



Merkityksellinen työntekijäkokemus
vieraanvaraisuus- ja tapahtuma-alalla

EmployeeTuesday

7 Oct 2025 at 13-16

"Future is now"

Aiming at a
preferable meaningful
employee experience in the future



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Agenda

- Practicalities
- A cavalcade of employee profiles
- Why and how to imagine the future?
- Workshop
- Glimpses and perspectives on the futures of the hospitality and events industry
- Final words and next steps



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Tampere University of Applied Sciences

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Practicalities

– Mika Kylänen

- Connections, participants
- Main goals of the MERIT development program
- Collection of EURA21 monitoring data



MERIT programme

- Increasing the attractiveness and retention of the hospitality and events industry by developing meaningful employee experience and leadership skills, especially for the needs of generations Y and Z working in the industry.
- The project operates nationwide and is implemented by LAB (lead partner), TAMK and Lapland UAS – dozens of companies around the country are involved.



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MERIT at Your Service!



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Please enter your participant information into the EURA2021 system:

Project code when asked: S30979



Scan or go to the site:

<https://eura2021.fi/osallistuja>

- Most of the information in **section 1** comes directly when you log in with your **suomi.fi credentials**, enter your email address and phone number.
- In the information in **section 2** At the time of start, enter this time of the workshop.
- In the case of termination phase in **section 3**, enter this same date. The end date will be updated when there is a second participation in the project's development measure.



Employee experience

- Employee experience (EX) consists of what an employee experiences, perceives and feels during their work, from the moment they apply for a job until they leave the employer.
- Employees are internal customers of the organization, so the organization must understand their needs, expectations, and challenges; **also, in the future.**
- **The future** is not just “coming”, it is also being made!

Talent Vectia. Työntekijäkokemus 2020. Tutkimustulokset.

EMPLOYEE PROFILES





JANNE – FREELANCE TECHNICIAN



Passion for Technology

Janne is enthusiastic about technical event production and loves experimenting with new technologies.

Teamwork and Recognition

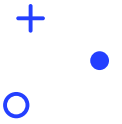
He values being part of a team and having his technical expertise acknowledged and appreciated.

Freelancer Challenges

Janne feels isolated as a freelancer and struggles with limited feedback and lack of development support.



LEENA – EVENT PRODUCER



Passion for Cultural Events

Leena finds deep meaning and fulfillment in producing cultural experiences that bring people together.

Motivated by Teamwork

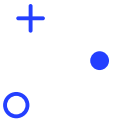
Successful events and strong teamwork inspire Leena's dedication and drive in her role.

Industry Challenges

Leena faces burnout, low pay, and limited well-being support within the event production industry.



ELIAS – VOLUNTEER WORKER



Volunteer Motivation

Elias volunteers to gain experience and actively contribute to building stronger communities.

Core Volunteer Values

He values clarity, inclusion, and recognition to feel engaged and appreciated in his volunteer role.

Challenges Faced

Elias often feels disconnected when instructions are vague and teams are distant or uncommunicative.



ONNI – PROGRAM SERVICE GUIDE

Enjoyment of Diverse Work

Onni appreciates the international diversity and dynamic environment of guiding safaris across various regions.

Value of Autonomy and Trust

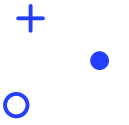
He highly values having autonomy in his role and being trusted to make independent decisions during tours.

Challenges with Leadership

Onni feels frustrated by unclear instructions and passive leadership that fails to address issues promptly.



MAY – KITCHEN INTERN



Commitment and Motivation

May demonstrates strong commitment to her internship role and hopes to secure permanent employment.

Need for Belonging

She is motivated by a sense of belonging and recognition within her workplace community.

Integration Challenges

May faces difficulties integrating due to language barriers and cultural differences in her work environment.

