SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

School of Social Welfare
State University of New York at Albany

Preparing Facilitators for Retention-Focused Design Teams

Participant Handbook

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DAY 1
Unit One:

Networking:
Beginning to Work Together To Understand Design Teams, Team facilitation, and How Teams Achieve Retention-Related Goals

A. Welcome, Purpose & Goals of the Training

B. Introductions and Icebreaker

C. Rules and Norms for the Training
Unit One

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of Unit One, participants will:

- Build solid working relationships with each other, mirroring the work that design teams must do
- Help to establish ideal conditions for learning and capacity building
- Begin networking, laying the foundation for mutual supports, technical assistance, and idea exchanges
Unit One: Introduction

A. Welcome, Purpose & Goals of the Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To provide an overview of the two-day “Preparing Facilitators for Retention-Focused Design Teams” Training</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-printed newsprint labeled: “Welcome and Training Goals”</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
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<td>30-45 minutes</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome to the “Preparing Facilitators for Retention-Focused Design Teams” Training!</td>
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This two-day preparation program is structured for Facilitators who orchestrate the work of special teams called Design Teams (DTs). DTs earn their names because they design—create, develop—new rules, roles, relationships, policies, and practices. Teams design these improvements to reduce and prevent turnover and improve desirable retention.

Because design teams are structured in each agency, each is somewhat unique. Teams are made up of individuals who represent the diversity of each public child welfare agency’s workforce.

For example, DT members represent every unit (e.g., CPS, foster care) and every level of the organization (e.g., front line and experienced caseworkers and supervisors; middle managers; staff developers; directors of services; and deputy commissioners). Moreover, DTs represent the various “cliques” and “friendship circles” in the agency.

This diverse membership is important because:

- It ensures that the team represents the agency as a whole.
- When the team represents the agency as a whole, its work has a better chance of being accepted by others in the agency and spreading throughout the agency.
- When the team is representative, it has the best chance of tapping all of the expertise in the agency.
- When the team is representative, its achievements and “good news” have the best chance of spreading quickly, accurately, and effectively throughout the agency.
In short, the DT is structured as a driver for agency-wide changes in support of desirable retention. Desirable retention depends fundamentally on improvements in individual, group, supervisory, organizational, and community factors that cause undesirable turnover. The DT facilitator’s job, for which you are being prepared, is to help ensure that the team becomes a driver for multiple improvements, which improve retention and benefit everyone.

[Quick review of Overall Training Goals]: This curriculum is structured to achieve four main goals. On successful completion of the curriculum, participants will:

1. Know how to start a DT in a public child welfare system, including how to work with top level leaders to create, implement, and operate a DT

2. Be able to facilitate a successful DT

3. Know how to obtain implementation supports, assistance, and resources, including coaching from expert consultant-facilitators

4. Understand the need for additional DT facilitator training and competency development

This beginning training for DT facilitators encompasses two full days. In today’s sessions, you will:

- Deepen your knowledge and understanding of the Design Team Model
- Receive and review tools and related resources for team facilitation
- Begin to acquire and practice DT facilitation skills
- Use a logic model template to promote team action planning to improve desirable retention

Do you have any questions, needs, or concerns before we begin?
B. Trainer Introductions and Icebreaker:

**PURPOSE**

To introduce participants and trainers to one another, encouraging networking for resource exchanges, mutual support, and shared learning.

**MATERIALS**

- Pre-printed newsprint labeled, “Conditions for Learning and Networking” for brainstorming
- Handout “Future Facilitators, What About Them? Bingo” (also provided in Toolkit – Unit 1, Tool 1)

**TIME**

As needed

**PROCESS**

Trainer(s) introduce themselves and share their backgrounds, especially their successful experiences with DTs.

Icebreaker exercise called “Facilitators, What About Them? Bingo”

**Handout “Future Facilitators, What About Them? Bingo”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I have a definite assignment to Facilitate a Design Team</th>
<th>I have skills in helping workers learn and develop</th>
<th>I am an “outsider” in my new assignment</th>
<th>I have participated in the process of group development</th>
<th>I practice communicating in a strengths-based, solution focused manner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I listen attentively and appreciate what others are saying before developing alternative view</td>
<td>I have shaped meeting agendas for workforce meetings</td>
<td>I consider myself to be a human rights advocate</td>
<td>I have experience as a facilitator of a Design Team</td>
<td>I have made mistakes that have paved the way in my personal development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I agree that rules and norms will help a group function</td>
<td>I have been employed in child welfare for over 10 years</td>
<td>BINGO</td>
<td>Agree that there is no such thing as a stupid question as a group member</td>
<td>I have contributed to team formation and functioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have worked on improvement models and utilized organizational strengths</td>
<td>I have developed creative flyers to announce events</td>
<td>Has been a team leader</td>
<td>It is ok for a team member to keep questioning until clarity and consensus is achieved</td>
<td>I know what it is like to Wait for a promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have experienced work connected with the CB Grant that includes the DT Model</td>
<td>Know what it is like to be a member of a culturally diverse group</td>
<td>I am an excellent dancer or singer or sports enthusiast or musician OR</td>
<td>I have received written recognition for quality work</td>
<td>I have a birthday this month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is a stand up exercise. Write person’s first name and their county (locale) in the appropriate box if they can identify with a particular statement. Try to receive feedback from as many participants in the room as possible. Shout BINGO when sheet is complete.
Directions for Icebreaker:

- Everyone is to stand up with their BINGO SHEET and pen - move around the room until they locate a participant who can answer positively to a statement. Write the persons first name and where they work. Complete entire sheet with as many different participants names as possible.
- Participants Shout BINGO when sheet is completed. (If time is limited or group size is small, have participants complete only one line up, down, across or on the diagonal)
- Acknowledge the first several persons to get Bingo and give prizes to all.

Discussion of the Icebreaker:
Trainers solicit reactions to Icebreaker. For example, how they felt participating, what they got out of it, the possibilities of its use for their own facilitation of teams. What would they do differently when presenting an Icebreaker?

Ensure these points have been derived from and highlighted in this discussion:

- Unlike traditional training, this DT facilitator training is structured to foster networking among participants. The best networks are learning communities called “communities of practice.” We hope that you’ll form such a community of practice over the next two days.
- Your network (community of practice) will be a resource to you because other DT facilitators will provide social and emotional supports, new ideas for team facilitation, and examples of “what works” in other teams and systems.
- DT facilitation involves building members’ social relationships. Your DT also will benefit from icebreakers like these. (Emphasize that they will hear this over and over again during the two-day training.)
- Icebreakers like these help diverse participants see that they have something in common. Commonalities are team builders.
- Icebreakers like these enable everyone to see how much expertise is in the room; and, in turn, how many resources we have together.
- Inform participants that they will get a copy of “Future Facilitators, What About Them? Bingo” in their packets, to be handed out shortly.
C. Rules and Norms for the Training

**PURPOSE**
- Identification of rules and norms participants want and need during these two days
- Provide an opportunity for participants to experience consensus-building

**MATERIALS**
- Preprinted newsprint labeled with “Conditions for Learning and Networking”
- Post-its
- DT facilitators’ “Toolkit”

**TIME**
As needed

**PROCESS**

Here, the trainer emphasizes again that everyone in the room is viewed as an expert and has some input in how the training will proceed. This input begins with participants’ working together to reach consensus. Agreements begin with the identification of rules and norms they want and need during these two days.

**Trainer asks:** What conditions of working together would be helpful to you during this 2 day training? Specifically, what rules and norms can we agree on?

- Trainer gives out post-its and asks each individual to find a partner. Together, their job is to identify a few important norms and rules to follow during this 2 day training (10 minutes).
- Have all partner groups present and place their post-its on newsprint titled “Conditions of DT work.”
- Ask for any additional rules from the floor. Keep these norms and rules on wall for duration of training.
- Have group decide by “consensus” which norms to agree upon.

**State:** Using our consensus-building exercise, you have created a set of agreements, including shared rules and norms. Like teams, you will adhere to them throughout this 2 day training.

The process of building consensus is important to the DT model because DT’s begin as loosely-structured, diverse groups of people who often have little in common. Developing consensus, thanks to your facilitation, is an important contribution to team development. Norms and rules are a good place to begin. We will return to this consensus-building process later in this training.
Housekeeping Arrangements for the Training:

Another consensus-builder involves what might be called “housekeeping” agreements. These agreements include being on time, when to take breaks, the use of cell phones, etc. These arrangements help “get the conditions” right for learning and networking.

Just as DTs in your agency need to reach consensus on these issues, so must we. So, here are some basic responsibilities.

- Trainer states time of sessions and responsibilities of participants to be on time – breaks- lunch- location of restrooms, telephones, food, and cell phone etiquette.
- Trainer indicates that DTs also have meeting protocols with some of the same housekeeping agreements identified by the participants. This tool will be provided later.
- Others?

Summary: We have experienced getting to know one another better, and as a result, we are in a better position now to value one another’s experience and expertise.
Unit Two:

The Import of the Design Team Model
For Reducing Turnover and Improving Retention

A. The Specifics Related to Design Teams

B. How ID Teams Create Positive Change and Improve Retention
Unit Two

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of Unit Two, participants will:

- Define and describe different kinds of turnover and retention
- Describe, in a preliminary way, a Design Team Model
- Describe, in a preliminary way, how the DT model can be used as an intervention in improving child welfare retention
Unit Two:

A. The Specifics Related to Design Teams

PURPOSE

To identify, describe, and explain the DT model with special emphasis on its import for retention-related improvements

MATERIALS

- The Participant Toolkit
- Unit 1, Tool 1: “Overall Goals of the Training”
- Unit 2, Cover: “Unit Two Objectives”
- Unit 2, Tool 1: “A Snapshot of Turnover, Retention, and Their Relationships”
- Unit 2, Tool 2: “Push Factors”
- Unit 2, Tool 3: “Pull Factors”
- Unit 2, Tool 4: “Keep Factors”

TIME

60 – 90 Minutes

PROCESS

A. Trainer Introduction:

Trainer states: We have just gotten to know one another better, and we have had fun doing it.

