

Archetype Analysis Thematic Results

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Introduction

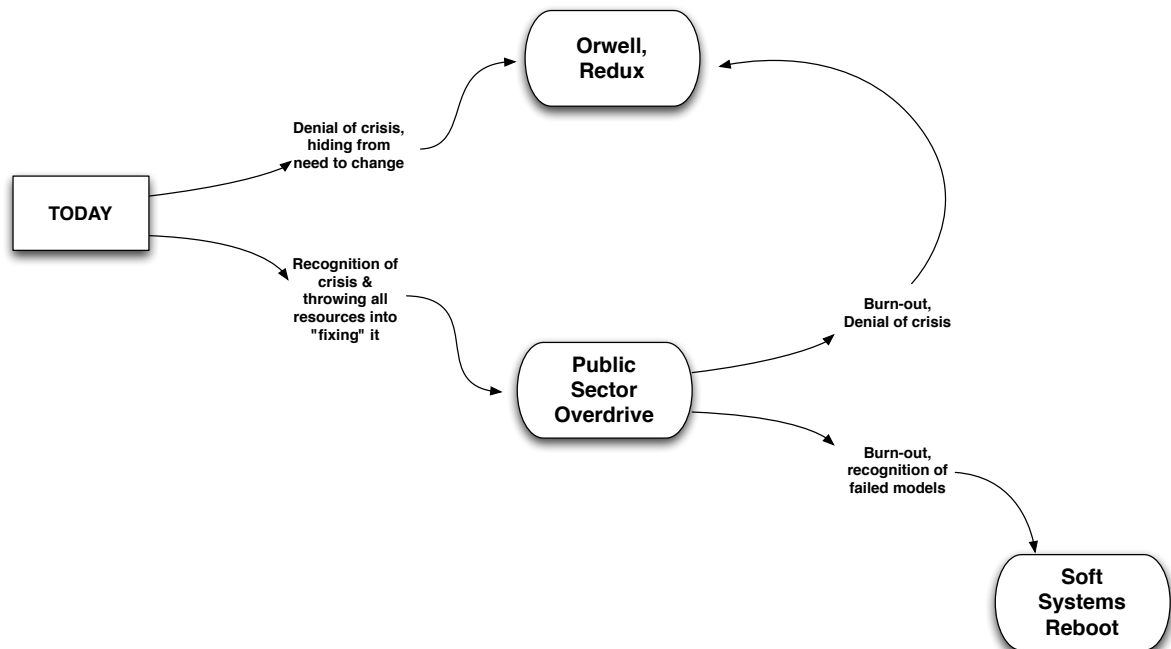
This document extracts key themes from the scenario fragments sorted into archetypes and arranges them into draft narrative headlines.

Quotes from relevant fragments, both verbatim and summarised, are included beneath each headline for further detail.

The goal was to use these as narrative structures for scenario building, which was successful. The process and result is described in more detail at <http://news.noahraford.com/?p=650>

Possible Scenario Pathways: The Future of Public Service

Raford, 2011



Archetype A - “Orwell Redux”

Given: Diminished resources
Higher expectations from the public

Thematic headlines:

1. **Internal control & pressures to produce**

“My organisation is into ‘operational efficiencies’, which means losing staff.”

“I have noticed that what we do is has become increasingly tinged with messages about ‘picking up the metabolic rate, doing more and more, 80% is good enough, don’t over-deliver.”

“Getting tighter and harder, less loving and generous”

2. **Attempt to control risk by changing as little as possible**

“Don’t over-deliver”

“Control the risks, don’t do anything that might rock the boat.”

“Doing more with less, don’t do anything too risky.”

3. **Deception, double-think & propaganda**

“Rhetoric is about partnerships and flexibility when the reality is about control”

“They say ‘innovation & collaborate’ but mean ‘giving up responsibility’

“Becoming more adept at spin”

“Senior management understands the need to consult, but is fearful that this would leave the organisation being held accountable”

At the international level, “will they do a Greece and pretend that they can cut things back, lie to Brussels and the Euro central bank, but in reality do nothing?”

4. **Decreased innovation, poor performance and economic stagnation**

“I’m working the innovation group at a large public agency. They can’t even open attachments in email.”

“Being forced to do more with less.”

“Reduce costs and minimise risks while delivering fewer services.”

5. **Slow realisation of the public and markets**

“It doesn’t take much to send fear into the hearts of the trading public... sell currency and force the hands of govt’s perceived as under-performing.”

