



THINK Like A Futurist

## **Program Overview and Summary**

The Foresight Academy is a groundbreaking online program that teaches leaders, teams, and individuals the same skills that innovators, industry disruptors, and change makers, have used to guide and shape the future they wanted to see. This program contains twelve weeks of material divided into four modules that teach you the key concepts and skills required to:

- Identify and act on emerging trends, issues, and events that are relevant to your long-term success.
- Uncover the impacts and implications that these trends, issues, and events may have on the future growth and value of your organization.
- Create an ongoing process for monitoring the development of those emerging trends and issues.
- Develop powerful narratives that inspire others to take action.
- Determine the strength and viability of your existing and proposed strategies in multiple future scenarios.
- Create a culture that thrives on communicating their ideas and collaborating to make those ideas a reality.

Each module consists of two to five videos around Jared's, *Four C's For Creating The Future - Conscious. Curious. Creative. Collaborative.* All course materials, downloads, and instruction is provided in a members only website. You'll be able to follow along and learn at your own pace after each module is released. Each lesson is delivered in video format with a downloadable mp3, which means you can watch at your leisure or listen on the go. Once you have completed this program, you will receive an official Certificate In Strategic Foresight, from Graduate and Executive Education, Haslam College of Business, at the University of Tennessee.

## **Module 1: Conscious**

What does it mean to be “conscious?” Simply stated, it’s being aware of your environment and your relationship with it. In a world of constant distraction, this function of our minds has greatly suffered, preventing us from knowing where and how to focus our attention. Today, we have a much greater breadth of information with a much poorer understanding of what it all means in the bigger scheme of things. But being conscious doesn’t just mean you are aware of the issues that need your attention, it also means you are able to think about these issues with greater depth and clarity.

Being conscious means you are aware of the predictions, forecasts, and narratives about our future as well as their limitations. You seek out information from a variety of sources and can recognize the biases and assumptions of each. Being conscious means you recognize the problems with our current perspective and embrace the potential of the unknown. Being conscious opens your eyes to the full array of possible futures both for your personal life and for our world.

In this module, you will learn what foresight practitioners have known for decades when it comes to influencing and shaping our world. However, we will go beyond that and explore what it means to be a futurist today and going forward. You will begin to transform the way you think about the future by challenging the dominant narratives about how it will unfold. Just as there are competing narratives for how we interpret the past, there are also competing narratives for how we think about the future. In this module you will learn how to identify these narratives and the impact they have on your beliefs about the future and the power you possess to shape it. You will also learn strategies for evaluating predictions and navigating the information-heavy environment. I will teach you tips for being more intentional about uncovering the information that might actually have the greatest impact on your future. Finally, you will take the principles of being conscious and apply them to your personal journey, identifying the narratives you live by, and the unconscious limitations they have imposed on your life.

## **Week 1**

### **Video 1: A New Kind of Futurist - Foresight Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow.**

This video is all about the origins of foresight and how it has been used since WWII. In this video Jared will share how this new way of thinking has been the driving force behind the rapid growth in commercial and warfare technology, globalization, resource allocation, and monetary policy. Jared will talk about how foresight has been used up through the present day to spur innovation. Most importantly, Jared will identify the characteristics of a new kind of futurist that is emerging, those who have embraced the full potential of foresight in today's world across a broad spectrum of society and have already begun shaping our future.

### **Video 2: The Power of Narrative**

This video is all about the power of narrative and how the most effective storytellers shaped the world throughout history and how they are shaping the future through the stories they are telling today. In this video, Jared will share historical examples and the methodology used to achieve specific outcomes on a wide scale and how you can identify these same patterns today. This video will teach you the power of challenging the dominant narrative, even when that narrative is your own.

## **Week 2**

### **Video 3: The Problem with Predictions**

In this video Jared discusses forecasting and how to avoid the problems and pitfalls that so many fall into when evaluating, planning, and executing their strategy based on information and predictions being made about the future. Jared shows you how to quickly assess the underlying intent of forecasts and predictions so you can extract the most relevant and valuable information.

### **Video 4: From Overwhelm To Insight**

In this video Jared dives into the problem we all face with information overload. In this video Jared shows how overload leads to overwhelm and shares his process and strategies for turning that overwhelm into a productive and insightful process for creating your future. Jared also teaches you how to determine the value and quality of information quickly so you can confidently make important decisions.

