

# Part I

## Process Leader

### *Introduction*

Today's organizations have begun to shed the mechanistic, Newtonian worldview that was prevalent in past years (Wheatley, 1992). The mechanistic view dictated that objectives and goals be met through sterile, automatic, lockstep tasks.

Growing, thriving companies have adopted a quantum worldview. "To live in a quantum world, to weave here and there with ease and grace, we will need to change what we do. We will need to stop describing tasks and instead facilitate process" (Wheatley, 1992, p. 38).

Modern organizations recognize that they are composed of complex, dynamic processes. They understand that "the process of organizing is much broader and more basic than the task of achieving goals" (Morgan, 1986, p. 72).

The Process Leader is a key player in any organization that desires real change. She moves organizations from mechanistic thinking to process thinking. She orchestrates and conducts processes rather than imposes goals and objectives. She challenges the mechanistic tendency to value stability and pushes for radical reform in approaching tasks and relating to people. She can discern when chaos or upheaval is helpful. School systems that have spent years expanding bureaucratic control and stability need a Process Leader to guide them through chaos to a more vibrant and responsive organization.

Process Leaders "need both technical and change process expertise" because the change process is complex (Fullan, 1991, p. 226). They need not be experienced in curriculum, school management, or child development, but they need to know a variety of tools for leading schools from where they are to where they want to be. Currently, schools are inundated with top-down legislative and administrative mandates. Teachers attend numerous inservice

events on new instructional approaches. Every newly discerned gap in society is turned over to the schools to solve.

The Process Leader helps local schools design workable solutions for their unique situations. She brings together administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community members to decide on plans and solutions. She encourages participation and consensus so that she might receive support and commitment for the change process. She attempts to involve all stakeholders in planning and implementing reform.

The Process Leader may assume three roles: architect, carpenter, or contractor. The architect sees the big picture and focuses on the goal of improving student learning and achievement. The carpenter builds consensus and promotes shared decision making. The contractor steers the process and puts the focus on creating visible achievements so that those who participate in the process reap the benefits of change.

# 1

## The Architect Sees the Big Picture

*The architect is the Process Leader who focuses on student learning and achievement.*

### ROLE DESCRIPTION ■

The architect keeps school teams focused on the big picture—an overall view of what to change and how to work toward change. She does not impose her own ideas on the group participants; she allows them to discover the big picture for themselves. She keeps pushing for agreement on the big picture as a way to transcend the differences among those holding limited perspectives. She enables people with conflicting viewpoints to look above, beyond, around, and under their views to see the larger perspectives that connect them.

#### Focusing on Student Learning

The first task of the architect is to remind educators that their central goal is improving student learning and achievement. Teaching and learning focuses on meeting children's needs rather than catering to the needs of everyone else in society (Astuto et al., 1994). While education may validly serve other social, political, and cultural functions: "Education's first responsibilities are to ensure the entitlement of the young to the best that society has to offer and to serve as an agent of societal improvement and transformation" (Astuto et al., 1994, p. 88).

The educator's essential challenge is to provide each child with a successful learning experience in school. Any other focus diverts attention and energies away from the essential task. The architect of school change keeps groups focused on their crucial task.

### **Expanding Traditional Boundaries**

Most educational institutions are purely preservational (Astuto et al., 1994). In many ways, education is conducted today just as it was 100 years ago. Society has progressed, but schools have not.

School reforms are failing because educators fail to break out of their preservational, outdated modes of thinking. "Breaking out of our circular loop of reform strategies will require a novel look at the situation" (Deal, 1990, p. 7). "The basic causes of the failure [of reform strategies], we will argue, are the narrow limits of imagination that have governed the reform proposals" (Astuto et al., 1994, p. 1).

The architect moves educators out of their traditional, outdated, narrow perspectives. As Einstein is often quoted as saying: "No problem can be solved from the same consciousness that created it. We must learn to see the world anew" (Wheatley, 1992, p. 5). The architect starts by leading teams to perceive the world as it actually is, not as it was in the past, so that teams may devise educational methods that help students participate in the world. If educators do not understand their society, they will find it impossible to envision and to create an education system that helps students participate in society.