May Chef Intern



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Image 	1. Who is he/she? - 42 years old, a mother of three - Originally from Thailand - Moved to Finland 10 years ago, and since then worked as a stay-home mother - Spends time with fellow local immigrants and speaks mostly Thai - Now studies to be a professional chef, and wants to learn Finnish	2. Who is he/she at work? - Has now her second internship in a restaurant kitchen - Willing to learn new and takes it seriously - Is conscientious and wants to do her very best when working
Quote <i>"Hard work pays off"</i>	3. Personlaity traits and interests? - A little shy, timid and unsure about her language skills - Enthusiastic and interested about food - Flexible and a team player, always ready to step forward in case of extra effort needed	4. What does he/she think about his/her work and what are his/her expectations? - Considers the internship as an important step, and completes her work like being a full-time employee - The job gets done with care and accuracy - Wants to show that she has deserved her spot and is willing to get a permanent job after graduating
5. What is motivating and meaningful to him/her in his/her work? - Status in the work community, to achieve a role in the company, and to be part of the community - An oppotunity to get a stable work relationship and a steady income - To experience success and gain respect in and from one's work		6. What frustrates him/her at work? - Frustrated about cultural differences and difficulties in fitting in at the work place - Low local language skills - She isn't always able to follow colleagues' conversations on breaks and is sometimes ashamed to ask to make sure



KAISLA – CAFÉ WORKER

Flexible Work Preference

Kaisla appreciates flexible work hours that accommodate her student lifestyle and personal commitments.

Enjoying Workplace Atmosphere

She enjoys a fun and lively café environment that makes her work engaging and pleasant.

Scheduling Frustrations

Unexpected schedule changes and rigid routines cause stress and interfere with Kaisla's personal life.





VEERA – HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

Empathetic and Enthusiastic

Veera is a warm and enthusiastic receptionist who genuinely cares about guests and her work.

Values Autonomy and Feedback

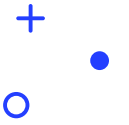
She appreciates autonomy in her role and thrives on receiving positive feedback from colleagues and managers.

Challenges Faced

Veera is discouraged by lack of clear career progression and inconsistent support from management.



VEERA – STAGE MANAGER (RECENT GRADUATE)



Entry-Level Stage Manager

Veera is a recent graduate starting her career as a stage manager in theatrical event coordination.

Passion for Coordination

She enjoys organizing events and feels fulfilled by successful coordination and teamwork.

Challenges Faced

Veera faces challenges such as job insecurity and poor communication within her role.

JANE – JUNIOR EVENT COORDINATOR



Proactive and Detail-Oriented

Jane is proactive in her role and pays close attention to details to ensure event success.

Enjoys Learning and Connecting

She values continuous learning and building strong connections with people.

Satisfaction from Smooth Events

Jane feels fulfilled when events run smoothly without issues.

Stress from Poor Coordination

Unclear expectations and poor team coordination cause Jane significant stress.



Name: Jane Junior Event Coordinator



THUN Luottamuksellinen - Confidential (3Y)
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Image 	1. Who is he/she ? Jane is a Junior Event Coordinator and she has a wide range experience of events, like conferences, weddings.	2. Who is he/she at work? Jane is a proactive and organized junior event coordinator. Originally from Europe, she brings strong attention to detail and time management to every project she handles. She has experience assisting in corporate conferences, weddings, music festivals, and private events. Jane is known for staying calm under pressure and ensuring everything runs smoothly behind the scenes.	7. Positive emotions one feels at work Jane feels happy and fulfilled when completing her tasks. She is thankful for her job and feels enthusiastic when given new challenges and learning opportunities.
Quote "Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out." — Robert Collier	3. Personality traits and interests? She likes to travel and she is creative. She is also doing volunteer work.	4. What does he/she think about his/her work and what are his/her expectations? Jane is somewhat reserved and not very confident at first, but she approaches her work with a positive attitude. She enjoys speaking with people and shows genuine interest in learning new things and growing in the event industry.	
5. What is motivating and meaningful to him/her in his/her work? Thinking about future event and planning them by herself, and meeting like minded individuals, she loves good feedback but also improves upon negative ones. Creating a flawless experience for the audience.		6. What frustrates him/her at work? She might feel over tired and lots of pressure especially when things are not going well. Unclear expectations, difficult clients or stakeholders. Handling multiple responsibility.	