## **Week 3**

## **Video 5: Being Present for Your Future**

This process is not complete until we allow it to get personal. This video is about taking all we've learned and focused on outside ourselves and turning it inward. In this video Jared shares his personal story of transformation and the freeing power that comes when we shed old ways of thinking and reframe what we believe is possible for the future as a whole.

## **Module 2: Curious**

What does it mean to be "curious?" Being curious means that we think creatively and curiously about the future, eager to discover the many possibilities it holds. It involves learning how to ask meaningful and illuminating questions about the implications of new issues, trends, or potential events so we can better understand the different ways the future may unfold.

Unfortunately, many futurists, academics, scientists, and experts get too focused on making predictions and neglect to explore the full spectrum of possibilities. Just focusing on predictions creates tunnel vision into the future, allowing us only to see what we consider most probable. This approach assumes the future is a set destination and your job when it comes to thinking about the future is to simply prepare for the inevitable. This can give you a false sense of security when it comes to planning for the future and it robs you of the opportunity to use your creative power to imagine something better. Predictions, anticipation, and preparation are all valuable tools, but a new futurist uses these resources as a jumping off point for exploring what else might be possible. A new futurist realizes his or her full power is not merely in anticipating the future, but in imagining and creating it.

In this module, I will teach you a method for creating multiple future frameworks. This involves looking at an emerging trend, issue, or potential event and asking specific questions about how it might impact various facets of society. These exercises not only give you concrete examples about how the future might unfold, but it's also a mind-expanding, eye-opening experience. I can promise you this, once you see all the possibilities that the future holds, you can't unsee them. Once you learn to utilize the resources that are right at your fingertips to discover, create, and connect, you start to realize the real potential that each of us holds to impact the future.

## **Week 4**

### **Video 1: Driving Forces And Why The Future Is NOT Set In Stone**

In this video Jared discusses the major driving forces and emerging trends in technology, science, the environment, geopolitics, and society. Jared also teaches you how to see the future as a spectrum of possibilities rather than a predetermined inevitability. You will also learn how different visions of the future have formed around these driving forces, their effect on individuals, and why the experts can't seem to agree on what the future will look like.

### **Video 2: From Reactive to Proactive - How to Identify Early Signs of Change**

In this video Jared teaches you how to identify early signs of change by scanning the horizon and the environment. You will learn how to maximize your search for relevant information, discovering exciting new possibilities. This video provides you with a method for categorizing and assessing the information you uncover.

## **Week 5**

### **Video 3: Exploring the Future, Part 1**

In this video Jared teaches you how to see the full impact of a trend, issue, or event by looking beyond the industry or sector in which it's rooted. New trends or technologies usually have implications for multiple facets of society that often aren't immediately apparent. The future doesn't happen in a vacuum, so we always have to consider the broader context. Jared will teach you how to create future context for exploring the full range of potential outcomes a new technology or trend may have on all aspects of future society. As with many new technologies, the greatest potential is often hidden.

### **Video 4: Exploring the Future, Part 2**

In this video Jared will demonstrate the process for creating future context outlined in the previous video. In this video, Jared takes a deep dive into a specific topic by looking at historical events, behavioral patterns, religious beliefs and cultural nuances in order to gain the greatest insight into how disruptive trends, events, or shifts will impact us.

## **Week 6**

### **Video 5: How To Turn Uncertainty Into Your Greatest Opportunity (Impact & Uncertainty)**

This video is all about clarity. Having uncovered a broad spectrum of implications, this video teaches you how to your narrow focus by identifying the issues that have the greatest potential to disrupt your future. You will learn why those areas that are high impact (both good and bad) with a high degree of uncertainty are where you need to be focusing. This will create the groundwork for the scenarios you'll be developing in the next part of the course.

## **Module 3: Creative**

What does it mean to be "creative?" This module takes you through the entire creative process of practicing foresight by applying your insights and imagination to the future of your organization. You begin by using your imagination (and the information you've uncovered) to create powerful and compelling future scenarios. Each future narrative you create reveals potential obstacles and opportunities that can be avoided or capitalized on. When one of your strategies is revealed as weak across multiple scenarios, that is a good indicator that this strategy needs to change. If a potential strategic initiative shows strength across a variety of scenarios, then you know it is a place to focus your creative energy. Once you put your current strategic initiatives through this process, they will come out the other side stronger and much more robust in the face of change. You will uncover previously unrealized potential and identify the weaknesses that will threaten your strategic mission going forward. In the end, you will use your new insights to create a powerful and compelling vision of the future that will take your organization to the next level.