Educators who truly wish to transform schools expand their imaginations and ideas about the role education can play in society. They examine new ideas and possibilities for school change and define their purposes and methods to carry out those purposes. They challenge many of the long-held and dear concepts of school that are espoused by parents, local politicians, community members, administrators, teachers, staff, and students (Deal, 1990).

The architect helps school change teams think "outside of the bounds." She raises questions that spur teams to do research, to amass data, and to broaden conceptual horizons so that they may discover an overall perspective. She pushes teams to gain the widest perspective possible on their situation (Wheatley, 1992). She challenges teams to question their preconceptions about education and educational institutions (Miles & Louis, 1990).

### **Considering All Viewpoints**

No one person or group has the final and definitive answers on what education should look like or how it needs to change. Therefore, it is important for the architect to consider the perspectives of all stakeholders in the process of change (Deal, 1990). Diversity guarantees success as schools embark on the transformation process. The architect skillfully melds together the diverse viewpoints into a cohesive and powerful whole.

Each school team figures out what is going to work in its local situation.

First, I no longer believe that organizations can be changed by imposing a model developed elsewhere. So little transfers to, or even inspires, those trying to work at change in their own organizations. Second, and much more important, the new physics cogently explains that there is no objective reality out there waiting to reveal its secrets. There are no recipes or formulae, no checklists or advice that describe “reality.” There is only what we create through our engagement with others and with events. Nothing really transfers; everything is always new and different and unique to each of us. (Wheatley, 1992, p. 7)

All the stakeholders in a particular situation create school change plans bit by bit, step by step. The architect facilitates this process by teaching teams how to access information from expert sources. She encourages teams to use this information to spark imaginative and creative ideas that fit their own situations. The architect also urges teams to assess their efforts and to integrate new information as it becomes available.

### Seeking Order Instead of Control

The change process can be very chaotic, but the architect trusts the process even when things seem out of control. The architect enables teams to search for order rather than control in the chaos of the change process.

Teams, in their natural desire for neatness and orderliness, may be tempted to control the change process instead of waiting for a new order to emerge. Instead of allowing the process to move forward, the team may retreat back to the old order, stifling creativeness and responsiveness to the new. The architect urges teams to give up control and search for order within the chaos. “What if we could reframe the search? What if we stopped looking for control and began, in earnest, the search for order? Order we will find in many places we never thought to look before” (Wheatley, 1992, p. 23).

Teams may also be discomfited by the collapse and disappearance of old structures. As change begins, disintegration of old systems is a necessary step toward the reemergence of a more appropriate form (Wheatley, 1992). The architect enables teams to ride the storm and to discern the new forms that are emerging in what seems like either total disintegration or wild, unproductive chaos.

## WHEN THIS ROLE IS NEEDED ■

The architect is needed at the beginning of any effort for school change. By raising appropriate questions and by making sure the staff has access to leading articles, books, and videos, the facilitator encourages the school community to look comprehensively at school change. The architect also steps in when teams get detoured—when they spend huge amounts of time and energy on tasks that have little to do with student learning and

achievement. The architect encourages the team to continually review its original plans, so that all team members remain focused on the original goals. She ensures that momentary setbacks do not deflect teams from their original path.

## ■ SKILLS

The architect keeps the group focused on the big picture, assuring that student learning and achievement remain the highest priorities. She uses tools such as questions and graphics to illustrate the big picture. She uses strategies that enable the group to expand its thinking and tap into its imagination. The architect is a skilled questioner. Her questions can help a group make leaps in its thinking or discover order amidst chaos.

## ■ PRACTICAL TOOLS

The architect enables teams to focus on the big picture by using the following tools:

