

# Growth Model

(placeholder text)

The GROWTH model leads teams through the 4Ws of Innovation and the Why, What, Who and hoW questions.

The purpose of this group coaching technique is to find a common ground for the participants to work on. We begin with defining a goal that emerged from a [visioning](#) session, then explore the reality or feasibility of the visions in order to brainstorm a series of options and look at their benefits and drawbacks.

Process GOAL – Transformative

- What do you want to achieve?
- Why is that important?
- What will achieving this goal get you?
- What will it look like if you don't achieve it?
- What can we agree on as goals for our project?

The result of the session is a list of goals that the group agrees are worth pursuing.

REALITY – Objective

- What do you know about the project?
- What are the key features of the project?
- What do you need?
- How can you get it?

The result of this session is a list of features, needs and ways to meet the needs.

OPTIONS – Creative

- How can you achieve the goal?
- How else might you do it?
- What else might you do?
- What else?

- In what other ways could you approach this?

The result of this session is a series of options (solutions, processes, ideas...) that would achieve the goals.

#### OPTIONS - Positive

You have generated a set of options. Looking back at these options,

- What are the benefits?
- What is the value?
- What makes it attractive?
- How can we build on it?

The result of this session is a list of benefits for all options generated in the previous session.

#### OPTIONS - Critical

This session builds on the previous two, but focuses on honestly and constructively criticising the generated ideas. Looking back at the options,

- What are the problems?
- What are the difficulties?
- What are the risks?

After coming up with a set of options and examining their risks and benefits, it's time to examine them through the filter of the participants' 'gut' instinct, then look at how the individual instincts can be brought together and agreed upon by the group.

#### WILL - Intuitive

- What does your instinct/gut feeling say?
- How do you feel about the options?

#### TIME - Organised

- Which option(s) would you like to you pursue together?
- What exactly will you do?
- When will you do it?

- What is the first step you can take?

#### HEALTH - Energised

- How committed are you?
- Is all your energy behind it?
- Is your plan in-line with our goals?

# References

- [GROWTH](#) cards
- Based on the [GROW model](#) from coaching

# Methods

What is the difference between a technique and a method? In this section we use the term 'method' to describe a specific flow or path that combines several techniques. We include a few established futuring methods, complete 'recipes' which include easy to follow step-by-step instructions. These provide a good place for the novice to start, as he or she can become comfortable with the different facets of the practice. More experienced practitioners are encouraged to extract general principles or incorporate aspects of these methods into an existing practice. In addition to conventional futures techniques, we also include experimental and contextual methods from hosting and experiential futures.

- [The classic 2x2 \(Shell/GBN Method\)](#)
- [Causal layered analysis \(CLA\)](#)
- Four generic futures
- [Prehearsals and pre-enactments](#)
- [The future mundane](#)
- Combinatorial futures
- Future search
- Futures workshop
- Non-predictive strategies
- Steady state and non-extrapolatory futures
- OODA (observe, orient, decide, act)
- [Appreciative inquiry](#)
- U-process
- AoH 8 breaths
- Chaordic strategy
- ...

## Prehearsals / Pre-enactments

Prehearsals or pre-enactments are direct experiences where future scenarios, alternative pasts or presents can be explored in an immersive situation. They are meant as prototype experiences or rehearsals for situations that haven't happened (yet). A pre-enactment is an up-close-and-personal, embodied form of futuring, as it reveals habitual behaviours, surprising intuitions and unconscious collective patterns, which are likely to be overlooked or ignored in predominantly cerebral futuring methods. Prehearsals build on LARPS (live action role playing games), improvisation, experience design, (insight) meditation and disaster drills and could be used in a range of group sizes (from individuals to whole countries). As described below, prehearsals were first developed at FoAM in Brussels in 2008, but there have been similar approaches used in the Manoa School and other futures establishments (see Stuart Candy's [The Futures of Everyday Life](#)).

