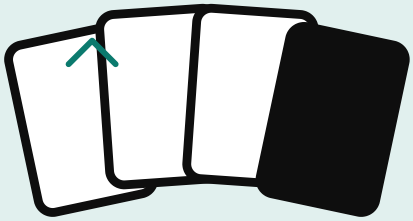
Method

The Thing From The Future

A card game in which players combine a type of future, a place, a kind of object and a mood to imagine a specific object from that future and discuss it as a group.



Origin

Situation Lab, by Stuart Candy and Jeff Watson (Candy, 2018)

Output

Descriptions of objects from possible futures, to discuss as a group

What it's for

It helps you imagine alternative futures, which is hard: the game gives a concrete starting point and makes it fast and fun.

Key elements

Arc

The type of future (growth, collapse, discipline, or transformation) and how far away it is.

Terrain

The context or place where the object appears.

Object

The kind of thing to imagine, which becomes concrete when combined with the other cards.

Mood

What it feels like to come across it.

How it's done

1

Draw the cards one of each type.

2

Describe an object from that future, each person on their own.

3

Discuss the ideas as a group and pick the most telling ones.

Applications in design

When to use it

To open a futures workshop or as a warm-up before building scenarios.

Avoid

Stopping at the witty idea: the value lies in discussing what each object says about that future.

Don't fall for it

Play several rounds: the first ideas tend to be the most obvious.

Connections

Builds on

- Four generic alternative futures
- Diegetic prototype

Used by

- Design futures
- Experiential futures

Authors and works

	Stuart Candy and Jeff Watson	Created the game at Situation Lab.
2009	**Jim Dator**	Proposed the four archetypal futures on which the arc cards are based.

Sources

Original sources

- Candy, S. (2018). Gaming futures literacy: The Thing From The Future. In R. Miller (Ed.), Transforming the future (pp. 233–246). Routledge. View source (https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351048002-7)
- Dator, J. (2009). Alternative futures at the Manoa School. Journal of Futures Studies, 14(2), 1–18. View source (https://jfsdigital.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/142-A01.pdf)

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