



Welcome

Creating positive pathways for societal engagement

through scenarios, visualisation
and storytelling



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**We need to understand
our role in society**





Does this sound familiar?

„our university is very good in research but we don't know how to communicate research outcomes or profit from them“

„increasing social and environmental problems need to be addressed in a different way and we dont know how“

„we cannot talk with the scientist“ (rector, lectures, manager ...)

„we need to align our research with the current social needs“

„students and companies want more practical experiences and how to apply knowledge“

„we know what we want to do, but is is very difficult to implement the change“

The problem of facilitating change

New and faster societal challenges

New trends in higher education



Need of institutional change
Universities find it difficult to change
Change management is unknown
(on the making)

Complex process:
includes leadership,
management, strategy,
finances....

Faces skepticism, fear,
apathy,
misunderstanings...

Long term and slow
process

The future is not an extension of
present trends – it is full of

surprises

Meinert, 2014

Our belief in a possible solution

- Qualitative, explorative
 - Evidence-based
 - Design-oriented
 - Dealing with an unknown future:  
 - Participatory, bottom-up
 - It is a *process*  
- Shared and common vision
 - Possible, preferable, probable futures
 - Anticipation, alternatives
 - Strategic long-term planning?
- It creates alternatives, not a standalone solutions
 - It is always *in-the-making*
 - It is an effort to see and combine different perspectives