Now we need to focus more on the specifics related to design teams. I’ll now hand out two packets to help us focus collectively on DTs. The first is the curriculum. The second is a packet of DT facilitator tools and resource materials.

Distribute the Training Packet to “Trainees”. The packet has four components: (1) A copy of this training outline; (2) A Training Toolkit; (3) A Resource Guide for Facilitators; and (4) A brief for agency commissioners considering a design team.

- Trainer reviews the outline for the remainder of the two-day training to provide participants with a “map” of what lies ahead.

You will note that the first tool in Unit One lists the “Overall Goals of the Training” that we just discussed.
You will also note that the cover-page for each unit in your Toolkit includes the learning objectives for that unit.

(Cover page, Participant Toolkit Unit 2)

Trainer distributes an information sheet to be collected at lunch time. Participants are asked to provide their names, agency, roles and responsibilities, mailing address, phone numbers, and e-mail address.

**Trainer then announces:**

We’ll continue the next phases of our DT facilitator training with one important reminder in mind. *Each of you has your own needs of what they want to get out of this session.*

Once again: Is there anything special, beyond what you know we’ll cover, that you want and need from this training?

Then trainer introduces Design Teams with the following text:

**Introducing Design Teams**

The simplest way to introduce DTs is by thinking about them as problem-solving mechanisms for the entire agency. Basically, teams identify problems and needs related to retention and design solutions for them. They are based on the assumption that workers at all levels in an agency have first hand knowledge of why workers leave and also what it will take to encourage them to stay.

In short, DTs generate and apply knowledge about turnover, retention, and retention-focused improvements. As teams generate and apply knowledge and design improvements, learning and development occur. This learning is both individual and team-based, and ideally it spreads throughout the agency.

So, one of your first responsibilities, as the DT facilitators, is to help DT members and others in the agency gain more knowledge and understanding about turnover, retention, and their relationship. This training-related function paves the way for improvement planning by the DT and others in the agency.
Trainer then refers participants to Unit 2, Tool 1: “A Snapshot of Turnover, Retention, and Their Relationships.” Trainer “walks through this material” with participants, encouraging and addressing their questions and concerns.

Refer participants to Unit 2, Tool 2: “A Snapshot of Turnover, Retention, and Their Relationships”

Lecture:

A SNAPSHOT OF TURNOVER, RETENTION, AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS

- There are different kinds of turnover and retention.
- Not all turnover is bad, and not all retention is good.
- Some turnover can be prevented, and some cannot.

Workforce Turnover:

- **Think about workforce turnover as a concept that describes:**
  - workers’ exits from the agency
  - their exit pathways
  - the reasons they cite for leaving.

- **There are three kinds of turnover.**
  - Functional turnover:
    - also called beneficial turnover, is the first kind
    - when workers ill-suited for the job, the work, the agency, and its surrounding community leave
  - Unpreventable turnover:
    - Retirements, deaths, and changes in life roles (e.g., a spouse changes jobs and must move to another place) account for this kind.
  - Undesirable, preventable turnover:
    - the most important of the three
    - Good people leave despite the agency’s efforts to retain them—at considerable cost to the agency and its clients.
    - This is the kind of turnover we must learn how to minimize and prevent.
Classifying causes of undesirable turnover

- Push factors:
  - Are internal to each agency
  - Refer to the individual, supervisory, organizational, and community factors, which drive away or push out good workers
  - Knowledge is growing about these push factors (Refer to Unit 2, Tool 2).
  - Something can be done about these push factors because reside within each agency’s sphere of influence and control.
  - Push factors cause undesirable, preventable turnover.
  - Removing and preventing these factors is thus a top priority.

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**Unit 2, Tool 2**

**PUSH FACTORS**

**Push Factors**: Features of the Agency, Job, Work and Community that lead to turnover.

Workforce research has indicated that the following factors, individually and in combination, cause good workers to leave:

- Inadequate salaries and benefits
- Heavy caseloads
- Heavy workloads caused in part by excessive, redundant paperwork
- Lack of safety protocols and supports at the office and in the field
- Stress, emotional exhaustion, and vicarious trauma induced by the work
- Lack of supports and interventions aimed at preventing burnout and trauma
- A depersonalized environment with no say-so in which “a job is a job”
- Lack of supportive and competent supervision
- Lack of support from co-workers, including few or no meaningful relationships with them
- “Tighten the screws”, compliance-oriented, and punitive supervision and management
- Lack of rewards for competent practice and for extraordinary achievements
- Lack of fit between career goals and actual job and work requirements
- Lack of career ladders
- Agency’s demands interfere with personal needs and requirements
- Perceptions of unjust practices (e.g., assigning caseloads, granting promotions)
- An agency-wide emphasis on people processing instead of people changing practice
• **Pull factors:** (Unit 2, Tool 3).
  
  o Are external to the agency
  
  o Include the lure of a good job provided by another organization; or the irresistible appeal of moving to another locale
  
  o Better salaries and improved benefits are important pull factors because commissioners and policy makers can do something about them.
  
  o Most pull factors are outside the control of policy makers and commissioners.
  
  o The turnover they cause can be classified as “unpreventable turnover.”

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**Pull Factors**

External features and forces that lure people away

Research has indicated that the following factors and forces pull good workers from the agency:

- Recruitment by child welfare systems in other counties and states
- Recruitment by other human services systems in the area
- Job opportunities outside the human services in the area
- Pressures and demands by family, significant others, and friends to quit
- The lure of living in another town or city, which provides better life-work fit
- The lure of a different career
- The opportunity to “go back to school” to secure a graduate degree
Workforce Retention

❖ *Desirable retention:* (Unit 2, Tool 4) (See Tool below).

- When good, competent, committed, and engaged workers stay with the agency
- The reasons why good workers stay
- Involve a complex interplay among individual, supervisory, organizational, and community factors and forces
- Vary by agency and locale

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**Unit 2, Tool 4**

**KEEP FACTORS**

**Keep Factors:** Internal and external forces and factors that encourage retention

Research has indicated that the following factors and forces encourage good workers to stay on the job and remain in the agency. Most of these factors and forces are ones the agency can influence and control and, for this reason, they are retention planning and improvement priorities.

- Consistent communication, leadership, management, and supervision, helping everyone in the agency stay “on the same page” and enjoy unity of purpose.
- Public child welfare is a career, not just a job, because the agency supports and promotes career development
- Adequate wages and employee benefits
- Flex time and other supports for workers with families
- Worker recruitment, selection, training, organizational induction, and job assignments are aligned and harmonized; there are few surprises and shocks
- Caseworkers, supervisors and managers perceive that the agency values and supports them
- Workers at all levels feel supported by the co-workers
- Workers at all levels of the agency have input into processes and structures that influence them, especially their job placements and the work routines
- Workers are provided with suitable office space and equipment and good transportation
- Workers at all levels have a stake in agency and steward its development and image
- All workers enjoy unity of purpose; everyone knows what success entails
- The agency promotes and rewards research-supported, collaborative practice models
- A “can do” attitude—individual and collective efficacy—is pervasive in the agency
- New workers are provided with mentoring and coaching; they are not greeted with heavy, difficult caseloads and “sink or swim socialization”
### Undesirable retention:

- When incompetent, disengaged, and passive-aggressive workers remain
- This kind of retention is especially problematic when good workers are leaving at the same time that sub-optimal workers are staying.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 2, Tool 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Supervision is both supportive and competent, and supervisors’ loads are manageable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Caseworkers are able to learn and develop expertise from their practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Caseloads are harmonized with overall workloads, and both are manageable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Life-work fit is an organizational priority, and workers have “say so” in improving it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Workers at all levels of the agency are rewarded for competent practice and recognized for their extraordinary achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Burnout, stress, and trauma prevention and reduction interventions are readily available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ The agency provides safety protections in the office and in the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ The job and the work are meaningful and rewarding; they enhance workers’ well being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ The job, the work, and life in the agency build and strengthen commitments to the career and to the agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ The agency and its workers enjoy solid, effective ties with other service systems, enabling case coordination and collaboration to meet clients’ co-occurring needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ The agency gains the support of workers’ family and friends, making them retention resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ The agency has implemented early detection and rapid response systems aimed at preventing workers from even thinking about leaving (called “withdrawal cognitions”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ The agency’s climate and culture are nurturing, positive, and proactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ The agency has procedures for initiating newcomers into the local community and strengthening their ties to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ The agency has a clear, effective plan for deploying workers with MSWs and other advanced, graduate degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ The agency functions as a high performing, learning organization; it has mechanisms for detecting and correcting errors and improving as it does.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Complicated Relationship Between Turnover and Retention

- Not all turnover is bad (e.g., sometimes it’s best that a worker leaves).
- Not all retention is good (e.g., sometimes workers ill-suited for the job and the work should leave).
- We gain knowledge about why workers leave through exit interviews and surveys; but this knowledge often is insufficient for retention planning.
- Knowledge about what pushes workers out and pulls (lures) them away is a useful starting point for planning. But this kind of knowledge is limited in its contributions to plans for desirable retention.
- Every agency is somewhat unique, which means that turnover, retention, and their relationship need to be understood and addressed in context.
- Retention-focused training helps, but training alone will not solve the problem of undesirable turnover.

THE DESIGN TEAM IMPROVEMENT MODEL FOR DESIRABLE RETENTION

- The design team intervention was developed because of the finding presented in the last bullet above. *Training is helpful, but training alone will not solve the problem of undesirable, preventable turnover.*
- Some training is needed and vital.
- It shall become apparent that design teams:
  - Help to identify, develop, and garner support for some kinds of training
  - Recommend improvement strategies for desirable retention
  - For example, DTs have recommended and helped to implement training focused on trauma prevention-alleviation and also on improved safety in the office and in the field.

