studio di futuro

Human Stories Shaping our Community

WYDE

The Connective School

We cannot predict the future.
But we can create it.

WYDE

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WYDE
Your Wdye to the Future

introduction

Periods of uncertainty have always been the matter of studies, since they lead to transformation in social order, power shifts and their direct impact on business world.
The continuously changing socio-political environment within the context of Covid-19 crisis shows us that sometimes it's literally impossible to be ready for the crisis, especially when it comes from nowhere, hits immediately and dramatically and remains for long, giving very vague opportunities to plan and even dream.
Certainly, the pandemic was impossible to predict, however, has the crisis really started from the virus?

Should we consider the uncertainty we are living now as the enemy or will it show up later, so we still have time to prepare?
The crisis of Covid-19 that was followed by physical lockdown of people in their homes misdirects us into thinking that the changes we are experiencing today are caused by the virus. Every day, what we knew as normal before coronavirus fades away, and we find ourselves in a transitional space where we cope with the crisis day by day and wonder what we'll be doing whenever the next normal arrives. **This project is not about trying to predict the future: everything we talk about will be representative of a broader, consistent experience or finding.**

introduction

Our first briefing on COVID was about how to keep trading as we headed into that fogged times. In this briefing, we look at how to plan for the other side. In short, how to emerge well. The particularity of that period is in its disturbingly easy source for study. The world is evolving, and we are spectators and direct participators of its transformation that was accelerated by current crisis.
Therefore, to draw estimations and make strategic assumptions we should look in the mirror and observe **ourselves**. Easily accessible but complicated to comprehend.

Traditionally the transformation is not easy, that is why we call it period of uncertainty. It starts from our internal insecurity that then expands on all the areas of our lives, relationship with people and business. The study of the future is not about making imaginary predictions with groundless promises or warning alerts.
At WYDE, we study future to explore the shifts in values and behaviors that will be mirrored in possible scenarios. That is why calling in the study of the future, technically we conduct the analysis of the present.

research goals

The research aim at exploring **possible scenarios** of the near future to provide relatively valid guidance and suggestions for entrepreneurs and business how **to read the crisis** and be prepared for its outcome.
The approach would allow to draw **feasible transformation plan** and thoughtfully face critical issues without clutter.
Even though, the goal that we have defined in the research is very ambitious, it could be achieved by placing the right questions and trying to answer them accordingly.

We decided to apply gradual approach in questions definition in the study: (1) How people see the future; (2) How individuals live the transformation; (3) How this will impact organizations.

future

Research Questions

transformation

organisational impact
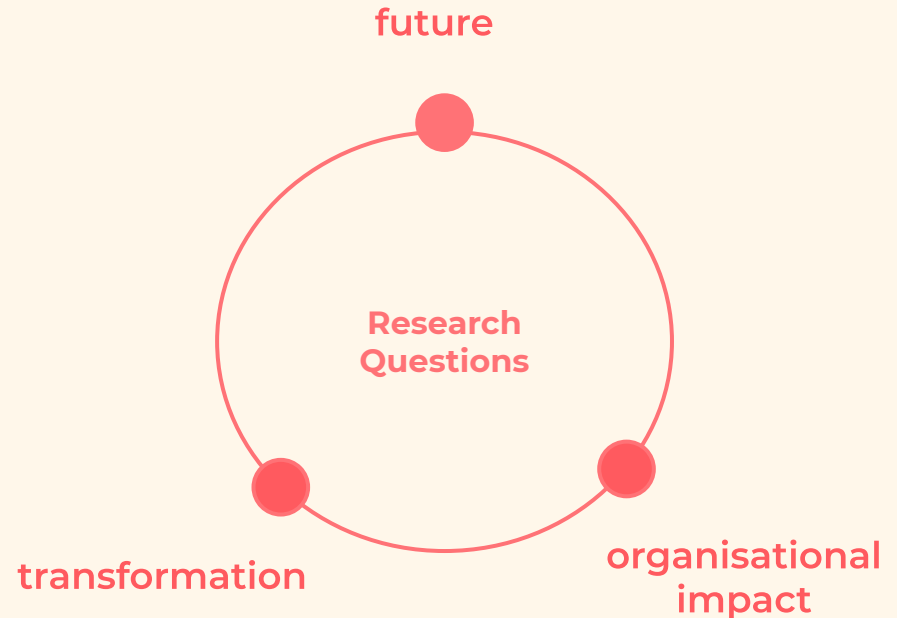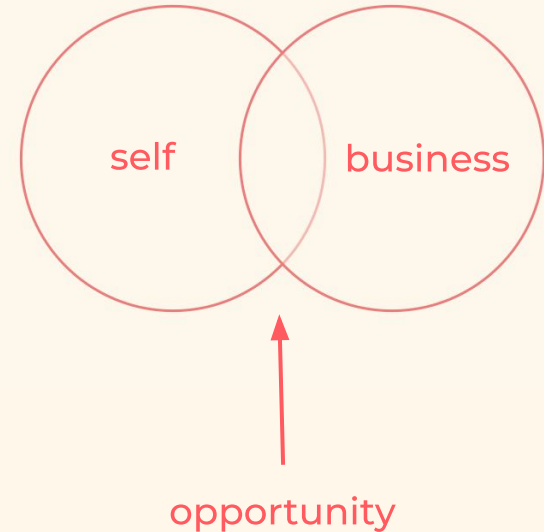
BIG DATA IS
WATCHING YOU