1. Needs Assessment Grid
2. Resource Analysis Chart
3. Journey Wall
4. Trends Analysis
5. Wishful Thinking Organizer



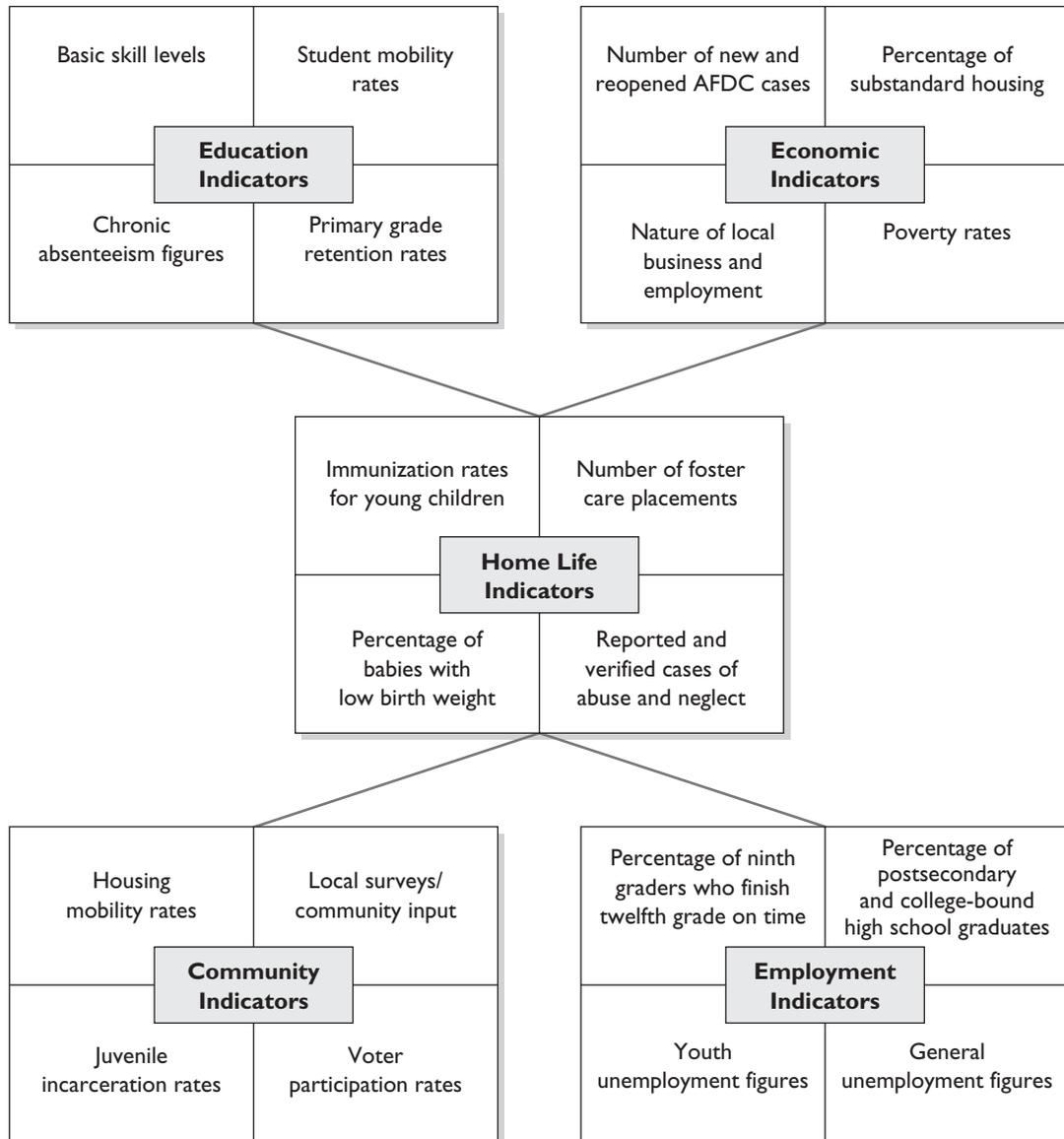
Practical Tool 1

**Needs Assessment Grid**

**Description**

The Needs Assessment Grid helps a group collect and organize information about district and community needs. When all data are gathered, the facilitator leads the group in analyzing the information and making plans for the future.

**Example**



## Instructions

*Note: A blackline master of the Needs Assessment Grid is provided in Appendix A, page 208.*

1. Divide the group into five teams. Assign each team to collect data for one of the five indicators: education, economic, home life, community, or employment.
2. Reconvene the group after teams have had time to collect data.
3. Compile data on a single chart. Display the chart at the front of the room or make copies for each person.
4. Lead a follow-up discussion with these questions:
  - a. What data do you remember from what you have read?
  - b. Which data are most significant for you?
  - c. Which information supported what you knew or sensed before the data collection began?
  - d. Which information surprised you?
  - e. What messages do the data communicate?
  - f. How do the data impact our planning and our future work?
5. Ask an individual or a team to record the answers to these questions and to write a needs assessment report.

