

Future Skills for Film and Series

Nostradamus Report: Paradox of Hope
from a Skills Perspective

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Future Skills for Film and Series

Nostradamus Report: Paradox of Hope from a Skills Perspective

Nostradamus is a project initiated by the Göteborg Film Festival that monitors and analyses the rapid changes within the audiovisual sector. Since 2013, the project has established itself as a central player in helping the industry navigate its environment and develop sustainably—particularly through the annual Nostradamus Reports, written by media analyst Johanna Koljonen.

One of the key insights from the 2024 *Nostradamus Report: Paradox of Hope* is the need for increased collaboration within the audiovisual industries. The chapter *Collaboration as Innovation* emphasizes that the major challenge ahead is not just working together but building a truly collaborative ecosystem.

The audiovisual sector faces the challenge of creating new collaboration structures, developing leadership capabilities, and building learning organizations. Here, the report *Skills* offers valuable insights. Since 2022, these annual reports have analysed the competencies that are becoming increasingly important within the cultural and creative industries, aiming to create a deeper understanding of which skills will be crucial in the labour market of the future. The reports are presented by Kulturakademin in collaboration with Rasmussen Analys.

Skills has observed that the world has become so complex, and the conditions for cultural organizations so transformed, that no individual can manage everything alone anymore. Success increasingly depends on the ability to build relationships and collaborate across disciplines.

This article explores some of the most central insights from the latest Skills reports, viewed considering some of the challenges and opportunities highlighted in the 2024 Nostradamus Report. The focus is on future skills, the importance of collaboration, and the role of leadership in developing a more sustainable and innovative audiovisual sector.

A Collaborative Ecosystem

The Nostradamus Report depicts a development where innovation and collaboration are crucial to strengthening the audiovisual sector, particularly for independent players in film and drama series, to reduce dependence on larger companies such as global streamers. Success requires an ecosystem where players see each other as colleagues rather than competitors, which can enhance the resilience and long-term sustainability of the industry and its various

stakeholders. This demands both innovative investments and a shift in how resources are allocated, with greater emphasis on audience engagement and collective ecosystem-building.

Smaller players, such as independent production companies or cinemas, often lack the resources necessary for innovation work. The report highlights the need for more long-term investments in networks and educational initiatives. A major obstacle is the industry's individualistic culture, which requires a shift in mindset to encourage a more dynamic collaborative climate.

Building a resilient sector requires the courage to test new ideas and share experiences—even those that fail. By constructing new structures and models together, the entire ecosystem can be strengthened, creating more opportunities for creators and companies to reach their audiences.

Coopetition – Initiatives and Skills That Enable Knowledge Sharing Across an Industry

The need for collaboration within the audiovisual sector, as highlighted in the Nostradamus Report, aligns with the concept of *coopetition*—a business strategy in which competing companies collaborate to leverage each other's strengths and create mutual benefits. This approach is common in the tech industry, where companies often form alliances to combine software and hardware expertise. By working together, organizations can share resources, expand their market reach, and better meet customer demands. The coopetition model is built on understanding when collaboration is advantageous and when competition is necessary.

Coopetition can also help smaller businesses and startups compete with larger companies by joining forces to create stronger offerings. This strategy can lead to long-term advantages such as increased market growth and improved customer relationships.¹

But is it possible to realize such a vision in an industry where many players traditionally see each other as competitors rather than collaborators? The answer is yes—but it requires a shift in both mindset and capabilities among leaders and stakeholders.

1. The Ability to Establish a Shared Agenda

For collaboration within any industry to be successful, the stakeholders included must share a common understanding of the goals and benefits. Why is a collaborative ecosystem desirable? The reasons may vary—from strengthening the industry's competitiveness and

¹ Brandenburger, A., Nalebuff, B. "The Rules of Co-opetation". Published in HBR Jan–Feb 2021 and <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/coopetition.asp>

increasing audience engagement to creating financial sustainability for smaller players. However, the key question is: Do all stakeholders perceive the ecosystem in the same way? If not, where do their perspectives differ? And in what areas do they find common ground?

The first step in creating a shared agenda is gathering key stakeholders to identify challenges, align on a direction, and establish common ground. Beyond just sharing a vision, the industry must also reach a consensus on clear goals, effective strategies, and the concrete actions needed to achieve them. This requires committed effort—there are no shortcuts.

Of course, this is easier said than done. The audiovisual sector consists of multiple layers of stakeholders with diverse interests and perspectives. A practical approach could be to focus on specific challenges or thematic areas and gather stakeholder groups around those topics.

