

Future-Proofing Your Business: How Sustainable is your Sustainability?

86% of CEOs/Senior Executives say less than 5 years!

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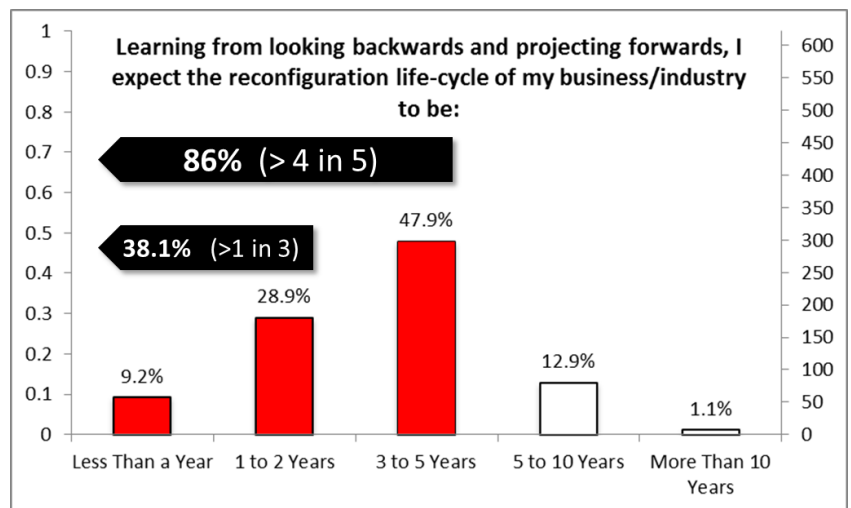
These days, sustainability can be short lived! Many businesses think they have sustainable strategy, sustainable execution and sustainable leadership ... until they don't! As a small example, but one that more and more of us have participated in, just ask your average taxi-cab firm right now with the emergence of Uber!

Is your sustainability so last year too? While visiting Vistage groups as a Resource Speaker, I conducted a research survey with more than 600 CEOs/Senior Executives responding across a spectrum from hi-tech to low-tech, local to global, large and small, young and old. One of the questions asked our members what they expect the reconfiguration life-cycle of their industries/businesses to be? That is, the time horizon within which they expect their industry/business to be reconfigured to a state significantly unrecognizable with how it is today. The easiest way to think about that is to look backwards and then turn around and look forwards. As an example, looking backwards 4 years, the cell-phone industry has been reconfigured to a state which is significantly unrecognizable with how it used to be – 4 years ago Blackberry was still #1 in the business professional demographic, now it's not. Apple and Google will still relatively recent entrants, now they aren't, now dominating. Nokia was #1, now it's not. Samsung was still on the rise, now it's #1. Turning around and looking forwards, it will likely be 4 years or less for the same to happen again.

More than 4 in 5 respondents (86%) of answered less than 5 years! We might not be terribly surprised to see a peak of responses in the "3 to 5 Years" bracket, as that's a common planning horizon for many businesses. But keep in mind that isn't what I asked. These respondents are projecting that their industry/business will be largely unrecognizable only 3 to 5 years from now!

More than 1 in 3 respondents (38.1%) answered less than 2 years! Also notice that less than 1/5th (14%) of respondents answered more than 5 years, and for only

1.1% of respondents answered more than 10 years. By the way, give me 5 minutes with those respondents and I bet I can talk some of them to the left – they often aren't thinking about it the right way!



Our members better be asking, "how sustainable is our sustainability?" You too!

Anticipate VUCA (Volatility, **U**ncertainty, **C**omplexity, **A**mbiguity)

The challenge is to be anticipating VUCA, and responding to it with agility. What's the best way to do that?

Participate in [The VUCA Report at The Strategic Agility Institute](#). Hope to see you there!