At FoAM, designing a pre-enactment begins with creating a range of scenarios, each of which we translate into a short backstory. We usually include one or more images to capture their atmospheres. From the back-stories we design a prehearsal script that includes instructions, questions, rules and guidelines for the participants, as well as describing the physical setting. Sometimes we include props or prototypes of technologies and media that can encourage deeper immersion. If the duration and setting of a prehearsal are long and complex, a preparatory phase with the participants is conducted online and in a briefing beforehand. However, a short pre-enactment (e.g. half an hour to an hour) can be improvised on the spot during a futuring workshop with minimal setup as well.

Once a prehearsal starts, the most important rule is 'don't break the universe', i.e. the participants are encouraged to stay in their role, and to keep all comments and reflections for a debrief session. The stronger the immersion, the more valuable the experience. It is important to note that in contrast to a LARP, participants play themselves rather than take on the role of a (fictional) character. They observe what happens when they place themselves in an unfamiliar (and sometimes uncomfortable) scenario. The purpose is to observe and train situated introspection and adaptation skills, as well as scrutinise assumptions and behaviours. The facilitator can function either as an 'external game master' or (if the group is small enough) participate in the pre-enactment in character.

After a pre-enactment, a debrief and reflection phase is needed, in order to decompress and to translate the insights into applied learning. A group session and/or individual interviews can be conducted and the findings shared with the whole group. If a series of scenarios is being prehearsed, a reflective session at the end should collect findings from all prehearsals and transform the learning into practical applications in the present.

Creating a pre-enactment can take weeks or months, but can be as short as a few hours or a day. Regardless of the complexity, each prehearsal follows similar steps (those in italics are optional):

1. (Create Scenarios)
2. (Visualise scenarios)
3. Design a prehearsal question
4. Create a backstory (for the prehearsal and for each individual participant)
5. Decide on the date, duration and place for the prehearsal
6. Create the framework (the atmosphere, physical aspects, inhabitants, events)
7. Assemble a production and support crew
8. Write a short framing 'script' which includes the purpose, backstory, instructions and rules
9. Create the setting (props, media, prototypes, interior and exterior design...)
10. Brief the participants by email and in person
11. Hold the prehearsal, operating as coordinator or game master
12. Invite participants to write up individual reflections
13. Decompress and share stories
14. Hold a collective debriefing and evaluation session
15. (Define practical implementations and indicators)
16. (Invite individuals and the group to write pledges of what 'will be')
17. Celebrate!

## Process

Step 1: Create scenarios The prehearsal design usually starts with scenario building. You can use one of the scenario building methods in the Fieldguide (e.g. the [GBN Approach](#)) to create one or more scenarios that provide an alternative to the current situation. They can be possible futures or alternative pasts or presents, as long as they are described as dynamic worlds based on existing circumstances. A very speculative far future scenario might not provide most interesting results, while everyday or mundane near-future scenarios can offer valuable insights.

You can also opt for using more informal story-creation techniques, or even omit step 1 and 2 and start directly with step 3 by designing a prehearsal question.

**Step 2: Visualise scenarios** Invite participants to select and collect images to visualise the scenarios. You can use a single image, a moodboard, or a collage. One image can get the atmosphere across, while a moodboard or collage is a visual story, where the relationships between different elements of your scenario can be visualised. We found [Pinterest](#) a good tool to co-create moodboards for groups who aren't in the same physical space.

**Step 3: Prehearsal question** Identify the focal issue or central question of the prehearsal. Formulate what you want to examine in the prehearsal as a question.

If you have followed the first step, the question might be the same as the question you used as a starting point for scenario building, with a few more details from the scenario itself. For example, if the scenario question was 'How will we draw in the future?' your prehearsal question might be, 'How will we draw in a future where wood is expensive and computers are wearable?' (where expensive wood and wearable computers are key features in the scenario).

**Step 4: Backstory** Create a short backstory. The backstory describes the history of the macro and micro environments that underlie the situation you'd like to pre-enact. It contextualises the specific prehearsal instance and functions as a scaffolding for its design.

A backstory can be an element of the scenario you developed in step 1, or you can develop it in response to the prehearsal question. Whichever situation you choose, it should be familiar enough to the participants (e.g. a party, a conference, a Monday morning at work, a farmers' market...), yet it should include elements from the alternative world you want to pre-enact.

You can co-create a skeleton of the story with the group, then one person can write it out, with others suggesting comments and edits. Include one or more images in the backstory.

