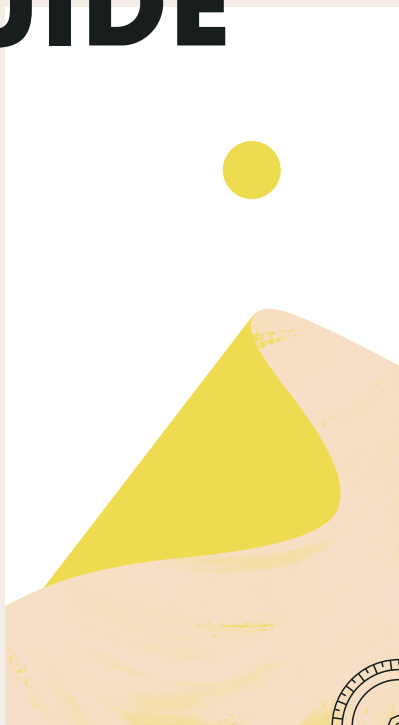
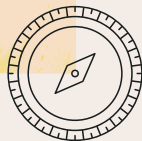


# FIELD GUIDE

INCLUDES: ACTIVITIES + CONVERSATION STARTERS



CREATED BY OMI DYAR NETWORK



Tools to help navigate the future impact  
of today's tech



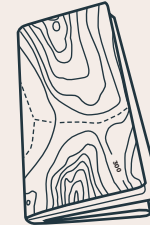
**WELCOME**

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**ABOUT THIS  
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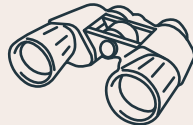
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## WELCOME

You're passionate and have empathy for people impacted by your product, but the constant news of tech's missteps weighs on your mind.

Getting traction with your colleagues to more deeply consider each of our roles in developing responsible tech can sometimes feel like an uphill battle, a full-time job, and uncharted territory all rolled into one.

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But the tides are changing.

That's because people like you are asking questions, challenging norms, and creating a future where tech products are built with responsibility at the core.

Ethical Explorers—whether product managers, designers, engineers, or founders—are driven by the idea that it's possible to innovate while also designing tech more thoughtfully to avoid potential downsides. You want to do the right thing, but you don't always know where to start.

That's where the Ethical Explorer Pack comes in.

Consider this a go-to tool for sparking dialogue and facilitating group exercises.

Make the Ethical Explorer Pack your own. Experiment with it. Evolve it.

**Let's start exploring.**

# It takes courage to be an explorer.

The Ethical Explorer Pack is for leaders like you: people who have started thinking about and maybe even asking the hard questions, and who want to help pioneer a new standard for building human-centered tech that's safer, healthier, fairer, and more inclusive for all.

But as we all know, it's impossible to do this alone.

Use the Ethical Explorer Pack as a group facilitation exercise to discover and discuss tough tech issues and the impact they have (or could have) on users and our society. These conversations lay the groundwork to create a culture of questioning, scout early warning signs, and build support within your organization.



## Support human values

When we design for convenience and engagement above all else, we only acknowledge a narrow view of the human experience. The Ethical Explorer Pack helps reframe our thinking so that we consider the impact of what we build. This will lead to tech products that value fundamental human rights, empower users, and create healthy online experiences.



## Create a culture of questioning

Tech ethics and innovation are evolving at different speeds—after all, we can't imagine every future consequence, intended or otherwise. But we can recognize, challenge, and question the decisions we make along the way. The more we use our voices, the more we'll inspire others to do the same.



## Ignite change through dialogue

Change starts with open and honest discussion. These exercises can help you and your team to start small, discover common ground, and empower everyone to play a part in building human-centered technology—one conversation at a time.

# EXPLORING THE TECH RISK ZONES



There is no “right” path to follow for the Ethical Explorer Pack’s activities—you can explore them in any order and at whatever pace. Make them your own and blaze a unique, ethical tech trail.



## Exploring on your own

(30–60 min.)

### PURPOSE

To develop your own perspective on an issue before sharing it with others

- 1 Read through the Tech Risk Zone description cards
- 2 Select 2-3 Risk Zones that interest you or that relate to your organization
- 3 Explore news events around these Risk Zone topics
- 4 What connections do you see between what’s happening in the tech industry and potential risk areas in your own company?

### EXAMPLE

While researching Surveillance, I read that a ridesharing app has been in the news for tracking people—without consent—even after they stop using the app. Our app also uses location tracking. Is this a problem for us, too?