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MINTTU – RECEPTIONIST

Professional Motivation

Minttu is driven by a desire to help customers and utilize her skills effectively.

Career Growth Aspirations

She aims to grow professionally despite the challenges she faces in her current role.

Work-Life Challenges

Minttu struggles with understaffing and balancing shift work with family responsibilities.



ZICHEN – PART-TIME RESTAURANT WORKER



Eager to Learn

Zichen is enthusiastic about gaining new skills in hospitality and values learning opportunities.

Enjoys Customer Interaction

He enjoys engaging with customers and building positive relationships in the restaurant environment.

Challenges with Communication

Zichen feels overwhelmed due to unclear roles and communication issues among staff.

Name: Zichen – Part-time Waiter



THINK Luottamuksellinen - Confidential (3Y)
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Image 	1. Who is he/she ? This is Zichen. He is a student of Hospitality Management at LAB Uas. He works as a part time in various locations.	2. Who is he/she at work? He is a student who also works part-time in a hotel restaurant. He is Asian and holds a diploma in Hospitality Management. He has previous work experience in his home country, where he worked in the Food and Beverage department of a local hotel. He is very welcoming and has strong communication skills. He is also willing to learn.	7. Positive emotions one feels at work Feeling happy and content with his task doing and he is feeling thankful for his job. Feeling enthusiastic about if he get challenges and new oportunities .
Quote "I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it." — <i>Pablo Picasso</i>	3. Personality traits and interests? He is not so open or confident at work. But he has a good attitude and loves to talk with people seems intrested in learning new things.	4. What does he/she think about his/her work and what are his/her expectations? He is very happy with his work as he gets to learn new things and there are nice colleagues. He is very happy and wants to be a professional and move to a better position.	
5. What is motivating and meaningful to him/her in his/her work? Getting to learn new things, interacting with colleagues, dealing with different people and personalities		6. What frustrates him/her at work? Hard work, and when job roles are not clearly defined , it can be frustaring and not knowing exactly what is expected from him can lead to confuse and mistakes. Sometimes misunderstandings or a lack of communication from coworkers or managers can cause frustration. It can happen to mistakes or delays.	8. Negative emotions one feels at work Stress feeling overwhelemd by too many tasks, Frustation like feeling upset or irriated when things are not going well. He might get confusion also. Feeling let down when things dont go as planed , such as missing out on a promotion.



VICTORIA – WILDERNESS GUIDE



Passion for Outdoor Work

Victoria enjoys working outdoors and finds fulfillment in guiding through natural wilderness areas.

Cultural Exchange Value

She values meaningful cultural interactions and connections made during her guiding experiences.

Challenges Faced

Victoria faces challenges including logistical difficulties, language barriers, and limited privacy.

Name: Victoria Wilderness Guide



THINK Luottamuksellinen - Confidential (3Y)
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Image 	1. Who is he/she ? A 33-year-old single Spanish, Catalan woman who now lives in Lapland. She is a bit of a wanderer and explorer by nature.	2. Who is he/she at work? She is a seasonal worker, a winter worker in Lapland since 2018. She is originally from Barcelona, Spain, where she graduated from university in tourism. She has previously worked as a guide in Ethiopia and in various marketing positions. She is good at guiding, coordinating and organizing. She is hardworking and willing to work as needed.	7. Positive emotions one feels at work Enjoyment, job satisfaction, work engagement - doing and experiencing together with customers in a wonderful environment.
Quote <i>"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands but in seeing with new eyes."</i> - Marcel Proust	3. Personality traits and interests? She likes hiking in the Pyrenees mountains, she is very sporty. She also likes skiing and cycling. She found Finland by googling when she was looking for a job as a winter guide. It is very interesting to work with different nationalities, people with different professional backgrounds and ages. Social life is also important, although she enjoys a quiet life.	4. What does he/she think about his/her work and what are his/her expectations? She is currently in the process of signing a year-round contract with his employer. In the future, she will be responsible for coordinating the schedules of seasonal workers. She likes working outdoors, close to nature. Lapland offers a wonderful and unique experience. She loves this way of life. She wants to learn new things. She also wants to improve her Finnish.	8. Negative emotions one feels at work It's annoying if things needed for the trip are missing - you should be able to trust that the internal process will work, but that's not always the case.
5. What is motivating and meaningful to him/her in his/her work? Lifestyle and work go hand in hand. She wants to be outside with customers. Mind and body are awake – healthy life. In Lapland she can be herself – and people are real here. She can be far from the commercial world. The best thing is to meet new, really interesting people who open up your worldview and thinking.	6. What frustrates him/her at work? She would like more privacy - her own room – not always sharing a room with another temporary worker. The salary is not high, but on the other hand the expenses are not that high. She knows how to live on a small budget. It has been frustrating being a temporary worker for so long. Sometimes the working days are long, but it varies.	Sometimes the language barrier means that when you don't understand, you feel like an outsider. Dealing with a difficult customer affects how one feels at work. A feeling of frustration if the customer has misunderstood one's message.	



