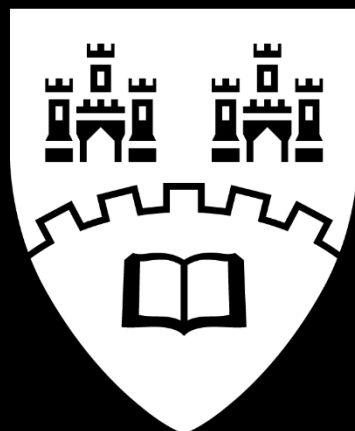




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The Future of Evaluation: where have we been and where are we going?

Facilitators: Sonia Dalkin and Angela Bate

Introduction: Elliott Stern

75 minutes

#TakeOnTomorrow

Overview

- Introductory provocation: Professor Elliott Stern
- This interactive workshop will use the 'Three Horizons' technique to think about the future of evaluation in health and social care
- We will consider:
 - The current 'norms' in evaluation (i.e. business as usual)
 - Innovations which, if appropriately developed, may bring about change in evaluation
 - The desired future of evaluation (the 'new' normal).
- At the end of this workshop, as a group, we will better understand the current state of evaluation in health and social care, what the future of evaluation in health and social care may look like, and how we can move toward that theoretically, practically, and pragmatically.
- Please note that this session will involve some movement around the room so do let us know if we can support you should you have any access requirements



Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

Elliot Stern FAcSS

Emeritus Professor University of Lancaster

Editor, journal Evaluation

Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

My argument – work in progress!

- Evaluation has been shaped by successive generations of ‘policy scenarios’ that have largely determined who evaluates, what is evaluated, how we evaluate
- These scenarios have bequeathed us a legacy – of assumptions, actors, theories, methods as well as modes of practice and espoused values
- We are now witnessing the passing of old and the emergence of new policy scenarios that sit uncomfortably with the legacy evaluation has inherited....

Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

Three incumbent scenarios....

- Social service/welfare state scenario
 - Public management scenario
 - Enabling State scenario

Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

Social Service/Welfare scenario

- Times of social solidarity and consensus – State was there to meet needs and deliver services – a monopoly supplier
- Evaluation undertaken by sector experts in health, housing, welfare often client relationship with public service provider
- Evaluation interested in monitoring service delivery and money being spent on time, uncovering new needs and piloting new services
 - Highpoint of participatory, democratic and self-evaluation

Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

Legacies of Social Service/Welfare scenario

- Continuing tradition of sector-experts and auditors conducting evaluation
- Initiated 'siloed', programme-based delivery tied to departmental budgets
- Distrust by state-actors of bottom-up, participatory evaluation – legacies of democratic experiments that challenged public agencies and increased demand/costs

Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

Public Management scenario

- Refocussing on cost-saving and public management rather than public administration
 - Emergence of outsourcing & contract compliance
 - Process innovation- new ways to deliver & target services
- Expansion of evaluation that is centrally managed and contracted
- Belief in 'superiority of markets' and limits of the State/public action

Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

Legacies of Public Management scenario

- Entry of economists and economic models into evaluation e.g. NPM, principal agent theory
 - Learning reframed as ‘learning by Commissioners’ and/or transmissive rather than collaborative learning
 - More fragmented knowledge production: sectoral experts, management consultants, economists, generic evaluators,
- Silo reinforcement as ministries/agencies compete for resources and carefully control ‘decentralisation’
 - Marketisation of evaluation commissioning – evaluation professionalisation demand, partly competition for market control

Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

‘Enabling State’ scenario

- Product v’s process innovation i.e. ‘alternatives to welfare’ – active labour market policies; industrial and innovation strategies; place-based territorial strategies; preventative public health
- Multisectoral, complex & ‘horizontal’ – emerging interest in behaviour change from above (‘nudge theory’, incentive-based, extrinsic motivation...)
- Mismatch between long-term policies and implementation chains & short run electoral cycles; and siloed policy responsibilities
 - Growing policy demand for results and impacts despite growing uncertainty

Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

Legacies of 'Enabling State' scenario

- Imbalances between decentralised policies and centralised evaluation
- Renewed interest in explanation/causal inference: theories of change, realist and 'configurational'; systems and complexity thinking
 - Entry of new generation of economists as evaluators – behavioural and counterfactual - interested in measuring impact
 - Investment by policy community in uncertainty/risk reducing methods and infrastructures
- Limited interest in implementation, process and real time evaluations

Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

The accumulated legacies of these scenarios is a top-down policy system, that distrusts bottom-up participation and experiment; that produces fragmented knowledge via competing disciplines and professions; that works in silos and finds 'joint evaluations' very difficult; that thinks short term and programmatically rather than intergenerationally or in real-time; that favours models of behaviour change that are extrinsic and sometimes even manipulative..

Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

Two emergent and intertwined but still weak Policy Scenarios ...

Transition management: that attempts to manage societal change in the face of climate, biodiversity and sustainability risks

and

Crisis management: that comes into its own when transition plans and policies fail in the face of what Kay and King call 'radical uncertainty' whether climatic, geopolitical, demographic or technological

Policy Scenarios and their Legacies

- Transition management and Crisis management both require consensus building, conflict resolution, sense making and above all large-scale behaviour change

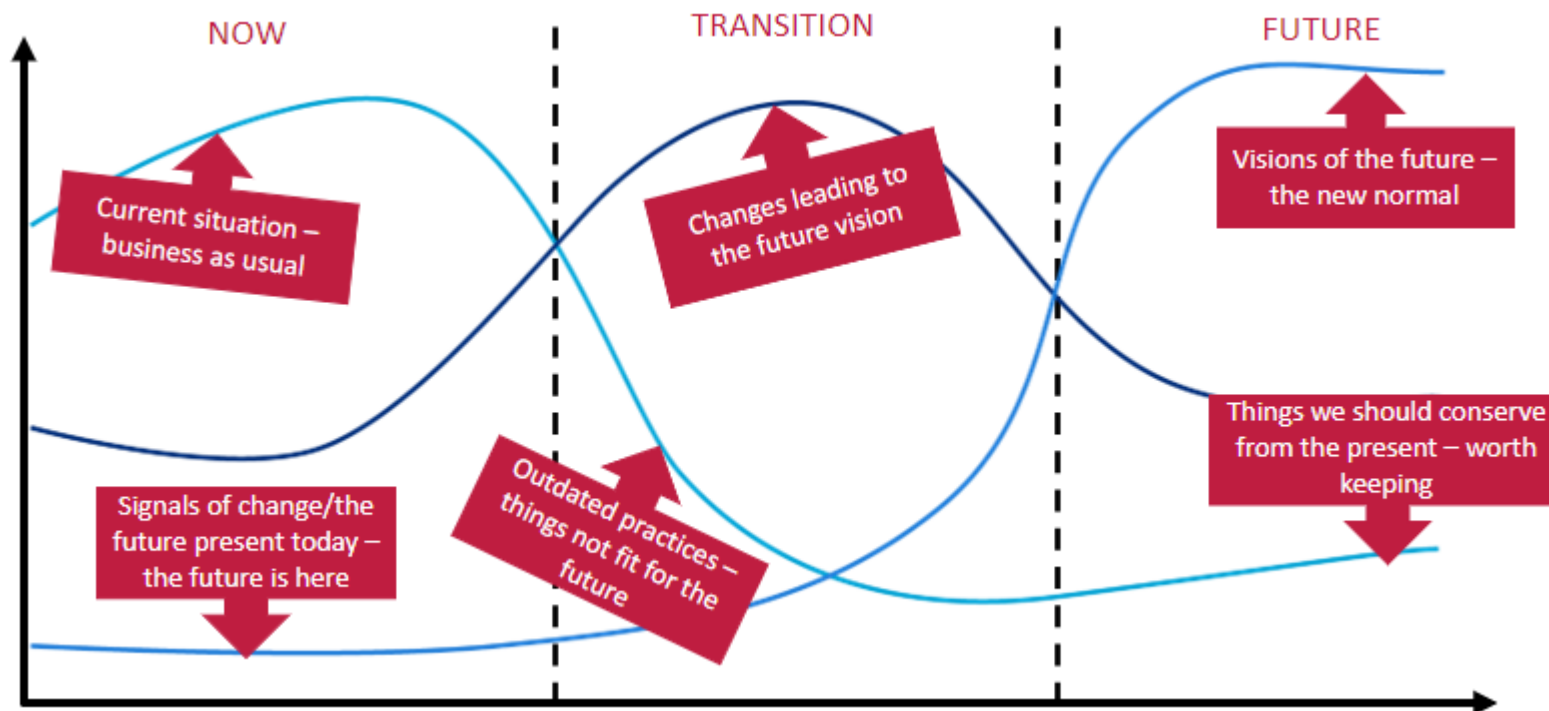
An important tension for the policy community to resolve, is between enforced/externally regulated and voluntary/‘self-determined’ behaviour change pathways (following Ryan and Decci)