Why Design Teams? A Selective Summary

- Local supervisory, organizational and community factors, by themselves and in combination, influence the workforce’s composition, stability, and performance.
- This means that each agency is somewhat unique, necessitating local leadership and agency-specific planning for all workforce development initiatives.
- Workers, especially front-line workers and their supervisors, have expertise about agency characteristics, operations, and performance, and some of their
recommended improvements enhance effectiveness, better the agency, and reduce undesirable turnover. DTs capitalize on worker knowledge and expertise.

- Solid, positive relationships with co-workers are important retention and job satisfaction enhancements, especially when they are dovetailed with organizational supports. DTs help build these relationships.

- When agencies have effective design and improvement teams, good work gets done. For example, job satisfaction increases, burnout is reduced, and fewer workers look to leave the agency.

- Agencies need specially trained DT facilitators. Agencies plagued by high turnover have difficulty mounting and benefiting from self-managed teams because, in some circles of the agency, finger-pointing and blaming dynamics are commonplace, whether publicly or behind the scenes. Conflicts and even hostilities are present.

- Commissioners and their deputies often are not positioned to rectify these interpersonal issues as well as the supervisory, managerial, and organizational problems (e.g., negative climate, unhealthy culture) they produce.

- These issues and problems comprise powerful push factors; that is, they cause good workers to leave.

THE ESSENCE OF A DESIGN TEAM

A design team is a group of workers representing the breadth and diversity of the agency as a whole, including:

- Top-level leaders (e.g., the deputy commissioner and the director of services)
- The staff developer
- Supervisors
- Senior caseworkers
- Both new and experienced caseworkers
- Representatives from the several units or departments (e.g., CPS, Foster Care)
- Some teams include secretarial and support staff. Local leaders and later, DT members, determine whether these staff should be on the team.

Characteristics of Design Teams:

- Represent the various informal cliques and networks in the agency
- Range in size from 8 persons to 25. Local leadership, sometimes in consultation with representative workers, determines the DT’s exact size and composition.
Some members are appointed, while others are elected. Team selection procedures vary by the agency.

The DT facilitator:

- Is a specially prepared outsider facilitates DTs
- Is called “The Design Team (DT) Facilitator” (Note: In some agencies, “insiders” may serve as DT facilitators from the outset. In most, insiders take over when the outsider departs.)
- Works to help a group of diverse, representative employees become a productive, healthy team
  - This team development and performance require attention to two aspects of time development. The social side of team development must be balanced with the task side of getting good work done.

What the DT does:

- Figuring out the causes of undesirable turnover and developing improvements that will increase desirable retention
- Consult repeatedly and consistently with their co-workers throughout their problem-solving. For example, DT members get feedback from co-workers about remedies for undesirable turnover and the improvements needed for retention.
- Responsible for ensuring that co-workers support improvements and “spread the good news” when innovations are developed
- A successful team acts as a kind of “agency nerve center.”
- Team members need the skills and the will to make this happen. DT facilitators help provide these skills and reinforce this will.
- Ongoing feedback and data collection in the DT are important mechanisms for continued learning and positive change.
  - By continuing to collect information and feedback from the entire agency on what is working and what needs improving, the DTs help create a learning organization.
- Built on accurate information, which is used in decision-making
- This approach values workers, creates positive work environments, reduces undesirable turnover, and improves desirable retention.
TEAMS, OTHER AGENCY STAFF, AND TOP LEVEL LEADERS WORKING TOGETHER

Teams cannot do this retention-focused work alone.

- Their job is to serve as incubators for good solutions and then to share them with others in the agency to gain support and resources for implementation and follow-through.
- Ideally, every staff member helps to steward the agency’s climate, culture, and overall performance.
- DTs are a mechanism for making this happen. You, the facilitator, enable DTs to do this good work.

Top-level leaders in the agency:

- Must view the team as a resource and a critical problem-solving driver.
- Must be prepared to support the team (There is much more on how to do this later in this training.)

As a Facilitator, you are helping the agency initiate several related improvements simultaneously. DTs help agencies to:

- Open up new lines of communication.
- Develop new problem-solving resources and supports.
- Generate new knowledge and understanding about retention and child welfare practice.
- Shift leadership, management, and supervision to a more participatory-democratic style.

[Stress the following point:] This new leadership, management, and supervisory style:

- Represents a powerful new way of doing business.
- Entails “doing with” rather than “doing to” workers.
- Is based on the belief that each worker has expertise that needs to be tapped.
- Promises to improve the agency’s culture and climate when used in combination with workers’ increasing commitments and engagement.
- All of these changes are associated with improved retention.

Finally, teams need to become self-directed and self-sustaining:

- From the beginning, you need to be involved in capacity-building of the team.
- You need to be preparing teams to continue after you are gone.
B. How DTs Create Positive Change and Improve Retention

**PURPOSE**
- To encourage participants to begin to apply the concepts related to teams to their own organizations
- To summarize the nature of design teams and to review examples of positive outcomes

**MATERIALS**
- Prewritten Newsprint “How Design Teams Create Positive Change And Improve Retention In Your Organization.”
- Unit 2, Tool 5: “A Design Team’s Status Report”
- Unit 2, Tool 6: “Keeping and Attracting Good Workers in Schoharie County”

**TIME**
As needed

**PROCESS**

**Brainstorm:** How do you think this model might create positive change and improve retention in your organization?

Ensure these points are emphasizing during the brainstorming session:

- All levels of staff need to be working together to achieve goals, and the DT “moves” everyone in this direction.
- The DT empowers staff and develops a “can do” attitude toward change.
- The DT’s contributions to improved communication are important to retention.
- Listening and responding to staff promotes a sense of self worth, higher morale and stronger commitment.
- Ongoing evaluation and improvement of polices/ procedures/protocols from the perspective of the various stakeholders involved
- The development of participatory-democratic leadership, management, and supervision styles, structures and decision making mechanisms
- DTs encourage staff engagement in strategic problem-solving.
- This engagement engenders commitment, while preventing the symptoms of burnout.
➢ **Summary:**

- Design Teams are a cross section of diverse, representative staff (caseworkers, supervisors, administrators and support).
- DTS work together to solve workforce and workplace problems that effect retention.
- When the DT is effective, the solutions it has developed address individual, team, and agency-wide priorities and needs.
- While some priorities and needs are retention-specific, others have a far-reaching effect on the agency as a whole and the children, families and communities it serves.

Some examples (Unit 2, Tools 5&6) are helpful at this time. Go over them with participants.

*Unit 2, Tool 5*

**A Design Team’s Status Report**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Action and Improvement</th>
<th>Identified Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue of “Safety”</td>
<td>Safety Task force established with 9 work volunteers. Posters (provided by the child welfare agency graphics dept) placed throughout the child welfare agency to provide greater awareness of safety techniques in workplace and field. Task Force is working on palm cards for workers to carry with safety tips and will develop a safety manual and training. …DT discussed with Borough Director -security guards needed at Bank site (lobby and on floors at critical times). Director will follow up. <strong>2006 Recommend that attacking the child welfare agency worker be considered a felony. Recommend that self defense training be an option for workers.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of professional support from community agencies</td>
<td>Borough Director stated Memo’s of Understanding with Dept of Education, “Metropolitan” Police Dept, and Hospitals will be updated if needed; will make sure all staff gets copies, will name an assistant to be liaison between staff and community. Incidents must be reported right away and to help process of notification, all staff will be able to call assistant directly to address situation. …DT discussed providing training on memos when updated. <strong>2006 Recommend continued evaluation of intra agency communication and professional relationship building. Recommend staff access to computer/connections in Family Courts.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Action and Improvement</td>
<td>Identified Solutions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Training and curriculum to include practice/problem needs</strong></td>
<td>Regional Director suggested that he would set up a meeting with Director of Training but DT wishes first, to revisit this problem to work out how to accomplish having staff involvement in training development to further address practice/problems needs. Re: the child welfare agency computer training, discussed having the work unit staff work with technical trainers who know the computer but not the job. <strong>2006 Recommending a research supported practice model, H. Lawson &amp; N. Claiborne “A Planning Framework for Public Child Welfare Supervision”</strong> (see Area of Action – Improving Consistency of Supervision)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CPS Conference June 7-8, 2005. DT members placed on conference agenda.</strong></td>
<td>DT members presented information about goals of DT at CPS Conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff shortages impacts on communication between staff and administration and how the staff/unit needs are being addressed.</strong></td>
<td>Help is on the way – but there is a prioritized list. The child welfare agency commissioner has been given permission to hire through 2005 – so the need has been recognized but neighboring region has even more vacancies than we do. It has been suggested by Director to the Commissioner that “workloads” not “caseloads” be looked at for an accurate measure of complex work involved(i.e. case conferences, school visits, court appearances, and collaterals) DT recommends that – (1) a reciprocal communication process between CPS staff and administration is set up that identifies site/unit needs. Share the assignment process with staff – how, why, where new caseworkers will be assigned.(2) establish a “caseworker support unit” to provide targeted case activity to assist quality transition of cases(closing visit, follow up on medicals, 2921 to begin service, voluntary placements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overtime policy for field visits not consistent.</strong></td>
<td>There is ongoing conversation with management about overtime. DT recommendations: give supervisors more autonomy in overtime approvals by taking out O.T. monitoring from managers tasks and standards, monitor more cost effectively and review O.T. guidelines in context of realistic client/caseworker needs and agency demands. <strong>2006 Recommend that flex time is extended to start at 12:00- 8:00pm; compressed time – 4 day work week to be negotiated with union.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DT recommendations be discussed directly with Commissioners</strong></td>
<td>The DT recommendations to be discussed directly with Commissioners – not started. <strong>2006 Discussion planned for June 14, 2006</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8 parking spaces offered to the work unit</strong></td>
<td>DT proposal on how to allocate 8 parking spaces equitably now in process <strong>2006 Recommend parking permits to be continued after 6:00pm. Commissioner is following up with DOT about providing an exception when staff must work past 6:00pm</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Action and Improvement</td>
<td>Identified Solutions</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop article on DT for the child welfare agency electronic commissioner’s bulletin</td>
<td>Article developed. <strong>10-28-05 Article included in Commissioner’s Bulletin</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop DT mission statement</td>
<td>Mission statement being developed and will be incorporated into bulletin article. Targeted date end of October 2005.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine how to provide all staff with communication to and from DT</td>
<td>Develop a grid of all sites and have at least one DT member be the key communicator to staff so team can better represent entire staff. <strong>2006 DT member list includes site location which is utilized to enhance communication between staff and DT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Computer Case Management</td>
<td>Recommendations to be discussed with area Director at DT meeting scheduled for 10-18-05: (1) better access to tech help staff; training development and written procedures must allow for feedback on practice issues by all levels of staff; (2) strive for consistency throughout agency (only one person to have authority to change rules); (3) computer templates streamlined through a Task Force that includes both city and state personnel to further integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Consistency of Supervision</td>
<td>Recommendations to be discussed with area Director at DT meeting scheduled for 10-18-05. (1) In relating to supervisory support: supervisors to maintain a meeting schedule; an ideal schedule to be developed between supervisor and caseworker. (2) In relating to supervisory ability to be effectively supportive: administration to ensure that all supervisors and managers participate in core training; integrate the concepts and skills of the supervisory core into practice through a systematic plan of on the job training; evaluate the effectiveness of supportive abilities.(3) In relating to uniform expectations when interpreting policy and procedures: determine if there is uniformity in specific requirements and strive for uniformity and clarity (i.e. great variations in medical documentation expectations)(4) In relation to awareness of inconsistencies: encourage supervisors to share tip of the week <strong>2006 Recommend supervisory/management training using a research – supported practice model (Lawson/Claiborne) where a comprehensive planning process has the goals of consistent supervision across the board (with supervisors, managers and caseworker input). Outcomes –improve consistent supervision which will benefit the agency and improve retention. Recommend that all staff have a uniform updated resource packet, piloted with new caseworkers.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Action and Improvement</td>
<td>Identified Solutions</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Reduce Stress and Burnout** | Recommendations to be discussed with area director at DT meeting scheduled for 10-18-05  
- Workshops, support groups dealing with stress routinely  
- Discounted membership for health clubs...  
- Backup child care for staff in emergencies  
- Evaluations should be a mutual undertaking for personal growth with regular feedback  
- Work environment should be clean – plant maintained  
- Establish caseworker support unit and staff it  
- Reward competence  
- Inform workers in a timely way about changes and involve the worker in the change  