It might help to use a diary/guided journaling technique to develop the backstory for each individual. Questions can include: How did you get to where you are in this world from where you are today? What would have to happen in your life and in the world to find yourself in this scenario? What aspects of your character would come to the fore? What knowledge, skills or talents could be more useful than others? The individual backstories help the participants develop their roles and characters for the prehearsal.

**Step 5: Time and Space** Define date, duration and place for the prehearsal.

Based on your prehearsal question and backstory, discuss how long you would need to prehearse to find satisfying answers. Sometimes an hour is enough, other times no less than a day or a week would be adequate. Assist participants in defining the duration. If the duration is short and doesn't require a complex setting, the preparation time can be a day or two. For longer and more complex prehearsals, leave at least two weeks

between this step and the event to allow participants to prepare. It is recommended to plan a briefing at least one day beforehand and a debrief one day afterwards. Agree on date(s) for the prehearsal. Specify the exact day and hour when the prehearsal will start and end.

Discuss and decide where the prehearsal will take place. Agree whether the prehearsal should be private or public. If it is public it will necessarily involve people who are not prehearsing. Think about how this will effect the scenario and the participants.

**Step 6: Create the framework** Translate your prehearsal question and backstory into the framework of the prehearsal. Discuss and design the following:

- What is the look and feel of this world? Design the atmosphere (interior/exterior design that brings out the 'flavour' of the backstory), and create a moodboard to describe it.
- What can you find in this world? Design the physical aspects as the infrastructure, objects, materials, tools, food, clothing...). Make a list of things that need to be made and/or alluded to.
- Who are the inhabitants? Include the participants, roles, non-player characters... Think about who to involve, how many people, possibly specify appropriate roles (e.g. jobs, tasks, groups, political parties...), and decide whether there are any inhabitants who won't be physically present but leave their traces in the space. Make a list of inhabitants, roles and any other character-related aspects of the prehearsal.
- What's happening? Describe the events and activities that might be happening at the prehearsal, e.g. what will people do, are there unexpected events, joint rituals, etc. Make a list of requirements the activities and events might need (materials, people, other resources).

**Step 7: Production Crew** Define the support roles in-game and behind the scenes, such as a 'game master', professional actors/improvisers to keep the storyline/universe alive, a real-time documentation crew, tech-support behind the scenes. Make a crew list and find people to fill them. Together with them make a tech-rider, a running sheet and emergency protocol.

For shorter and simpler prehearsals the production crew might be the facilitator(s) themselves, with assistance of the participants.

**Step 8: Framing** In a few clear sentences, describe:

- the backstory in a nutshell (i.e. a description of the prehearsal situation)
- what you want to prehearse (i.e. your central question)



- what are the roles and essential activities people can perform
- what are the basic rules of conduct in the prehearsal

Send this framing to the participants and add something like the following instructions:

‘During the prehearsal please remain yourself, but try out a specific role/attitude that you think you might assume in this scenario. Please stay “in character” for the duration of the prehearsal: pay attention to how you act, live and work in a situation you’re prehearsing. Be aware of your thoughts, words and actions. Note what aspects of being in this scenario work for you and which ones don’t. Watch how you react to different people, tools, events and how they react to you. Please don’t pretend you are fictional character. Instead think carefully about who you are and how you can best engage in the given scenario. This might accentuate a different part of your personality to what you’re used to. Observe the changes and interact accordingly.’

**Step 9: The setting** Decide on the minimum number of props (such as tools, furniture, costumes) that could be used to give a sense of being immersed in the backstory. Design and create the props: repurpose existing materials, borrow stuff and mock-up prototypes – there’s no need to make big investments (unless your scenario demands it and you have the budget). Use a minimum amount of materials and effort for maximum effect.