Common vision

Scenarios

Different combinations of multiple factors

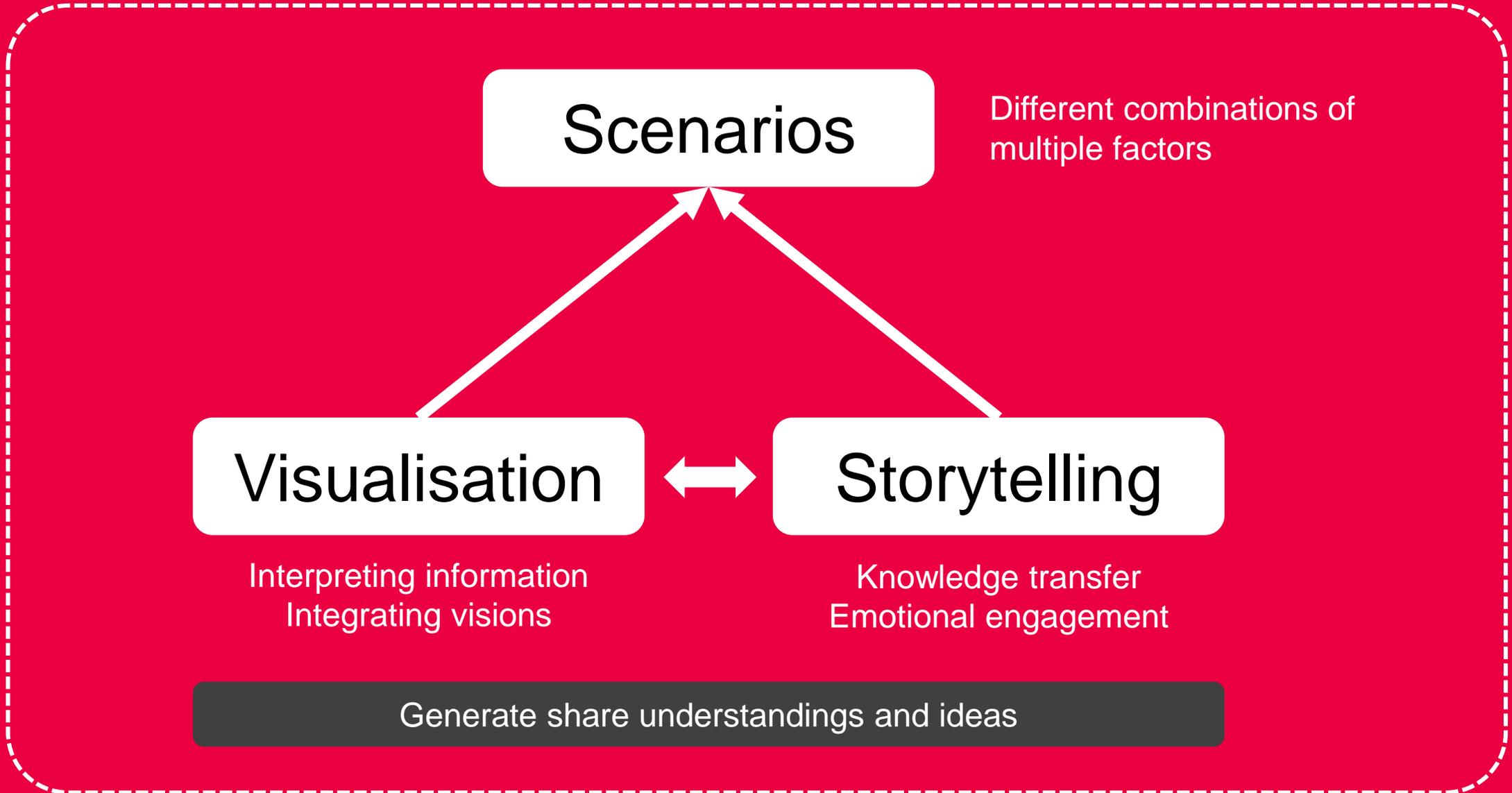
Visualisation

Interpreting information
Integrating visions

Storytelling

Knowledge transfer
Emotional engagement

Generate share understandings and ideas



Exploring two avenues of societal engagement of a university

Scenario technique, visualisation and storytelling

So, what are **scenarios?**

Let's take a look at some definitions

“a piece of writing that gives an outline of the story”

(Collins dictionary)

“an outline of the plot of the dramatic work, giving particulars of the scenes, characters, etc.”

(Websters dictionary)

“a description of possible actions or events in the future”

(Cambridge dictionary)

Therefore...

“scenarios are an organisational or institutional device for clarifying thinking about the future”

Coates, 2000

What are scenarios?

- descriptions of natural, constructed or imagined contexts
- scenario sketches future situations
- presentation of a possible future situation in narrative form
- do **not** set out to **predict** the future
- convey a new vision given a contextual change

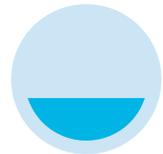
*“The great value of a scenario is being able to take **complex elements** and weave them **into a story** which is coherent, systematic, comprehensive, and plausible” Coates, 2000*

What are scenarios used for?

- Scenarios help stakeholders to:
 - Create a shared and mutual understanding of a common issue
 - Create a common and desired future
 - Describe possible uses of the envisioned future
 - Useful for participatory design/planning exercises
 - Deal with uncertainty: illustrate possible pathways into the future (Meinster 2014)
- Need to include person with emotion, action and needs, roles and context (Madsen, 2009)
- Respond to questions as „*what can happen?*“ or „*how can a specific target be reached?*“

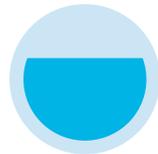
And what is **visualisation?**

the representation of a situation
or information as an image



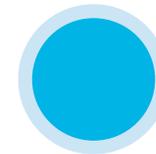
Analysis

Understanding
of information



“Building”

Integration of
perspectives



Communication

Presentation and
sharing of
scenarios

- Uses traditional artefacts such as sketches, drawings, pictures and models
- Visual tools create a dialogue to facilitate interpretation of criteria and factors around a problem/situation

And **storytelling?**

Storytelling

“Storytelling is the interactive art of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story.”

<https://storynet.org/>

Usage in organisations

An ongoing process of meaning and knowledge- construction among and between the members of an organisation to understand the past, share the present, and shape the future.