*2006 Respect posters have been produced and will be available to all regions to lead off an agency wide, respect campaign. A sub-committee of Design Team members have begun to provide information and support to new caseworker trainees. Recommend Day Care for staff by contracting with a professional provider in area. Or negotiate access to a nearby company’s onsite facility. Always get employee input first and find out what they want, do your best to meet their needs.*
Local solutions

Keeping & Attracting Workers In Schenectady County

When 50 percent of workers in 7 out of 13 counties say that organizational changes would encourage worker retention; when 43 percent of workers who have considered leaving their jobs say they would stay if their caseloads were smaller; and when 3 out of 4 CPS workers in one county leave within a week—it is time to do something.

Thanks to a partnership between the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), local districts, the Social Work Education Consortium, and others, OCFS and local districts have gained a better understanding of the complex factors contributing to caseworker turnover and have taken steps to address them. Surveys of caseworkers and supervisors in 13 local districts, conducted by the Consortium, yielded valuable data on why workers leave and why they stay. Simply put, participants in the study cited four main reasons why they would consider leaving: pay, benefits, organizational/administrative issues, burnout, and caseload size.

Schenectady County was one of the original 13 counties experiencing high turnover of casework staff. Commissioner Paul Brady says, “The survey data was very useful but also a little hard to take as an administrator. It forced us to look at how we operate. We asked ourselves, what do we do that affects turnover?”

With assistance from Mary McCarthy from the Consortium and Hall Lawson, SUNY School of Social Welfare, the county created a self-directed work team consisting of 8-10 staff members who examine policies, procedures, and practice issues that affect staff resources. Facilitators Jessica Strolin and James Caingi helped the team focus on problems affecting recruitment and turnover, identify root causes, and design potential solutions.

“I am astonished at the work the staff are doing,” says Paul Brady. He had some “trepidation” in the beginning but has been pleasantly surprised by their willingness to deal with difficult problems and their dedication to finding workable solutions. When they make a presentation of their ideas, they state, “This is how we want to change our practice. Here’s why we think it is important.” They are also good at anticipating naysayers and doubters.

Tackling a range of issues, the team has made changes in the on-call system, addressed the transfer of cases between units, and designed a flow chart on preparing petitions. They also examine case practice issues such as “vicarious trauma,” i.e., the trauma experienced by caseworkers when encountering difficult situations in the field.

Schenectady County had significant turnover in the years 2001-03. In 2004, there was no turnover. So far in 2005, one CPS worker left but to go back to school for her MSW. As far as recruitment goes, the casework exam is offered more frequently, and the district now has an adequate pool of prospective workers.

“We are on a journey to nurture a positive work environment with active participation from staff. Our challenge now is how to sustain it.” Given the effectiveness of the team, the Commissioner is optimistic. For more information on Schenectady County’s workforce development initiative, contact Paul Brady, (518) 205-8379; paul.brady@dfs.state.ny.us. For more information on the OCFS workforce development strategy, contact Peter Miroglio, (518) 474-9645; peter.miroglio@dfs.state.ny.us.

* Workforce Retention Study, Executive Summary (Summer 2000), Social Work Education Consortium, University at Albany. School of Social Work

The updated Handbook for Youth in Foster Care is now available. The July 2005 edition includes the Youth in Progress logo and mission statement, a brand new cover, and a pull-out receipt for agencies to make sure that youth have received a copy.
Supplemental Reading for Trainer Preparation
Unit Two
A Snapshot of Turnover, Retention, and Their Relationships

There are different kinds of turnover and retention. Not all turnover is bad, and not all retention is good. Some turnover can be prevented, and some cannot. Details follow.

Workforce Turnover

➢ Think about turnover as a concept that describes workers’ exits from the agency, along with their exit pathways and the reasons they cite for leaving.

- There are three kinds of turnover.
  - Functional turnover, also called beneficial turnover, is the first kind. It occurs, for example, when workers ill-suited for the job, the work, the agency, and its surrounding community leave.
  - Unpreventable turnover is the second kind. Retirements, deaths, and changes in life roles (e.g., a spouse changes jobs and must move to another place) account for this kind.
  - Undesirable, preventable turnover is the third kind, and it is the most important of the three. Here, good people leave despite the agency’s efforts to retain them—at considerable cost to the agency and its clients. This is the kind of turnover we must learn how to minimize and prevent.

- Classifying causes of undesirable turnover
  - Push factors are internal to each agency. They refer to the individual, supervisory, organizational, and community factors, which drive away or push out good workers. Knowledge is growing about these push factors (Refer to Unit 2, Tool 3). Importantly, these push factors reside within each agency’s sphere of influence and control; something can be done about them. Until such time as something is done, push factors cause undesirable, preventable turnover. Removing and preventing these factors is thus a top priority.
  - Pull factors are external to the agency (see Unit 2, Tool 4). They include the lure of a good job provided by another organization; or the irresistible appeal of moving to another locale. Better salaries and improved benefits are important pull factors because commissioners and policy makers can do something about them. However, most pull factors are outside the control of policy makers and commissioners. This means that the turnover they cause can be classified as “unpreventable turnover.”
Workforce Retention

- **Desirable retention** occurs when good, competent, committed, and engaged workers stay with the agency. Together, the reasons why good workers stay may be called *keep factors* (Unit 2, Tool 5). These keep factors involve a complex interplay among individual, supervisory, organizational, and community factors and forces. They vary by agency and locale.

- **Undesirable retention** occurs when incompetent, disengaged, and passive-aggressive workers remain. This kind of retention is especially problematic when good workers are leaving at the same time that sub-optimal workers are staying.

A Complicated Relationship Between Turnover and Retention

- Thus, not all turnover is bad (e.g., sometimes it’s best that a worker leaves); and not all retention is good (e.g., sometimes workers ill-suited for the job and the work should leave)

- We may know something about why workers leave (e.g., we gain knowledge through exit interviews and surveys); but this knowledge often is insufficient for retention planning. In other words, knowledge about what pushes workers out and pulls (lures) them away is a useful starting point for planning. But this kind of knowledge is limited in its contributions to plans for desirable retention.

- Every agency is somewhat unique, which means that turnover, retention, and their relationship need to be understood and addressed in context.

- Retention-focused training helps, but training alone will not solve the problem of undesirable turnover.

**The Design Team Improvement Model for Desirable Retention**

The design team intervention was developed because of the finding presented in the last bullet above. *Training is helpful, but training alone will not solve the problem of undesirable, preventable turnover.*

Some training is needed and vital. It shall become apparent that design teams help to identify, develop, and garner support for some kinds of training at the same time they recommend improvement strategies for desirable retention. For example, DTs have recommended and helped to implement training focused on trauma prevention-alleviation and also on improved safety in the office and in the field.
Why Design Teams? A Selective Summary

- Local supervisory, organizational and community factors, by themselves and in combination, influence the workforce’s composition, stability, and performance. This means that each agency is somewhat unique, necessitating local leadership and agency-specific planning for all workforce development initiatives.

- Workers, especially front-line workers and their supervisors, have expertise about agency characteristics, operations, and performance, and some of their recommended improvements enhance effectiveness, better the agency, and reduce undesirable turnover. DTs capitalize on worker knowledge and expertise.

- Solid, positive relationships with co-workers are important retention and job satisfaction enhancements, especially when they are dovetailed with organizational supports. DTs help build these relationships.

- When agencies have effective design and improvement teams, good work gets done. For example, job satisfaction increases, burnout is reduced, and fewer workers look to leave the agency.

- Agencies need specially trained DT facilitators. Agencies plagued by high turnover have difficulty mounting and benefiting from self-managed teams because, in some circles of the agency, finger-pointing and blaming dynamics are commonplace, whether publicly or behind the scenes. Conflicts and even hostilities are present.