research design

The aspiration to read the crisis is achievable through qualitative research methodology. We have conducted an ethnographic observation of specific group that included people from education sphere, university and business school professors, highly specialized business professionals and entrepreneurs, philosophers and sociologists. The group participated in the research has a broad explosion to the large audiences of different background and ages, i.e. students, employees.

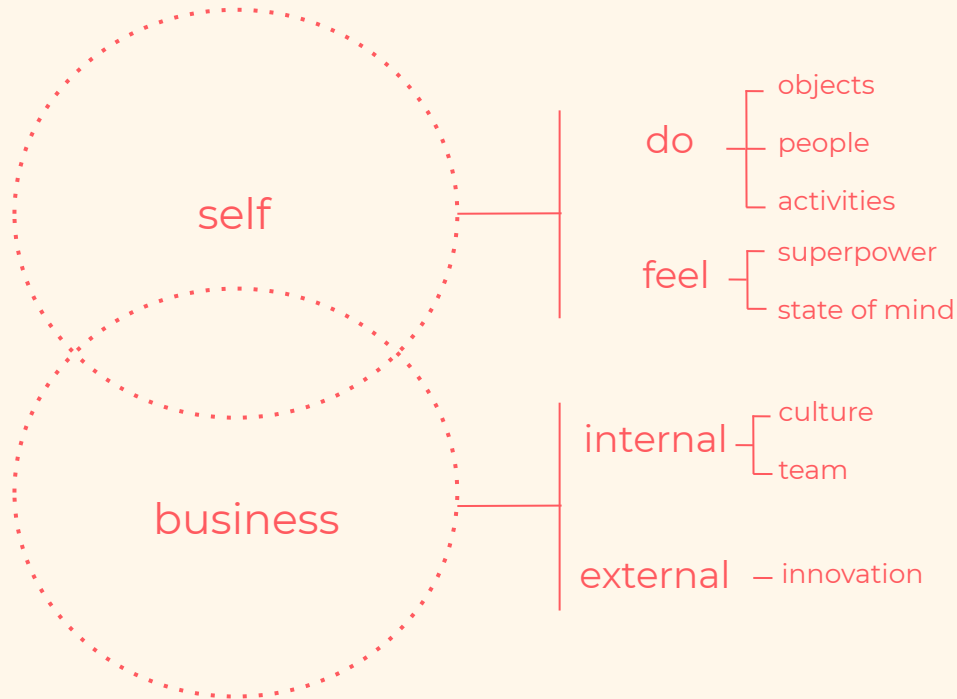As the main method of the research we chose questionnaire, distributed online.

Taking into account the nature of the questionnaire and people participated, then purposeful sample method was applied with its further inductive expansion on the society in general.

