My book, *The Key*, is above all about resilience. It is about how today’s corporations, faced with a fragile and uncertain world, can ensure their future and that of the communities surrounding them. In the book, I have shown many examples of how corporations can secure their future, and why embedding themselves in the wider community is a vital part of doing so.

The Key deals with global issues, and at times these can seem overwhelming. The questions and challenges they raise can seem unanswerable and even insurmountable, with the optimal solutions being slightly different for every organisation. The purpose of this workbook is to help you break these issues down into a series of questions and statements so that you can assess your levels of inner and outer resilience. In pondering and answering these questions, you will begin to identify your company’s strengths when it comes to building resilience – as well as the gaps and weaknesses that may prevent it from doing so.

This workbook will be of greatest benefit to those who have read *The Key* and are familiar with the examples and case studies within it. It is my hope that by thinking about the questions asked here, and applying them to your own organisation, you will be able to find the key to a more resilient future.

**LYNDA GRATTON, 2014**
THE FIRST STEP: GATHERING YOUR RESILIENCE COMMUNITY

The issues discussed in The Key are wide-reaching, so it is unlikely that there is one person or team within your organisation who is best placed to think about these issues. Therefore, the first step is to bring together a group of stakeholders into a Resilience Community to address the questions raised in The Key. My advice would be to find people who are excited about the idea of building resilience, and keen to make a contribution. The more diverse the group, the more they will be able to understand the organisation. So think about the diversity of membership along these dimensions:

• **Power and influence:** the leaders of businesses and teams are crucial to setting an agenda for change and allocating resources, so it is wise to include them.

• **Generations:** each generation plays a role in building resilience. Be sure to include multiple generations, from senior employees at a mentoring and coaching stage to younger joiners.

• **Functions:** building resilience requires action from, many functions, including HR (since people practices and processes are crucial), Innovation (because experimentation and creative thinking will be key), and CSR (who bring a view of social values and current initiatives). Getting their ideas and buy-in will be crucial.

• **Businesses:** resilience often comes down to corporate practices and culture, as well as day-to-day habits and behaviours. That’s why it’s important to gain insight from various parts of the organisation.

• **Inside and out:** you may want to engage external stakeholders such as partners and community representatives at certain points in the conversation.

Once you have gathered your Resilience Community together, it’s time to begin preparing for the future.
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Talking to those who lead corporations around the world, I have heard that most want to enter the future in an optimistic and prepared way, and many believe that the next ten years will be crucial. What they are less sure about is how to prepare for the future. In my experience, I have found the organisations most able to prepare for the future and to build resilience in a fragile world have some of the qualities outlined below.

Share these six statements with your Resilience Community and ask them to think carefully about your organisation and whether it fits the descriptions. As they do this, ask them to make a list of three or four ways in which you feel your organisation achieves this. The answers will help you examine the extent of your organisation’s resilience from a range of different perspectives, and to identify any gaps or areas in which the organisation is strong or weak.

Resilient organisations are made up of emotionally strong, intellectually challenging and socially connected communities of employees.

1
2
3
4

Resilient organisations have a deep concern for their legacy, and are able to balance the needs of the long-term with the requirement to deliver short-term financial results.

1
2
3
4

Resilient organisations have an external perspective and an awareness of the forces that are shaping their lives and their business. They want to leverage these forces in a positive way, rather than simply be subjected to them.

1
2
3
4
In resilient organisations, people are optimistic and opportunistic. They see the forces at work in the world as opportunities rather than as threats, and are able to think consciously and intentionally about the interventions that would improve the broader system.

Resilient organisations understand that their groups and business are not isolated from the communities in which they work, but rather are profoundly related to them.

In resilient organisations, people think comprehensively about the larger environment in which they operate.
RESILIENCE begins within the organisation. Without a core of inner resilience, employees will lack the energy, capability, and innovation to meet business performance targets. Moreover, they cannot hope to reach into their communities and confront global challenges. Inner resilience is built when ideas and knowledge are amplified, emotional vitality is enhanced, and social connections are harnessed. These are brought into action through the way that employees behave on a day-to-day basis, which in part is shaped by the context of the organisation: the practices, processes and structure. Finally, it is shaped by the way leaders create a purpose and narrative.

It is in the combination of employees, organisation structure, and leadership purpose and narrative that create the capabilities at the heart of inner resilience.
AMPLIFYING INTELLIGENCE AND WISDOM
Resilience is created when people have the opportunity to be insightful and analytical, not only as individuals, but also in teams and wise crowds.

Have you built diversity into the way you think? Insight comes from a diversity of thought. Looking into the future means conversations about the strategy of the business, how emerging forces will shape it, and the role business can play in the wider society. Is your organisation relying on the same people to have the same conversation, and in their similarity, do they lack the mix of perspectives and heuristics that are so crucial to innovative problem solving?