- An important tension for the evaluation community to resolve is whether it can be part of a community of practice able to work on equal terms with many other practitioners and disciplines

Or more simply: to clarify what it is we bring to the party!

Three Horizons approach

- A way of thinking about the future that asks us to make explicit our current assumptions, emerging changes and possible and desired futures.



Reference: Dr Hayley Trowbridge,
Presentation given at The National Centre
for Research Methods MethodsCon: Futures
2024. Sept 13th 2024.



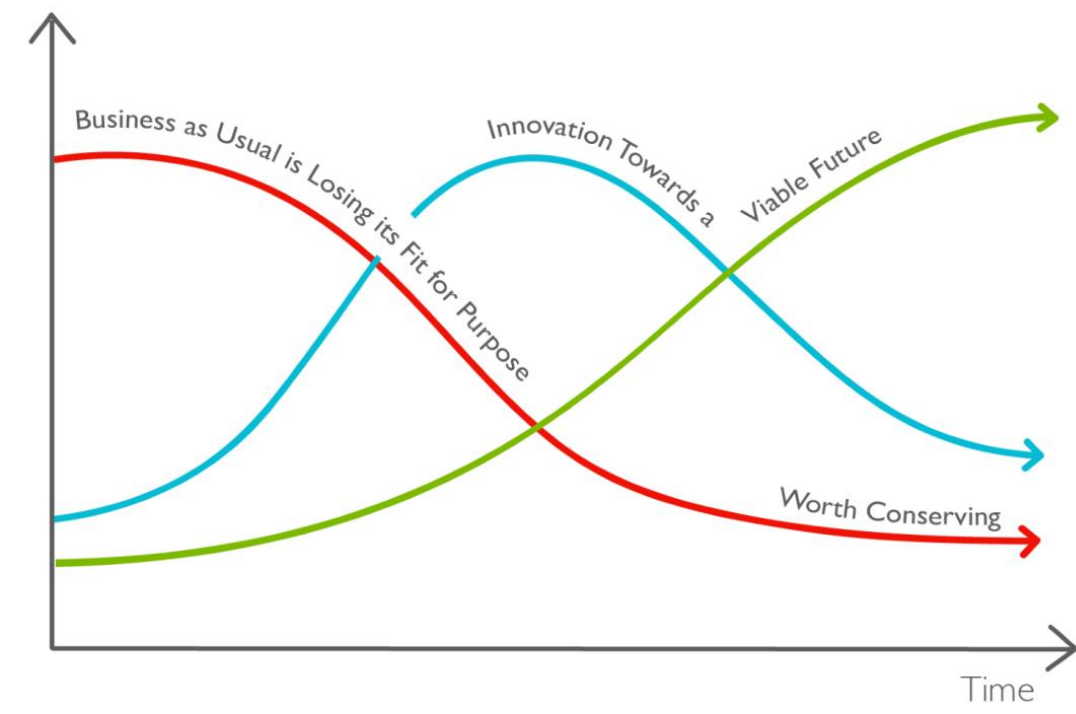
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A note on post-its!