- Commissioners and their deputies often are not positioned to rectify these interpersonal issues as well as the supervisory, managerial, and organizational problems (e.g., negative climate, unhealthy culture) they produce.

- These issues and problems comprise powerful push factors; that is, they cause good workers to leave.

The Essence of a Design Team

- A design team begins as a group of workers representing the breadth and diversity of the agency as a whole. Notably, it includes top-level leaders (e.g., the deputy commissioner and the director of services), the staff developer, supervisors, senior caseworkers, and both new and experienced caseworkers. It also includes representatives from the several units or departments (e.g., CPS, Foster Care).

- Teams also represent the various informal cliques and networks in the agency.
- Some teams include secretarial and support staff. Local leaders and later, DT members, determine whether these staff should be on the team.

- Teams range in size from 8 persons to 25. Local leadership, sometimes in consultation with representative workers, determines the DT’s exact size and composition.

- Some members are appointed, while others are elected. Team selection procedures vary by the agency.

- A specially prepared outsider facilitates DTs. This person is called “The Design Team (DT) Facilitator” (Note: In some agencies, “insiders” may serve as DT facilitators from the outset. In most, insiders take over when the outsider departs.)

- The DT facilitator’s job is to help a group of diverse, representative employees become a productive, healthy team. This team development and performance require attention to two aspects of time development. The social side of team development must be balanced with the task side of getting good work done.

- Getting good work done entails figuring out the causes of undesirable turnover and developing improvements that will increase desirable retention.

- Team members are asked to consult repeatedly and consistently with their co-workers throughout their problem-solving. For example, DT members get feedback from co-workers about remedies for undesirable turnover and the improvements needed for retention.

- DT members also are responsible for ensuring that co-workers support improvements and “spread the good news” when innovations are developed. In other words, a successful team acts as a kind of “agency nerve center”, and team members need the skills and the will to make this happen. DT facilitators help provide these skills and reinforce this will.

- Ongoing feedback and data collection in the DT are important mechanisms for continued learning and positive change. By continuing to collect information and feedback from the entire agency on what is working and what needs improving, the DTs help create a learning organization.

- This learning organization approach is built on accurate information, which is used in decision-making. This approach also is one that values workers, creates positive work environments, reduces undesirable turnover, and improves desirable retention.
Teams, Other Agency Staff, and Top Level Leaders Working Together

Teams cannot do this retention-focused work alone. To reiterate: Their job is to serve as incubators for good solutions and then to share them with others in the agency to gain support and resources for implementation and follow-through. Ideally, every staff member helps to steward the agency’s climate, culture, and overall performance. DTs are a mechanism for making this happen; and you, the facilitator, enable DTs to do this good work.

Above all, top-level leaders in the agency must view the team as resource and a critical problem-solving driver, and they must be prepared to support the team. (There is much more on how to do this later in this training.)

For now, know that, as a Facilitator, you are helping the agency initiate several related improvements—simultaneously. For example, DTs help agencies open up new lines of communication, develop new problem-solving resources and supports, generate new knowledge and understanding about retention and child welfare practice, and shift leadership, management, and supervision to a more participatory-democratic style.

This new leadership, management, and supervisory style is especially important. It entails “doing with” rather than “doing to” workers, and it is based on the belief that each worker has expertise that needs to be tapped. This new style, in combination with workers’ increasing commitments and engagement, promises to improve the agency’s culture and climate, improvements that are associated with improved retention.

Finally, teams need to become self-directed and self-sustaining. This means that, from the beginning of your work with the team, you need to be involved in capacity-building. In other words, you need to be preparing teams to continue after you are gone.
Unit Three:

First Steps in
Forming and Facilitating a Design Team

A. Design Team Formation and Operation Tools: Their Importance and Use

B. An Overview of the DT Process: The Facilitator’s Responsibilities, Roles and Strategic Actions
Unit Three

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of Unit Three, participants will:

- Describe how facilitators start and conduct an initial design team meeting
- Identify, describe, and explain the importance of norms, rules, and meeting protocols in developing a true team from a loosely structured group of people with limited histories of working together effectively
- Begin identifying and describing ways to elicit and use the DT members’ retention-related expertise.
- Describe how facilitators influence early team development, reaching a balance between the social side of team development and the task side of getting work done
- Describe and explain the use of key facilitation tools in starting, operating, and ensuring the success of a DT
- Identify and describe the emotional demands DTs place on the Facilitator
- Identify and describe the emotional work of Design Teams
- Identify and describe ways to address emotional needs and opportunities
Unit Three

A. Design Team Formation & Operation Tools: Their Importance and Use

**PURPOSE**
To introduce early phases of team development and tools used to help groups become a functioning team.

**MATERIALS**
- Unit 3, Tool 1: “Examples of Team Rules and Norms”
- Unit 3, Tool 2: “Responsibilities of Each Design Team Member”
- Unit 3, Tool 3: “Team Operational Guidelines”
- Unit 3, Tool 4: “Why Dialogue is Better Than Debate in Design Teams”
- Unit 3, Tool 5: “Developing a True Team: The Importance of Norms, Rules, Member Responsibilities, Meeting Protocols, Language, and Your Presence”

**TIME**
60-90 minutes

**PROCESS**

Combined lecture and group discussion

This activity is about the initial formation a design team and how you as a facilitator will help the group become a true team.

Trainer introduces the following DT formation and functioning tools:

- Unit 3, Tool 1: “Examples of Team Rules and Norms”
- Unit 3, Tool 2: “Responsibilities of Each Design Team Member”
- Unit 3, Tool 3: “Team Operational Guidelines”
- Unit 3, Tool 4: “Why Dialogue is Better Than Debate in Design Teams”

Trainer explains that these tools are starters for local teams; and that facilitators ask local teams to develop their own agreements.

Importantly, the trainer also emphasizes that these tools do “double duty.” At the same time they help groups become true teams, DT members’ dialogue focused on them and agreements they reach foster team cohesion. In other words, these tools help build “the social side” of DTs, helping teams to get ready for task-focused, problem-solving to improve retention.
- Trainer provides the timely reminder that participants experienced this process without these tools earlier in the same day.

Trainer then asks participants to spend approximately 4 minutes on each tool to determine what’s good about each and what may be missing and needed. Each group is asked to report their findings and reactions to the group as a whole.

### Unit 3, Tool 1

**Examples of Team Rules and Norms**

1. Begin and end all meetings on time
2. Check your role, status, and rank at the door
3. Avoid finger-pointing and blaming dynamics
4. Communicate in strengths-based, solution-focused ways
5. Do not try to figure out "who said what" about needs, problems, obstacles, and barriers; focus on the accuracy of the information
6. Operate with "a no reject ethic"—every idea and perspective worth sharing needs to be heard and analyzed through team dialogue.
7. Listen intently and appreciate what other members are saying before you develop an alternative point of view.
8. Agree that there is no such thing as a stupid question and make it safe to people to question and learn.
9. Avoid "I'm right, you're wrong" dynamics; use questions and ask for alternative perspectives when you're intent on getting a co-worker to re-examine a point of view.
10. Agree that every team member has the right and the obligation to keep questioning until clarity and consensus have been achieved.
11. Agree on a "100 mile rule"—phone calls and messages, which you would not take if you were more than 100 miles from your office, are not allowed.
12. Agree that every team member has the right and the obligation to request "a time out" when potentially destructive interactions, processes, and dynamics threaten team norms, rules, trust, relationships, and productivity.
13. Agree that everyone makes mistakes, and mistakes are our friends because they pave the way for learning, development and improvement.
14. Others? (Every design team needs to rule itself by its own rules.)
Unit 3, Tool 2

Responsibilities of Each Design Team Member

- **Shape the Agenda**: Solicit co-workers' views of recruitment needs and retention problems and share this information with the team.

- **Contribute to Team Formation and Functioning**: Identify and help enforce shared norms, rules, and operational guidelines; welcome and help orient new members; help pick up the slack when someone leaves or needs help; and follow through on assignments.

- **Engage in the Design Team Process**: Attend every team meeting, come prepared, build trust among team members, do not withhold important information, listen actively to other members' views, participate in problem-solving dialogue aimed at consensus.

- **Preserve Confidentiality and Anonymity**: Protect co-workers' and other team members' anonymity and maintain confidentiality in accordance with the team's agreements.

- **Search for Relationships and Root Causes**: When it's possible to do so, identify patterns involving recruitment needs and retention problems and pinpoint their primary causes.

- **Focus on Solutions**: Identify improvement models and strategies that respond to needs, solve problems, and build on individual, group, and organizational strengths.

- **Identify Constraints, Obstacles, and Barriers**: Identify the factors and forces that limit, inhibit, and prevent effective improvement strategies and promising innovations.

- **Develop Barrier-Busting Strategies**: Identify people, resources, strategies, and models that reduce, eliminate, and prevent problematic constraints, obstacles, and barriers.

- **Request Training and Learning Resources**: Enlist the team facilitator's assistance in providing responsive training and mobilizing learning supports and resources.

- **Identify Competencies**: Identify individual, group, and organizational competencies that will improve recruitment, retention, well being, and performance.

- **Design and Implement Training Programs**: Plan and deliver training, enabling co-workers to contribute to improved recruitment, retention, well being, and performance.

- **Help Co-workers Learn and Develop**: Use your formal and informal relationships with co-workers to "spread the word" and help others learn what you have learned.

- **Serve as a Co-evaluator**: Help the project evaluators gain knowledge and understanding about the design team process, training and learning dynamics, important obstacles and facilitators, concrete results, and both unanticipated and unintended consequences.

