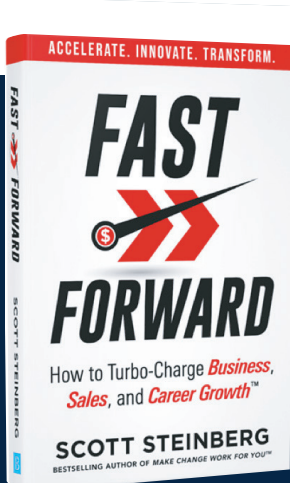# WHAT IS POP FUTURE!?

A BETTER WAY TO MONITOR AND ADAPT TO NEW TRENDS IN LIFE + BUSINESS

From 5G high-speed wireless networks, self-driving cars, and artificially-intelligent telehealth platforms to NFTs, cryptocurrency-based trading crazes, and cutting-edge metaverse playgrounds, make no mistake: Growing public fascination with both new and emerging technology trends and the art and science of innovation has now made a passion for all things forward-looking an intrinsic part of life and work.

As much an exercise in sociocultural learning as management strategy, **POP FUTURE** challenges us to put the impact and import of breaking developments and emerging trends in an everyday context that audiences of all backgrounds and skill levels can understand. In effect, by framing these subjects in a clearer, more familiar manner and describing their pending influence in terms that anyone can comprehend, not only can we make complex concepts more approachable and simpler to grasp. We can also help the future more clearly come into focus – and help determine what, if any, impact that it will have on the way we work, live, and play going forward in the years ahead.

Enter the concept of POP FUTURE™, which describes the theory of applying the lenses of pop culture, anthropology, and organizational psychology to the practice of futurism (actively contemplating the impact and import of future events and trends).

ACCELERATE. INNOVATE. TRANSFORM.

FAST FORWARD

How to Turbo-Charge *Business, Sales,* and *Career Growth*™

SCOTT STEINBERG
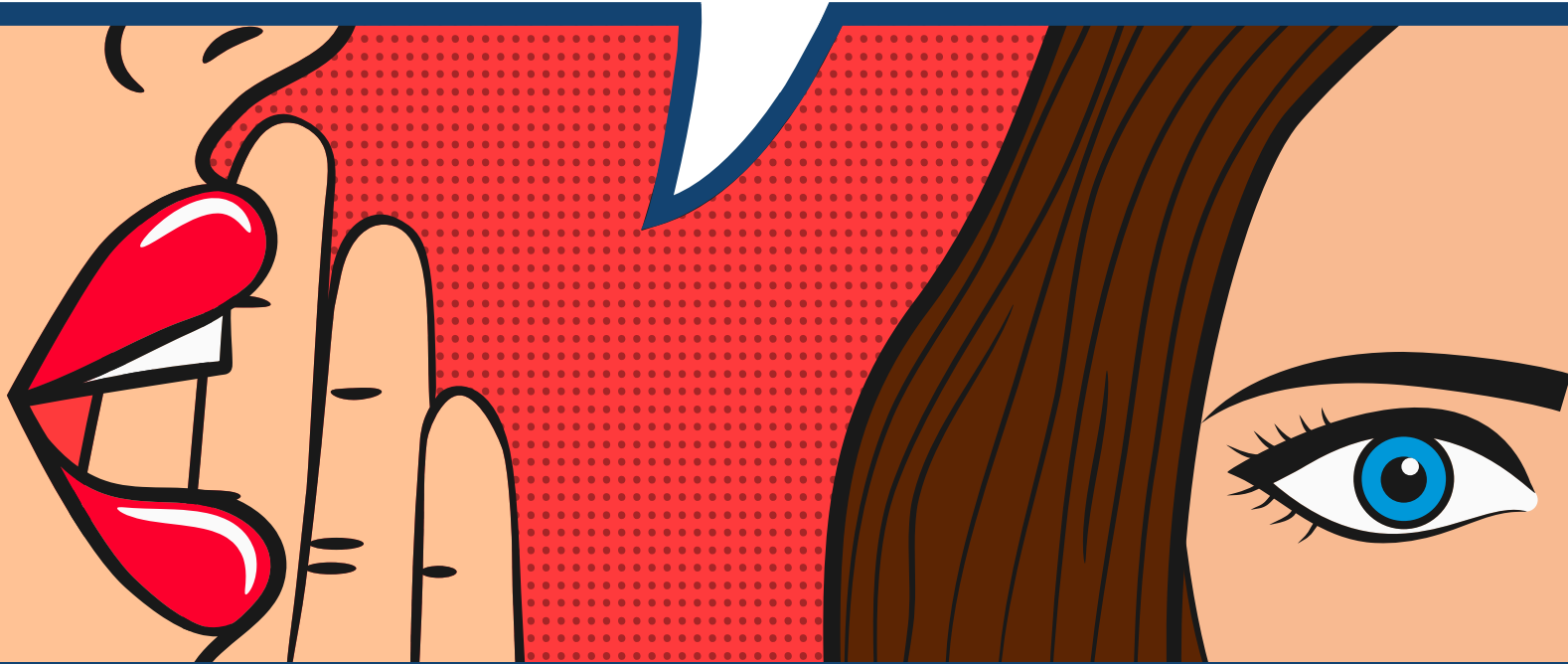BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF MAKE CHANGE WORK FOR YOU™