- The colour is important!
- **PINK = Horizon 1** (current assumptions/the present day)
- **GREEN = Horizon 3** (emerging future/the new normal)
- **BLUE = Horizon 2** (changes required/the transition)



Pattern



Reference: <https://www.h3uni.org/tutorial/three-horizons/>

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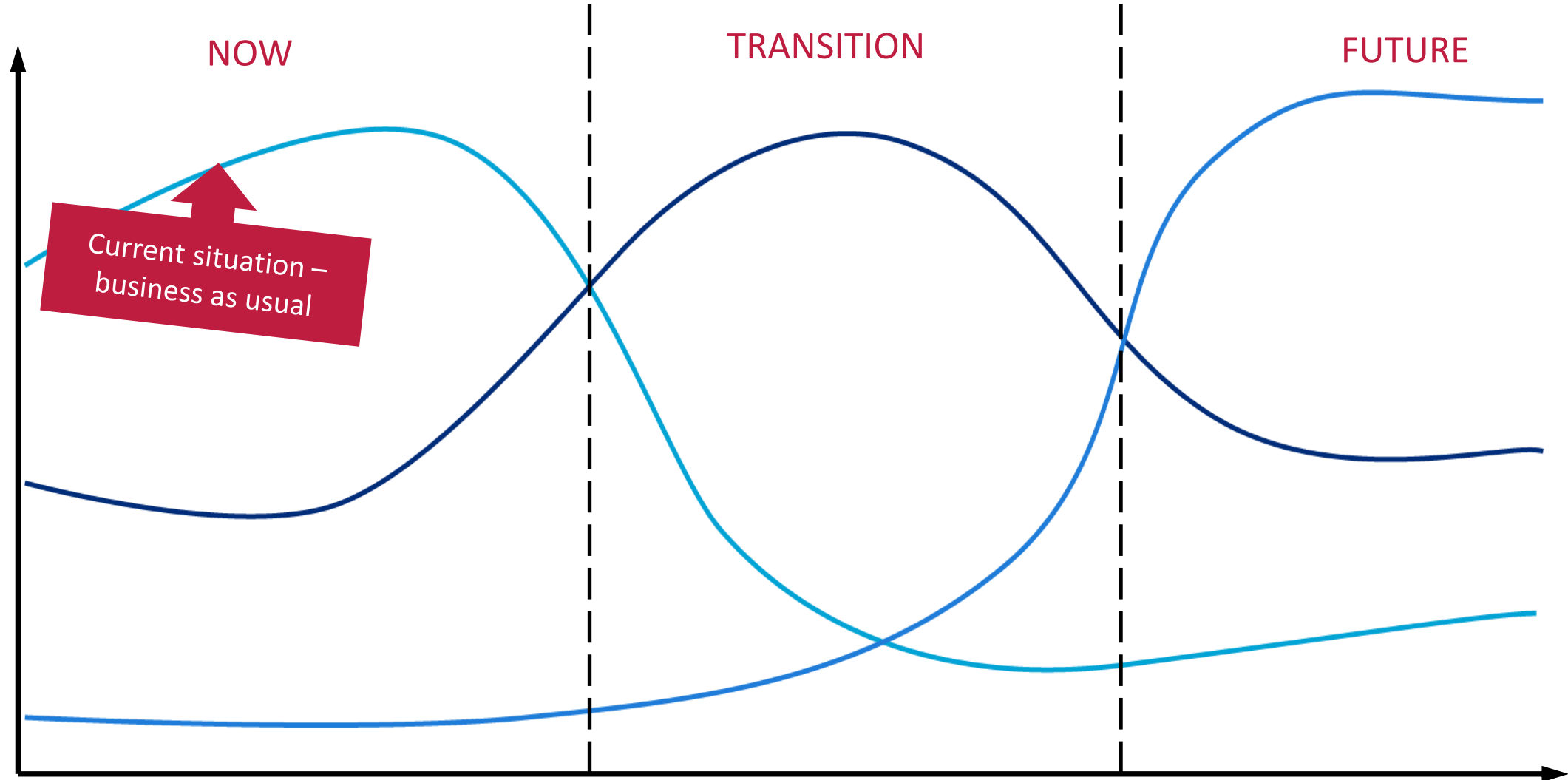


Horizon 1. 5mins

- The current state of play
- Examining present concerns.

- Describe what health and social care evaluations look like now.
For example:
 - What is evaluated?
 - By whom?
 - Using what methods/approaches?
 - To what end/impact?