## Possible Uses

This tool can be used to gather information before any districtwide or schoolwide strategic planning sessions. Groups may modify the categories of the grid to fit the concerns of their local situation. This tool can enable a group to discover relationships within data clusters and between categories.

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Practical Tool 2

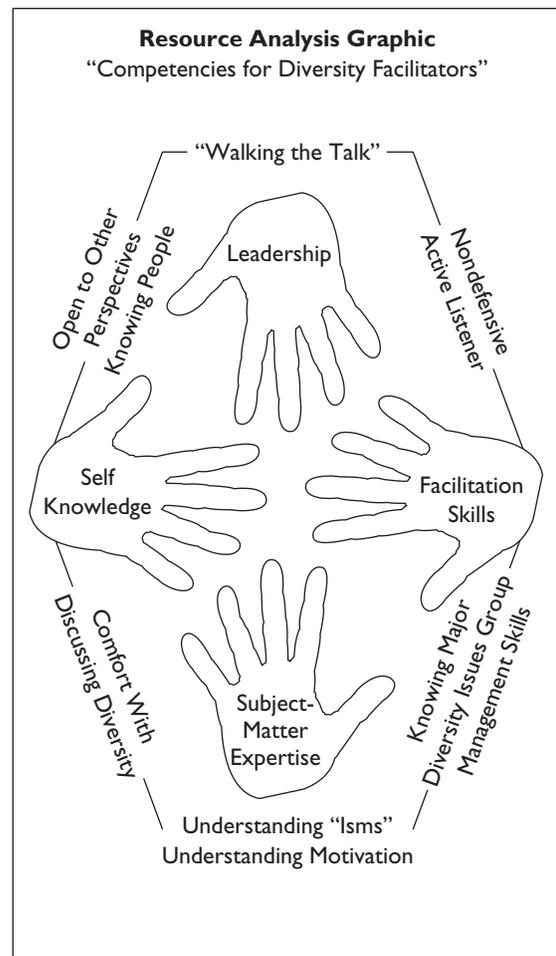
**Resource Analysis Chart**

**Description**

A group can use this tool to gather and to organize information from written, audio, or video material. The Resource Analysis Chart helps participants connect what they have read, heard, or watched with what they are experiencing or attempting to change in the local school or district.

**Examples**

Resource Analysis Chart	
Title: "Competencies for Diversity Facilitators"	
Author's Key Ideas	<p><b>Competency Area 1</b> Self-knowledge One's personal knowledge, beliefs, and values affect other people.</p> <p><b>Competency Area 2</b> Leadership The facilitator promotes diversity.</p> <p><b>Competency Area 3</b> Subject-Matter Expertise The facilitator is clear about the goals and implications of diversity.</p> <p><b>Competency Area 4</b> Facilitation Skills Skills include preparing, delivering, questioning, listening, maintaining, controlling, and managing conflict.</p>
Crucial Insights	The link for all the above four is facilitator style—the ability to genuinely orchestrate procedures, skills, and knowledge.
Local Implications	We need to broaden our subject-matter expertise on diversity. We also need to encourage several lead teachers to attend training sessions to expand their facilitation skills.



## Instructions

*Note: A blackline master of the Resource Analysis Chart is provided in Appendix A, page 209.*

1. Divide the resources (e.g., articles, books, videotapes, audiotapes) among teams.
2. Display the Resource Analysis Chart, noting the categories—Author’s Key Ideas, Crucial Insights, and Local Implications. Ask teams to create a Resource Analysis Chart and a Resource Analysis Graphic that illustrates the major points from the resource.
3. Give the teams time to read, watch, or listen to the material and to complete their reports. (You may choose to assign teams to work on their reports between meetings.)
4. Gather the whole group. Ask each team to post its Resource Analysis Chart and Graphic and to explain what it has learned.
5. Lead a follow-up conversation using these questions:
  - a. Which points seemed most significant to you?
  - b. Which information supported what you knew or sensed before hearing the reports?
  - c. Which information surprised you?
  - d. What ideas or information do you recall from these reports?
  - e. What is the significance of this information for the work ahead?
6. Ask an individual or a team to record the answers to these questions and write a summary report.

## Possible Uses

This tool is particularly useful when you want all group members to begin their thinking from similar starting points. It can also be used to bring the whole group up to date on many sources of information or on a particular area. This tool may be modified so that a group might use it to analyze an oral presentation.