To facilitate this process, dedicated forums and meeting spaces where the stakeholders can meet, and spark collaboration are essential. But how do you create a forum that truly works? One that not only brings people together but also leads to actual commitments and change. This is where major stakeholders play a crucial role. Organizations that fund and shape the industry—such as film institutes, funds, broadcasters, distributors, and major production companies—must be willing to adapt their structures. If regulations and operational methods remain stagnant, established habits can become barriers to a more open and collaborative ecosystem. To enable genuine cooperation, even well-established stakeholders must be open to change.

2. Trust-Building Initiatives

Trust is the foundation of all collaboration. Building trust within an organization is already a challenge, but how do you foster trust between stakeholders who have traditionally viewed each other as competitors and have considered it important not to share knowledge and insights?

Research highlights three key factors in trust-building:

- *Authenticity* – Being perceived as genuine and sincere.
- *Logic* – Demonstrating sound judgment and competence.
- *Empathy* – Showing genuine care for others.²

Transitioning from competition to collaboration requires a foundation of authenticity. A major obstacle is that companies often safeguard their insights, fostering distrust. One solution to overcome this, is to establish platforms where organizations openly share visions

² Frances X. Frei and Anne Morriss “Begin with trust”

and goals. A collective manifesto or ethical guidelines for the industry or a specific stakeholder group could serve as a reassuring starting point.

A challenge in strengthening the logic of collaboration is scepticism about its business value and the fear that competitors will gain an unfair advantage. To address this, it is useful to create a logical and transparent framework for collaboration—leveraging data and analysis to demonstrate the benefits of working together. Regular evaluations can further reinforce the advantages of cooperation.

Empathy is the most critical factor in trust-building. If stakeholders focus solely on their own interests, collaboration will fail. Trust is not just about convincing others—it begins with organizations themselves believing in the value of cooperation and the importance of creating something greater together. Trust is earned, and if industry players lack empathy—meaning they prioritize only their own gains—it will have consequences.

Practical steps to build trust in the film industry:

- **Identify "trust barriers"** – Conduct a joint assessment to determine where trust tends to break down. Is it authenticity (lack of honesty), logic (uncertainty about benefits), or empathy (lack of understanding)?
- **Invest in training and development** – Organizing training programmes that enhance leadership, collaboration skills, and communication across different organizations is crucial.
- **Clearly communicate success stories** – Highlight successful collaborations and their positive effects, such as improved innovation, increased profitability, or greater social impact. This strengthens the logic of collaboration and inspires more stakeholders to participate.

3. Mapping Competencies to Identify Synergies

Industry stakeholders need to clarify their strengths and resources to identify how they can complement each other. To effectively leverage synergies, the first step is understanding what each organization can offer others. It's useful to ask: What are our strengths? What competencies do we have in our organization? What is our area of expertise?

The next step is to map out current needs: What competencies are we lacking today? What skills do we anticipate will become more important in the coming years?

Once all stakeholders have clearly defined and mapped their competencies, new opportunities for collaboration become visible, making it easier to match the skills required to achieve shared goals. It also becomes clearer what they can collectively offer audiences and customers—delivering higher-quality experiences than what is currently available.

Skills for Building Truly Learning Organizations

The Nostradamus Report highlights expert insights emphasizing the need to systematize learning within the industry—particularly to enable smaller players to build on existing knowledge. Learning is not just about creating something new; it is also about preserving and evolving what has already been built—leveraging past experiences to strengthen future projects.

The audiovisual sector is far from homogenous, encompassing everything from solo entrepreneurs and small production companies to major institutions and global players. Naturally, this creates different conditions for fostering learning cultures within organizations. While larger companies may have the resources to systematize learning through structured processes and internal training programmes, smaller players often need to find alternative ways to develop their skills and capitalize on experience.

Sharing Lessons to Strengthen the Industry

One challenge is that industry players seldom share the insights and solutions they develop, often resulting in a continuous cycle of reinventing the wheel. The industry would greatly benefit from a culture that actively fosters collaboration and knowledge-sharing. This applies to both large organizations and independent entrepreneurs alike—even freelance creators can gain substantial advantages by engaging in networks that facilitate the exchange of experiences.

To enhance learning across the industry, we need to cultivate genuinely learning organizational cultures—where knowledge is not confined to individual productions but spreads and evolves through collaboration. Below are four key factors for building a learning culture.

1. Systematically Analysing Successes and Failures

The ability to learn from experience is strengthened by establishing structured processes for reflection and analysis. For example, after each completed project or production, teams could hold debrief meetings to systematically evaluate, document, and map out both successes and failures. By sharing insights between production teams, directors, and collaborators, a collective knowledge base is created—reinforcing future projects.

A recent study found that only 15% of Swedish companies actively recognize mistakes as part of their learning process, despite research indicating immense potential in such initiatives.

To facilitate learning across different companies, a potential strategy could be to establish networks and forums where smaller industry players exchange case studies, insights, and challenges through industry-wide workshops.