Depending on the needs of your scenario and the time available, make small [experience prototypes](#). For example, if it is crucial to have a new technology developed for your world to work, think about how you could sketch or prototype or just allude to the way this technology could be used, what it would look like, etc. Find the simplest possible way to prototype or visualise this technology and its use. There are quite a few techniques you could use in this step to help – from design thinking, rapid prototyping, HCI, user-centred design, or improv theatre... See [design techniques](#) including [physical narrative](#) )))

Prepare the space if possible a day in advance. Arrange the props, furniture and anything else you think people might need for the situation to feel realistic. Leave ‘breadcrumbs’ for people to follow into the story, such as seemingly forgotten pieces of paper, letters, messages or graffiti that can remind people of key features of the backstory. If you can try prehearsing with a few people to see how the setting works and if any changes are needed.

**Step 10: Briefing** Describe in simple instructions what the participants should do before, during and after the prehearsal. This should include anything that people might need to bring. Stress that it is crucial that during the prehearsal people remain themselves, but adapted to different circumstances (rather than playing a fictional role). Send a ‘how to prepare’ email a few days before the prehearsal.

For long prehearsals hold a preparatory briefing at least one day in advance; for short ones this can be done just before the prehearsal starts. During the briefing, go through

everything you think the participants need to know – the purpose of the prehearsal, the backstory, the rules and guidelines, what is expected of them, what to do in emergencies, etc. It can be useful to conduct short [improv exercises](#) in order for the participants to get comfortable with imagining, improvising and reflecting ad hoc. Allow plenty of time for discussion and be prepared to make last-minute changes. Agree what will happen after the pre-enactment is finished. Remind the participants that there will be a formal debrief session one or more days after the pre-enactment is over. At the end of the briefing say that the next time you'll see each other it will be in another world and another time. Possibly conduct a small ritual or celebration to begin easing the group into the prehearsal atmosphere.

**Step 11: Prehearsal** If there are people who perform the support roles but do not prehearse, make sure that they arrive at least an hour beforehand and are appropriately briefed to avoid 'breaking the universe'. Let the support team assume their roles and positions before the pre-enactors arrive.

Once the participants arrive, they should immediately enter into the pre-enacted world, there should be no out-of-character conversations. Whatever they encounter should be consistent with the backstory. It is useful to have a role of a in-world host, who can welcome and guide the pre-enactors, easing them into the somewhat uncomfortable role of playing themselves in a strange situation.

Your (facilitator's) role is to pay attention to the overall state of the prehearsal, pre-enactors' emotional states, engagement and motivation, responding to the need for additional scenario elements or guiding questions, as well as mediating disputes, clarifying confusions, swiftly reacting to things going off the rails, etc. You might also be in charge of 'non-player-characters' that can make the story more believable. In some cases you might need to document the prehearsal, which you can do yourself or delegate to a dedicated documentation person/team.

If the backstory has a role for a futurist or facilitator, you can keep your role as in the rest of the process, but this time from within the prehearsal. In this case prepare yourself in the same way you have instructed the participants. If your role is to be an impartial 'game master', you stand with one leg in the prehearsal and with the other in your process facilitator's and mediator's shoes. Pay attention not to break the universe yourself.

In large and long prehearsals it is helpful to involve experienced improvisers and/or LARPers, to help keep the story alive and the universe whole.

At the end of the prehearsal, have a clear 'end' signal, if possible as part of the story.

**Step 12: Individual Reflection** Write your individual reflection.

After the prehearsal instruct the participants to 'take some time to be alone – go for a walk, meditate, have a nap or a drink – do something to let go of your prehearsal character. Before speaking to other participants jot down a few personal reflections:

- what are your initial thoughts and reactions?

- do you have any answers to the core question?
- what worked and what didn't work for you in the prehearsal?
- do you have any reflections/additions on the backstory you rehearsed?
- etc.'

Step 13: Decompress Invite the participants to celebrate and share their stories. Sometime after they have a chance to decompress and write their individual reflections, welcome the participants to an informal setting for a drink and a chat. Make a toast, or simply cheer to the prehearsal and everyone involved.

Step 14: Collective debriefing A day or two after the prehearsal hold a collective debriefing session, where the participants can share their experiences and reflect on the scenario. You can use the questions from Step 12, or an evaluation framework like [adaptive action](#). Make sure to allow everyone to be heard. You can use a hosting technique such as the [listening circle](#). End with a discussion on how you could integrate the prehearsal findings into your current situation.

Write clear minutes and share them with everyone.

