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CCT Distinguished Lecture

Leaders Make the Future: Ten New Leadership Skills for an Uncertain World
Bob Johansen, The Institute for the Future

 Life Sciences Building A101
 March 04, 2009 - 11:30 am
Abstract:

Grounded in the most recent ten-year forecast by the prestigious Institute for the Future, Bob Johansen will paint a picture of the VUCA world (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous.) Then, he will identify the new leadership skills needed to thrive in that context, including examples, and tools to develop your expertise in each of the ten skills. How adroit are you at dilemma-flipping—turning problems that can't be permanently solved into opportunities? What is your level of immersive learning ability—the ability to dive into very different physical and online worlds and learn from them? Do you know what a smart mob is and how to organize one? Some leadership skills are enduring. But to be successful in the future, leaders also need an emerging set of skills uniquely suited to dealing with the challenges of the threshold decade we are entering. Today's businesses and organizations are operating in a world characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Though they already seemed stressed to the breaking point, Johansen reminds us that we are also more connected than ever before in our history, but we must fully realize the benefits of that connectivity. In the next decade, leaders will not just see the future—they will make it! But they will not be able to do it alone. Institute for the Future has been developing ten-year forecasts for some of the world's top organizations for forty years—it is the only futures group to outlive its own forecasts. Bob Johansen draws on IFTF's latest forecast (included in this book) to introduce skills that will help leaders see connections in the larger systems of which they are a part, embrace shared assets and opportunities, and cut through the chaos to make a better future. We are facing times of unprecedented challenge. Combining research-based forecasts, real-world examples, and his own astute analysis, Bob Johansen helps you identify and acquire the abilities you need to thrive in this difficult world.

Speaker's Bio:

Bob has worked for more than 30 years as a forecaster, exploring the human side of new technologies. He has a deep interest in the future of religion and its impact on business, society, and individuals. Bob works mainly with senior corporate executives across a wide range of industries. He has rich experience in presenting IFTF's foresight and then drawing out insights-inputs to strategy-and-action steps. Bob served as IFTF's president and CEO from 1996 to 2004. Still on IFTF's Board and the IFTF Leadership Team, Bob now spends most of his time with IFTF sponsors, writing, public speaking, and facilitating content. Before his role as president, Bob created and led IFTF's program on emerging information technologies-now called the Technology Horizons Program. Since joining the IFTF staff in 1973, he has explored the social and organizational impact of new technologies. One of the first social scientists to study the human and organizational impacts of communications and computing technologies, his focus is primarily three to five years out, going as far as ten years when possible, and occasionally as far as 20 years. Bob is a frequent keynote speaker. He has taught both graduate and undergraduate courses. He is the author of six books, including *Upsizing the Individual in the Downsized Organization* with novelist Rob Swigart, a guide for organizations undergoing technological change and reengineering, and *GlobalWork* with Mary O'Hara-Devereaux, a guide to managing global, cross-cultural teams. A social scientist with an interdisciplinary background, Bob holds a BS degree from the University of Illinois, where he also played varsity basketball, and a Ph.D. from Northwestern University. Bob also has a divinity school degree from what is now called Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, where he studied comparative religions.