Organisations use the power of a story

From an **organisational statement...**

“FrieslandCampina Domo is one of the world leaders in the development and production of ingredients and complete formulas. High quality, reliability, safety and expertise are of the utmost importance when producing infant nutrition”

<https://www.frieslandcampina.com/en/brands/domo/>

... to a **story!**



Early Life Nutrition

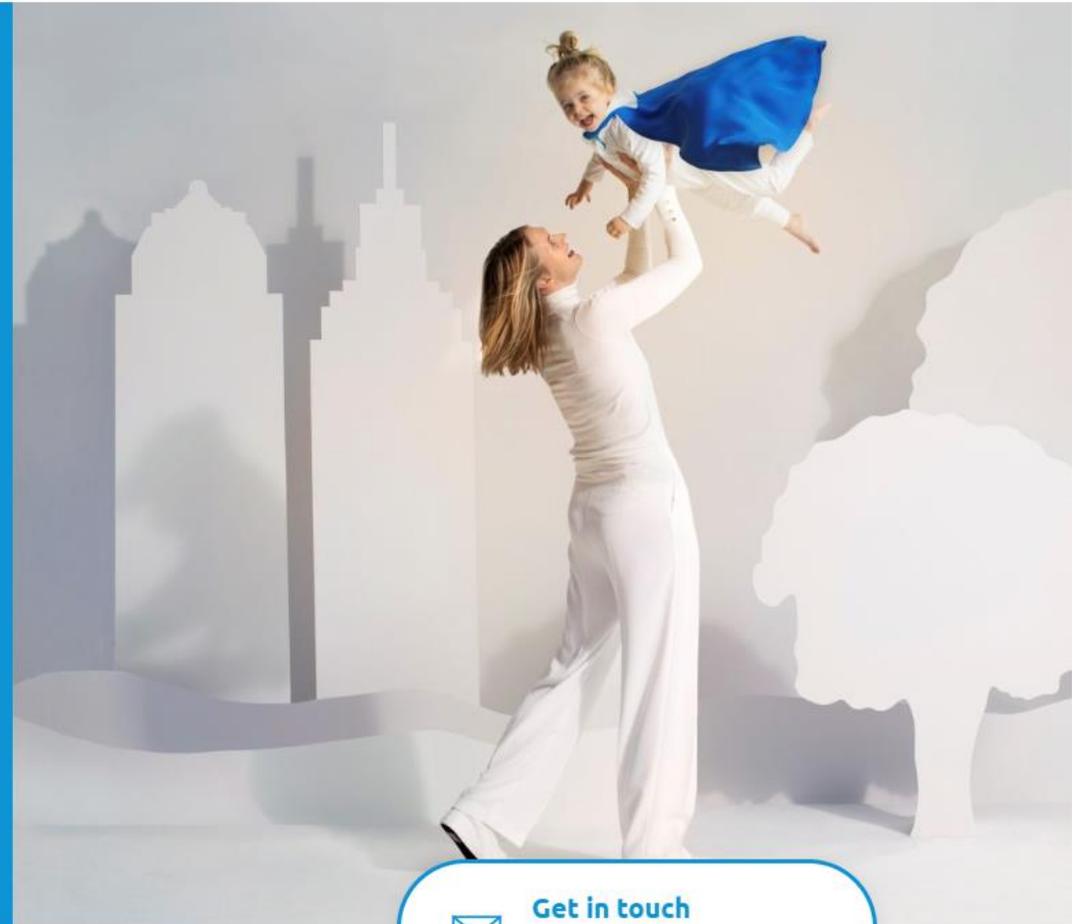


Early Life Nutrition

Bringing a child into this world, a precious journey that begins well before pregnancy and continues through early life. In all phases it is critical that optimum nutrition is available. That belief inspires us to provide nourishing ingredient solutions trusted globally, for every child.

[Our applications](#)

[Our ingredients](#)



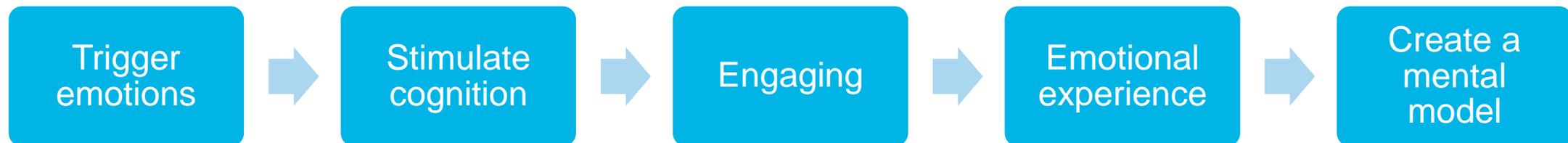
Get in touch

Contact our experts

Storytelling

“emotion is the fast line to the brain”

- Unify and transmit purpose and perspective
- Communicate events and states
- Reflect accepted behavior
- Help to build “worldviews”
- Create a long-lasting emotional bond
- Build identities within society or organisations



Stories are used to build trust ,
achieve shared understanding ,
simplify what is complex, and offer
examples and models.