Are you creating wise crowds? As business challenges become more complex, so knowledge and wisdom come to the fore. Are you making the most of collaborative technology to join people up into wise crowds, and to effectively capture their insights and experiences? Are you ensuring these conversations are strong enough by giving access to real data, and broad enough by listening to those outside as well as inside.

Do you know how to experiment? Very few organisations have so far developed the capabilities needed to run experiments in management with as much rigor as they would run scientific experiments. Yet many of the challenges organisations are facing are sufficiently complex and ambiguous to require experimentation as a core competence. Effective experiments provide an opportunity to ask the unthinkable without betting the company on the outcome. Do you have any examples of experimentation within your organisation? What is the attitude to risk taking? What would it take to build deeper experimental capability?

ENHANCING EMOTIONAL VITALITY
When people are energised and have vitality, they are more likely to bring creativity and innovation to their work.

Is the organisation sapping energy? An organisation’s resilience is built through employees who are healthy and resilient. Yet work is often designed in a way that increases stress levels and drains vitality and creativity. One important aspect of this is measuring the vitality of the company to understand how emotional resources within the company are being supported or undermined. Are there specific groups that seem to be under the most pressure? Is there an understanding of what is causing this pressure?

Are managers too attached to traditional ways of working? The industrialisation of work saw the emergence of traditional working hours and office-based work. The challenge is that too often these traditional ways of working create real pressures, and lead to exhausting emotional cycles between work and home. The need for 24/7 working in global corporations; the rapid development of advanced collaborative technologies; and changing employee aspirations have together created an opportunity
to reinvent work. But ‘presenteeism’ and managerial inertia can cause these opportunities to be missed. Do the working practices simply represent the needs of the past? Is it time to question the basic assumptions about the way that work gets done and bring in more flexibility?

**What is stopping change?** Employee vitality is becoming crucial. Yet across the world, companies are sapping this vitality through fragmented work and exhausting hours. An agenda to build vitality will include looking hard at where work is done (should there be more opportunities for working from home?); how work is designed (is more time for playful creativity needed?); how career paths are configured (should we include more on- and off-ramp opportunities?) There has to be an agenda for change in every organisation that addresses this challenge and looks at the options. Have these options been acknowledged, and are the barriers understood? Only by acknowledging and understanding barriers to change can action to enhance emotional vitality occur.

**HARNESSING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS**
The social wealth of a corporation is held in the values of generosity and cooperation, and in the extent and richness of networks that crisscross the company and stretch outside the boundaries of the corporation into the supply chain and the wider ecosystem.

- **Is there a culture of generosity?** In resilient, high performing companies, people trust each other and are willing to share ideas and networks. This trust is fuelled by a cooperative spirit and a culture of generosity. Does the way that the organisation treats people signal trust? Are leaders role-modelling trust and generosity?

- **Is there a capacity to create high performing complex teams?** More and more work takes place in teams, and these teams are often made up of people who are highly specialised, who are different from each other, and who are working in different places. These are complex teams to manage, and they often fail. It takes purposeful leadership and managerial skill to make them perform. Do you have the capability training in place to develop these skills and make this work?

- **Is there enough communication?** We have discovered that social connections are significantly enhanced and harnessed by constant communication. As companies become more global, more of this communication is becoming virtual. Whether through intranets, virtual communities or telepresence, is the company investing sufficient time and energy into creating a constant sense of communication?
Now more than ever, organisations need to realise that they do not operate in isolation. Building resilience involves taking a long-term view, and thinking deeply about your organisational interaction with the surrounding community is an essential part of this. In this section you will find questions to help you assess how deeply your organisation is rooted in its environment.

**BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR**

- **Is community activity encouraged?** Are there practices and processes in place that create opportunities for people to feel part of the community? Is volunteering encouraged? Organisations that encourage volunteering have reported on the dual impact it has had, both on the engagement of employees and on its positive impact on the community. Is there more that can be done in your organisation to leverage this asset?

- **Are people too tired and stressed?** When the emotional cycle between home and work becomes caustic and people arrive at work exhausted, the idea of supporting the community is pushed down the agenda. Is the design of work creating so much stress for people that they are too exhausted to participate in community activities?

- **Is there too much focus on transactional behaviours?** Is the focus on economics driving out compassion? When the only standards of an organisation are those of utility and the market, values like empathy and generosity are crowded out. Is the performance management system so focused on transactional behaviour that it negates relational acts of generosity?

**ANCHORING IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN**

- **Do you know what is going on in your supply chain?** Are there sufficient monitoring practices in place to really understand the conditions and experiences of those working in the supply chain? Are there more opportunities to leverage the core capabilities of the corporation into the supply chain?

