



SOCIETY FOR
Healthcare Strategy & Market DevelopmentSM
of the American Hospital Association

BRIDGING WORLDS

THE FUTURE ROLE OF THE
HEALTHCARE STRATEGIST
SECOND EDITION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Executive **SUMMARY**

Healthcare continues to undergo radical transformation, and the rate of change is accelerating across every type of organization in the field. Politics and legislation, technical and scientific developments, and shifts in consumer thinking and expectations are creating greater uncertainty, clouding one's ability to clearly see the future for hospitals, health systems, and other organizations.

Strategic thinking is not the domain of any one particular individual or discipline. Rather, it is a critical skill for all healthcare leaders. Healthcare strategists—including planners, marketers, communicators, physician strategists, and business developers—play a central role in helping their organizations manage the constant and complex forces of change to both shape and successfully execute the strategic vision. Regardless of title or role, the future belongs to those who are able to discover, plan for, communicate, and adapt to the evolving healthcare landscape.

The emerging role of the healthcare strategist is multifaceted; strategists serve as agents of change, recognizing what needs to be done to transform their organizations and prepare for the future.

Healthcare strategists must add increasingly greater value to their organizations, to broaden the impact of their roles, and to shape the future of our field.

Bridging Worlds: The Future Role of the Healthcare Strategist was first published in 2014 to help strategy professionals successfully navigate their organizations through turbulent times with the specific toolkit of skills and attributes necessary for future success. The report resonated not only with SHSMD members, but was met with a positive response from healthcare leaders across the



nation. Thousands of copies were requested and downloaded from the SHSMD website. This report hit a chord for SHSMD members and interested parties throughout healthcare seeking the best way to position themselves and their organizations for success in the years ahead.

In the three years since *Bridging Worlds* was released, SHSMD has heard from numerous organizations that have embraced these uncertain times and internalized the report's key insights and implications to translate the concepts into significant transformations. In the new edition of the report, you will find a sampling of stories from these teams, highlighting how they have increased their resiliency and adaptation, redefined competencies, created new roles, and adopted lessons from other industries. They have applied *Bridging Words* concepts—such as agile strategy, rapid prototyping, and co-opetition—to their work and have achieved significant results.

This update to *Bridging Worlds* incorporates fresh input from new leadership interviews, review of current trends, new case studies and examples, and refinements and validation from sounding boards. It has brought more clarity and definition to many of the concepts to support action and usability. In the second edition of *Bridging Worlds*, you will find:

- Updated synthesis of critical emerging trends impacting the healthcare landscape
- Reconstructed implications for the strategist with relatable applications
- Refreshed skills and behavioral attributes key to the strategist's role
- Examples of how individuals and organizations are using *Bridging Worlds* to help close skill gaps and strengthen strategic performance
- Expanded resources and case studies available at shsmd.org.

“What do I say to my CEO colleagues? This report is worth a read. There is a lot in there that will be helpful to us all as we strive to lead our organizations.”

*— James Skogsbergh
President and Chief Executive Officer,
Advocate Health Care,
Past Chairman, American Hospital
Association Board of Trustees*

A notable addition since the initial release of *Bridging Worlds* is SHSMD ADVANCE™, a comprehensive roadmap for career and team development. This companion to *Bridging Worlds* has three components, which are designed to help you, your team, and your organization enhance strategic performance.

- **SHSMD ADVANCE™ | Assess** is a 15-minute, online self-assessment of over 60 skills and attributes to identify strengths and gaps, and generate a personalized online development plan.
- **SHSMD ADVANCE™ | Skill Builder** contains a library of over 500 articles, books, courses, and tools tailored to the self-assessment results.
- **SHSMD ADVANCE | Credentials** is a selection of intensive certificate courses available to you and your team.

“Now, we’re driving how we design our services and systems around the patient, around the family, and around the community. That’s new to healthcare, frankly.”

