

Sheryl Connelly

Manager of Global Trends & Futuring at Ford Motor Company

Sheryl Connelly has served as the in-house futurist for Ford Motor Company for over a decade. In this role, she identifies and analyzes global consumer trends to aid in the discussion of long-term planning and strategy across the entire company, including design, product development, and corporate strategy and help anticipate and predict the needs and desires of consumers.

Sheryl is skilled at identifying what's coming around the corner and the potential influences to customer attitudes and behavioral patterns that directly impact business strategy. With the unique ability to translate how consumer and lifestyle trends will affect organizations across industry sectors, Sheryl outlines how to develop a futuring mindset, to act decisively in high-stakes business environments. *Fast Company* magazine twice named her one of the "100 Most Creative People in Business," and *TechWeek* listed her among its "Top 100 Innovators". Sheryl was also a featured speaker at TED and TED Global, and her strategic viewpoints have been published in *The Wall Street Journal*, Reuters, *Financial Times*, and the BBC, and she has been profiled in *Automotive News*, *Forbes*, and *Edmunds*. She has also appeared on CBS' *This Morning with Charlie Rose*, CNBC's *Fast Money*, and NPR's *All Things Considered with Robert Siegel*. She is also a former member of the Global Advisory Council on transportation for the World Economic Forum.

Her insights into what's next helps others understand how STEEP factors—Social, technological, economic, environmental, and political trends—will affect business in the short-and long-term.

From population growth to the proliferation of technology, to mindfulness and the tiny home movement, Sheryl's big picture outlook ensures that organizational leaders recognize and take advantage of the trends that shape the way we live. With perspective that will revolutionize your approach to long-term planning and strategy, Sheryl reveals her secrets for how to think like a futurist, and delivers the insights necessary for business leaders and organizations across industry sectors to thrive, innovate, and remain relevant in the new age of constant innovation and disruption.

Prior to joining Ford's trends team, Connelly spent eight years of her 18-year career with Ford working in a variety of marketing, sales, and service field positions for Ford Division, where she learned about everything from dealer relations and owner loyalty to new product launches and government regulations. Before she started working at Ford, she practiced law. In addition to a Juris Doctorate, she holds a bachelor's degree in finance and a master's degree in business administration. But after doing a short stint as a civil litigation attorney in Buffalo, NY, Connelly realized quickly that practicing law might not be the ideal fit for her, so she decided to look for the sweet spot of intersection between finance, business, and law.

"I took an unconventional path to get here, but I think everything I learned along the way helped me. Law school taught me how to put together a persuasive argument and how to research, analyze and distill information," she said. "And I think my love of art helps me understand how to think visually and reinforce complex ideas with simple images."

Connelly is openly passionate about her work but readily admits that the road that led her to where she is today included a few unexpected twists and turns. She teaches design research at the Center for Creative Studies in

Detroit, Michigan. Sheryl has also been a guest lecturer at Massachusetts Institute for Technology, University of Michigan, and Wharton School of Business.

She lives with her husband and two daughters in Birmingham, Michigan.

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