

# Design Team Procedure, Fundamental

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NOTE: This is a very early edition of this article. It will be followed by several revisions as suggestions and questions are received. This early copy (20.1) is provided in response to recent heightened interest, and is intended to help new initiators and organizers get started in the right direction.

It is evident that Design Teams around the world have begun to spring up from the magnificent 1% of every community. All have essentially asked the same question, "How do we proceed?" The following should help everyone for a very long time whether you are working with social-societal, political-governmental, or financial-economic designs. We will use two investigative and solution-creating processes.

**1.** The first was devised by Kurt Wright in his book, *Breaking the Rules*,<sup>1</sup> which I have referenced dozens of times in the last 10 years. I have a synopsis of this book which is available upon request. Essentially Wright provided 5 rules to create solutions:

**1. What's right?** i.e., *what is working right* concerning the problem/situation that you are working on?

**2. What makes it right?** i.e., *that makes is work right?* Here we want to identify the criteria that tell us what parts are working right.

Already you are getting the insight that Wright's process does not attempt to "fix problems" but to create solutions. Essential to that process is that we identify what is working right in order that our solutions do not sent us backwards by removing good working processes.

**3. What would be ideally right?** i.e., if we were to create a solution, what would that look like. *...how would it work ideally?*

This step urges us to clearly identify what it is that we want the results to look like and how it would work ideally. What new criteria would tell us it is working right?

**4. What's not yet quite right?** i.e., *what is not yet working right?* It isn't until step #4 that we identify the problem of the situation we are trying to repair.

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, Kurt 1998. *Breaking the Rules*, CPM Publishing, Boise, ID ISBN: 0-9614383-3-9

5. **What resources can I find to make it right?** i.e., *what resources can I find to make it work right?*

Many problems are never authentically investigated simply because the problem was never clearly identified. This makes it very difficult for the person or team to focus its attention on *repairing the causes* of the genuine problem. If we have not clearly identified the problem, then there will never be clearly identifiable solutions. Solution-creation always begins with asking *the (W)right questions*.

Kurt Wright's five steps are an excellent example of a "Type II Organizational Learning" process espoused by Peter Senge in his classic book on systems, *The Fifth Discipline*, and the work by Chris Argyris, with others, in *Action Science*. The wisdom of organizational learning is that all organizations undergo change either within themselves or in their operational environment, or from an unrelated outside sources that cause immense problems. Type II learning processes accept that a problem exists, and then devise *solutions that address the causes* so that the problem does not come up again due to the same causes.

**The intention of Design Teams and the Kurt Wright process** is to install Type II learning processes into local communities using the timeless, validated values of our species to create long term solutions. *This has never been done before!* Now we can move ahead with confidence without the dithering and uncertainty that all generations before us have had to accept, and worse, have had to swallow what the social, political, and economic hierarchies told them to accept.

**2.** The second investigative and solution-creation process comes directly out of the Design Team Process. <sup>2</sup>

1. The Design Team organizer and initiator will probably discuss the problem or situation s/he has discovered with others who may become a member of the Team. Wright's process will help this first-stage team define the problem, and to see who is "on board" for working in the Team with this problem.

2. The next step picks up from #5 above by guiding team members to research the "best practices" concerning this problem/situation. It begins with 1) what you and team members already know; and 2) a search of the literature in the area of investigation of the problem. This data base may be digital, it may still be in hardcopy form, and could be over 3,000 years old.

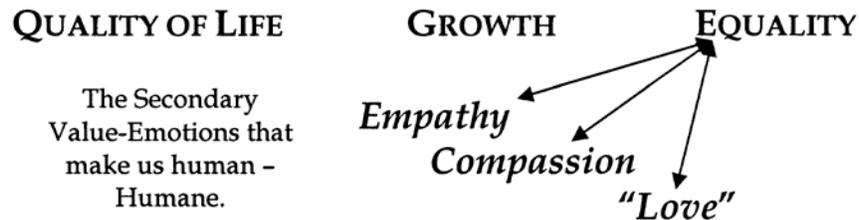
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<sup>2</sup> Raphael, Daniel 2015. *Social Sustainability HANDBOOK for Community-Builders* Infinity Press, Evergreen, CO.  
ISBN Trade Book: 978-0-692-41640-2 e-PUB ISBN: 978-1-4951-6048-6

Your findings will be published, eventually. Please accurately “tag” all references to your discoveries for later investigation and verification.

A rough discernment of “best practices” can be accomplished simply by using the illustration below to remind you of the sustaining criteria.

## SIX CORE VALUES OF SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY



**An example:** In the first month immediately following birth, what are the best practices for infant care? This question will guide you to #3 of Wright’s process. “What is ideally right?” involves only a very few immediate parameters: a) nutrition; b) interpersonal contact with the infant; c) and infant care involving all of the physical aspects needed for the infant.

The question in #3 should stimulate the team to also ask to identify the “right development” of the child to age 20, or when the child separates from their family of origin.

Because infant care sets the stage for childcare, pre-teen, teenage, pre-adult, and young adult development the parents also need a long term understanding of what it is all about having children. What is that? It is to prepare the child to become an independent, self-sustaining, and responsible adult in the larger community and society where we have all found our self once we left home.

I like to use this example because it gives us a sense of immediacy, urgency, and long-term necessity of taking practical actions that result in great benefit to the child, great pride for the parents, thankfulness on the part of future spouses/partners, and provides very healthy modelling for their own children. What we are trying to create are multi-generational win-win-win-win-win-win-win solutions. (Seven generations according to Native American wisdom.)

Undergoing a “best practices” investigation can be a very long project as there usually exist many thousands of research studies, articles, and books on most subjects. However, NONE HAVE EVER BEEN VALIDATED using the six core values of social sustainability in step three of the Team Process.

3. This is the step for testing and (in)validating the research material. Here we take nothing for granted. As these values have never been used to validate any previous research projects, all research studies and their conclusions will come under the scrutiny of these values. The best part of the process is this, once these best practices have been validated, those validated practices have every possibility of being useful to parents for a hundred generations.

If your team is working on a project of the magnitude of this example, I suggest the team narrow its investigation to avoid a decade of research. If you do divide the project into segments, then validated segments must support the sustainability of the next segment in order to create the socially sustainable congruence of the whole project.

4. Contact other Teams that are working on similar topics. Compare results, collaborate, and perhaps co-publish your findings that will be useful to every race, ethnicity, culture, nationality, and gender. Yes, there will be cultural and ethnic differences but except for those unique populations, your results will become historic.

5. "What works" to support the sustainability of societies and nations will need to be published. At this early time, we have no central organization to accommodate the central gathering, organization, analysis of missing validations, and publication of validated findings. It is my hope that such will come into existence... "very soon" is not soon enough for me!

If you have questions or thoughtful comments regarding what this article proposes, please share them with me. Thank you.

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