- **Set the Stage for Continuous, Lasting Improvements**: Identify mechanisms, supports, and resources that enhance your agency's ability to recruit, retain, and support its workers, enabling them to be successful with vulnerable children, adults, and families.
Unit 3, Tool 3

Team Operational Guidelines

1. At the beginning of each meeting, the training team facilitator and team members will:
   - Clearly state and agree on the purpose of the meeting
   - Review progress and achievements from previous meetings as reflected in the written summary prepared by the training facilitator

2. Agree to focus on problem-solving dialogue, while avoiding potentially damaging debates (refer to companion guidelines)

3. Recognize that conflict and diversity are assets to be maximized, not problems needing to be avoided and suppressed, and develop conflict resolution procedures.

4. Agree on procedures that ensure that every voice is heard and that the problem-solving dialogue is focused, detailed, and productive. For example:
   - Avoid long speeches by asking each person to identify and describe briefly just one problem, need, improvement strategy, or obstacle
   - Use round robin strategies to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to offer perspectives on, and ask questions about, this problem, need, strategy, or obstacle
   - Develop a logic model, including the specific need or problem; its causes; desirable solutions; and anticipated results and benefits
   - Reach preliminary consensus on the likely facilitators, constraints, obstacles, and barriers for improvements (e.g., co-workers lack certain competencies)
   - Identify barrier-busting and problem-solving mechanisms (e.g., design and deliver training that develops co-workers’ competencies)

5. Agree on "a parking lot" for ideas that are not immediately relevant and useful; and revisit the parking lot during the debriefing process (see guideline below).

6. Do not “lump together” too many needs, problems, and priorities so that you end up with an unmanageable problem.

7. Because the team may have to make some hard choices, develop a prioritizing process that is acceptable to all members. For example, agree on a method for selecting the five most important identified areas of improvement (e.g., voting with “stickies” and “dots”); and then put the remaining issues in the "issue and idea parking lot."
8. Chunk out action steps as often as possible in CONCRETE ways that demonstrate to the team and others that progress is being made. Do this as early in the process as possible to help get some momentum going for the team.

9. Develop an orientation/mentoring process for members joining late in the process and for members who miss a meeting. For example, develop a "buddy" system where 2-3 members take someone new to lunch a week or so before the meeting, provide them with copies of materials, and try to bring them up to speed as much as possible to avoid taking valuable time in the meetings going back to square one.

10. At the midpoint of each meeting, the team facilitator will do process, progress, and product checks, helping to ensure that the problem-solving dialogue and interactions are healthy and productive.

11. At the end of each meeting, the team facilitator and team members will debrief, summarizing progress, achievements, and barriers; celebrating successes; and identifying next steps.

12. Also at the end of each meeting, the team will decide what information can be shared agency-wide, including who on the team will share this information with top level leadership.
Unit 3, Tool 4

Why Dialogue is Better Than Debate in Design Teams*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Debate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In dialogue, finding common ground and reaching agreements are the goals.</td>
<td>Winning is the goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue is collaborative: two or more people with different views work together toward common understanding.</td>
<td>Debate is oppositional: two sides or more sides oppose each other, and each attempts to prove each other wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In dialogue, one listens to the other side(s) in order to understand, find meaning, and find agreement.</td>
<td>In debate, one listens to the other side(s) in order to find flaws and to counter its arguments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue enlarges and possibly changes a participant’s point of view.</td>
<td>Debate affirms a participant’s own point of view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue reveals assumptions for reevaluation.</td>
<td>Debate defends assumptions as truth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue causes introspection on one’s own position.</td>
<td>Debate triggers a critique of others’ positions, while one’s own remains unexamined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue opens the possibility of finding a solution better than any of the original solutions.</td>
<td>In a debate one defends personal positions as the best solution and excludes other solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue creates an open-minded attitude: openness to being wrong and an openness to change.</td>
<td>Debate creates a closed-minded attitude, a determination to be right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In dialogue, one submits one’s best thinking, knowing that other people’s reflections will help improve it rather than destroy it.</td>
<td>In debate, one submits one’s best thinking and defends it against challenge to show that it is right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue calls for temporarily suspending one’s beliefs</td>
<td>Debate calls for investing wholeheartedly in one’s beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In dialogue, one searches for strengths in the other position</td>
<td>In debate, one searches for flaws and weaknesses in the other position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue involves a real concern for the other person and seeks to not alienate or offend.</td>
<td>Debate involves a countering of the other position without focusing on feelings or relationship and often belittles or deprecates the other person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and that together they can put them into a workable solution.</td>
<td>Debate assumes that there is a right answer; that someone has it; and, once the answer’s found, the work is over.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trainer provides the following lecture—referencing the text below, which is in the toolkit as Unit 3, Tool 5 “Developing A True Team...”

**Developing a True Team: The Importance of Norms, Rules, Member Responsibilities, Meeting Protocols, Language, and Your Presence**

**Lecture Points:**

**Teams consist of diverse, representative people from the agency:**
- Members often have little or no prior history working together effectively.
- Some come to the team with a history of finger-pointing and blaming dynamics.

**Always keep in mind that conflicts and strong emotions can erupt at any time:**
- Work to keep them in check.
- Use them as opportunities for innovation and improvement.

**Inappropriate and unkind interpersonal histories reflect core problems in the agency:**
- This negativity tends to foul the agency’s culture and climate.
- Workers leave in part because of this.
- Members will leave your team unless you prevent it.

**Without your facilitation, members are unlikely to form a true team. On a true team:**
- All members are interdependent
- Members work together to solve retention-related problems
- Healthy relationships are build between team members

**Facilitation of a true team is challenging:**
- When conflicts and unhealthy dynamics from outside intrude
  - During team formation
  - During problem-solving
- Work to prevent such conflicts and unhealthy dynamics emerge.
- When they do present themselves, intervene early.

**A true team requires every member to:**
- Share responsibility and accountability
- Build productive relationships
- Insist on strengths-based, solution-focused and blame-free language
- Every team member needs to pledge to use this language

**Emphasize with your team that problem-solving must proceed with dialogue and not debate:**
- Share the tools we’ve just discussed (Unit 3, Tools 1-4) with your teams.
- Approach your team members in a genuinely respectful way.
• Encourage them to modify these samples where necessary so that they end up in agreement about how to conduct themselves as team members.
• Help your team members to understand that each member is responsible for successful team development and functioning.

Understanding and Preventing Storms

The tools in Unit 3 (Tools 1-4):
• help to structure positive interpersonal interactions
• facilitate productive, retention-focused problem-solving
• Perhaps above all, they help prevent open, hostile conflicts, which some researchers call “storms.”

Without norms, rules, meeting protocols and expert facilitation, groups follow a pattern:
1. **Forming**: A Design Team forms
2. **Storming**: Predictable conflicts surface and emotions run high – referred to as “storms”
3. **Norming**: The team creates effective norms, (and rules, and meeting protocols)
4. **Performing**: As a result, the team is able to prevent future storms, thereby being better able to perform.

Unfortunately, some groups do not survive the initial storms:
• The storms are destructive, hurtful, and harmful to individuals and to the entire team.
• The design team innovation ends prematurely when this happens.

The rationale for the recommended language, norms, rules, and meeting protocols:
• When storms are on the horizon, a return to these norms, rules, and meeting protocols provides you with the opportunity to intervene immediately.

These norms are especially important in public child welfare systems with high turnover.
• Turnover in these systems is caused in part by blame and maltreatment dynamics in the agency.
• The team provides the first point of intervention for improved quality of treatment and interaction and, in turn, productive team problem-solving.
• Team members who are “at war” with each other are not likely to work together, develop cohesiveness as a true team, and solve problems together effectively. Instead, they will likely resort to familiar patterns of blaming and arguing with each other.

When you, the DT facilitator, introduce norms and rules:
• You are providing a new structure that enables team members to enjoy a fresh start.
Like the referee for a sports contest, you provide reminders of the interaction and quality of treatment rules, aiming to ensure that team members, in essence, play well together.

**Your role as facilitator** is to assist your team to develop and perform in two ways:
- One way involves interpersonal relations and social development.
- The other side is task-oriented, i.e., the developing team’s ability to engage productively in solving retention-related problems.
- Both sides are important; each reinforces the other.

**A team may not weather all storms and reach the final stage of development, but it can still be productive.**
- A team may be able to work on important, concrete priorities.
  - improving job descriptions
  - developing new on-call procedures.
- When these types of tasks are completed quickly and effectively, these successes help propel the team to a new level of development.
  - In short, success breeds success.
  - One-at-a time “small wins”, over time, fosters team cohesion.

**Your team will depend on you, the DT facilitator:**
- For both the social side and the task side
- Over time you’ll work against this dependence on you as you build team capacities for self-directed, sustainable operations.

[Emphasize the following tip:]

**Confidentiality is a critical factor:**
- It helps provide a safe, secure environment.
- Members feel they can be honest, test ideas, and make mistakes.

**If confidentiality is breached:**
- Members may leave.
- Those who stay may not be honest and open.
- Such breaches threaten the entire process.

**A final note:** *Storms can and do occur at any time during DT operations.*
- DT facilitators are on hand for exactly this reason:
- To prevent storms and team rule violations that cause them

**Trainer then elicits reactions, suggestions and other feedback from participants.**
- What has your experience been with group stages?
- What are some ways you’ve managed group “storms?”
B. An Overview of the DT Process: The Facilitator’s Responsibilities, Roles and Strategic Actions

**PURPOSE**

To provide an overview of DT process emphasizing the facilitators’ responsibilities, roles, and strategic actions

**MATERIALS**

- Unit 3, Tool 6: “A Simple Overview of Design Team Development and Functioning”
- Unit 3, Tool 7: “The PDSA Cycle and SMART Goals for Design Teams”
- Unit 3, Tool 8: “A Developmental Progression for Team Formation, Functioning, and Action Planning”
- Unit 3, Tool 9: “A Basic Structure For DT Problem-Solving to Improve Desirable Retention”
- Unit 3, Tool 10: “The DT Facilitator’s Multiple Priorities For Stewarding A Successful Team”

**TIME**

As needed

**PROCESS**

Foci for Training and Learning: (Unit 3, Tools 6-10).

