to the following question: Which ways, methods, means and measures can lead to the realisation and implementation of your scenario?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What limitations and difficulties can be identified? ▪ Which measures are realistic and feasible under which conditions? ▪ Who can support the group in this? <p>The participants are each other’s corrective here, and should always critically question how realistic and effective the proposed means are or can be.</p>		<p>What bothers you; what are you afraid of; what makes you angry? Why?</p>	<p>Where do you see opportunities; what developments have excited you and improved your life?</p>
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STEP 3	Closure: Collection and presentation of ideas and plans, development of a perspective for action, further networking.	
	<p>GUIDING QUESTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What aspects of the other groups' future scenarios particularly impressed you? ▪ Where do you see opportunities and risks? ▪ Can your ideas be related to each other or even combined? ▪ Are there social structures or institutions that might be interested in your idea? ▪ What role does the ability to act play in your plans? 	
	<p>CONTINUE WITH OUR TOOLBOX</p> <p>For a different take on digital futures, try the tool: From Weak Signals to Megatrends</p>	

EXTRAS	Criticise your utopia	6
SOURCES	<p>Future Workshop ^{DE} Zukunftswerkstatt, Robert Jungk Bibliothek für Zukunftsfragen, https://jungk-bibliothek.org/zukunftswerkstaetten/aufbau-und-methoden-der-zukunftswerkstatt</p> <p>Future Workshop ^{DE} Zukunftswerkstatt zum Thema Big Data, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, https://www.bpb.de/lernen/digitale-bildung/medienpaedagogik/bigdata/253169/zukunftswerkstatt</p>	
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