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MOONA – MULTI-TALENTED WORKER



Passionate Event Assistant

Moona is dedicated to her role as an event assistant, showing enthusiasm and commitment to her work tasks.

Part-time Waitress Role

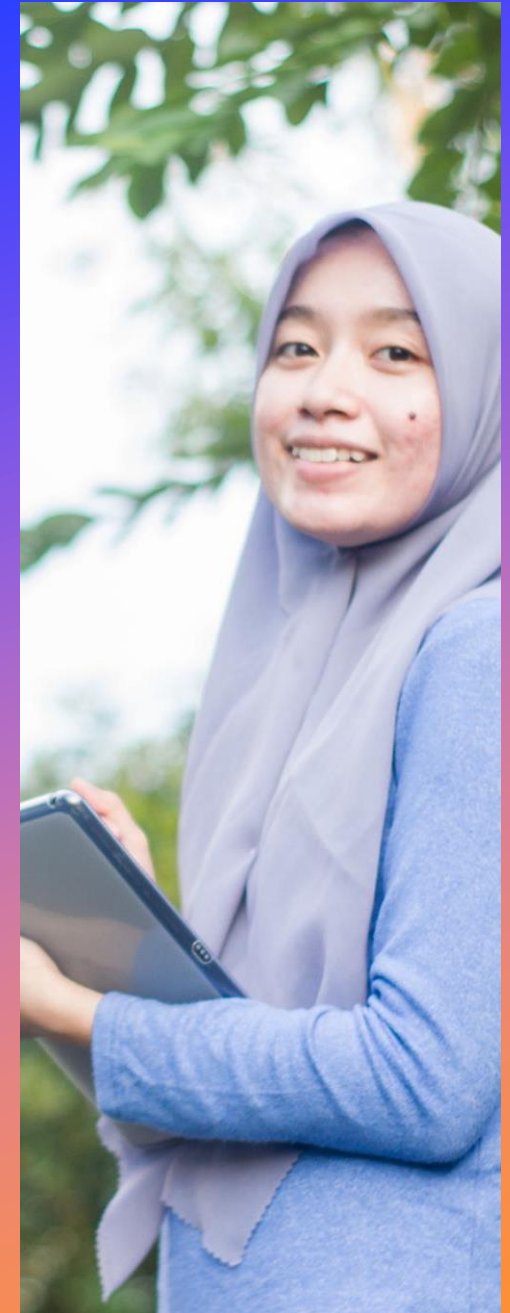
Alongside events, Moona works as a part-time waitress, gaining diverse work experience in hospitality.

Skill Development Driven

Moona is motivated by improving her skills and values growth and self-development.

Challenges Balancing Life

She faces difficulties balancing work and studies and feels discouraged by lack of motivation in others.



MARIA – SALES AND MARKETING MANAGER



Goal-Oriented Professional

Maria is driven by setting and achieving goals related to successful events and networking.



Motivated by Feedback

She values continuous improvement and relies on feedback to enhance her performance.