It worth mentioning that the research was conducted during the first wave of lockdown in Italy, in critical environment with insecurity and general novelty of the situation with no tuned set of actions.

Therefore, the parallel analysis of secondary sources took place.

self   business

opportunity

research methodology

self

do
- objects
- people
- activities

feel
- superpower
- state of mind

business

internal
- culture
- team

external — innovation

The questionnaire has intentionally heterogeneous questions with mixed order to achieve more sincere emotional answers with less logic in anticipation.

However, defined questions could be divided in 3 main groups: (1) **self** – (a) questions related to internal feelings: emotions, and (b) questions related to the external expressions: things and behaviors (2) **business** - (a) questions related to the internal management: culture, and (b) questions related to the performance of the company; (3) **opportunities** – questions related to the future.

The process of data elaboration consisted of **2 levels of clustering.** The received answers first were grouped in micro areas, and then those micro areas generated their macro areas.

research methodology

The clustering process followed further logic: the first level of "things around me" identification with very heterogeneous concepts, like PC, smartphone, tablet that were joint in devices; fear, hope, liberty, freedom, resilience - state of mind; dreams, creativity - imagination; coffee, breakfast, cooking - food.

Next level contained more general concepts: devices, books, food - objects; friends, family - people; education, sport, walk, sleep - activities; state of mind, love imagination - thoughts & feeling. It is important to highlight, that the nature of open questions expects diversity in answers, therefore some replies didn't require any clustering, because they were related to macro areas (people or love, for instance)

At the first place, we have defined another marco area - places. However, the analysis showed that the places mentioned in the answers were all related to HOME, that broadly covered even other macro areas of the analysis.

home

objects:

clothes
books
devices
food

around me

thoughts & feelings:

state of mind
love
immagination
change

people:

friends
family

activities:

education
sport
culture
walk
sleep

research methodology

The obtained results were compared to the answers to the primary question of the research, that was hidden in the middle of the questionnaire: **"What are the news headlines in 2030"**.

That comparison was very useful to comprehend the expectations and reality. The imaginary news headline that come into mind of participants is a representation of their image of the future, dreamy idealistic or on the contrary dramatic. While the rest of the research illustrates the real social climate and the path towards change.

The correspondence of these two results may reveal the social trends and also weakness of "perfect" strategies that has less potential to come true.

