

Oliver W. Markley, Ph.D.

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MISSION

Subtle technologies to help people envision and realize a wise future

FORMAL BIO

Oliver Markley is Professor Emeritus and formerly Chair of the graduate program in Studies of the Future at the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL), whose personal mission is *to help people envision and realize a wise future*. His career began as a design engineer but quickly shifted to social psychology and policy research on possible/probable/preferable alternative futures. His primary professional specialization is visioning methods for foresight and innovative resilience. Before UHCL, he was a principal investigator and consultant with the Management and Social Systems Group at Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International). Dr. Markley is a Member Emeritus of the Association of Professional Futurists, a Fellow of the World Futures Studies Federation, was a Visiting Fellow at the Centre of Excellence for National Security (Singapore) in the spring of 2014. Most recently, he is founding coordinator of the Austin Consciousness Explorers (ACE) noetic meetup community group.

An experienced consultant, Oliver is the author or co-author of dozens of publications including four books:

- *Changing Images of Man* (1982)
- *Information and the Future: A Handbook of Sources and Strategies* (1988)
- *America Beyond 2001: Opposing Viewpoints* (1995)
- *Twenty First Century Earth: Opposing Viewpoints* (1996).

He currently maintains a part-time research, writing and consulting practice, producing refereed journal articles such as [Research and Action toward the Upside of Down](#) (awarded the Jan Lee Martin Foundation prize for Best Futures Essay of 2011), [Imaginal Visioning for Prophetic Foresight](#) (2012), "[Aspirational Guidance for Wiser Futures](#)" (2015); and most recently, he edited a special "[Symposium](#)" in the *Journal of Futures Studies* focusing on intuition in futures work that was recognized by the Association of Professional Futurists as a "2016 Most Significant Futures Work for works that advance the methodology and practice of foresight and futures studies".

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

- Enhancement of foresight, creativity and resilience
- Interactive guided visioning and enhancement of intuition
- Scanning, forecasting, risk assessment and strategic planning
- Socio-cultural survey research
- Proactive policy analysis
- Strategic planning and team building

ILLUSTRATIVE PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- For the graduate program in Studies of the Future at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, I led the transformation of the program from having a merely academic orientation into an effective engine for training professional futurists, *proven by outstanding professional accomplishments of its graduates*.

- For the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, I led a visioning and feasibility study, *leading to the implementation of a new system for vocational forecasting and strategic planning of vocational education at the community college level.*
- For the U.S. National Institute of Education, I led a study of the national infrastructure for educational R&D, determining that *a formal systems-oriented governance framework that had been proposed was not feasible, leading instead to a “community-oriented” policy management style*
- For the NASA Johnson Space Center, I did a culture-specific audit of strategic planning in its three main subcultures (business/administration, engineering/research and mission control) that led to a new approach, which *won them an OMB award for “best practice” of strategic planning at NASA.*
- For the California State Department of Benefits Payments (welfare) Planning Office, I developed *an innovative trends monitoring and intelligence system that gave them early warning on challenges needing to be planned for and managed.*
- For a variety of high technology business firms in California and in Texas (e.g., Apple, Texas Instruments, Tenneco, Conoco, Amoco), I did proprietary trend analyses and executive briefings on “STEER” threats and strategic opportunities *leading to improvements in product and strategic planning* [STEER is an acronym for Social/demographic, Technological, Economic, Ecological, and Political.]
- For a variety of professional boards and community groups (e.g., Sasona Cooperative, Lance Armstrong Foundation, International Association for Humanistic Psychology, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association; various Presbyterian church communities; Austin Network of Spiritual Progressives), I have led proactive culture surveys and facilitated team alignment retreats that led to *increased focus and effectiveness.*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2014: Visiting Fellow, Centre of Excellence for National Security, Rajaratnam Institute of Technology, Singapore — a research, teaching, and networking service for risk assessment and strategic foresight, for which I taught a graduate course in Risk Assessment and Strategic Foresight, and provided consultative services to the government about the risk of a global mega-crisis.
- 2000 – Present: Founding Principal, Inward Bound – a research and services practice specializing in the use of interactively guided Imaginal Visioning for innovative problem solving and strategic direction. Many training workshops and journal articles have stemmed from this work.
- 2000-Present: Professor Emeritus (Ret.) of Human Sciences and former chair, Studies of the Future, University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL) — a graduate program preparing students for productive careers as professional futurists. Professor from 1989 to 2000 and Associate Professor from 1978 to 1989. After assuming the chair of the Studies of the Future Program in 1979, I transformed the Futures Studies curriculum to train for professional consulting, resulting in a three-fold increase in student enrollment from 15 to 45 and a strong community of alumni who are now leaders in the field of professional futures research and consulting.
- 2005: Visiting Fellow, Precurve, LLC – a futures research, consulting and incubation company where I co-managed a long-range strategic planning project for the Lance Armstrong Foundation.
- 2003-2004: Founding Coordinator of the Walnut Creek (CA) Integral Transformative Practice (ITP) Community—a wellness enhancement practice group.
- 1968 – 1978: Senior Policy Analyst, Principal Investigator and Consultant at the Center for Study of Social Policy, Management and Social Systems Group, SRI International—a small “think tank” for alternative futures policy research, where I developed a variety of proactive visioning, policy research and consulting tools.

- 1967-68: NIMH Postdoctoral Fellow with Carl Rogers at the Western Behavioral Sciences Institute, where I learned client-oriented methods for group dynamics facilitation and consulting.
- 1958-1964: Design engineer, computer systems programmer, and draftsman at numerous California Aerospace firms before changing career focus from design engineering to humanistic, social, and organizational psychology, futures research, consulting, and teaching.

UNIVERSITY COURSES TAUGHT

- Integral Living for Sustainable Communities
- Meaning and Identity; Human Consciousness; Global Consciousness
- World Futures; Visionary Futures; Social change
- Strategic Foresight, Strategic Planning and Organization Development
- Forecasting; Technology Assessment; Risk Assessment; Applied Futures Research
- Change, Management and the Future; Media and the Future; Issues Management
- Creativity in Business; Entrepreneurship and the Future
- Your Changing Future (a personal/professional strategic planning course for non-futures majors)

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION

- B.S. and M.S. in design engineering, San Diego State and Stanford University (1962 and 1963)
- M.A. and Ph.D. in social psychology, Northwestern University (1966 and 1968). Doctoral advisor: Professor Donald T. Campbell, pioneer of experimental and quasi-experimental designs for socio-cultural research
- Registered Professional Engineer: California No. ME-13203.