— *David Brooks*
President and Chief Executive Officer,
St. Joseph Mercy Health
Ann Arbor and Livingston

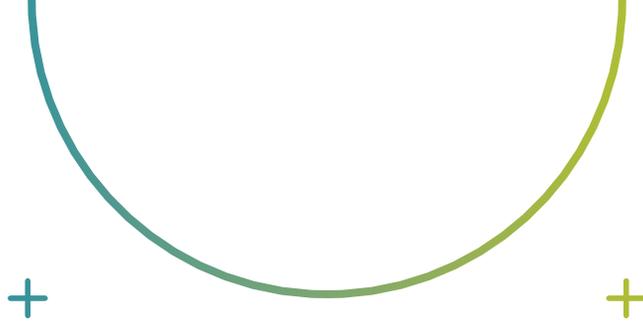
A Look Inside the Second Edition

While written primarily for senior leaders and strategists, this report is relevant to anyone who contributes to the development or deployment of healthcare strategy in any form. Whether discovering ways to differentiate and focus, or shaping the future of an organization more globally, the practice of strategy is universal, though the application of strategy may vary by discipline.

This body of work is intended to inspire discussion and debate among healthcare leaders. It should serve as a discussion guide, rather than a prescriptive recipe for healthcare strategy.

Bridging Worlds paints a vision of how the role of the strategist is evolving. Recognizing the scale of organizational types and sizes, SHSMD intentionally makes no recommendations on a preferred approach. Rather, the society suggests paying more attention to the implications, skills, and tools that healthcare strategists will need.

The updated report begins with an overview of the emerging healthcare landscape and articulates significant forces that characterize the changing environment today. It discusses five implications and 18 key takeaways for the healthcare strategist. Collectively, the implications and takeaways form a point of view on the future role of healthcare strategy. Here is a summary of *Bridging Worlds* implications, which are explored in depth in the complete report.

**Be Nimble to Exceed the Rate of Change:**

Healthcare strategists need to evolve as fast as their environment. They must frame problems, ask provocative questions, and move the organization to action.

Create Consumer Experiences. Tell Powerful

Stories: Understanding needs and motivations is key to influencing consumer behavior through stories and experiences.

Integrate and Co-create: Healthcare strategists must facilitate conversations within multilayered and complex organizations, create coalitions, and seek out diverse inputs.

Erase Boundaries of Business: Strategists must help develop accessible, integrated systems of care, assembled through new means, such as partnerships and technology.

Generate Data-Driven Insight: Data is only valuable if it can deliver insights and better decisions. Strategists must identify the best tools to collect, interpret, and communicate information.

Finally, *Bridging Worlds* offers roadmaps of the attributes, skills, and tools that will help prepare healthcare strategists to face the future head-on. These lists are intentionally provocative. Many technical skills and areas of knowledge that are considered a baseline expectation—including business, financial, and technology acumen; communication skills; and project management—

are not included. Instead, the report sets an aspiration for the additional behavioral qualities and advanced skills healthcare leaders need for success, both now and in the future. They are intended to challenge and inspire strategy professionals to take the next step in their development and knowledge.

“Healthcare is highly consolidated and competitive. We are looking for a competitive advantage every day. Our new competitors are Walmart, CVS, and direct-to-consumer primary care.”