Challenges of Uncontrollable Factors

Maria experiences frustration with factors like weather that impact event success beyond her control.



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Why and how to think about the future?

– Mika Boedeker



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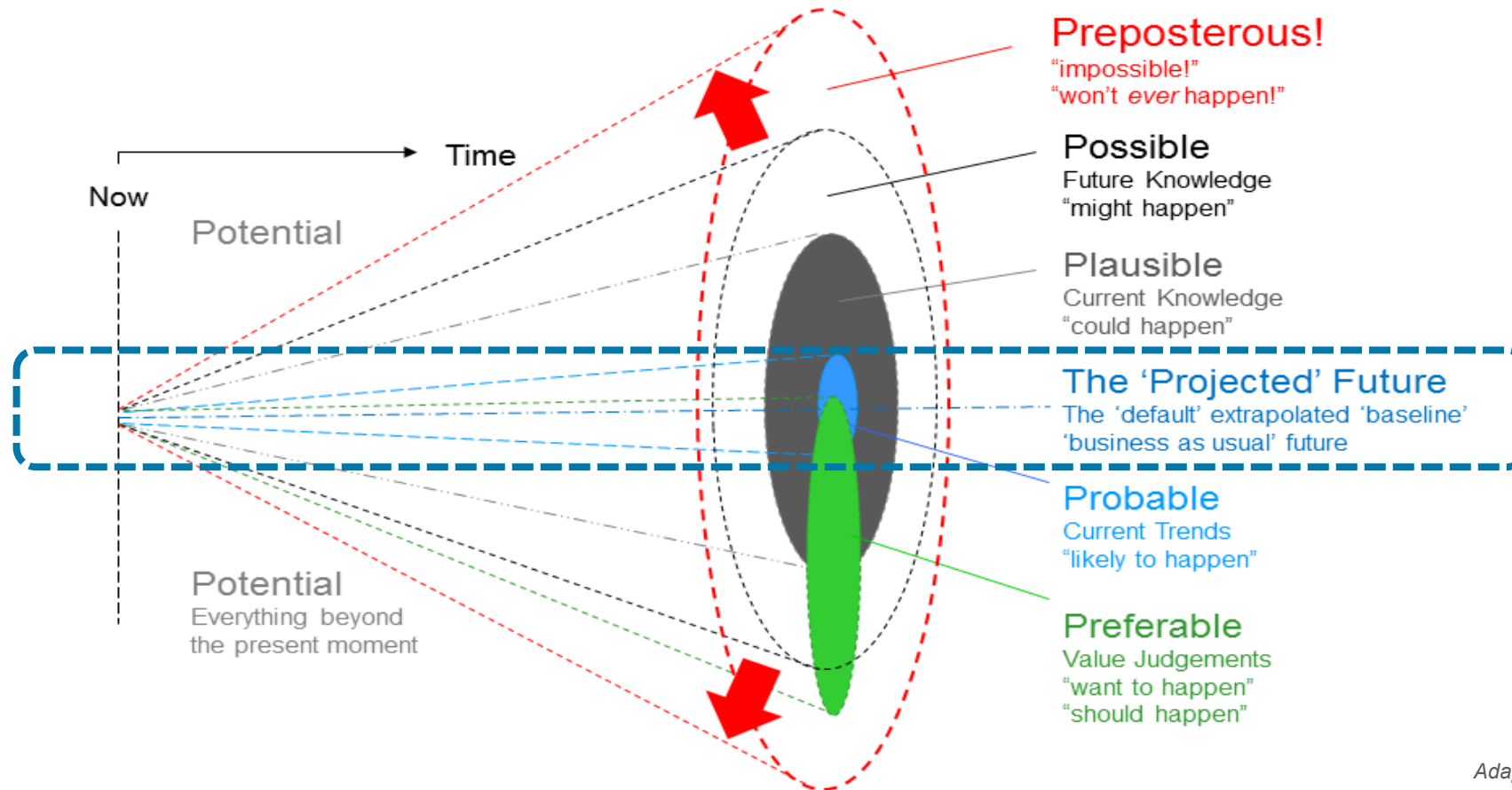
Imagining futures