This part of the session is a mixture of presentation and group discussion. It is imperative that participants have every opportunity to ask questions and are able to receive timely responses to their developing needs, interests, and concerns about the DT model and their roles, responsibilities, and strategic actions as facilitators.
• Trainer introduces Unit 3, Tool 6 “A Simple Overview of Design Team Development and Functioning.” This simple overview is one of five cornerstones for future facilitators’ work. [“Walk them through” this one and the other four slowly and methodologically.]

Unit 3, Tool 6

- Emphasize that teams will generate new knowledge, which is useful to them and also to the agency as a whole.

- Also emphasize that teams develop “a collective mind.” through their knowledge generation and retention-focused problem-solving. They do so by developing shared language, understanding, and retention-focused solutions.”

- Ensure that every question is addressed before you move on to the next two tools.

• Next, the trainer introduces Unit 3, Tool 7 (See below): “The PDSA Cycle and SMART Goals for Design Teams.” This is the second cornerstone for the DT and your facilitation of it. Key points to emphasize:
Unit 3, Tool 7

The PDSA Cycle and SMART Goals for Design Teams

Learning, knowledge generation, and problem-solving need to be united in a continuous cycle involving planning, doing, studying, and acting—The PDSA cycle (Conzemius & O’Neill, 2002). DTs operating in accordance with this cycle:

This cycle “animates” DTs. It is cycle characterized by collaborative inquiry into retention-focused problems and solutions--and with multiple opportunities for reflection and learning.

- PLAN (P) a change or action
- DO (D) the change or action, starting on a small scale
- STUDY (S) the results to learn about successes and shortcomings; reflect; and then capture this new knowledge
- ACT (A) by refining the change or action or by scaling it up

The PDSA “wheel”, presented below, is intended to present the idea that learning, knowledge generation, and improvement comprise never-ending cycles. It derives from Edward Deming’s work on learning organizations.

Actionable Priorities: SMART Goals (Conzemius & O’Neill, 2002)

The SMART acronym guides action planning, especially the development of goals and objectives. In other words, as DTs strive to make their priorities and needs “actionable”, facilitators can help them do so by ensuring that goals and objectives conform to the SMART prototype.
The SMART prototype is as follows:

**S=Strategic and specific**
Goals are strategic when they target the key “drivers” for the organization’s identity, missions, and functions; then they promise permanent improvements. Goals are specific insofar as they will impact the central missions and functions of the organization. Strategic and specific goals depend fundamentally on sound knowledge about the organization; its staff and clientele; its core missions, functions, and technologies; and its surrounding environments.

**M=Measurable**
The study component in the PDSA cycle depends on the quality of measurement and the data it provides.

**A=Attainable**
A goal is achievable when current resources and capacities are aligned with it; and when the priorities specified in the goal are within the organization’s realms of influence and control.

**R=Results-based**
A focus on results promotes accountability, and it keeps individuals and groups focused on “the prize” accompanying their dedication and hard work. These results also focus knowledge-generating activities focused on both success stories and shortcomings.

**T=Time-bound**
The time allotted to the implementation and achievement of a goal influences its attainability. And when firm time frames accompany goals, they are more likely to remain a priority because they will be viewed with a sense of urgency.


- Everyone in public child welfare is burdened by heavy workloads and excessive demands. **Immediate, successful action is a priority.** If DTs are only opportunities to “talk problems to death,” members will disengage and leave.
- While it’s helpful to introduce DTs with the PDSA Cycle, it also is true that DT problem-solving and solution-development often are not linear. Oftentimes teams go back and forth between these phases—even in the same meeting.
- Developing a SMART goal means gaining consensus in response to two questions. How will the proposed solution make the agency different and better, while also improving retention? How would you know this solution if you saw it?
• Trainer then introduces Unit 3, Tool 8: “A Developmental Progression for Team Formation...”

- Emphasize that outside facilitators are uniquely positioned to elicit deeply rooted misperceptions, especially biased views that DT members accept as “the truth” and “valid knowledge.” Until such time as these biased views, or misperceptions, are made explicit and tested, they will not change. And when they do not change, team development and retention-related improvements are difficult to develop, implement and sustain.

- Also emphasize that outside facilitators also are uniquely positioned to help DT members and, in turn, others in the agency begin to discuss difficult, controversial issues. Of special import are the issues that cannot be discussed anywhere else in the agency. In fact, members often feel that they can’t discuss the fact that some issues are “off limits” and undiscussable.

- Emphasize that both kinds of problems (misperceptions, un-discussable issues) are like the roots for organizational and supervisory forces that cause people to leave. Because DTs address them, they are in a position to improve retention.

- Also emphasize that the team develops cohesion as these problems are placed “on the table” and as members come to grips with all they entail and the related problems they cause. This team development process is emphasized in this tool.
- Trainer then introduces Unit 3, Tool 9: “A Basic Structure For DT Problem-Solving...” which provides a basic structure for DTs and their facilitation. This fourth cornerstone also needs to be presented systematically and carefully.

![Diagram of Unit 3, Tool 9: A Basic Structure for DT Problem-solving to Improve Desirable Retention](Diagram)

- Emphasize that both turnover AND retention comprise the work of DTs—and that, while the two are related, they also are different.

- Emphasize that some agencies already have “solutions” in place for turnover and retention needs—and that these need to be acknowledged and included (because top level leaders will be upset if these solutions are ignored or dismissed automatically). DT facilitators need to be able to value these solutions in place, while simultaneously agreeing with the team that other, companion solutions are needed.

- Emphasize that retention-focused improvements may include new roles, relationships among people and departments (e.g., foster care and child protective services; cps and lawyers), job descriptions, agency policies, and caseworker, supervisor, and management practices.

- Call attention to state and local constraints—factors and forces that recommend some alternatives, while ruling out others. KEY POINT: **The regulatory environments for the agency often rule out DT members’ ideal solutions.** Thus, DT members will need to accept the fact that, for the time being, some aspects of the agency and their practices cannot be changed because of federal requirements (e.g., Adoption and Safe Families Act--ASFA) and state requirements (e.g., state level performance monitoring and accountability systems for ASFA).
A RELATED KEY POINT: Top level leaders and managers often feel limited and constrained by the same external regulations. Like DT members, they would like to see some changed. Like DT members, they are constrained in how much they can do. In short, these constraints provide opportunities to get DT members and top-level leaders “on the same page” insofar as both must cope with regulatory realities.

Finally, emphasize that this retention-focused work, while important, is one part of an overall effort to improve agency performance. In short, workforce retention is not the main outcome. The main outcome is improved outcomes for the vulnerable children, youth, and families the agency must serve.

Trainer then introduces Unit 3, Tool 10: “The DT Facilitator’s Multiple Priorities for Stewarding a Successful Team.” As with the other two tools, the trainer must “walk through” this fifth cornerstone carefully, using each part of the figure for a combination of training and responsive, interaction-oriented learning.

[Trainer Note: Consider “Managing Emotions” to be the first box]

- Start with the box on managing emotions and conflicts—and use it to remind participants of the import of norms, rules, meeting protocols, etc—as well as the ever-present danger of team-eroding “storms.”
o Emphasize what can go wrong when DT members break the rules—for example, when they communicate information to others outside the team before the team has agreed to do so; and when powerful members on the team (supervisors, managers) discipline other team members (e.g., caseworkers) outside of team meetings for what they said during these meetings.

o Then move clockwise around the figure, combining reminders (from previous sessions) with new emphases.

o **HIT HARD** importance of starting with a need-problem and a recommended solution, which *enable immediate action and success*. There is no substitute for success with the first need or problem! This means that DT facilitators need to help members prioritize some needs-problems, while postponing others. Ensure that future facilitators understand this. *Provide examples of what can go wrong when teams take on priorities that may take years to solve.*

o Three of the six boxes represent newer content and DT facilitator responsibilities. Each merits more time and emphasis in comparison with the first three.

o Emphasize in the communications box the need for an interactive process in which the DT serves as a representative “go-between.” This communications part has two components: (1) Receiving timely, focused inputs and feedback from co-workers and top level leaders; (2) Sharing timely information, developments, and achievements with them, especially “good news” that needs to spread throughout the agency. **DT facilitators and members simply must prioritize both communications systems.**

o Emphasize in the “working with leaders” box the need to secure supports, resources, and rewards from top-level leaders—and also the opportunity for interactions with top-level leaders to build consensus and develop mutual understanding. **IMPORTANTLY, one or two DT members need to be charged with responsibilities for communicating progress and recommendations to top-level leaders.** Alternatively, the DT can decide to invite top-level leadership to a DT meeting for team-based sharing and discussion. Either way, this communications pattern builds mutual understanding and unity of purpose; it gets people on the same page and helps to prevent problems caused by misperceptions involving all parties.
Finally, emphasize that even the best-conceived solutions may not work as planned—and that in-flight adjustments and “returning to the drawing board” are normative for DTs. This sixth and final box in the figure also calls attention to the need to move on to the next set of retention-related priorities the DT has identified. In short, this part of the figure indicates that DTs have a never-ending “back and forth” nature. They continue to assess the effectiveness of their solutions at the same time they decide on new solutions. [Trainer Note: Consider “Assessing the Effectiveness...” as the last box]

Trainer announces that, after lunch, participants will have the opportunity to experience a mock DT meeting. Before the break, trainer responds to summary questions, concerns, and needs from participants. Trainer also provides the following tip:

**Important Tip**

All of these tools for team formation are important. All contribute to team cohesion and functioning. All prevent the development of interpersonal problems in the team, especially problems that have originated outside the team (in the workplace). On the other hand, excessive emphasis on these tools also poses problems. Facilitators simply must get the team started with its problem-solving. A good blend of social development and task completion helps the team develop.
Supplemental Reading for Trainer Preparation
Unit Three
Developing a True Team: The Importance of Norms, Rules, Member Responsibilities, Meeting Protocols, Language, and Your Presence

Design teams consist of diverse, representative people from the agency who often have little or no prior history of working together effectively and successfully. In fact, some members come to the team with prior and recent histories involving finger-pointing and blaming dynamics and even open conflict. Always keep in mind that conflicts and strong emotions are ready to erupt at any time; and that you job is to keep them in check and use them as opportunities for innovation and improvement.