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Practical Tool 3

**Journey Wall**

**Description**

This tool helps teams see the big picture. It graphically portrays world events, education events, and local school events so that all may be considered in a larger perspective. It enables the group to see connections and implications heretofore unrecognized. By getting an idea of the journey up to now, the group is better equipped to project where the school needs to go next. (This tool is adapted from *More Than 50 Ways to Build Team Consensus* by R. Bruce Williams [2007, pp. 46–53].)

**Example**

THE GREAT JOURNEY OF SERVING THE COMMUNITY						
	A Fresh Start		A Changing Community		A Transformation Challenge	
	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
<b>World Events</b>	Korean War Cold War Sputnik	Vietnam War		Reagan, Thatcher, Gorbachev  Personal Computers  AIDS  Berlin Wall Down	German Reunification  Collapse of USSR  Somalia  Bosnia  Mandela President of S. Africa  Rabin, Arafat, Clinton	Examine Breakthroughs in Former USSR  Environmental Treaties Expanded
		JFK Assassinated MLK March on Washington  Great Society  MLK Assassinated Woodstock	Kent State  Oil Embargo  Sadat, Begin, Carter			
<b>Events in Education</b>	Supreme Court Integration	Math/Science Push  Johnsons' Cooperative Learning  Goodlad's Nongraded Schools	Madeleine Hunter	Glasser's Control Theory	Charter Schools  New Ways to Fund Education	Technology Enters Every Classroom  Schools as the Center of Education for Whole Community

(Continued)

(Continued)

THE GREAT JOURNEY OF SERVING THE COMMUNITY						
	A Fresh Start		A Changing Community		A Transformation Challenge	
	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
<b>Local School Events</b>	School Built	Open Classrooms	Addition Put On	Basic Skills Emphasis Influx of Asians and Latinos	Cooperative Learning Introduced Multicultural Week Multiage Classroom	High School Dropout Rate below 1% All Students Seek Education Beyond High School

## Instructions

1. Determine how far into the past and how far into the future you want to examine. (For example, you might decide to start with the decade of the 1950s and go through the decade of the 2010s.)
2. Across the top of a blank wall, list the decades or five-year intervals you are covering. Down the left side of the wall, list three categories: World Events, Events in Education, and Local School Events.
3. Have individuals (if the group is small) or small teams (if the group is large) brainstorm events in all three categories.
4. Ask individuals or teams to write five or six of the most significant events for each category onto 5"×8" cards, one event per card.
5. Tape the cards on the wall using tape loops. Align the cards in the correct rows and in the appropriate decade or half-decade columns.
6. Allow participants to read the cards and survey the large amount of material.
7. Use the following questions to help the group absorb the mass of information on the wall, connect ideas, and draw conclusions.
  - a. Which cards in the World Events row stand out? What relationships or connections do you see among these cards?
  - b. Which cards in the Events in Education row grab your attention? What relationships or connections do you see among these cards?
  - c. Which cards in the Local School row do you notice? What relationships or connections do you see among these cards?
  - d. Where do you see relationships and connections among all three rows?
  - e. How does this journey break down into three or four sections? How would you title each of these three or four sections of the journey?
  - f. How would you title the whole journey?
  - g. How do the discoveries from this activity impact your planning and thinking?
  - h. How did this activity alter your perspectives of our school?

## **Possible Uses**

This tool can affirm the perspective of those who have been in the school for a long time and bring new people onboard. This activity also enables the group to see the connection between local events and events that occur in the world around them.

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Practical Tool 4

**Trends Analysis**

**Description**

This tool lets group members examine a number of trends affecting their institution to determine how they overlap and if they are new, emerging, established, or disappearing. This tool is particularly useful in gauging the timing of the full impact of a trend (e.g., its full impact may be past or its full impact has not been felt yet). (This tool is adapted from Mirja P. Hanson, Consulting and Facilitation, St. Paul, Minnesota.)