- The future is often described in terms of major changes and broad developments, which can make the future seem distant. It is therefore necessary to imagine what it would be like to live in different futures.
- The better we can imagine different futures, the better we can assess what kind of future we would like.
- **Anyone can imagine the future and making the future belongs to everyone.**

Our futures cone is often too narrow



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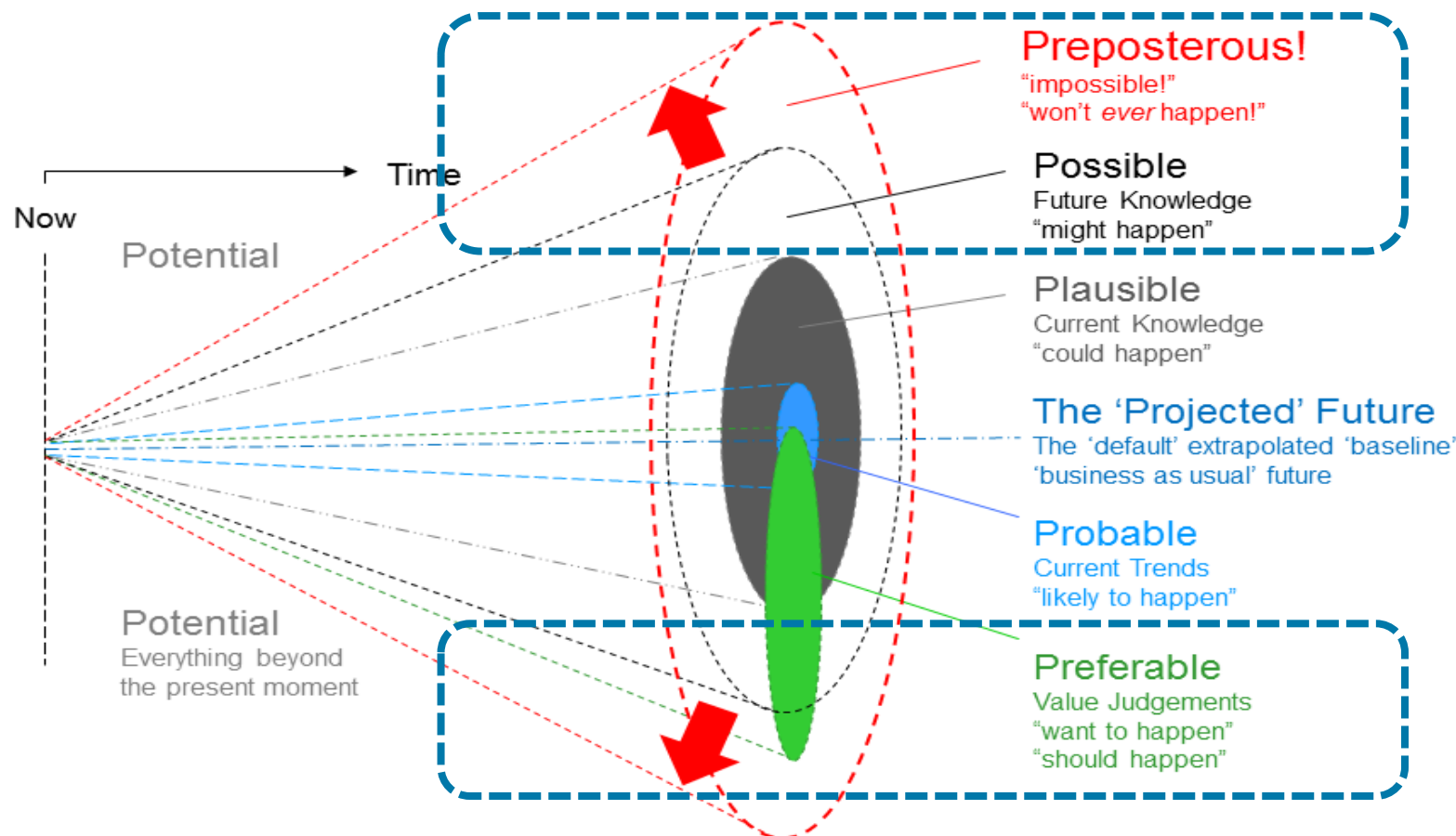
Adapted from Voros 2017