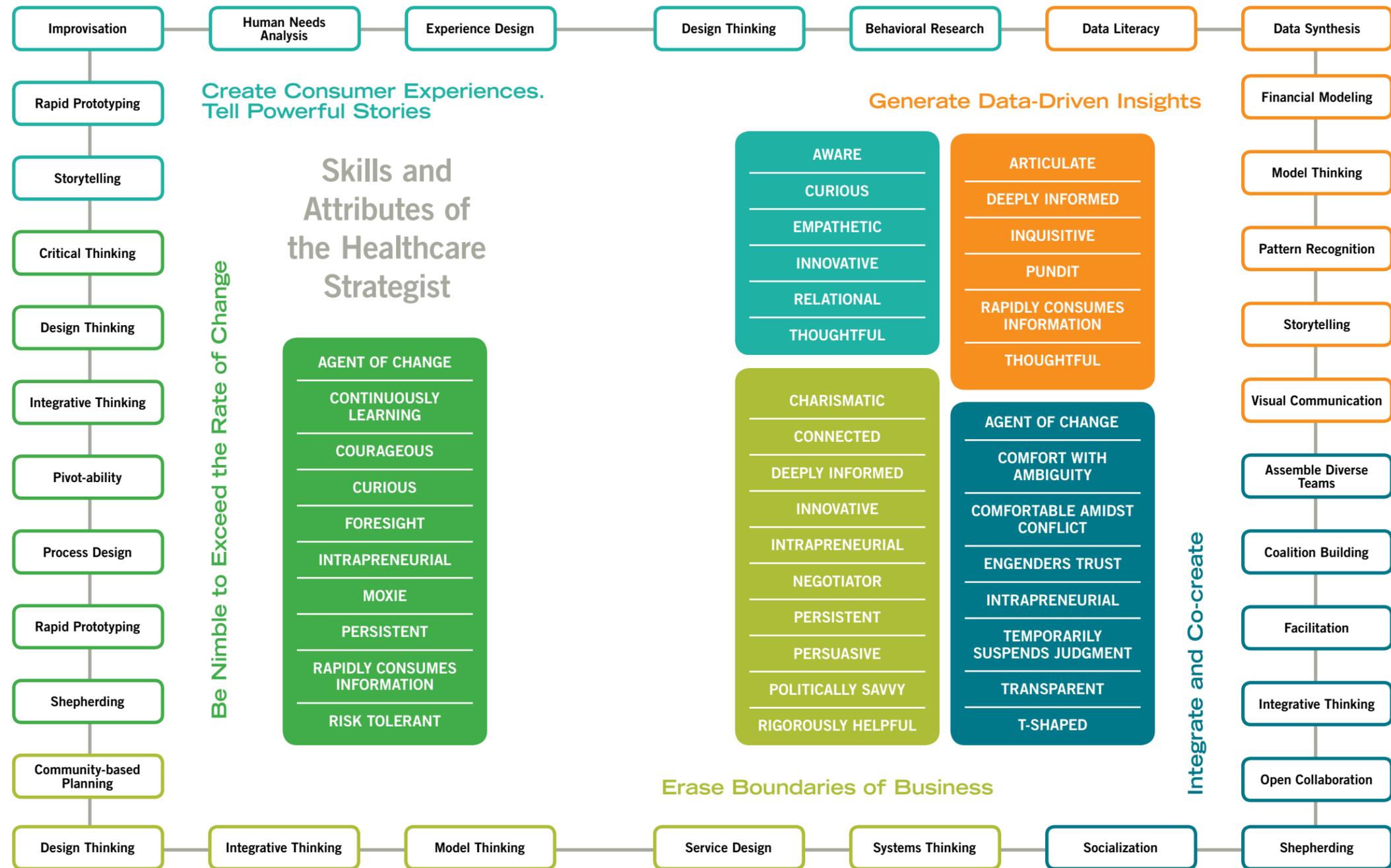
— Pete Celano
Director of Consumer
Health Initiatives, MedStar

Skills and Attributes of the Healthcare Strategist

06 This diagram presents the skills and attributes from all five implications in a single view. Use this diagram as a roadmap for professional development by identifying your areas of interest as well as any gaps in your current skills. Use SHSMD ADVANCE™ to assess and identify skill levels among individuals and teams, then build those skills using SHSMD's online resource library, which contains hundreds of articles, books, courses, and tools to help you further develop your abilities.

"We've used Bridging Worlds as a team read where we've asked our strategy team to read it, digest it, and then do some self-reflection. We actually use it for career planning for all of our team members."

