

Influences [Hiding](#) in Plain Sight

INSIDE

What's Got our Attention

Stories and prompts from each dimension of SCAN.

Embracing Uncertainty

A new learning experience that teaches leaders and teams how to SCAN.

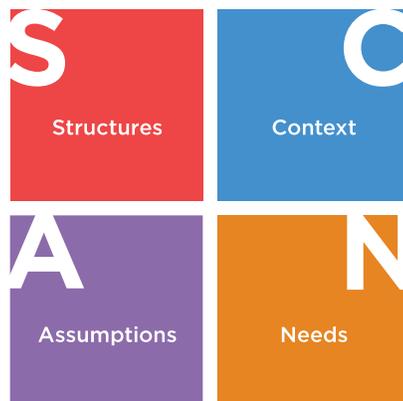
Spotlight

Community members making the world more creative and kind.



The Quarterly SCAN is a publication of Unstuck Minds. Each quarter, Unstuck Minds and our [Network Partners](#) pause to set aside our expertise and adopt a beginner's mind. This report highlights insightful and provocative ideas hiding in our turbulent and uncertain world.

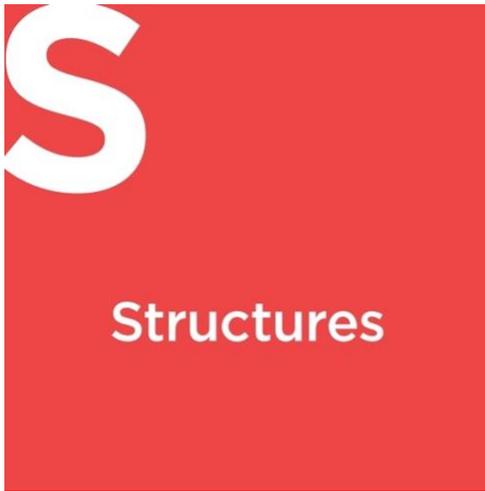
About SCAN



SCAN is an all-purpose thinking tool for reducing the risk of missing something important. SCAN helps us develop our [attention agility](#).

Each element of SCAN is like a key that unlocks a wealth of insights and options to help us get unstuck. Each element provides a view into a different, and often overlooked aspect of our situations.

To learn more and get your FREE SCAN Profile, visit www.unstuckminds.com/scan



Structures—

Norms, habits, systems, and processes that create stability and consistency

Advertisers aren't the only people using technology to track your online behaviors. In an [August 14 New York Times article](#), Jodi Kantor and Arya Sundaram wrote, "Across industries and incomes, more employees are being tracked, recorded, and ranked."

The NYT article is cleverly designed to give the reader a taste of what it's like to be tracked in real time. Messages pop up as you read the article giving you statistics on how long you've been reading and whether you've been actively scrolling. The tracking software warns you when you click away from the article without finishing it, or when it sits idle too long. At one point, a pop-up encourages you to add a photo to identify who has been reading. You get a grade at the conclusion of the article and are told if your pace suggests comprehension.

According to the New York Times, "Eight of the 10 largest private U.S. employers track the productivity metrics of individual workers, many in real time." Last year, Amazon famously adjusted, but did not eliminate its Time-Off-Task (TOT) metric. TOT can result in an employee being disciplined or fired for spending too much time engaged in any "unproductive" activity.

Advances in electronic surveillance now make it possible to track the productivity of white-collar workers too. United Health social workers were marked idle because time spent counseling patients resulted in a lack of keyboard activity. Grocery store cashiers are pressured to prioritize scanning purchases over chatting with customers or taking extra time to help people who move more slowly.

Measuring to learn makes sense. Measuring to rank is best left to sports. Measuring to control is Orwellian.

Structural Influences We're Paying Attention to

- Last quarter we highlighted the inclusive process Chile used to create a new constitution. On September 4th, 62% of Chileans rejected the new constitution. In [an article](#) for Noëma, Nathan Gardels details the lessons learned for the future of democracy.
- Dominic Price [writing for Work Life](#) argues that it's time to stop obsessing over productivity.
- Who's ready to return to their desk in an open-plan workplace? According to [David Brooks](#), no one.
- In [this video](#) (8:13) Prince EA asks: What is School For? Follow it up with the New York Time's [opinion piece](#) by the same name.

Who owns our data trails?