Horizon 1



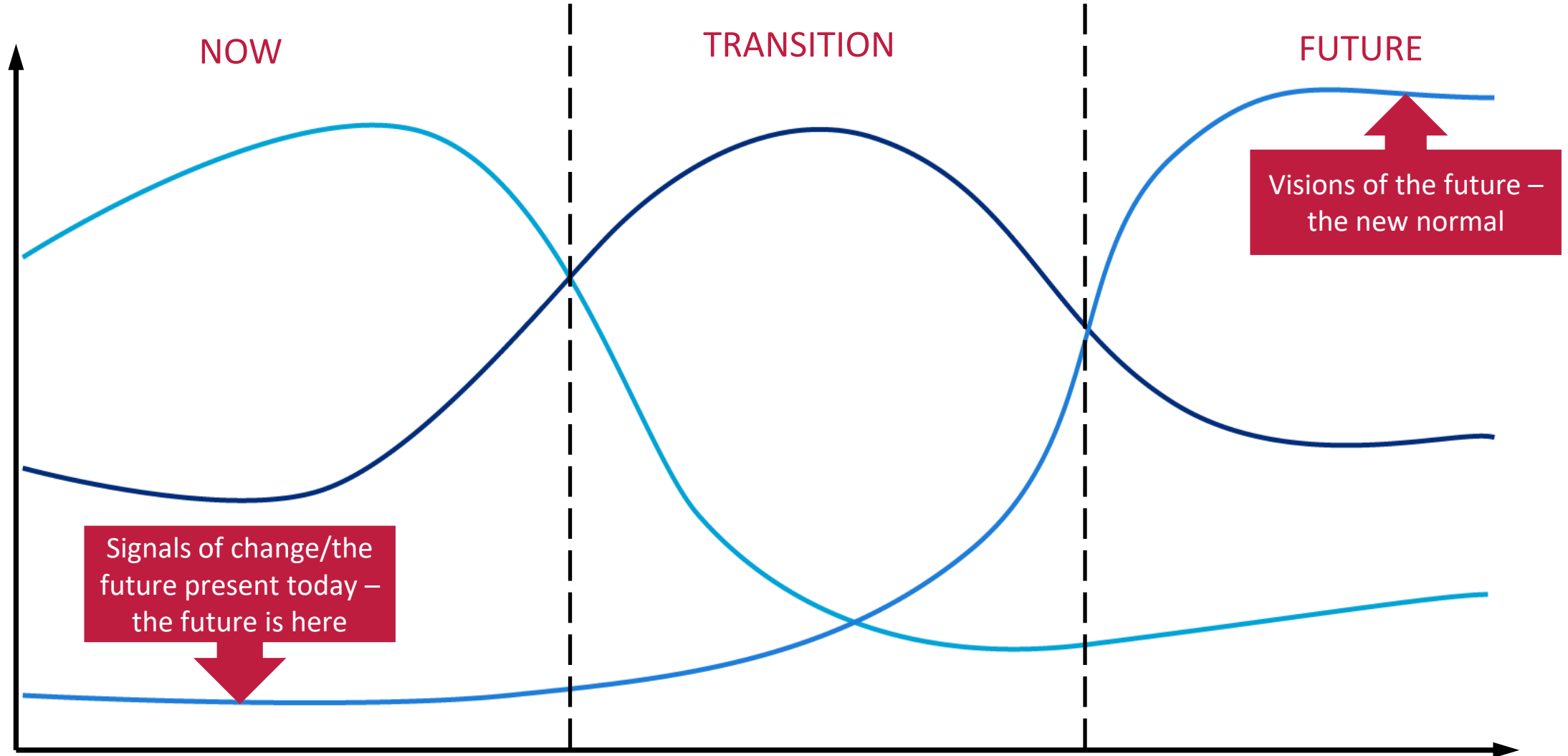
Horizon 3. 15mins

- The new normal
- Exploring future aspirations. For example:
 - What should health and social care evaluation look like?
 - How should it be done?
 - What does impact look like?

- The emerging future
- Identifying pockets of the future in the present. For example:
 - Any examples of new ways of working in existing practice that demonstrate the above?
 - Inter/transdisciplinary working?
 - New approaches to/advances in evaluation?
 - Novel approaches to dissemination and policy impact?