6. **Anger & blowback**

“US will have to devalue the dollar to repay its loans, the only real question is when? When it does all hell will break loose.”

“Large numbers of the population will be in shock when the real crash comes.”

“Their malleable souls will be easily manipulated into seeing the benefits of any new order. The tool is fear.”

“Chaos in the streets! Like Greece. Willingness to take to the street, take back the streets, but in fact, to see the streets again as public space.”

Archetype B - “Soft systems reboot”

Given: Diminished resources
Inability to meet demands leads to a crisis in governance

Thematic headlines:

- 1. Public sector in crisis, unable to cope**

“Our management systems are not fit for mastering complexity.”
“The perfect storm is still to come.”
“Metaphorically speaking the ‘nervous system’ of our institutions are collapsing.”
- 2. Overcoming fear through bold & creative leadership**

“[Discomfort with ambiguity] is a major internal factor for PS leaders to overcome.”
“They need to shift their ‘inner operating system’ from being reactive to the world around them, to one of being creative within it.”
“Engaging community in a systematic way requires courage, staring down fear, a willingness to observe and listen carefully.”
“Public sector will need to engage the community to bring together disparate groups.”
- 3. Values shift / rise of civil society / partnerships taking responsibility**

“The public services will have to change drastically in the coming decade.”
“There will be rising organizational structures in civil society which connect the dots between government, private sector and citizens.”
“More public-private partnerships, but only once politicians and public sector execs have acquired better insight, understanding and professionalism around such partnerships.”
“A new world is emerging, I’m taking that responsibility and I see patterns shifting.”
- 4. New tools & new leaders arise to facilitate social change**

“Catalyzing change is part of the [new] role [of leadership].”
“We have new solutions, of which Sensemaker can be one.”
“These new tools are faster, more precise and in the right direction... than the ones that have brought us in this crisis.”
“Public service will need to be more efficient and effective, drawing on all available forms of tools; social media, networks and web 2.0 technologies.”
- 5. Producing local self-reliance**

“Public service [will be] about being self-sufficient and connected to a larger context.”
“Our city... is trying to become a ‘self-sustainable’ city... ensure more local decisions about resources in case of a national or world crisis... without having to rely on state, national or multinational governments and corporations.”
- 6. With lower profits & material wealth but increased quality of life & other “soft benefits”**

“The private sector will need to forego some profit and both parties will need to expand their view of ‘solutions’... and accept longer ROI horizons.”
“All ROI [will not be] hard cash but ‘soft’ benefits for the people.”

Archetype C - “Public Sector Overdrive”

Given: Diminished resources
Genuine willingness to innovate and change
Embracing new tools and approaches

Thematic headlines:

1. **Things are moving too fast for government to keep up**

“Public service tries to keep up and do the right things, but inertia and human inability to work towards long term goals [gets in the way].”

“There is significant uncertainty in my job [to restructure my dep’t]... I am still unsure how a centralised finance system will work in a decentralised organisation.”

“There is too much building going on and the city can’t afford enough inspectors.”

2. **A lack of public understanding of complex issues causes ignorance of long term consequences**

“The media can no longer keep up with intelligent dialogue and the population seems unable to think critically.”

“There is very little evidence of general public understanding of complex issues.”

3. **Technology helps manage structural & cultural change**

“Opening up government data sets... is allowing all manner of public-spirited applications to be developed.”

“This may mark the start of breaking down the centralised bureaucracies that attempt to manage public life.”

“In the future... [PS managers] will be expected to make a significant cultural shift.”

4. **Social innovation, transparency and entrepreneurship take the lead**

“We need a new mind set to visualize, value and leverage what is already done in the public sector.”

“We need to encourage social innovations and social entrepreneurship.”

“There is massive public investment in the public sector, which can be commer

5. **Innovation-chasing leads to reactive & opportunistic policies**

“There is a huge churn of senior and mid-ranking positions which means long term planning and policy is compromised.”

“Decision-making is geared towards the 2-3 year promotion cycle...”

“The progress trap of short-term thinking that doesn’t allow serious discussion...”

6. **Burn-out, short-termism, volatility & creeping crises**

“The burden of constant change without long term vision tends to burn people out very quickly. Cynicism and change-fatigue.”

“We lack the understanding about how decisions we make now will have unintended consequences in the future.”

“We are eroding our tax investment through anorexic cost-reduction approaches learned from industrial management schools (such as ‘lean’). Imagine a surgeon using 25% less stitches on you as a patient just to save money!”

“Foretelling government collapse... the city can’t repair its own problems and is having to shut everything down.”