### **Week 7**

#### **Video 1: Creating Future Contexts: How To Build Your Scenarios**

Like a house, scenarios need a blueprint before they can be built. In this video Jared teaches you his 5 Step Process for Scenario Building that will ensure your scenarios are both believable and powerful. Using what you discovered in the previous video's training, Jared will walk you through exactly how to frame your scenarios and the critical pitfalls and obstacles to avoid along the way. An effective scenario balances plausibility with creativity. Jared will teach you how to turn your scenario frameworks into powerful stories that capture the readers attention and sparks their imagination.

### **Week 8**

## **Video 2: How Future Fit Are You Today?: Strengthening Strategic Priorities**

Bringing the focus back to the present day, this two part training teaches you how to evaluate the compatibility of your current strategic priorities and initiatives in each alternative scenario. But, before we do that, Jared will show you how to get clear on what your ACTUAL priorities are by evaluating where you spend the majority of your time, energy, and money, in four distinct areas. The goal is to identify where your priorities and future aspirations don't line up.

## **Video 3: Strengthening Your Strategic Priorities: Part 2**

In this video, Jared walks you through the strategy matrix and shows you how to assess the strength of your present day initiatives around capital and resource investment, talent and workforce development, product and service R&D, and company culture and values. Jared will teach you how to develop scenario specific strategies and an early warning system for signs that a particular future is starting to unfold.

## **Week 9**

### **Video 4: Identifying Obstacles and Opportunities**

This video is all about finding the greatest potential obstacles and opportunities for you and/or your organization in each future scenario. In this video Jared will teach you how to find those new areas for growth that will enable you to drive innovation in your industry, create new market space, and ensure your long-term strength and relevance as a leader and/or organization. Having uncovered those areas, Jared will teach you the value of experimentation and how to establish an ongoing process of innovation and feedback to ensure your organization continues to evolve and enter new territory.

### **Video 5: Ideas to Innovation**

In this video, Jared will teach you how to turn your ideas into REAL innovation. Having uncovered new areas for growth in the previous video, this training will teach you the value of experimentation and how to establish an ongoing process of innovation and feedback to ensure your organization continues to evolve and enter new territory.

## **Week 10**

## **Video 6: Creating a New Vision for the Future**

This video is about translating what you've discovered into a compelling narrative that will inspire those around you to action. A strong vision is not only bold, it is engaging, it is empowering, and it awakens the potential of those with whom it is shared. In this video, Jared will teach you the characteristics of a powerful vision that invites and inspires others to take ownership of its future success. You will learn the value and unprecedented potential that bold ideas hold in today's world.

## **Module 4: Collaborative**

New futurists are collaborative in their approach to creating the future. When you involve members of your organization or network in the practice of strategic foresight, the results are greater engagement, innovation, and empowerment. People are much more likely to support and invest in a vision for the future that they had a hand in creating.

Strategic foresight is a philosophy as much as it is a practice. And it is a philosophy that you can instill within your organization. The future doesn't happen in a vacuum, and the more excitement and energy you create around your strategic mission, the more successful it will be. If your ability to impact the culture across your organization is limited or if you are an entrepreneur just starting out on your own, collaboration is still an important part of strategic foresight and it involves creating a network of people that share and can help grow your vision.

A good collaborator is able to leverage a greater pool of resources, maintain momentum going forward, and create a culture and a movement around a shared desired outcome. In this phase, I will teach you how to cultivate foresight within your organization and communicate a vision that others will want to be a part of. If you want to attract clients, if you want to break into new markets, if you want to establish advantageous partnerships, you will need to communicate a vision that is ahead of the curve and convey a mindset that is proactive on matters that are still out on the horizon.

## **Week 11**

## **Video 1: Creating a Culture of Foresight Within Your Organization**

This video lays the foundation for creating a culture of foresight within your organization in order to foster a more collaborative approach to the future. It will cover the ongoing process of incorporating foresight into your daily operations in order to ensure continued success. Jared will teach you how to evaluate the structure of your business, roles of team members and partners, and what you must have in place to build momentum going forward. You will learn the creative potential of a collaborative effort and the empowerment that comes when each member learns to think like a futurist.

## **Week 12**

### **Video 2: How to Mobilize Others to Action**

This video is about maintaining momentum by building a movement that extends beyond your organization. Establishing an active community of thinkers and doers will spur your creativity and amplify your efforts. In this video, you will learn how to grow and leverage your network, how foresight can inform your messaging, how to better communicate with your intended audience, and where to find the tools and resources that are now widely available to expand your mission and reach.