2. Learning is Largely a Leadership and Cultural Issue

The 2023 Skills Report concluded that leadership plays a critical role in establishing truly learning-oriented organizational cultures. This applies to all types of businesses—including small production companies, where a single person often serves as both a creative and a leader.

Regardless of company size, it is crucial to prioritize learning and actively create space for reflection and development. In larger organizations, this needs to start at the very top. If senior leadership does not prioritize learning—or fail to signal that learning is a fundamental part of the company’s vision and culture—there is little chance of such a culture taking root.

It is also about leading by example. Do leaders themselves set aside time for evaluation and learning in their daily work? Do they actively seek constructive feedback from others? Are they open about their knowledge gaps and committed to continuous learning? If the answer is no, it is unlikely that a learning culture will be successfully established.

3. Learning is Hindered by Prestige and the Pursuit of Perfection

Over the past decade, the concept of psychological safety has gained recognition in research as a key factor for learning in the workplace. It refers to an environment where employees feel safe to share ideas, acknowledge mistakes, and offer constructive criticism—without fear of social repercussions or damage to their reputation. A combination of high psychological safety and high-performance expectations has been found to create the most favourable conditions for employee development and learning.³

A survey of over 1,000 business leaders in Sweden found that leadership training in psychological safety is the most common approach to fostering knowledge transfer and learning within organizations. However, the survey also revealed that a major obstacle to these efforts is the influence of prestige.⁴

The numbers speak for themselves: 65% of companies where employees fear making mistakes struggle significantly with effective knowledge-sharing. In contrast, among organizations where employees do not fear making mistakes, only 29% face challenges in knowledge-sharing.⁵ When looking at expert interviews from Skills Reports, it is evident that the audiovisual industry also struggles with prestige-driven cultures. The audiovisual sector now

³ Edmondson, A. C. *The Fearless Organization*. Sonoma.

⁴ 2024 Nordic Learning and Talent Report, Cornerstone and Rasmussen Analys

⁵ 2024 Nordic Learning and Talent Report, Cornerstone and Rasmussen Analys

has an exciting opportunity to foster more open and learning-oriented organizational cultures by reducing prestige and embracing failures as a natural part of growth.

4. Learning is Strengthened by Intergenerational Collaboration

Diversity in the workplace fuels learning, according to a study conducted across both public and private organizations in Sweden.⁶ One crucial aspect of diversity is age diversity.

An annual youth study in Sweden has revealed that younger generations want more intergenerational interaction at work—not least because they seek mentorship and learning opportunities from experienced colleagues. When Swedish 15- to 29-year-olds are interviewed about work life, they often express feeling abandoned by senior professionals.⁷

In the audiovisual sector, knowledge transfer frequently occurs in project-based settings. However, there is great potential in developing more structured mentorship programmes and intergenerational collaborations. By developing systematic models for passing on experience, the industry can not only strengthen its future skills supply but also create a more sustainable and engaging work environment.

Elevating Leadership as a Strategic Issue in the Audiovisual Sector

In an industry where many businesses are small, financially pressured, and project-based, it can be challenging to make leadership a priority. Many producers become managers not because they have a natural aptitude for leadership, but because they possess other crucial skills, such as creativity, business acumen, or strong networks. At the same time, the lack of strategic and sustainable leadership can become a challenge—both for the work environment and for the industry's long-term development.

Leadership is crucial for creating a work culture where learning can thrive, and since long-term learning and innovation are essential for building a sustainable sector, leadership should increasingly be highlighted as a strategic key issue for the sector's future.

The Nostradamus Report emphasizes the importance of maintaining a human-centred perspective in an increasingly technology-driven world. A key factor in achieving this is to elevate the leadership dimension within the industry and give it greater focus. To create workplaces that foster creativity, innovation, and sustainability, leadership must not only be viewed as an individual concern for producers and managers but as a strategic investment for the entire industry.

⁶ Wes Insight: 2023

⁷ "Ungdomsfokus 2023", Rasmussen Analys and the Foundation Ungt Ledarskap

Authentic Leadership – A Path Through Complex Challenges

Research shows that in times of uncertainty and rapid change, industries need leaders who stand firm and have a strong internal compass. A study of over 1,000 leaders in the Swedish business sector mapped out the leadership behaviours that are becoming increasingly important in today's complex challenges. The results were clear: the most successful leaders are those with strong self-awareness, authenticity in their leadership, and alignment with their core values.⁸

But what does authentic leadership mean in practice? Some critics argue that even a tough and ruthless manager, who is openly transparent about their leadership style, could claim to be authentic. However, research clarifies that authentic leadership does not mean acting on every impulse without filter. Rather, it is about being genuine, not pretending to be someone you are not, and at the same time, striving to be the best version of yourself as a leader.

