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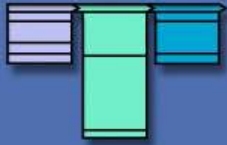
FORESIGHT

Strategic futures planning Suggestions for success

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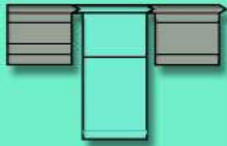
Strategic Futures Planning

Suggestions for Success

Author: Andrew Jackson, Deputy Director Foresight

Foresight and the OST Horizon Scanning Centre are run by the Office of Science and Technology in the Department of Trade and Industry. Project findings are independent of Government and do not constitute Government policy.

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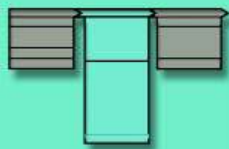
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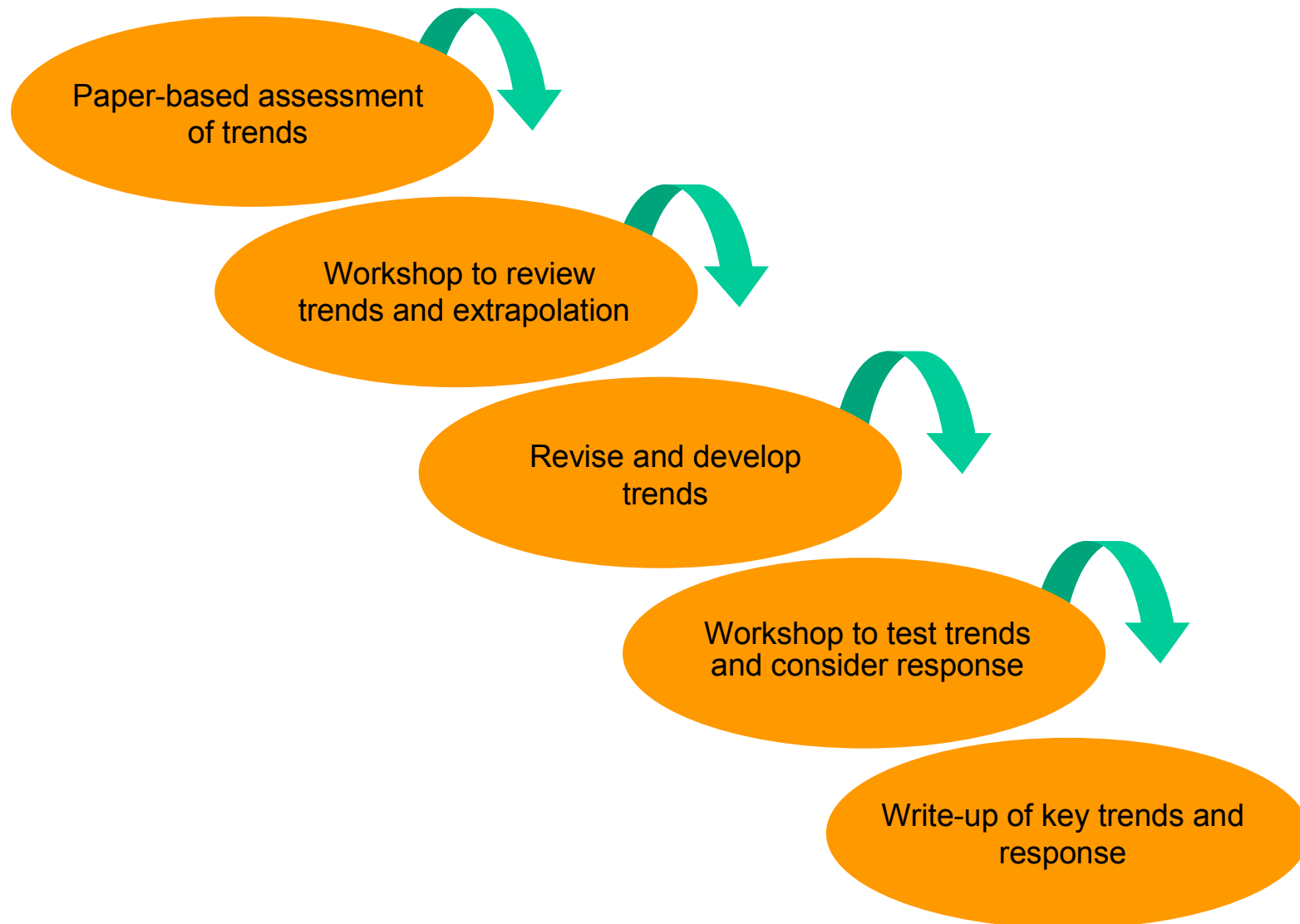
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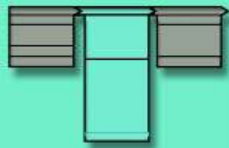
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Trend analysis: the broad approach





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Trend analysis: technique

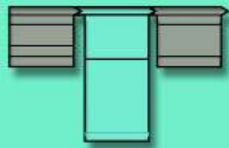
Step 1: Collect data at least twice the length of the time of the forecast. You may use paper-based and also a workshop to collect data

Step 2: Plot the data. A simple spreadsheet will suffice

Step 3: Identify the pattern either by eye or with statistical analysis

Step 4: Project the trend but make clear where extrapolation starts and beware of absolute limits

Step 5: Sense check. Consider what could change the pattern



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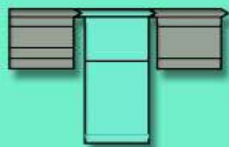
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Trend analysis: suggestions for success

- **Only use** if the area being considered changes slowly
- **Use at least 4 historical data if possible**
- **Extrapolate** a range of possible futures. Do not use a single line
- **Try to understand what factors underlie the trend** so you can see whether it is likely to continue in the current pattern or not. If there have been changes in the trends in the past, consider why and try to build this into the forward projection
- **Do not accept the results without question.** Trends look convincing but this does not mean that they will be accurate
- **Beware of graphs.** People seem to assume that if it is presented well, it is right
- **Start the work by looking for patterns in the past** but do not assume patterns will not change



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Trend analysis: case study

Population aged 20–39 and 45–64, United Kingdom