DeLarge, 2004, p.77

„*Scenarios are stories*“

Parkinson 2011; Madsen 2009;

They help people to:

- construct meaning
- resolve problems
- encourage a sense of community
- Scenarios are not presented as forecasts but as possible futures with the aim of **stimulating awareness and thinking about the future.** Coates, 2000

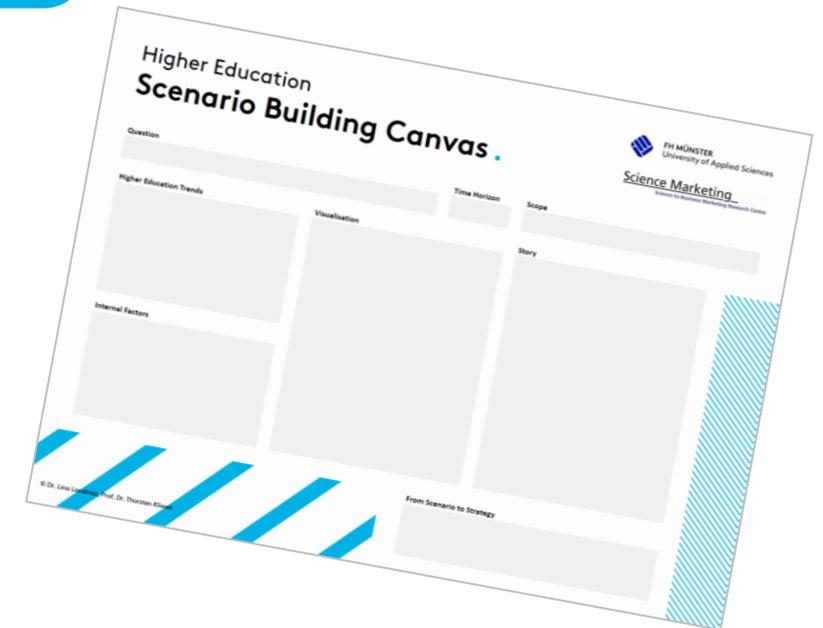
‘Scenarios are stories about the future, but their purpose is to make better decisions in the present.’

(In Meinert, 2014)

What are we **doing** today?

Scenario building for university engagement

- Form groups
- Select one university in each group as a case
- Select an scenario to work on
 - very positive development
 - very negative development



One way to do it is by doing it

How do you do scenarios?

„The rules, the hand holding, the guidance and the feedback are all important, but as important as all of that is having the knack for creating them” Coates, 2000

Defining the setting

Step 1



Step 1: Defining the setting

5 Minutes

Define your specific question

What will “social engagement” mean in our university?

How will societal engagement in our university look like?

What entails for us to be the engaged university of the future?

Define your specific time horizon

- far enough to leave room for change
- but not too far that it drifts into utopia (Meinert 2014)
- In relation to the topic and context
- 5, 10... years
- 2025, 2030, 2050...