## Exploring how to build habits

(15 min.)

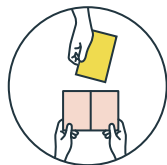
### PURPOSE

To make ethical exploration an integrated part of your team’s process

- 1 Read through the Tech Risk Zone description cards
- 2 Select the top 2-3 Risk Zones most relevant to your organization
- 3 As a group, decide on a cadence for introducing the practice of ethical inquiry into your regular processes (e.g. one question followed by team discussion)
- 4 For your first prompt, pick a single Risk Zone. Ask “How do we, as a team, define [Risk Zone]?”
- 5 For future prompts, use the “Where We Stand” questions to get you started

### EXAMPLE

Start small. Once a week, try posing a single “Where We Stand” question during team stand-up or over lunch. Perhaps you start with Data Control and ask “What data are we collecting from users?”



## Exploring the positive

(30–60 min.)

### PURPOSE

To celebrate your current progress when your team needs a moment of inspiration

- 1 Read through the Tech Risk Zone description cards
- 2 As a group, select the top 1-2 Risk Zones where you're already making strides
- 3 Look at the Risk Zones map where there is an associated human value with each risk. Together, discuss "How are we enabling \_\_\_\_\_?"
- 4 Imagine how you might take this one step further by asking the "Leading the Way" question

### EXAMPLE

Our app is advocating for access by offering a program that gives a discounted monthly rate to people at lower income levels. How else can we advocate for equity?



## Exploring how to improve

(30–60 min.)

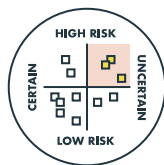
### PURPOSE

To give your team the confidence to question and challenge when kicking off/reflecting on a project

- 1 Choose a technology, product, or feature you're about to work on or have finished working on
- 2 Read through the Tech Risk Zone description cards
- 3 As a group, select a Risk Zone most relevant to the technology, product, or feature
- 4 Use the "Anticipating Risk" questions to imagine what situations might occur for the card you've selected
- 5 Once you've spotted a risk, think through:
  - What don't we know about this risk?
  - Who needs to be involved to better understand this risk?
  - What are we going to do about it?
  - Who are the decision-makers that will take action?

### EXAMPLE

We're introducing a new feature that recommends shops based on the location of our users. Are we favoring any particular shops? What privacy protections are in place?



## Exploring in a workshop

(Half day)

### PURPOSE

To give your team the tools to anticipate risk and imagine possibilities

### PART ONE

- 1 Find a scenario (either currently happening in the tech world or develop an imaginary future where it could happen) and present it to the group
- 2 Have everyone read through all of the Tech Risk Zone description cards and identify which Risk Zone this scenario best represents

### PART TWO

- 3 Present the top 2-3 Risk Zones you've pre-selected that pose the most risk to your organization
- 4 Break into small groups and answer "How do we, as a team, define [Risk Zone]?"
- 5 Next, use the "Anticipating Risk" questions and have the groups imagine what situations might occur for each Risk Zone selected
- 6 Encourage each team to share their scenarios with the larger group

### PART THREE

- 7 Draw a two-by-two grid with "High Risk" on the top and "Low Risk" on the bottom, "Certain" on the left, and "Uncertain" on the right
- 8 Have everyone write down assumptions they have about each Risk Zone
- 9 Evaluate and plot each assumption on the grid and include the team in discussing your rationale
- 10 Focusing on the assumptions in the "High Risk" and "Uncertain" quadrant, ask the team to write down questions they have that would make the assumptions listed clear
- 11 Assign Ethical Explorer roles to participants in the room to examine potential solutions to the posted questions and assumptions

### EXAMPLE

An assumption exists that our users understand we're tracking their location. It's in our service agreement that we're also giving this information to third parties, but we're unsure if it's clear to our users. Do they know they can opt in or opt out?