Expanding our cone



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- It matters, what kind of futures we think about, plan for, or dream about because **thinking guides action!**



Adapted from Voros 2017



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Workshop



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Instructions

- You get to take yourself now to the future – year 2035 – by “memorising” future(s)
- This is a two-phase exercise, in total 55 min:
 1. Meaningful to you at work in 2035
 2. Postcard from the future about “My Day at Work”



Instructions, phase 1

- Phase 1 – 20 min + joint discussion in the main session:
 1. Think about you in your work in year 2035. Don't be afraid of wild ideas – get creative! Combine bravely facts and your imagination! What is meaningful to you? What creates meaningfulness in your work and professional context?
 2. Complete the sentences on the template
 3. Add some more thoughts of your own choice



Instructions, phase 2

- Phase 2 – 25 min + joint discussion in the main session:
 1. Select a person to whom you are sending the postcard from the future. For instance, your colleague, friend or mother, if you like.
 2. In the message part of the card, describe your day at work by using your thoughts from the phase 1. Use full sentences to make it a short story. Remember it is year 2035!
 3. Also, select a cover image (e.g. Pexels.com or Pixabay.com) to your postcard that suits to the content of your message.



Procedure

- After instructions, you now move to breakout room to work in pairs/small groups
- Template link will be shared to you in the breakout room chat, including the instructions
- A two-phase process
- Complete the exercises individually from your own perspective, but interact with others; and introduce your work to your fellow team members / examples in the main session.
- Afterwards, we have a look at the findings about the future(s) together

Phase 1: Meaningful work in 2035 – what is meaningful to you at work?



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Type here by completing the sentences...and add some sentences of your own choice

I am working as...

I am happy about my work because...

My work community and colleagues...

Our tools and devices are...

Already, my first impression about the workplace...

My boss...

Here I have a chance to...

The best thing about the employer is...

I would definitely recommend this workplace because...

Here we put a lot of emphasis on...

Phase 2: Postgard greetings from the future!

“My day at work” – Type your message.



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Type here...

To:

...

...

Country:

Phase 2: Postgard greetings from the future! Select your cover image



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Workshop results

Phase 1: Meaningful work in 2035 – what is meaningful to you at work?



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Type here by completing the sentences...and add some sentences of your own choice

I am working as an Event Sports Coordinator for the City of Lahti

I am happy about my work because it helps me promote cultural wellbeing to people especially to children.

My work community and colleagues are city municipalities and sports sectors.

Our tools and devices are tourism sectors of each municipalities and country and also the business sector.

Already, my first impression about the workplace was innovative and design thinking minded.

My boss is friendly and he embraces change for the better.

Here I have a chance to create better wellbeing most especially teens.

The best thing about the employer is his open mindedness on change.

I would definitely recommend this workplace because it promotes the countries' cultures.

Here we put a lot of emphasis on unity, teamwork and wellbeing.

Your own sentence This job has given me the opportunity to give back to the community.

Your own sentence This job has given me the chance to learn from other people and work as a team and to give everyone a chance to have a voice.

Phase 2: Postgard greetings from the future!

“My day at work” – Type your message.



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Type here...

I woke up excited because it was the day of the competition and I am looking forward to it because of all the hard work that our team put into it to make the event run smoothly. I am also a little bit nervous on what problems might occur during the day although we have discussed and made preventive measures to all the problems that we think might occur.

The event went really well and all the delegation were happy with all the preparations and they all promised that they will be back the next year. I am so proud of my group because they went above and beyond than I expected. They all did their job well and they even thought outside the box to solve the problem.

This is why I love my job because of the team work with my team and to see everyone happy about the event.

To: [REDACTED] *My best friend*

...

...

Country: Philippines

Phase 2: Postgard greetings from the future! Select your cover image



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ThePhoto, kuvaaja PhotoAuthor, käyttöoikeus:
CCYSA.