In order to visually illustrate the results, we designed our own matrix *that could be used as sub method to support long-term strategies.*
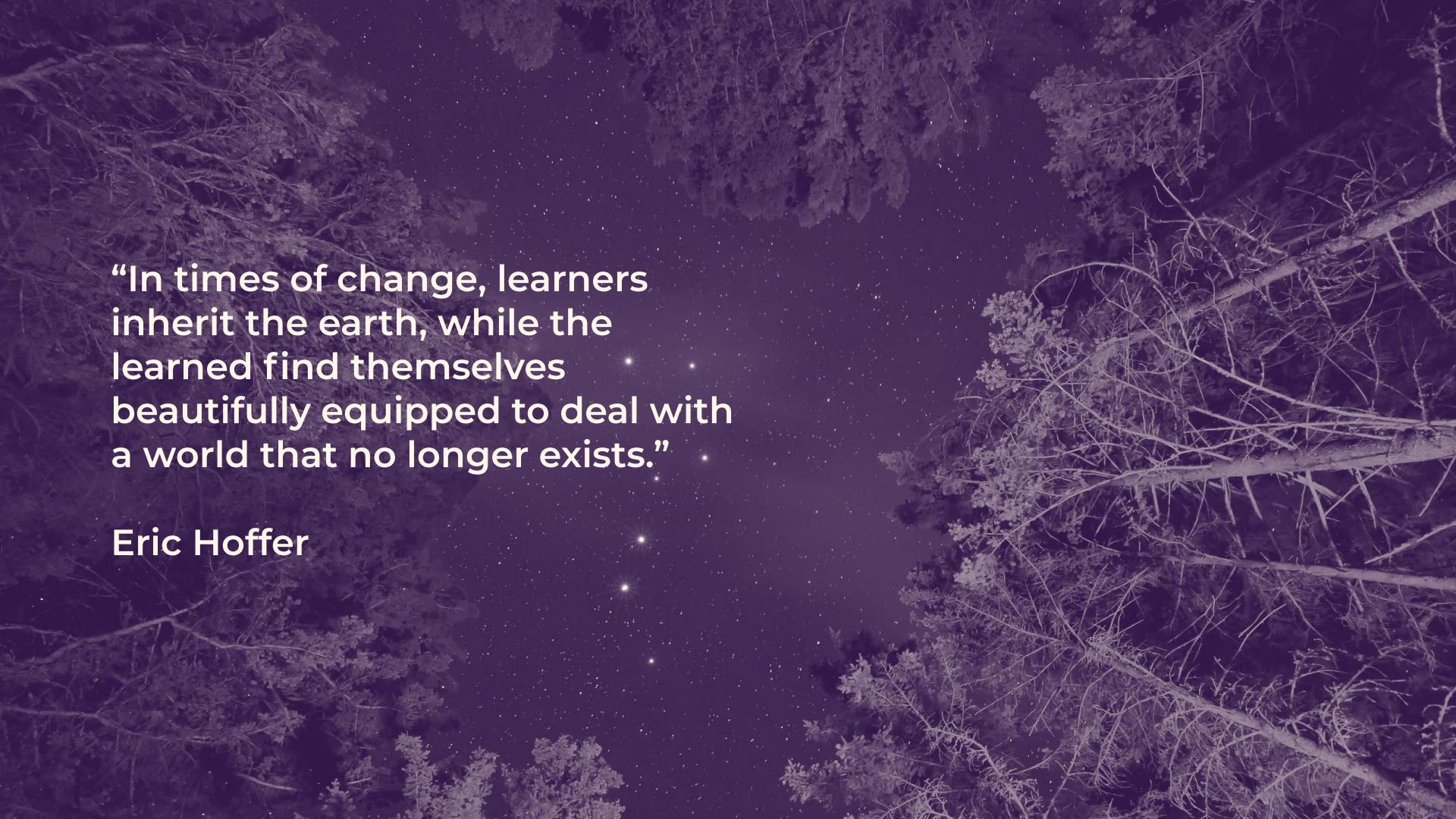
The matrix highlights all the results of the questionnaire related to 3 main categories: self, business and opportunities, clearly shows, on the one hand, the burning trends of the society and, on another hand, reveals empty areas that didn't get the attention, even though were promising in terms of expectations.

The definition of macro areas was necessary to divide the main "self" and "business" categories on "external" (do) and "internal" (feel) sub categories, while micro areas - are the concepts that we used to fill the matrix.

research methodology I
matrix (annex 1)

		Headlines 2030				
		humanistic approach	wellbeing	technology	sustainability	politics
self	do					
	feel					
business	internal					
	external					
opportunities (where are they seen)						

"In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists."

Eric Hoffer

The Results

research results |
expectations

" **38%**

expect the implementation of human centric approaches in the future

As it was mentioned before, we took the question "What are the news headlines 2030" as the starting point to be analyzed. The answers were very diversified and related to different areas, however at macro level we clustered them as "humanistic approach"; "technology"; "politics" and "sustainability".

According to analysis, **38%** of the participants expect the implementation of **human centric** approaches in all areas of their lives and the turn of the world towards human. It includes wellbeing of the community that is expressed through inclusivity and diversity by all means.

25% of the answers are related to the political changes, that mainly highlights the pursuit of **being united** and having no borders. The questionnaire was distributed during the first wave of pandemic in Europe. The way how the European Union was replying on the demands is translated in the expectations of people. In addition, people were forced to be separated with their friends and families, therefore being united is something that is desired.

Sustainability was the main issue of change in **21%** of the answers. Respondents expect transformation of the attitudes, reverse climate change and implementation of sustainable solutions on governmental levels.