Horizon 3



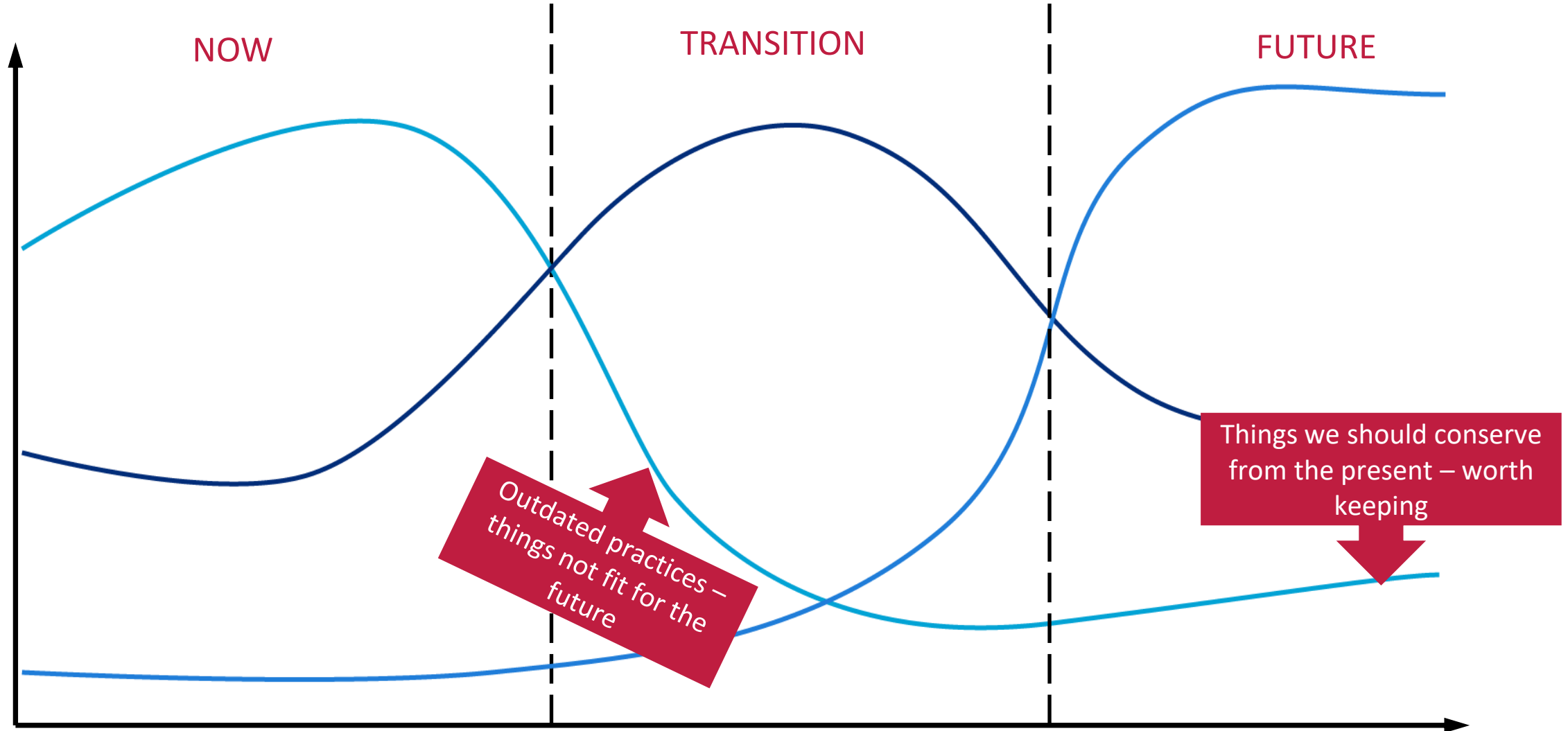
Horizon 1. 15mins

- Key or desirable elements that should be retained in the future. For example:
 - What works well currently?
 - Examples

- Things not fit for the future. For example:
 - What does not work well that we should drop?
 - Outdated practices



