

Dear all,

First, it was a great pleasure to participate at this conference in my hometown and it is a dream come true. The participation was diverse in any sense, i.e. academia vs. industry, man vs. woman, young vs. old etc.

I had two "hat"s while participating at the conference. The first was my hat at Siemens Healthcare Turkey as a "businessman" or "manager" and the second was my Vice-President position at the "All Futurists (or whatever we want to call it) Association of Turkey".

It was interesting for me to realize that every presentation had a contribution to one of my positions, tasks and responsibilities: Pleary session was an eye-opener in terms of our on-going identity crisis which is a leading indicator that our field is still in progress and still takes its nourishment from other disciplines. In the following sessions, the measurement scale for managerial foresight was exciting for me since I thought that I will finally be able to assess my direct reports with a valid and dependable tool regarding their foresight capability.

Systemic Foresight Methodology highlighted the fact that we shall not just jump into methods and try to build everything around them but rather start with understanding the issue at hand and then moving forward with steps which enables a participative and problem-oriented approach. Since I just moderated a workshop regarding R&D Foresight for Siemens Healthcare in Turkey, it was a very important input for me to investigate further.

People tend to think that business is only about sales and profit. Well, it is but it is not only about the customers who consume but also about the governmental rules and regulations which make the consumption activity feasible for that particular market. Hence, the presentation about lobbying was really a hit and made me think about how to improve the efficiency of a market for further customer benefit via a lobbying program based on foresight.

The automotive sector presentation I listened to with great interest and the tension at the end around the number of future car industry owners was worth watching. From the business perspective, you only prosper if you are the first mover for as long as possible so I believe there could be another scenario which highlights this aspect rather than the number of owners which really does not matter as long as you are not one of them ☺

It is not easy to look at the mirror for most people but I had to even listen to the mirror while I was listening to the assessment of my project. I guess apart from all the pitfalls it is also necessary to "time" the project so that the CEO who is going to implement the outcomes of that foresight project is around for another at least 10 years...

Looking back to the presentation about the new approach from Japan, the university activities in Romania and the roadmapping activities in the US, I was able to "re"draw the conclusion I had during my Ph.D. studies 7 years ago – which Mr. Akurgal mentioned as the "magic" timeframe during the dinner at Kalamış that you really need an institutional capacity to drive systemic foresight forward.

One of the best moments of the day was when Prof. Wendy Schultz told me about her research results about foresight methods just as we were leaving DEVELİ. That was great because I was able to update myself for my upcoming speech at the very first "Futurism School" - an open certificate program as a joint effort of All Futurist Association of Turkey and Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul which is due to start on October 3, 2009 and last for 15 weeks. Now, I was able to drive back home and meet my 20 months old daughter who might need some foresight counselling for her next 20 years or more ☺

I wish you all a good and safe trip back home and to keep in touch until the next conference,

Alper Alsan, Ph.D.
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