16% of people believe in **technological breakthrough** that will lead to new space colonies, new ways of communications exclusively through images and dominance of renewable energy sources.

research results |
self

The answers related to the self-evaluation could be divided on 2 main macro areas: (1) do and (2) feel. **"DO"** category is related to the answers where people talk about their external environment, i.e. (a) objects; (b) people; (c) activities. While **"FEEL"** category represents their internal condition and capabilities, i.e. (a) superpowers; (b) state of mind.

In **"DO"** category the dominant behavior detected is understanding, kindness and trust. People tend to act in a more thoughtful way, they are attentive to the others' feelings, express sympathy and willingness to help.
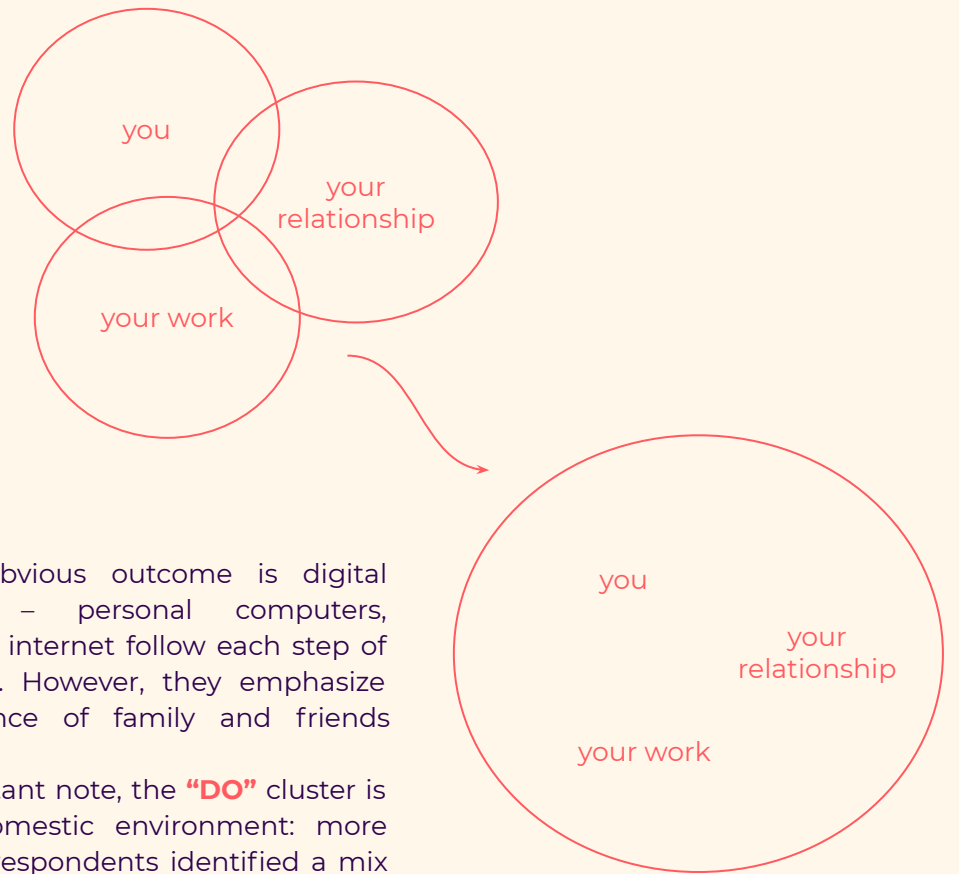
The obvious outcome is digital surrounding – personal computers, smartphones, internet follow each step of people's lives. However, they emphasize the importance of family and friends around.

Important note, the **"DO"** cluster is placed in domestic environment: more than 60% of respondents identified a mix of work, family and their emotional state as the main things they were surrounded at home.

research results |
self

The environment has changed dramatically. Having placed in closed critical environment our lives were all blended together.

Work that is placed in domestic environment, family that takes part of working life, new concepts of relationship pose new set of issues that we are facing and should solve on personal and enterprenal levels.

Before having its key aspects pretty differentiated it was much easier to maintain the balance. When so different parts of our lives come together we have to study how to find an equilibrium.