Step 15: Signals and steps Define practical implementations and scenario indicators.

If you were rehearsing multiple scenarios that began with the same core question, a final debrief is needed to integrate insights from all prehearsals. In this session, discuss what the implications are for the current situation and the plans for the future. Note specifically if there are steps that could be put into practice in real life.

Agree on any indicators (patterns, weak signals, trends...) that you should be watching for that show you're heading towards one or another situation.

Instruct the participants to keep the learning alive: 'When you go back to your daily life, periodically remind yourself of the key question and the various forces acting on your situation. Watch for early indicators of possible futures and adjust your actions accordingly. Remember what you felt like during the prehearsal – what you did as an individual and as a collective, and what impact that had on the simulated situation. If all goes well, this should happen intuitively – just see what emerges and use it to help you make decisions in complex and unpredictable situations.'

Step 16: Pledge Create pledge sheets for the individuals and group(s), and invite the participants to complete sentences like 'I will...' and 'We will...'. The pledge sheets move the conversation from 'what could be' to 'what will be' and create a sense of ownership and responsibility.

Discuss with the group how they will follow up on the pledges, what will happen if they don't get fulfilled, and how they will be translated and co-ordinated in collective actions.

Step 17: Celebrate An intense participatory process such as a prehearsal is best closed with a celebration or a ritual: good food, drinks, informal conversation, music, dancing, meditation, walks in the forest or on the beach, whatever the group needs. This step is meant to encapsulate the energy generated in the process and acknowledge the participants' individual and collective contributions. For you it's time to let go of your facilitator's hat, kick off your shoes and enjoy the company!

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- A longer text with FoAM's thinking behind prehearsals can be found in [Prehears-ing the Future](#)
  - Stuart Candy's [The Futures of Everyday Life](#)
  - Improv games: <http://improvcyclopedia.org/>

# Six Memos

In Six Memos for the Next Millennium Italo Calvino proposes six principles for writers of the 21st century. Although Calvino focused on writing, the memos can be applicable to any creative endeavour, including futuring. The six memos include:

- Lightness · Lighten, remove weight, enliven
- Quickness · Find the right pace and the right path no matter how convoluted
- Exactitude · Be clear, prepared, incisive, memorable, as precise as possible
- Visibility · Bring visions into focus, stimulate imagination
- Multiplicity · Weave together the various branches of knowledge, use rules as boundaries
- Consistency · (Unfortunately, Calvino died before writing this memo. As with many of his works, he leaves space for his readers to fill in the blanks...)

At FoAM we use the Six Memos as guiding principles, inspirations or tests through which we can scrutinise our creative process. We strive for Lightness as a counterbalance to the weight of life and work, attempting to distil the light essence that isn't burdened by unnecessary details and formalities. Quickness we interpret as finding the right speed that creation needs, from swift responses to slow pondering, taking as much time as necessary. We understand Exactitude as a need for clarity and meticulous preparation, especially when designing participatory experiences; the more exactitude is present in the preparatory stages, the more effortless and spontaneous the process. Visibility encourages us to find words, materials and media that can spark imagination and create rich mental and visceral images; it's about a transmutation from experience to vision and back again. Multiplicity relates to making connections between everything and everything else; it intertwines different branches of knowledge into a meaningful whole, yet it is also about rules which function as boundaries preventing us from getting lost in the vastness of possibility. The last memo, Consistency, remains ambiguous as it was never completed. We interpret it as a consistency of process, a determination to leave the creative work open, inviting additions, interpretations and improvements:

A work that would let us escape the limited perspective of the individual ego, not only to enter into selves like our own but to give speech to that which has no language, to the bird perching on the edge of the gutter, to the tree in spring and the tree in fall, to stone, to cement, to plastic...

—Italo Calvino

# A Six Memos Mindset

## Lightness

...My working method has more often than not involved the subtraction of weight. I have tried to remove weight, sometimes from people, sometimes from heavenly bodies, sometimes from cities; above all I have tried to remove weight from the structure of stories and from language.