Context—

Factors and trends in the external environment that signal disruptions and opportunities

In the coming decade, packaging will become intelligent, interactive, and environmentally friendly.

Intelligent

Imagine getting an alert that the milk in your refrigerator will only be good for another 48 hours. The alert is not based on the use-by date stamped on the carton. The alert is based on a sensor that has been collecting data about the chemical composition of the milk. The use-by date doesn't consider how long the milk has been exposed to temperatures above 41°F, but the sensor knows.

Interactive

You're in the grocery store and grab a package of spaghetti. There's a scannable image of a pasta dish on the package that looks delicious. You scan the image, the ingredients are added to your shopping list, and the recipe is emailed to your inbox.

Perhaps you want to know about the food you're eating. Maybe you're tracking calories and carbohydrates. You have a fitness app, but it requires input from you every time you eat or drink something. What if the packaging updates your app by noting the weight and volume differences when you use an ingredient to make a meal?

Environmentally Friendly

Compostable packaging has been around for a while. A more recent trend is [plantable packaging](#). What if the yogurt container you just threw away contained wildflower seeds? Or maybe the dog-food container, is also dog food.

The concepts above and others are overviewed in a [McKinsey and Company video](#) (4:10) about the future of packaging.

Think about what you offer your customers. What is the *product* and what is the *package*? How might the package add value to the offering?



Contextual Influences We're Paying Attention to

- Who gets the credit and who gets the blame when AI generates art? [FN Meka](#), an AI rapper who has more than one billion views on TikTok has been accused of racial stereotyping. Also, an [AI generated picture](#) won an art prize.
- Perhaps you'd enjoy the dating scene more if you could delegate it to your avatar. Meet [Nevermet](#). A dating app for the metaverse where your avatar can build romantic relationships with other avatars. Now, when will I be able to send my avatar to meetings I don't want to attend?
- If you prefer your reality augmented rather than virtual, you won't have long to wait. AR is getting useful, and the glasses are getting more stylish. Here's a [video link](#) about Google's new prototype. Here's [Apple's version](#).
- OPEC nations have outsized power and influence because the world runs on oil. [Who should we be thinking about](#) when the world transitions to "green energy?"



Assumptions—

Beliefs, values, and worldviews that orient our attention, judgements, and priorities.

An expert, quite literally, is someone with experience. We want experts involved in decision-making and problem-solving because we assume prior experience with the situation at hand will get us to a better conclusion.

Experts use [mental models](#) and [heuristics](#) to categorize situations. Mental models and heuristics are shortcuts built from education and experience. We all use mental models and heuristics to save us the trouble of having to relearn how the world works everytime we start a new day.

When it comes to my daily commute, I'm an expert. As an expert in traffic flow on a particular route at a particular time, I apply a heuristic when I switch lanes to avoid a predictable slow-down.

Mental shortcuts are useful because they save us time and demand less energy from our brains. However, a mental shortcut, like an out-of-date map, can get us into trouble. Consider all the mental models and heuristics we've been forced to discard courtesy of the pandemic. Rethinking workplaces and schools feels exhausting. No one is an expert.

When we resist letting go of a mental shortcut in the face of new information about the world, the heuristic becomes a bias. We become so comfortable with our mental shortcuts, we forget that a rule-of-thumb is a pretty good approximation, not reality. The trouble starts when we reinterpret the facts rather than refine our mental models.

Before we call upon experts to weigh in on our dilemmas, it's worth asking them to expose their mental models and heuristics. If they can't, it's a sign they can no longer tell the difference between their worldview and the world.

[What unchallenged conventional wisdom in your organization has passed its use-by date?](#)

Influential Assumptions Worth Challenging

- Ian Leslie in an intriguing [Substack post](#), suggests taking a cue from artists when it comes to how we are influenced. Leslie encourages us to *curate* and *interrogate* our influences.
- [Tyler Cowen asks](#): What would change about our discourse if we replaced the “beat-the-other-side” mindset with a “make-the-other-side-better” mindset?
- [Professor Alan Levinovitz recommends](#) abandoning certainty for bewilderment. Feeling certain about a bewildering topic is like presuming to understand the Grand Canyon through a pair of binoculars. What makes a topic hard to grasp can also be what makes it beautiful to consider.
- [Will MacAskill](#) points out that slavery was practiced ubiquitously throughout history. It's hard to imagine a time when people owning other people was permissible. What common practice today will seem unconscionable to our descendants?