"**60%**
identified home as a mix of work, family and their emotional state

research results |
self

In **"FEEL"** category the dominant emotion is love. People spend time analyzing themselves from the inside through meditations and find joy in very basic simple things.

After the lockdown people mostly realized that they are very strong and resilient, have the capability to accumulate positive energy to handle obscure period.

They feel strong stream of creativity inside and happy with their imagination that has been activated in critical environment that directly influence mental capacity.

research results |
business

Business, its present and future, was reflected through (1) **internal** and (2) **external** perspective as well. The main expectations in that part of the questionnaire were related to the change of time people see and how they would like to transform the working environment for a better.

The answers regarding (1) internal business evaluation was related to the (a) company culture and its metamorphoses and evolution of the concept of the (b) team in it.

While (2) external perspective was related to the vision of future growth through perception of innovation.

research results |
business

" **46%**
identified team as
community with the
same values

Internal company culture perspective revealed the importance of listening that also proved by aspiration for no hierarchy, human centricity and open minded approach.

The team itself is identified as a **community with same values** built on personalities with beautiful minds that cherish freedom and continuous transformation.

The change in perception of team from group of people we work with to a community is likely because smart working increased the level of deepness and trust in relationship at work.

Management was placed in the conditions when faith in employees is critical moment in working environment, and employees having much more flexibility and freedom consider management as mentors and not as inspectors.

Curiously, digitalization and introduction of new tools and methods is seen as a crucial point of efficient internal communication and team work, which means that probably smart working or working from home is perceived as long-term measure that could be adopted after the crisis is over as well.
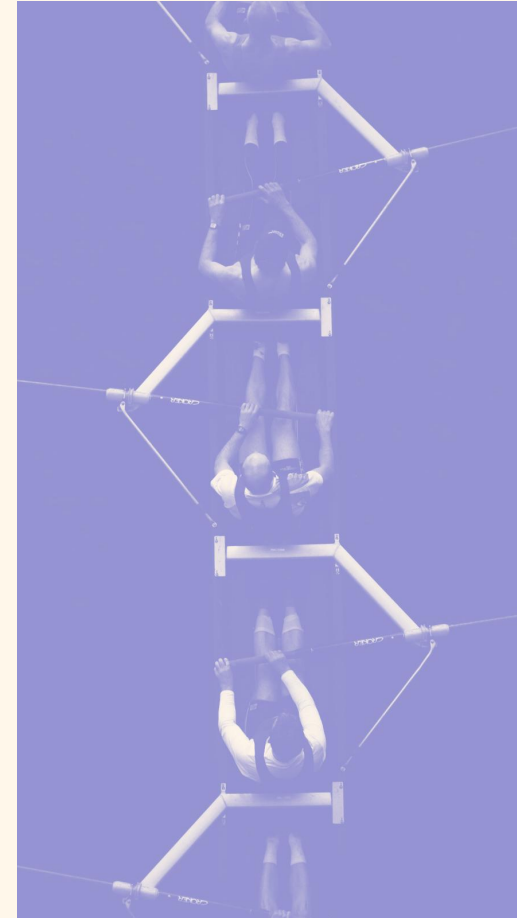
research results |
business

The vision of future **external** growth for the business through the concept of innovation is in human centric approach, focus on creativity and exploration, people's feelings and emotions.

Here innovation is seen in no hierarchical approach once again with continuous common growth and transformation. The way to boost innovation is seen in challenging dogmatic thinking.

The most curious finding in external innovation that we identified is focus on non-digitalization of businesses. People don't deny the necessity to implement digital tools in their value proposition, however they point on **healthy mix of physical and digital**.

The human touch is important for future of business world.

The reason why the mix is important is that first of all, people used to spend a lot of time in digital space and they feel the **lack of real experiences**.

Secondly, living the life of neighborhood with no travel they start to discover the beauty of **local** community full of authentic businesses, small stores, unusual concepts, new people. And they see the potential in growth of local life.

" 40%
said that innovation lies in freedom, creativity & exploration

research results |
opportunity

The part of the questionnaire related to the **opportunity** is about how and where people see themselves in changing environment.