REThink Tanks™

BIZDEV
The International Association for Business Development and Strategic Partnerships™

World's Leading Business Strategist

Scott Steinberg

www.FuturistsSpeakers.com

How POP FUTURE Informs the Future of Work

Who says that you need to have a PhD to make sense of market research reports, that workforce development needs to be dry and off-putting, or that business presentations must always prove formulaic and dull?

The art of **POP FUTURE** challenges us to consider: In the same way that songwriters and musicians use fun and catchy references or unique callouts and audiovisual gags as a way to make concepts seem engaging and familiar, how can we use creativity, wit, and insight as a similar way to grab audiences' attention – and quickly convey complex concepts by using these interest- and attention-grabbing hooks as a form of mental shorthand?

To put things in perspective: Given the meteoric growth of the Internet, mobile devices, and online media, the average human being's attention span has now shrunk to just 8 seconds. To put things in perspective, a goldfish's attention span is 9 seconds by comparison – 1/2 to 1/3rd of the time traditionally allotted to an "elevator pitch," and a far cry from the time many organizations traditionally allot for conference events, workshops, and professional development sessions. In other words, in less time than it's taken you to read these three sentences, you'll either have captured audiences' attention and piqued their excitement or not – making it growingly essential for those hoping to raise awareness for future-focused topics to find clever and creative ways to rapidly communicate their message and stand out at a glance.

POW!

POP FUTURE provides a vehicle for doing so by inviting us to use techniques including, but not limited to, the below strategies to get one's message heard:

- **Creativity** – Repackaging or representing familiar concepts in new forms (i.e. via eye-catching animations or snappy infographics) or adding a clever twist to a familiar formula.

- **Urgency** – Speaking to a pressing need or problem, such as how to effectively respond to shifts in customer purchasing habits and organizational behavior due to COVID-19.

- **Humor** – Using offbeat approaches or silly takes on common topics to approach otherwise dry subjects from original angles.

- **Timeliness** – Attaching your insights to a topical news hook that is currently trending, allowing you to piggyback on heighted public attention.

- **Teamwork** – Combining forces with like-minded businesses, brands, and influencers to team up on crossover efforts, or partner in clever ways.

- **Functionality** – Introducing unique hooks (whether practical or for purposes of generating publicity), innovative capabilities, or a fresh spin on ways to interact with your offerings.