Analysing information

Step 2



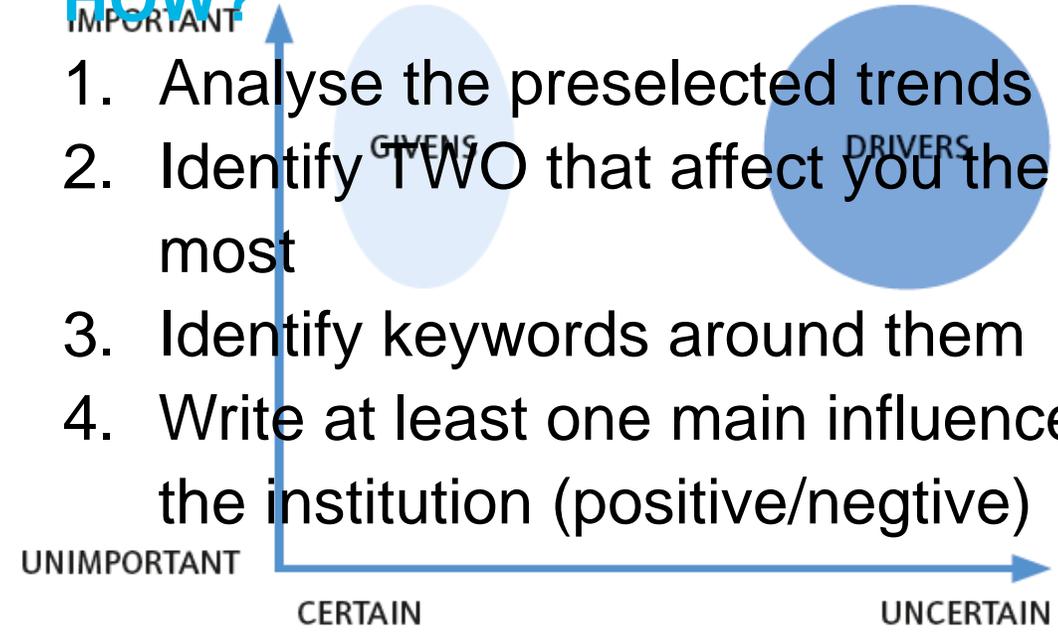
5 Minutes

Identify main external influencing factors

WHAT?

- Trends: Social changes, industry trends, institutional aspects
- Certainties: no or very small changes
- Uncertainties: factors that we know will change but do not know how

HOW?



- Online Education
- Digital transformation
- New skills required from industry
- Declining enrolment
- Decreasing public funding

5 Minutes

HOW?

1. Analyse the preselected trends
2. Identify TWO that affect you the most
3. Identify keywords around them
4. Write at least one main influence in the institution (positive/negative)

5 Minutes

Identify main **organisational** influencing factors

WHAT?

- Institutional commitment
- Staff profiles
- Culture
- Educating the wrong skills
- Research not aligned with needs
- Performance measurement

HOW?

1. Analyse 5 key standards from ACEEU
2. Identify TWO drivers that affect you the most
3. Identify keywords around them
4. Write at least one main influence in the institution



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ENGAGED UNIVERSITIES

Define the scenario

Step 3



Step 3: Define the scenario

Keeping in mind the identified drivers (trends and internal factors)

- **Discuss** how the future of your university is:

- How does the university look like?
- What is your role? Who is with you?
- Who would you like to support?
- Who is doing what?

- **Answer** the initial question (step 1)

- **Name** the desired future

Free education in my US university

„University of the free“

Visualise

Step 4



Step 4: Visualise (create an image of the situation)

- Put together the main ideas about the future in a visual form:
 - Visualise with a sketch (own drawings)
 - Represent selected drivers, main actors, main actions
- Discuss the details of the „picture(s)“ and agree on the desired situation
- Describe each drawing with some keywords

Write your story

Step 5



Stories evolve according to a **particular**
sequence of events related to people
and characters, which take place in
time and space.

Lugmayr (2017)

10 Minutes

Step 5: Write your story

Draft a story based on the visuals created: 3-5 sentences

- Select the type of story

Any literary format, e.g., a speech, a news article, a letter, a memo, a trip report, a transcript, and so on. Coates, 2000

- Describe the selected factors
- Describe actors and their relationships
- Describe what they do (actions and impacts)
- Include conflicts, limitations, solutions

From scenarios to strategy

Step 6



Let's share!

**Please present your scenario
in 3 minutes!**

Summary and key take aways

- There is a **growing need for fundamental organisational change** in higher education
- Scenarios can be a great „**device for clarifying thinking about the future**”
- Visualisation and storytelling help in the **analysis, building and communication of scenarios**

It is **not a panacea** for eliciting change in organisations. It can only be as good as the underlying idea being conveyed.

Denning (2007)



Thank you!



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