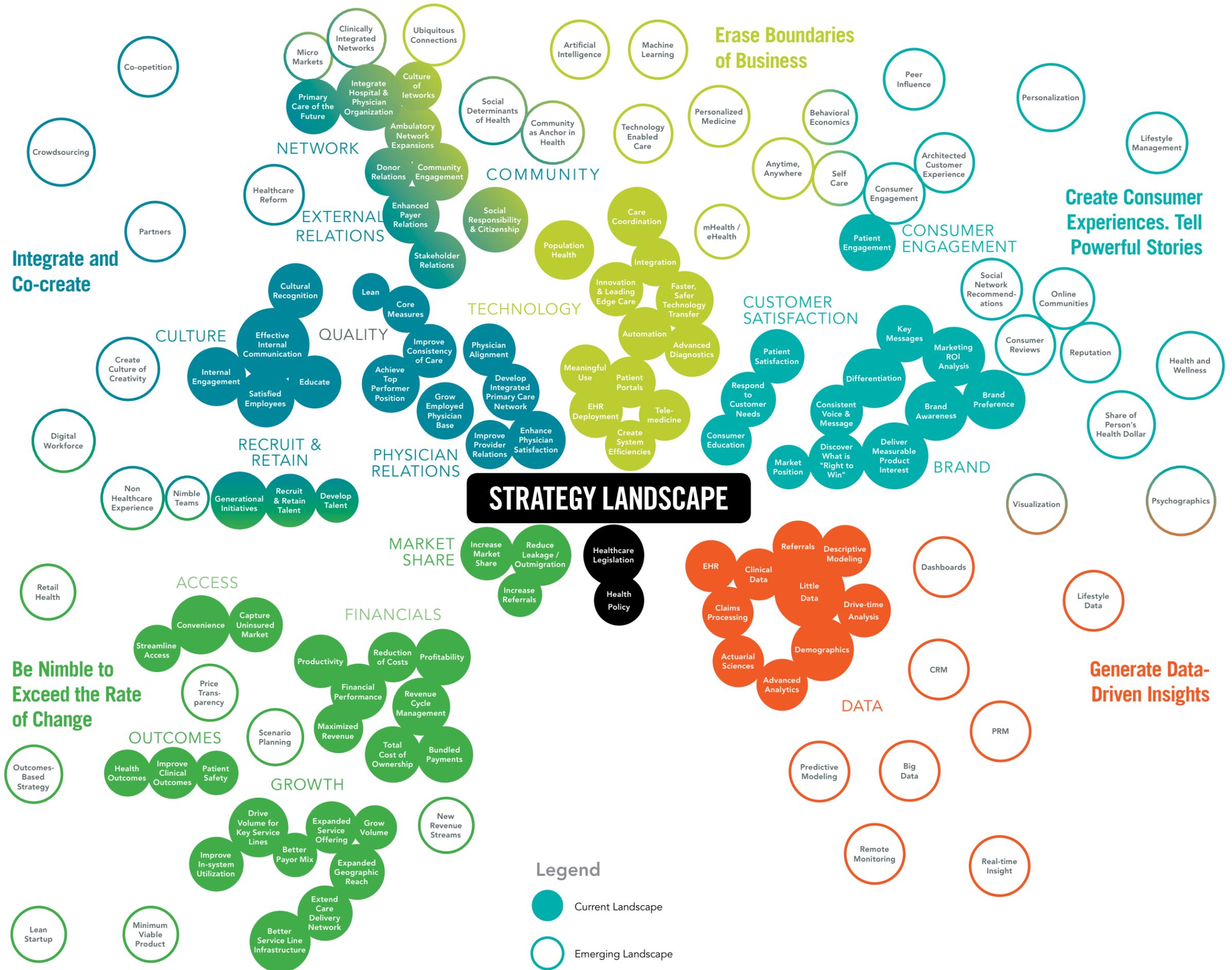
— Caryn Esten
Vice President, Strategic Planning
and Performance Measurement,
Froedtert Health



This mind map depicts a variety of business objectives in healthcare today that are top-of-mind for healthcare strategists. Those closer to the center represent the current state; those farther out represent an emerging landscape with areas of focus that are increasingly important. As the mind map illustrates, connections can be drawn between concepts nearer the periphery and those viewed as major themes defining the future of healthcare strategy.

“The strategy landscape is an indispensable tool. It helps start the discussion, providing a look at the overall healthcare environment. It improves our ability to focus on the challenges we will need to confront going forward.”

— Jeffrey Kraut,
Executive Vice President, Strategy
and Analytics, Northwell Health



SHSMD ADVANCE™ Roadmap

Bridging Worlds is a valuable resource for every career stage and leadership role in the organization. It is intended to provoke thought, inspire discussion, and drive change. This document is the starting point for a five-step process identified by SHSMD to improve individual and team strategic performance.

STEP ONE

+ Know Your Landscape

- Read *Bridging Worlds*. Highlight the sections that speak to you as being useful, provocative, and relevant. Share your reactions at shsm.org/BridgingWorldsSurvey.
- Facilitate discussions at team meetings on critical sections, such as the Strategy Landscape mind map, case studies, or emerging trends. Discuss how the implications and insights relate to the organization's strategic plan.
- Encourage your team to read and discuss *Bridging Worlds*.
- Share and present *Bridging Worlds* to key audiences, including leadership teams, finance, IT, and other collaborators.
- Work through Thought Provoker exercises for select implications—on your own or as a team.