The opposite of authentic leadership is a rigid, overconfident leadership style where the leader never admits uncertainty or mistakes—an approach that can stifle innovation and creativity.⁹

Self-Awareness – A Key to Sustainable Leadership

For a leader to be genuine and credible, both internal and external self-awareness are required.

- *Internal self-awareness* refers to understanding one's own strengths, weaknesses, and motivations.
- *External self-awareness* involves understanding how others perceive you.

Actively seeking and accepting feedback is crucial—but not always easy.

Interestingly, research shows that leaders tend to overestimate their own self-awareness. Those in higher positions are especially prone to believing they have an accurate self-image, when in fact, this may be an illusion.

Psychologist Tasha Eurich describes this as "The Ostrich Trinity", a phenomenon where powerful individuals develop a distorted self-image. Past successes can create a false sense of certainty, making it more difficult to both accept and receive honest feedback.¹⁰

In an industry where leadership has traditionally not been a priority, it can be challenging to reframe it as a strategic issue. However, if the audiovisual sector wants to create sustainable workplaces and foster creativity, leadership must be given the importance it deserves.

⁸ *Konsten att leda i nya tider*. Michaël Berglund's leadership report 2024.

⁹ George, B., Sims, P., McLean, A.N. och Mayer, D. (2021): "Utforska ditt autentiska ledarskap" from the book "Harvard Business Review: Om ledarskap", Polaris Fakta.

¹⁰ Eurich, T. *Insight*. Currency

Key Takeaways: Future-Proofing the Industry

Build Structures for Coopetition and Learning

For the audiovisual sector to become more resilient, long-term structures for knowledge sharing and innovation are needed. Platforms and networks where industry players share both successes and failures can create conditions for increased collaboration and a stronger ecosystem.

Prioritize Trust-Building Initiatives

Trust is essential for collaboration, especially in an industry where individualism and competition have traditionally dominated. By establishing transparency, clear shared goals, and a culture of collective success, trust between stakeholders can be strengthened.

Invest in Leadership That Promotes Learning and Collaboration

Authentic leadership and psychological safety are crucial for fostering knowledge-sharing organizations. Leaders who dare to show vulnerability, seek feedback, and encourage open knowledge exchange will be the ones driving the industry forward.

Identify and Develop the Right Skills

The industry needs a clearer understanding of which competencies are missing and how they can be complemented through strategic collaborations. By identifying strengths and gaps, synergies can be created that benefit both companies and individuals.

Strengthen the Human Perspective in a Digitalized Future

Technology will continue to reshape the industry, but human storytelling and authentic relationships will be essential in creating meaningful and engaging productions. Developing self-awareness and empathetic leadership is becoming increasingly important to balance creativity with digital transformation.

About the Sofia Rasmussen

Sofia Rasmussen is a futures and trend analyst, author, speaker, and CEO of Rasmussen Analys, which she founded in 2014. Her areas of expertise include the future of work, the values and lifestyles of the young generation, employer branding, gender equality in the workplace, and people's work-related values. Sofia has extensive experience as an analyst, including from the consultancy firm Kairos Future, and has worked internationally with women's rights. She has been named one of Veckans Affärer's 101 Super Talents and has been among the most in-demand female speakers in Sweden.

About the Skills Reports

The Skills Reports are published annually by Kulturakademin in collaboration with Sofia Rasmussen at Rasmussen Analys. Since 2022, the reports have provided relevant and forward-looking insights on learning within the cultural sector. The aim is to highlight key future skills and inspire a more strategic and proactive approach to lifelong learning.

Through trend and foresight analysis, the reports shed light on the forces driving change and offer concrete tools for skills development—both for individuals and organizations. The goal is to build future readiness and spark new conversations about how we can best equip the cultural sector for tomorrow. All Skills reports are free to download from Kulturakademin's [website](#), and the 2025 Skills report will be released later this year.

About the Nostradamus Project and Reports

Nostradamus is an initiative commissioned by the Göteborg Film Festival to provide in-depth insights and projections on the near future of the evolving audiovisual sector. Since 2013, it has published annual reports written by media analyst Johanna Koljonen, offering analysis of emerging trends in production, distribution, business models, and audience behaviour. The reports are based on interviews with key industry players and extensive strategic research, aiming to be accessible to everyone from producers and policymakers to students and stars. All reports are free to download on Göteborg Film Festival's [website](#).

The next step for Nostradamus is the development of the *Nostradamus Collective*—a year-round platform designed to foster collaboration and transparency, share intelligence, and build a community of audiovisual professionals dedicated to navigating change together.

The 12th Nostradamus Report will be presented at Marché du Film in Cannes in 2025.