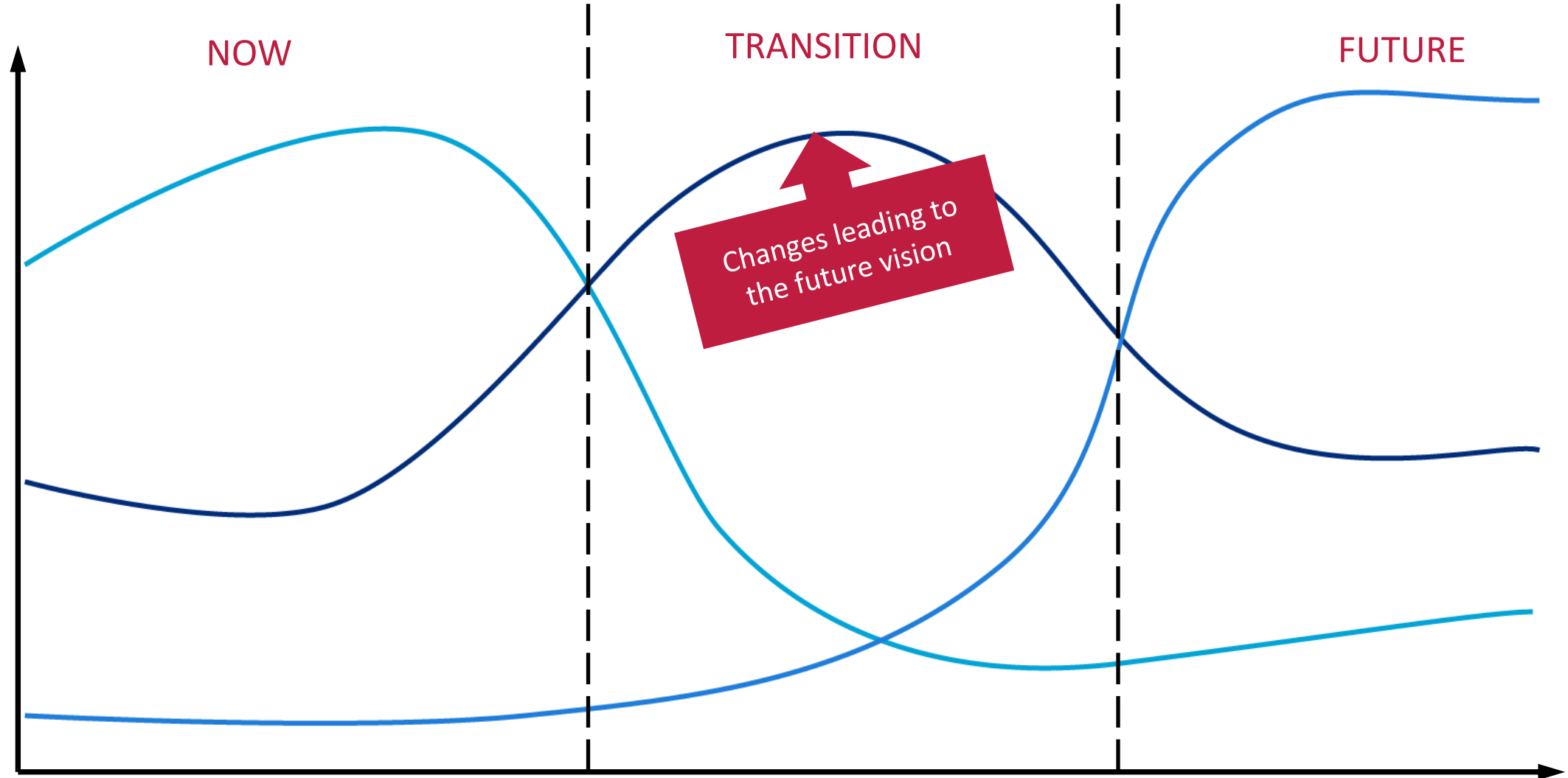
Horizon 1



Horizon 2. 5mins

- The transition
- What changes do we need to make that will lead to the future vision
- Changes to, for example:
 - Knowledge generation (research teaching and learning)?
 - Research environment (reward, structures/departments/research groups)?
 - Funding (how evaluations are funded/funding structures)?
 - Policy (methods of dissemination and knowledge translation, policy receptiveness/willingness)?
 - Practice (co-production, embedded research)?

Horizon 2



Feedback and summary 15mins

- BROWSE THE HORIZONS
- Highlights and main themes
- Discussion
- What next
- A summary will be circulated to all delegates.
- THANK YOU