Phase 1: Meaningful work in 2035 – what is meaningful to you at work?



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Type here by completing the sentences...and add some sentences of your own choice

I am working as...an International coordinator of global education for ESD

I am happy about my work because... I initiate many new international collaboration and allow teachers and students to exchange sustainable knowledge globally and build holistic understanding of SDG for young generations.

My work community and colleagues... are educational sectors and municipalities.

Our tools and devices are... UNESCO goals and the Taiwan integration strategy via policies and national curriculum.

Already, my first impression about the workplace... innovative, enthusiasm, design thinking, creativity, and empathy

My boss... that's me, myself, and the collaboration partners' leaders

Here I have a chance to... conduct a global youth forum from EU and Asian countries to discuss how to cooperate and build their sustainable future together.

The best thing about the employer is... we are eager to co-create a sustainable future together and learn from each others.

I would definitely recommend this workplace because... we create harmony via education.

Here we put a lot of emphasis on... how to do things collectively with a respectful mindset

Your own sentence... I aim to use education to connect Taiwan with the world — both bringing the world to Taiwan and showcasing Taiwan to the world.

Phase 2: Postcard greetings from the future!

“My day at work” – Type your message.



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Dear *me*,

I would like to tell you, in your near future, your life will have a upside down shift. Because, everyday, you wake up with an exciting mood that I know today I will connect and inspire with more educators, teachers, students, and schools from different countries. And at the end of the day, all participants inspire through this innovative, design thinking, and creativity with an enthusiastic vibe really reshape our future and create a more sustainable planet.

Even a small action could lead to a better future.

Your best friend *Me*, 2035

To: [REDACTED] *Myself*

...

...

Country: Finland

Phase 2: Postgard greetings from the future! Select your cover image



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Futures of hospitality and events industry

**– Glimpses and
perspectives**

Mika Kylänen



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Some highlights from a discussion with Co-Pilot: Future of the industry in 2035



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- **Personalization and Experience:** Data-driven and meaningful services
- **Responsibility and Sustainability:** Environmental and social focus
- **Digitalization and Virtuality:** AI, robotics, immersive experiences
- **Safety and Well-being:** Post-pandemic priorities
- **Blending Work and Leisure:** Remote work enables longer stays
- **Diversification:** Themed concepts and new services

Summarising meaningful employee experience in tourism, restaurant and event industries



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More emphasis on meaningfulness, experientiality, value alignment, flexibility, diversity and inclusion. People value sense of involvement, and sense of belonging. Multi-skilling is seen as a good insurance in the work markets. Wellbeing and coping are increasingly crucial parts of good leadership skills.

Work communities become more multicultural that requires wider interaction and cultural skills. Flexibility from both employee's and employer's side is highlighted. Digital solutions can support human-centered approach in customer service – not as a replacement for skilled, empathic staff.

Notes from Futures Platform / AI Futurist



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From an employee experience point-of-view:

- New skills and competencies
- Flexible work arrangements
- More personalised development paths
- Emphasis on work wellbeing and meaningfulness
- A supportive role of technology in working smarter not harder

From a management & leadership point-of-view:

- Change management combines communication, coaching and foresight skills
- Data-driven decision making from a strategic perspective
- Empathy and humaneness – ability to listen and to create trust
- Coaching employees to excel and to achieve their full potential
- Enhancement of innovation culture

More notes from Futures Platform / AI Futurist



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Some key sources of meaningfulness:

- To have an impact on customers, community, and environment
- Personal growth and visible, explicit and motivating career paths
- Workplace well-being and work/life balance
- Appreciation and recognition
- Sense of community and belonging
- Employer's ethics and sustainability practices
- Innovative use of technology



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Final words and next steps

- Final words
- EURA2021 tracking data collection
- Feedback survey



<https://merkityksellinentyo.fi/in-english/>



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**MERIT EmployeeTuesday: Future is
now 7.10.2025**



**Give feedback on
the 7.10. workshop!**

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/4t7KSsyw2Y>



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