—Italo Calvino

- Study formal methods, then distil their essence in an attempt to make them as light as possible
- Create informal, playful atmospheres
- Design futuring processes so light that you could conduct them in a bar, or over a coffee.
- Laugh and encourage others to laugh
- Lift the weight off the past and present by seeing them through the lens of possible futures
- Rational thinking is only one of many approaches: acknowledge and encourage alternate states of consciousness
- Allow the breeze of possibility to blow through a stale situation

Any useful idea about the future should appear to be ridiculous.

—Jim Dator

## Quickness

Festina lente...

Quickness of style and thought means above all agility, mobility, and ease, all qualities that go with writing where it is natural to digress, to jump from one subject to another, to lose the thread a hundred times and find it again after a hundred more twists and turns.

—Italo Calvino

- Practice manipulating time: wrangle and wrestle it, delay it, cycle it or render it motionless

- Direct the pace and the flow of the process towards the 'long now'
- Create quick mental images, with sufficient detail to be evocative of a whole world
- Be alert and capture mental images of the participants to fold them swiftly into the narrative
- Take as much time as needed to make sure that what you say is the only thing that needs to be said...

### Exactitude

To my mind exactitude means three things above all:

- (1) a well-defined and well-calculated plan for the work in question;
- (2) an evocation of clear, incisive, memorable visual images;
- (3) a language as precise as possible both in choice of words and in expression of the subtleties of thought and imagination.

–Italo Calvino

- In order to make the process feel effortless, subject your design to careful planning and testing. Fine-tune the flow and each component of the process iteratively. When the process begins, hold the plans loosely and be responsive to the situation at hand.
- Harvest and summarise conversations: find patterns in the chaos of words and concepts floating through in a participatory process.
- Craft every word you record carefully. Make sure everyone agrees on its meaning and intent.
- Edit your process and images of the future for clarity. This will minimise confusion and intensify the experience. Gradually reduce tangential elements and discussions. There has to be just enough context and shared experience to bring out the most memorable stories.

### Visibility

If I have included visibility in my list of values to be saved, it is to give warning of the danger we run in losing a basic human faculty: the power of bringing visions into focus with our eyes shut, of bringing forth forms and colours from the lines of black letters on a white page, and in fact of thinking in terms of images.

–Italo Calvino

- Use well crafted media (words, images, sounds, tastes, scents...) to evoke a world, so it can appear as if looking at it directly, as if a possible future were unfolding in front of you right now.
- Find a single image that alludes to the general atmosphere of a future, then gradually associate it with other images and words. Create a field of analogies, synchronicities and confrontations, that over time allows you to organise the material into a coherent story.
- Make the process open and visible. Let others learn from, scrutinise or build on your ideas.

### Multiplicity

Literature remains alive only if we set ourselves immeasurable goals, far beyond all hope of achievement... The grand challenge for literature is to be capable of weaving together the various branches of knowledge, the various "codes" into a manifold and multifaceted vision of the world.

–Italo Calvino

- Train to be a generalist, with wide in-breadth interests
- Use and modify transdisciplinary methods
- Use rules in your creative process as boundaries to work within, a set space to explore. Be prepared to change and work between them.
- Never assume anything is singular.
- Find meaningful connections between everything that's at stake.
- Keep multiple futures open for as long as possible.

### Consistency

The title Consistency appears at the bottom of the list of Six Memos. His wife Esther notes that Italo planned to write it when he arrived in Cambridge to give the lectures. Since many of Calvino's tales seem to leave something for the reader to finish, perhaps this book provides an example of his consistency in process, an unwritten but hinted at sixth memo for the new millennium for us as his readers to flesh out for ourselves after reading the first five memos.

–Bobby Matherne



- Provide a framework, but allow the participants create the 'world'
  - Create situations that continue for some time after the formal process is finished, thereby subtly transforming their present.
  - Free foresight from the bounds of the utilitarian, functional, goal oriented projects
  - Take futures in more speculative and whimsical directions
  - Create simple daily rituals that allow their practitioners to create alternative presents and imagine how things could be otherwise.
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Full text of the Six Memos for the Next Millennium: [http://www.stanford.edu/~protass/files/Calvino\\_Six%20Memos%20Of](http://www.stanford.edu/~protass/files/Calvino_Six%20Memos%20Of)