The answers covered both personal life and business. The answers highlight the tendency of movement towards human centric approach in the future. People see opportunities in common growth of the team and self and in education.

They emphasize the importance of balance between profit and purpose in business, which means that the approach in work is changing and puts person in the center of it, instead of money.

Participants see the opportunity in spending more personal time with family and friends. Lockdown reveals the vital "things" in life, like possibility to meet dear people, and stresses the ideas of being together, support and taking care.

People see general opportunity to change their behavior in term of sustainability, they expect to make better choices.

Digital transformation is the opportunity in personal life and business as well. It is perceived as the way to increase openness in communication and eliminate borders. However, the right balance between digital and physical is vital.

" **35%**
feel the faith in togetherness

research results |
matrix (annex 2)

		Headlines 2030				
		humanistic approach	wellbeing	technology	sustainability	politics
self	do (external)	education; kindness, understanding, respect, trust, open collaboration, connect	home, sleep, food, family, friends, animals	devises: pc, smartphone, digitalisation	X	X
	feel (internal)	strength, resilience; love, care, authenticity, introspection	creativity, imagination, mental capacity	X	X	X
business	internal	people; listening, open mind, community with same values no hierarchy	continuous transformation, freedom, flexibility	new tools and methods - less physical contact	transparency, inclusivity, diversity	X
	external	back to basics: feelings, people centricity, emotions, no hierarchy	continuous change, reinvention, circular, not linear	not only digital	X	X
opportunities (where are they seen)		professional growth of team, education, communications, balance In profit and purpose	personal time with family and friends, personal growth, self enrichment	digital transformation/ balance digital physical	new behaviors towards environment	X

research findings |
value shift

When we asked about the headlines in 2030 people predicted change towards human centricity.
According to the analysis of their feelings we may assume that the trend is real. People change their behavior; they notice that change in others and transform their ideas in terms of business and teamwork.
The shift in values is very noticeable and most likely will be pretty stable. From private life it expands on company culture and then value proposition for the external customers.

The same parallel value shift is noticeable in the wellbeing of the community that as expected moves towards new behavioral models that could be then mirrored in innovative business models emergence.
The path of transformation is not yet clear but it tends to step by step decrease the level of hierarchy and increase dynamics of competences and flexibility; freedom and bottom up streams of creativity.

DO WE REALLY WANT IT?

research findings |
discrepancy

There are several **controversial** moments that matrix revealed:

01.

Technological Breakthrough – Digitalization.

      In 2030 respondents expect to experience digital transformation of all the areas of our lives, possibility of landing on Mars and its first colony.

      However, they don't really see the opportunity in total digitalization. On the contrary, they would like to have a balance in digital and physical with unconditional human touch.

research findings |
discrepancy

02.

Sustainability.

In 10 years, respondents would love to see the reverse climate change, and implementation of sustainable solutions on governmental levels, like banned production of virgin plastic and turn to the renewable energy sources.

As an opportunity, people see the change in their behaviors and more sustainable choices.

However, the value shift in the behavior and feelings is hardly noticeable in private life and in business. It could be explained by the fact that during the pandemic people are very much concerned about health of themselves and their family members.

Fear and anxiety are pretty dominant feelings as well. In critical environments, the focus has been moved towards the essential basic things.

IT IS NOT THAT BAD!

Desire to build more inclusive and diverse community exists anyways. And the fact that a lot of respondents highlighted the importance of fresh air, nature and the sun during the lockdown could change the trend in a long term.

" 20%
identified fear and anxiety as the dominant behavior around

research findings |
discrepancy

03.

Politics.
The political aspect was frequently mentioned by the respondents in their vision of the future.
It was closely related to the ideas of United Europe, change in world patterns and powers.

Nonetheless, presence of those aspects in people lives, in opportunities for them doesn't exists at all. Perhaps, it is connected to the fact that during the pandemic people lost their belief in government.
Their expectations to improve the condition of people, financial aids that were promised but were hard to achieve don't make people believe in help of the authorities but show them as figures that disturb their wellbeing.

OPPORTUNITY

implications for companies |
perfect formula

       The main outcome of our research is related to the **space** where our lives are happening. Despite the expected, total digitalization will hardly happen.