- **Are your leaders able to build alliances?** When a supply chain extends into particularly fragile communities then supporting these communities becomes a complex task. There are often NGOs on the ground already working in these communities. So the capacity to understand these various stakeholders, and to build alliances with them, becomes critical. Do you have the training and development in place to ensure that this capability is being built?
• **Are Social Business Models understood?** There is a growing belief that having a positive impact on poor communities can only be sustained if businesses follow an economic model that is sufficiently robust to make a profit. With this in mind, the challenge executives face is whether they sufficiently understand how to create low-cost options that are able to meet consumer aspirations, even if they are at the ‘bottom of the pyramid’. Is this a way of doing business that has been explored within the corporation?

**STEPS TOWARDS ADDRESSING GLOBAL CHALLENGES**

Across the world, a generation of young people have no strong relationship with work, or the institutions of work. While there is unprecedented wealth for some, others have very little, and inequality is rising. The growing challenge of youth unemployment and the widening gap between rich and poor are creating an powerful breeding ground for malcontent. At the same time, a scramble for resources is playing out across the world, bringing with it the spectre of climate change. Organisations are ideally placed to address these challenges, and these questions provide a glimpse at what it takes:

• **What do we really care about?** In those organisations that address global issues, the initiatives inevitable start with a group of people saying they really care about something. It could be youth unemployment, or poverty in the communities in which they work, or it could be climate change. It is this impetus that leads to them thinking hard about what they are good at, and whom they can partner with. So the question is, how can you support passion in employees and really harness the energy around issues they deeply care about?

• **What are we good at?** Corporations tend to be strong in one of three core capabilities: in their research and innovation capability, their capacity to scale and mobilise, and in their ability to build alliances across multiple stakeholders. Those organisations that really make a difference to the big global challenges do so by leveraging these capabilities. In your organisation, which of these capabilities are best developed to serve you in the areas you care about?

• **Who can we partner with?** Global challenges like youth unemployment and climate change can only be addressed through multi-stakeholder initiatives. These could include other organisations, NGOs, governments or not-for-profits. Finding the right configuration of partners and building alliances with them is a crucial part of addressing global challenges. How skilled is the organisation at identifying and aligning with these potential stakeholders?
REIMAGINING LEADERSHIP

By far the most important aspect of ensuring a resilient future is the quality of leaders and leadership development. To ensure you are headed in the right direction, it's important to bring together all the stakeholders in your talent management programme - including existing leaders and individuals responsible for recruitment - to think carefully about the questions and statements below:

- **Is the corporation promoting the right people?** It seems that some people are more able to operate on a longer time-span of discretion, and more able to see issues at the global rather than the local level. In the organisation, are there people who are good at looking forward, or is there a process to identify those more able and prepared to take a longer view? Recruiting for diversity requires a positive and often courageous action, followed by a period of support. So when you recruit senior teams from outside, do you continuously go to the same sources, or are you prepared to look more widely for different people?

- **How are we encouraging the ‘inner journey’?** In a world of transparency, empowered employees and demanding consumers, authenticity and a strong moral compass will be more important than ever. What are the means by which potential leaders are encouraged to learn about themselves and develop a narrative about what they believe in? Are the development practices making the best use of coaching and mentoring, and creating opportunities for ‘crucible experiences’ that act as a catalyst to change?

- **In what ways are potential leaders connected to the outside world?** How do potential leaders become aware of the ‘boundaries of the system’? How do they understand the bigger issues in the world, and build networks with a diverse group of stakeholders? Are leaders too narrow in their perspective? The question of cognitive development within leaders is complex: too much specialisation, and the focus becomes narrow and the networks intense: too much generalisation, and the deep insight into a field of enquiry is lost. Each organisation will find their own route, but the conversation about this subtle balance is crucial.
FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

The most important resource for anyone using this workbook is my book The Key, which contains a wealth of information covering each of the statements and questions asked above. I have also written a number of articles on these subject areas, all of which can be found on my website: www.lyndagratton.com.

For more personalised support, you can contact my team at the Hot Spots Movement. They are actively involved in helping companies plan for the future and offer a range of support services. Whether you are looking to build inner resilience or want to learn more about interacting with the world around you for a more resilient future, they can help.

Our Resilience Diagnostic looks at how you as an organization build inner resilience and create external resilience and identifies areas where you need to develop your capabilities.

Our online jam platform, FoWlab, is a tool that enables you to harness the collective intelligence of your employees by bringing them together in a real-time, facilitated online conversation to find real solutions to complex organizational challenges.

Both tools were developed as part of our Future of Work Research Consortium that provides an innovative and collaborative environment for exchanging insights, models and concerns about the future of work. Members benefit from our world-class research with access to the latest academic thinking and thought leadership, emerging global trends and case studies on best practice ensuring members are able to address complex issues armed with the latest data. Current members include Unilever, Coca-Cola, Diageo, Huawei, BT Global Services, Tata Consultancy Services, KPMG, John Lewis Partnership and Shell to name just a few.

For more information, visit the website Hot Spots Movement or contact keith@hotspotsmovement.com +44 (0)20 7759 1848