Noting this, it's important to apply the lessons of **POP FUTURE** – taking your subjects and work seriously, but not getting hung up on the formality of process over the ability to achieve an end-result – at every turn. If it helps to explain why this shift in thinking is no laughing matter perhaps consider: As it stands, the next 10 years will bring more technological change than the prior 10,000. Learning to use POP FUTURE can not only help you put all of these changes in a more engaging and user-friendly context that audiences of all skill levels can appreciate and understand. It can also help you boost learning and retention – and more rapidly equip audiences with the tools and insights that they need to succeed in the years ahead. After all, the pace of change and disruption is only going to continue accelerating, and futurism will only continue to become an increasingly critical skill for working professionals to master.

Apply POP FUTURE to Your Efforts

Therein lies the challenge: How will you practice the art of POP FUTURE to more effectively get your message across – and get others talking?

As a general rule for those looking to find winning solutions here, the process starts by asking yourself a simple question: What makes your subject so fascinating and different – and why is it crucial to be aware of? And, of course, following it up by considering:

- **What 1-3 key insights are you hoping to convey?**

- **Which fun or familiar references can you use to quickly grab others' attention and put any given topic in context?**

- **What audiovisual, interactive, or other original elements can help you stand out and get your message across at a glance?**

- **And how can you share key insights or actionable information in a more engaging and bite-sized form?**

Case in point: Here at management consulting firm FutureProof Strategies, we're often asked to look 5-25 years into the future of different industries – but we routinely make a point to practice the skill of **POP FUTURE** to offer more practical and approachable takes on emerging trends. This often manifests through our use of unique elements – e.g. humorous videos, offbeat infographics, and keynote speeches that challenge commonly-held beliefs – to reveal tomorrow's trends today... and how to stay one step ahead of the curve in practical terms that anyone can understand.

Consider: Does your organizational leadership team really need another 100-page research report explaining how complex academic models and methodologies can be applied to de-risk a business – or would a two-page summary detailing upcoming shifts in customer habits your business should be aware of; what products/services audiences will be looking for going forward; and where gaps in the marketplace exist that you can quickly capitalize upon be more helpful? Likewise, are exhaustive looks at emerging technologies, shifts in generational trends, or changes to market landscapes (many of which are based on historical data, which is notoriously bad at predicting the future in times of radical change) truly needed, or would quick-hit overviews of what's come before and what's coming next paired with actionable business strategies and forward-thinking solutions for navigating through these advancements be more useful to you?

Again – if you can get the message across in minutes, why waste hours, and if what you're really looking for is small data (a handful of actionable insights to capitalize on), what's the point of being obsessed with big data instead?
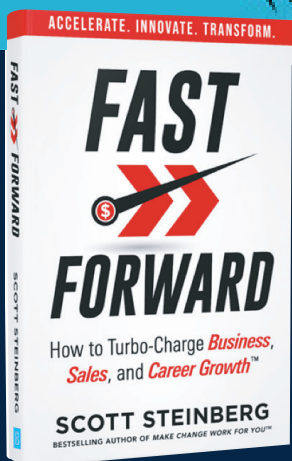
Noting our focus on quickly raising awareness for trending topics and finding more productive ways to drive practical outcomes, don't be surprised if you find us or our clients, for example:

• **Starring in quirky cartoons, episodic graphic novels, or offbeat videos encouraging working professionals to take more (not fewer) risks, albeit those of the calculated and well thought-out variety.**

• **Designing catchy learning exercises, interactive games, and workplace challenges that teach anyone how to get better at learning to spot new trends.**

• **Creating training guides, workbooks, and corporate training manuals that are otherwise disguised as tongue-in-cheek illustrated works, coloring books, or even the type of picture books that you enjoyed as a child.**

POP FUTURE

In other words, there is no one right way to practice the art of POP FUTURE – and the more creative and original the strategy that you adopt to applying it, the more successful you stand to be.

So what are you waiting for: Tomorrow is today, and the future is already taking shape before our eyes. Noting this, there is no better time to start applying POP FUTURE's core principles like the present – what future will you create?

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