       During the pandemic we spend most of our time in front of the screen. Personal computers, TV, smartphones, tablets. Time spent in virtual space has reached its climax and we want something real.

       The denial of digitalization would be irrelevant within our reality. Therefore, the future is about healthy mix of **Digital** and **Physical** that leads to **human centricity**.

perfect formula:

digital +
physical =
human centricity

perfect formula |
community spirit

01. **Business Culture**

(A). Smart working seemed perfect until we actually immersed in it.

Offer comfort and reassurance – **Promote togetherness.** Improvement of internal processes in the company and taking care of the employees at home is vital.

Things to keep in mind:

- Is the working environment appropriate for 8 hours workday?
- Are the internal virtual tools and devices convenient to use?
- Are the employees conscious about their working hours? Do they make breaks?

(B). Team is not a group of people that meet in conference room once a day anymore. It is a **community** that spends a lot of time together online, while their families, kids, animals and, sometimes, personal issues, take part of that space.

On the other hand, sometimes people live alone, especially in big cities and colleagues – is the only community they belong to.

Things to keep in mind:

- Do the employees feel good? Are they lonely?
- What is their living situation?
- How could I as manager make the virtual working environment cozier?

perfect formula |
community spirit

01. **Business Culture**

(C). Smart Working is a great benchmark for businesses to **implement transparency** in working process and increase trust.

Things to keep in mind:

- Encourage people to self expression
- listen at every level - bottom up creativity stream
- Encourage the reduction of hierarchy

(D). Smart working as a chance to increase level of **diversity** and **inclusivity**. Distantly it is psychologically easier to evaluate people only according to their professionalism.
Wider mindset cherish diversity that works as an added value.

Things to keep in mind:

- That approach attracts brave creative talents
- It leads to faster process of customers needs identification.
- The decisions turn to return on investment in talent.

" **12,5%**
believe in inclusive future

" **20%**
consider transparency and fluid exchange of ideas as teamwork essentials

perfect formula |
community spirit

02. Business Growth

(A). Customer Relationship. Digital is a very practical tool to be closer to your customer. Literally and figuratively.

Trust and ability to listen were defined as the most important factors of taking care. Homogeneous techniques adopted in golden times of globalization are no more relevant.

Having more **personalized**, geographically differentiated **approach** to the client is vital.

It is an opportunity to build long lasting relationship with customers based on **authentic values**. People turn towards brands they trust, stable ones - for security.

Things to keep in mind:

- Conduct detailed market research
- Build the comprehensive and rich omnichannel customer journey
- Every single touch point makes difference - be creative

" **72%**
relate taking care to the ability to listen and being together

perfect formula |
community spirit

03. **Customer Relationship**

(B). Inverse Globalisation - **Be Local**
The intensification of life of neighborhood and parallel recession in mobility is a sign for businesses to literally follow their customers. People tend to travel less, shop around the house and explore life in neighborhood.

This behavioral shift requires changes in business management. For instance, when it comes to manufacturing and operations, the trend of localization has an impact on **supply chain** activities.

Things to keep in mind:

The opportunity to reconfigure complex supply chain by supporting local artisans. It is a long-term strategic decision that enhances the value proposition and further increases the wealth of community.

implications |
perfect formula*

The last but not least implication for the managers of the companies is related to the matrix we have elaborated. It could be used to check the consistency of long term strategies of the business and their correspondence with market research results.

In this way, instead of Headlines, long term strategic directions could be used, and how are they covered in terms of internal business development, it's external steps; and conditions of the market; feelings of people and their behavior.

The obtained results - is a **perfect formula** of further development - the estimate outcome of the long term strategic plan. The formula, could be used as a sub method to see if some issues are not covered, or some steps are not strongly supported. It is an opportunity to refine the tactics and reveal weak moments of market research.

Our study of the future gave us the perfect formula of digital and physical that leads to human centricity. Applied in a specific case and with different variables, it could show different results shaped according to the industry business is operating, internal corporate culture, and its final customer.

THANKS

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