**Example**

<b>Trends in Middle School Education</b>			
Boundary		Emerging	Established
			Disappearing
Boundary Trends	Emerging Trends	Established Trends	Disappearing Trends
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainstreamed classes including special-needs students</li> <li>• Totally heterogeneous classes</li> <li>• Students stay with same teacher teams all through middle school</li> <li>• After-school programs for community</li> <li>• Whole school/whole year thematic units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global awareness</li> <li>• Staff development</li> <li>• Block scheduling</li> <li>• Career development plans for individual students</li> <li>• Technology (computers)*</li> <li>• Teachers teaching more than one subject</li> <li>• Interdisciplinary approach to instruction</li> <li>• “Politically correct” approach to instruction</li> <li>• More emphasis on assessment and accountability</li> <li>• Increasing questioning of practices and policies by parents (rescues)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team teaching</li> <li>• Summers off</li> <li>• Middle school is a transitional period</li> <li>• Exact time blocks for all curricular areas</li> <li>• Teachers teaching single discipline</li> <li>• Having no competition between schools</li> <li>• Standardized testing</li> <li>• Offering high school credit for certain classes</li> <li>• Tracking*</li> <li>• Exploratory projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Middle school being a mini-high school</li> <li>• Bell schedules</li> <li>• Funding (choices for programs)</li> <li>• Lecture for whole class period</li> <li>• Retention</li> <li>• Feeling kids are brain dead</li> <li>• Emphasis on Carnegie units</li> </ul>

\* Indicate key trends

## Instructions

1. Divide the group into teams of four or five people.
2. Draw a large trends wave on the wall in the front of the room. (The wave must be wide enough to accommodate four columns of 5"×8" cards.) Write the four category headings—Boundary Trends, Emerging Trends, Established Trends, and Disappearing Trends—beneath the wave graphic.
3. Explain the four trends using the chart on page 26.
4. Prepare 5"×8" cards of four different colors for each of the four sections. Distribute the first batch of cards (several cards per team) and have each team brainstorm some disappearing trends, writing their choices on the cards. Repeat this step for the established trends, emerging trends, and boundary trends.
5. Ask each team to place their cards under the appropriate columns on the wall. After all cards are posted, allow the group to study the cards.
6. Lead a follow-up conversation using these questions:
  - a. What significant trends do you notice?
  - b. Which trends had you forgotten until you saw them on the wall display?
  - c. Which trends were you surprised to see in the display?
  - d. What do you notice as you examine the whole wall? What does this whole picture of the trends communicate?
  - e. Have you participated in any of these trends?
  - f. Where do you see connections within a column or between different columns?
  - g. What trends merit encouragement and support?
  - h. What opportunities does this display of trends present to us? What threats does this display suggest?
  - i. What are some implications for planning and thinking?
  - j. How has your thinking been altered by participating in this activity? How has the thinking of our group been changed by engaging in this activity?
7. Assign an individual or a team to record the answers to the questions and write a summary report.

## Possible Uses

This activity can address the concerns of two distinct groups—those who are ready to move with the latest innovation and those who are reluctant to jump onto the latest bandwagon. It can also enlighten those who have failed to “see the handwriting on the wall,” enabling them to make some necessary leaps in thought, imagination, and commitment.