Needs—

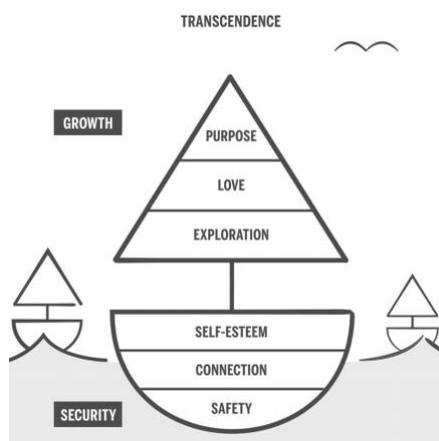
Desires, fears, preferences, and social processes that motivate behavior

Scott Barry Kaufman wants to correct the record on Abraham Maslow's famous Hierarchy of Needs.

In his 2020 book *Transcend; The New Science of Self-Actualization* Kaufman wrote, "Life is not a Video Game." We don't unlock higher needs, leaving lower levels of needs behind. Maslow considered human maturation an ongoing process, often experienced as two steps forward and one step back.

Kaufman also points out that Maslow never represented the hierarchy as a pyramid. The image of a pyramid is misleading. Kaufman wrote:

... the continual reproduction of the pyramid in management textbooks had the unfortunate consequence of reducing Maslow's rich and nuanced intellectual contributions to a parody and betrayed the actual spirit of Maslow's notion of self-actualization as realizing one's creative potential for humanitarian ends.



Kaufman offers a new visual metaphor of the hierarchy to replace the pyramid.

Without self-esteem, connection, and safety, we drown. We can choose to open the sail of growth to move. Eventually we transcend our individual boats and connect with the rest of humanity.

How well are the people we care about meeting their needs for self-esteem, connection, and safety?



Influential Needs We're Paying Attention to

- In the essay, [Our Technology Sickness and How to Heal It](#), Micah Goodman wrote, "Our humanity should not be measured by how much attention we attract, but by how much attention we devote to what matters."
- According to a 2022 [McKinsey study](#), 85% of employees want to continue working in a hybrid model. Notably, traditionally underrepresented groups demonstrated an even stronger preference for hybrid work.
- BeReal is currently the #1 Social Networking App in the App Store. See an [explainer video](#) (3:14). Apparently, there's a pent-up need for connecting in an unscripted, unfiltered way with your social media friends. What's next? Being together? (#okboomer).
- If you do decide to get together with a friend with the intention of deepening your relationship, try ["36 Questions for Increasing Closeness"](#) from Greater Good in Action.



Embracing Uncertainty

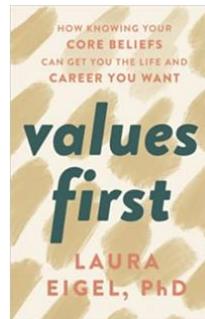
Four keys to unlocking hidden opportunities

Unstuck Minds and the award-winning business simulation designers at **Insight Experience** introduce an immersive learning experience to help leaders and teams break free of status-quo thinking. For information: lisa@unstuckminds.com.



Values First

Laura Eigel, Ph.D., founder of [The Catch Group](#), wants to help us recognize the relationship between our core beliefs and a joyful, fulfilled life. Laura shows leaders how to bring values-centered authenticity to the workplace, so organizations **and** people can thrive.



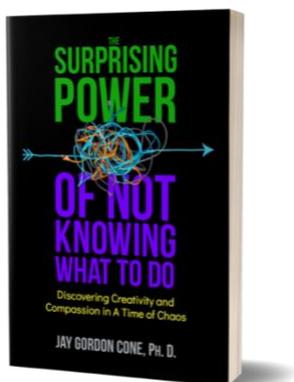
Check out Laura's framework for recentering our lives around what truly matters in her new book, [Values First](#).

You can subscribe to Laura's podcast, [You Belong in the C-Suite](#).

Community Spotlight



Each quarter we shine a light on a client, network partner, or organization doing inspiring work that helps the world become more creative and compassionate.



Being at a loss for what to do is an opportunity, not a problem.

available at


We help people **think better** and **connect better** so the world becomes more **creative** and **compassionate**

www.unstuckminds.com