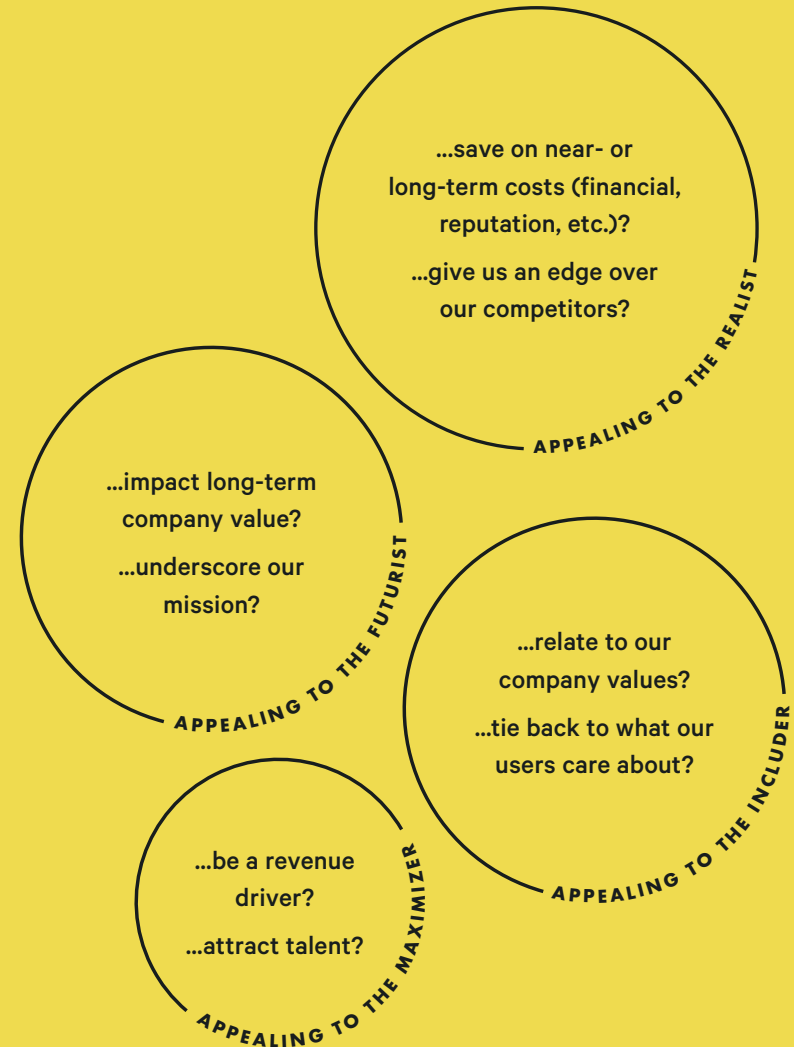


# MAKING THE CASE

It's easy to spot when change needs to happen in your organization; it's harder to find the courage and the business rationale to get others on board.

First, consider who you need buy-in from. Imagine what type of rationale would appeal to their point of view. Are they more of a realist or a futurist? Explore how you might craft an answer to the following questions based on their perspective.

**How might ethical thinking...**



There's no doubt that you'll face challenges as you build traction for ethical exploration in your organization. Here are a few ideas to navigate the tough conversations.

**WHEN YOU HEAR**

"Ethics sounds so philosophical, not actionable. It's going to be hard to get traction internally."

**YOU MIGHT RESPOND**

"That's why I need your help. When it comes to this type of work, it's about starting small and building habits, rather than having all the answers. Sometimes there won't be a simple solution. By investing now we'll empower our teams to prepare for what's next. We know that external forces will continue to impact us; it's a hard lesson we all learned with GDPR."

**WHEN YOU HEAR**

"We need to move fast. Now isn't the right time to slow down."

**YOU MIGHT RESPOND**

"It's not any different than trade-offs we make around technical debt. We can get away with taking shortcuts now, but it will catch up to us eventually. I'd rather we take a proactive approach than waste more time and resources acting reactively down the road."

**WHEN YOU HEAR**

"Taking responsibility for this sounds like a full-time job."

**YOU MIGHT RESPOND**

"This shouldn't fall on the shoulders of one person. In fact, it can be problematic if there isn't shared responsibility. Workers at some of the largest and most established companies—and startups, too—are banding together to question and even protest some uses of the technology they build."



As an Ethical Explorer, your work has just begun. It will take continual conversation and action.

From product launches to software updates, consider this your go-to resource for identifying early warning signs, tackling tech's ethical risk zones, and brainstorming potential solutions.

To build on and share your experience, please visit the Ethical Explorer Pack website at:

**[ethicalexplorer.org](https://ethicalexplorer.org)**

Thank you for helping to pioneer the movement toward responsible tech—one that's grounded in a culture of questioning, discovery, and human-centered experiences.





OMIDYAR NETWORK



This project wouldn't have been possible without the wealth of knowledge and expertise from dozens of individuals and organizations. We especially want to thank the [Institute for the Future](#) (IFTF), which identified our 8 Tech Risk Zones and conducted the original research, and [Artefact](#).