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## Practical Tool 5

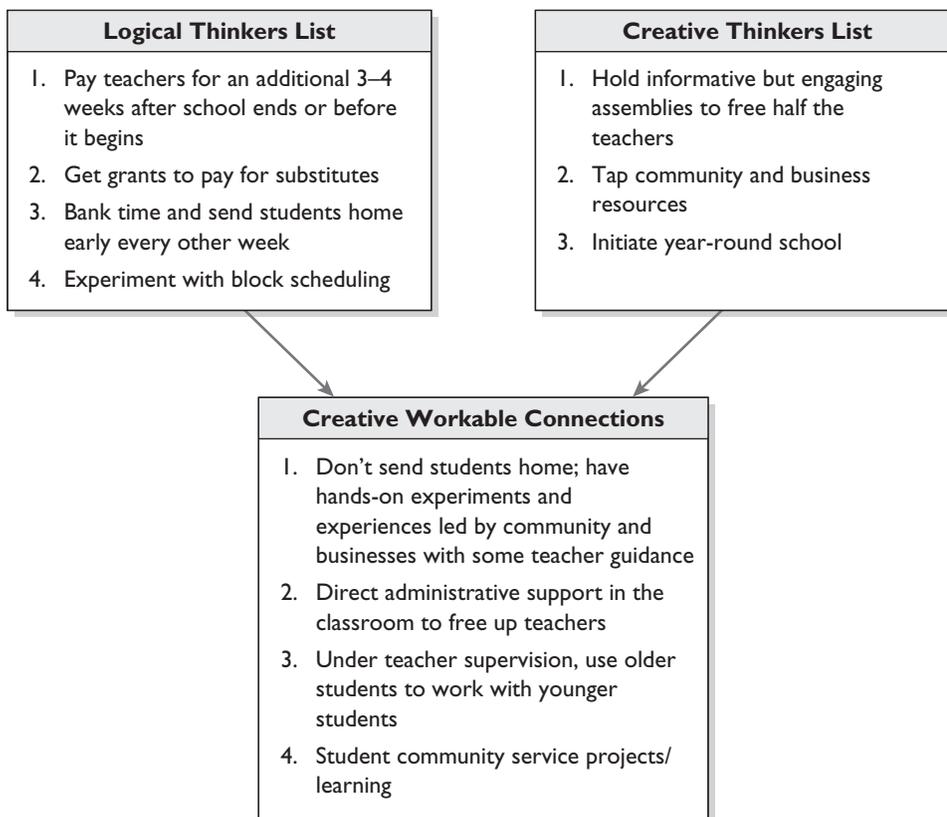
### Wishful Thinking Organizer

#### Description

The Wishful Thinking Organizer enables groups to devise fresh approaches and to reexamine tradition-bound approaches. This tool uses a variety of media to jar the minds of group members so that they can grasp imaginative and creative solutions. (This tool is adapted from the Combining Teams tool in *Recipes for Creative Teamwork* by Bruce E. Honig [1991].)

#### Example

**Focus or Issue: How can our teachers have more professional development, training, and planning time?**



## Instructions

1. State the general focus or the specific issue that the group is to target.
2. Form two teams: a logical-thinking team and a creative-thinking team. Assign a meeting area for each team. In each meeting area, provide appropriate art and music. For the logical team, you may choose realistic art and classical music, and for the creative team, you may choose impressionistic or modern art and new age or space music.
3. Restate the focus or issue. Allow time for individual brainstorming.
  - a. Individuals in the logical team can brainstorm using one of the following stems:
    - What needs to happen here is . . .
    - The research indicates that we need to . . .
    - Given what has been going on in the school, the next step is . . .
  - b. Individuals in the creative team can brainstorm using one of the following stems:
    - I wish . . .
    - What I really want is . . .
    - Wouldn't it be great if . . .
    - Looking at this piece of art (or listening to this music), it occurs to me that . . .
4. Ask individuals to share their thinking with their team and direct teams to create a list of responses.
5. Post responses and request that teams explain their responses.
6. Divide the group into new teams of three or four. (Be sure teams include a mixture of logical team members and creative team members.) Ask teams to synthesize ideas from the logical thinkers list with the ideas from the creative thinkers list to create a workable possibilities list that includes new, creative, and workable solutions.
7. Ask teams to share their ideas. Choose ideas and solutions that seem most appropriate and begin planning how to implement them.

## Possible Uses

This activity is useful when the group gets stuck, when nothing seems possible, and when members suggest that everything has already been tried. This activity can be conducted around a general concern (e.g., preparing students for the next century) or around a particular concern (e.g., relaxing the rigid schedule or getting parents involved with the school).

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## Case Studies

### Laying Tracks to the New

A long-standing military academy on the East Coast embarked on a process of restructuring that included rethinking their mission. Much tradition surrounded their decades of service as a military academy.

The architect (facilitator) stepped into this situation and began to share her ideas of what a totally new academy might look like. She brought in speakers and workshop leaders to challenge the staff members' thinking. She also held strategic planning sessions for the staff.

Because the architect had caused the group to see the big picture, the leaders and staff decided to reimage their school as a global learning community. They expanded the grades offered from 9–12 to PreK–12. They offered high school students the option of participating in the military academy program or the prep school program. They marketed their school to certain Asian countries, and many Asian students have since enrolled. Other foreign students whose parents live in the area have also enrolled. Currently, there is a waiting list for many of the grades in this school.

The leaders and staff at this academy accepted a creative mind-set when they imagined the school as a global learning community. They chose not to try to breathe new life into the traditional image of a military academy. This school was transformed because the educators could step back and see a picture large enough to honor the past and move the school into an exciting future.