STEP TWO

+ Evaluate Your Skills

- Discuss the skills diagram with your team, and identify which skills are most important and aligned with your strategic priorities.
- Take the 15-minute SHSMD ADVANCE™ | Assess online self-assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses, and create a customized skill development plan.
- Develop new competencies and job descriptions based on the most relevant skills and attributes.
- Participate in SHSMD ADVANCE™ | Assess as a team. Individual results are confidential, but team leaders can receive a report that shows collective strengths and weaknesses. Contact SHSMD@aha.org for more information.

STEP THREE

+ Sharpen Your Skills

- Use SHSMD ADVANCE™ | Skill Builder, an online library of resources, to hone your skills.
- Find ways to test new skills and tools within your existing role. Seek feedback from mentors.
- Create a roadmap for your own continuing education and career development.
- Encourage your staff to use SHSMD ADVANCE™ | Skill Builder to further their development. Find ways for them to stretch themselves and test new skills within their existing role.

STEP FOUR

+ Earn Your Credentials

- Participate in SHSMD ADVANCE™ | Credentials intensive certificate courses to boost your skills in a specific focus area. Upon completing an intensive course, digitally share your verified SHSMD credential to help promote your knowledge and personal achievement.

STEP FIVE

+ Lead the Change

- Share *Bridging Worlds* and your personal reflections with your colleagues, management, executive leadership team, and/or board of directors. Discuss how the insights might be applied.
- *Bridging Worlds* and SHSMD ADVANCE™ are key resources to help you lead transformation within your organization. Use these resources to create a common vocabulary, facilitate discussions, and drive action. Discuss key challenges and identify opportunities for collaboration with colleagues in strategic planning, marketing, public relations and communications, business development, and IT. Share your insights with colleagues, management, executive leadership, and/or the board of directors.
- Share your successes with other audiences, including writing articles, presenting at SHSMD conferences, or presenting at other national or regional education events.

Bridging Worlds is a living, ever-expanding document. Look online for additional case studies, CEO profiles, blog posts, and resources. Visit shsm.org/Advance to continue your career development journey. To share your story of success, e-mail SHSMD at info@shsm.org.



The Society for Healthcare Strategy & Market Development (SHSMD), a personal membership group of the American Hospital Association, is the largest and most prominent voice and resource for healthcare strategists, planners, marketers, communications, public relations, business development, and physician strategists.

SHSMD is committed to helping its members meet the future with greater knowledge and opportunity as their organizations work to improve the health status and quality of life in their communities.

shsmd.org

Over 50 strategists contributed to the second edition of *Bridging Worlds*, including CEOs, chief strategy officers, chief experience officers, marketing and communication leaders, business developers, researchers, analysts, and physician strategists. Special thanks to the *Bridging Worlds* project committee, the SHSMD Board of Directors, SHSMD member subject matter experts, and HDR. HDR, a multidisciplinary healthcare design firm, has been our innovation consultant in developing this project.

This publication is intended to provide accurate and authoritative information regarding the subject matter covered. It is provided with the understanding that SHSMD is not engaged in rendering professional services. If professional advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought. All situations and examples discussed in this report are for illustrative purposes

only. Unless expressly noted otherwise, the information has been collected through publicly available sources and the respective conclusions have not been endorsed by any third-party. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the survey respondents and do not represent the official positions of SHSMD or the American Hospital Association.



ONE NETWORK THAT HAS IT ALL

Strengthen your healthcare strategists—planners, marketers, communicators, and business developers—with SHSMD membership.

As the healthcare landscape rapidly transforms, your strategy team plays a critical role in leading change at your organization—taking innovative ideas and leading strategies and bringing them to fruition.



Support your organization's strategic efforts by arming your team with SHSMD membership. Hand them trusted resources, like *Bridging Worlds: The Future Role of the Healthcare Strategist, Second Edition* and SHSMD ADVANCE™, and access to a 4,000-strong network of healthcare strategy peers.

Amplify and grow your team's talents with SHSMD membership and propel your organization to new levels.

Join today at shsmd.org/membership