These interpersonal histories reflect a core problem in the agency—namely, some people may not treat each other nicely and appropriately. This quality of treatment and interaction problem tends to foul the agency’s culture and climate. Workers leave in part because of this quality of treatment and interaction problem, and members also will leave your team unless you prevent it.

In short, absent your facilitation, members are unlikely to form a true team. In a true team, all members are interdependent, and they build healthy relationships as they solve important retention-related problems.

Even with your facilitation, the development of a true team may be challenging at times. Challenges are especially likely when conflicts and unhealthy dynamics from outside the team are allowed to intrude into team formation and problem-solving. Your job is to prevent these conflicts and unhealthy dynamics; and also to intervene early when they present themselves.

Of course, you cannot do all of this alone. You need every team member to share responsibility and accountability for positive, productive relationships and interactions. One key strategy is to insist on strengths-based, solution-focused, and blame-free language. Every team member needs to pledge to use this language; and to remind others to do the same.

In fact, it is useful to emphasize with teams that their problem-solving needs to proceed with dialogue and not hotly contested debate. (*Trainer: Reference the tool that emphasizes the difference between dialogue and debate and have participants focus on it.*)

In the same vein, the sample norms, rules, and meeting protocols have been developed with the need to prevent storms in mind. (*Trainer: Reference the tools that provide norms, rules, and meeting protocols and have participants focus on them.*)

Your job is to give these samples to your DT team with a genuine request. You want them to make whatever modifications they envision, accept the revisions as their own, and agree to steward their implementation as the team proceeds. Your job, as DT facilitator, is to reinforce and help enforce these agreements, relying on DT members to steward each other through shared leadership for team development and functioning.
Understanding and Preventing Storms

Together, these design team tools help structure positive interpersonal interactions, in turn facilitating productive, retention-focused problem-solving. Perhaps above all, they help prevent open, hostile conflicts, which some researchers call “storms.”

When groups form and try to progress without norms, rules, meeting protocols and, above all, expert facilitation provided by someone like you, they follow a pattern. This pattern has been described in four parts:

- **Forming**
- **Storming**
- **Norming**
- **Performing.**

In other words, after a DT has formed, predictable conflicts surface and emotions run high. These are group-team “storms.” Groups able to weather these storms quickly learn about the need to develop norms, rules, and meeting protocols to prevent future storms. Groups successful in developing norms to prevent storms are then able to perform. (e.g., Tuckman & Jensen, 1977).

Unfortunately, some groups needing to become teams do not survive the initial storms. In other words, the storms are destructive, hurtful, and harmful to individuals and to the entire team. The design team innovation ends prematurely when this happens.

Here, then, is the rationale for the recommended language, norms, rules, and meeting protocols. Introduce during the forming (formative) stage by you, the facilitator, team norms damaging storms. And when storms are on the horizon, a return to these norms, rules, and meeting protocols provides you with the opportunity to intervene immediately.

These norms are especially important in public child welfare systems with high turnover. Turnover in these systems is caused in part by blame and maltreatment dynamics in the agency. DT members bring these interactions and perceptions to the team.

So, the team provides the first point of intervention for improved quality of treatment and interaction and, in turn, productive team problem-solving. The rationale is easy to appreciate.

When team members are “at war” with each other, they are not likely to work together, develop cohesiveness as a true team, and solve problems together effectively. Instead, they will likely to resort to familiar patterns of blaming and arguing with each other.
Thus, when you, the DT facilitator, introduce norms and rules, you are providing a new structure that enables team members to enjoy a fresh start. Much like the referee for a sports contest, you provide reminders of the interaction and quality of treatment rules, aiming to ensure that team members, in essence, play well together.

This means that your role as facilitator is to steward simultaneously the twin aspects of team development and performance. One side involves interpersonal relations and social development. The other side is task-oriented, i.e., the developing team’s ability to engage productively in solving retention-related problems. Both sides are important; each reinforces the other.

It is important to note that, although a team may not weather all storms and reach the final stage of development, it can still be productive. For example a team may be able to work on important, concrete priorities. Examples include improving job descriptions and developing new on-call procedures. In fact, when these types of tasks are completed quickly and effectively, these successes help propel the team to a new level of development. In short, success breeds success. One-at-a time “small wins”, over time, fosters team cohesion.

Ultimately, team development and performance depend on both the social side and the task side, which is to say that teams depend on you, the DT facilitator. Of course, over time you’ll work against this dependence on you as you build team capacities for self-directed, sustainable operations.

### Important Tip

Early in the design team process, it is imperative that members feel that the team and its facilitator provide a safe, secure environment, one in which they can be honest, test ideas, and make mistakes. None of this will happen if members don’t keep team proceedings confidential as determined by the team. In fact, if confidentiality is breached, members may leave, and even those who stay will not be honest and open. In short, confidentiality breaches threaten the entire process.
Day 2
Unit Four:

A Mock Design Team Meeting with Role Playing

A. A Mock Design Team Meeting

B. Design Team Facilitator Competencies

C. Structure for the First Three Meetings and Beyond
Unit Four

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of Unit Four, participants will:

- Gain firsthand knowledge and understanding of DT functioning, dynamics, and facilitation needs via a DT facilitation
- Describe important “do’s” and “don’ts” for DT facilitators
- Examine and process feelings related to experiencing a DT meeting and facing the prospect of facilitating a DT
Unit Four

A. A Mock Design Team Meeting

**PURPOSE**

To enable participants to experience DT operations and facilitation via a mock initial DT meeting

**MATERIALS**

- 3 x 5 cards prepared with team and agency roles specified
- Unit 4, Tool 1: “Sample Agenda 1”
- Unit 4, Tool 2: “Sample Agenda 2”

**TIME**

1 to 2 Hours

**PROCESS**

Mock “first meeting” facilitated by trainer.

The trainer will help participants will form one large design team. The trainer will be the facilitator, and participants will play the roles assigned to them. For example, some will be beginning caseworkers, while others will be supervisors, another will be the staff developer, and another will be the deputy-commissioner or assistant director.

- Trainer distributes role cards to participants. Here are some suggested roles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Roles</th>
<th>Group Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>Nay Sayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Natural group leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 workers</td>
<td>Contributor – positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Care</td>
<td>Self centered member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Angry member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced worker</td>
<td>Know it all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPS</td>
<td>Mediator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Peace maker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 new worker</td>
<td>Worker who loves job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 experienced worker</td>
<td>Rule follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td>Contract follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o 1 senior</td>
<td>Union leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Staff Development coordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Deputy Commissioner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE: Make sure that some roles provide instructions for predictable, “bad” team behavior. For example:

- Instruct at least one powerful participant (e.g., the deputy commissioner, the director of services) to try to dominate the conversation and play “power games” with front line caseworkers and supervisors (until this is stopped by the trainer-facilitator).

- Instruct at least one participant to emphasize a pet peeve (until the trainer-facilitator) helps the team to understand it as such—and not an agency-wide retention priority.

- Instruct at least one participant to debate-contest developing solutions (until the trainer-facilitator acts to restore dialogue-driven interactions).

- Instruct at least one participant to engage in finger-pointing and blaming behaviors (until the trainer-facilitator acts to enforce norms and emphasize the need for strengths-based, solution-focused language).

- Instruct at least one participant to be a “nay-sayer”—e.g., this agency will never change, and neither will child welfare practice. There is nothing we can do to improve the agency, practice, and retention.

- Trainer runs the first meeting as they would run the first DT making sure to touch on shared leadership, empowerment, rules and norms, etc…
  1. Distribute first meeting handouts.
  2. Agree to ground rules of conduct (e.g., norms, rules) and team members’ responsibilities.
  3. Remind participants of the need for an icebreaker or two.
  4. Demonstrate how to deal with predictable, bad behaviors by team members.
  5. Elicit examples of retention-oriented needs and problems.
  6. Demonstrate how to prioritize these needs and problems.
  7. Demonstrate how to force participants to get to “the theory of the problem”—what’s wrong that needs fixing in relation to what’s good that needs to be retained.
  8. Demonstrate how to ensure that.
  9. Demonstrate how to make solutions “actionable”—SMART goals.
  10. Celebrate successes.

Debriefing the Mock Meeting Experience

Debrief the meeting with a special focus on what the trainer-facilitator did to stop predictable, bad behaviors; balance the social and task sides of team development; and get the team to SMART goals and solutions. Sample questions for debriefing include:
1. What roles did you observe in this group?

2. Do the roles we picked out represent people in your agency?

3. Are you likely to encounter similar people on a team in your agency?

4. Is there any role type that we missed?

5. What did you notice about the way the facilitator responded to people in their different role?

6. Identify techniques or skills that the facilitator used.

7. Are their any skills that you might not be comfortable using as a facilitator?

8. Are there any particular personality types that might challenge you as a facilitator?

9. Any role types that challenge you as a facilitator (e.g., top-level leaders, CPS workers)?

Refer participants to Unit 4, Tools 1 & 2 “Sample Agenda 1” and “Sample Agenda 2.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 4, Tool 1</th>
<th>Sample Agenda 1</th>
<th>County Design Team</th>
<th>10/19/04</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Review minutes and agenda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Schedule for upcoming meetings a. Schedule meeting for Hal Lawson to visit in January re: surveys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Discuss plans for A. VT training – 12/2/04 – (9am-4pm) ➢ Thoughts about the agenda? Changes? ➢ Practical issues?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Work for Today: Logic Model a. Board education problem ➢ Approach the ups to educate them on crystal meth issues if they are from your town. You have to put a face on it. So letting them know that labs have been found in their town.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 4, Tool 2</th>
<th>Sample Agenda 2</th>
<th>Design Team Meeting</th>
<th>October 14, 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOALS OF MEETING:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Business (10 minutes) a. Member leaving b. Changes in Schedule i. 11/18 ----------- Tuesday 11/9 – 10:00-12:00 ii. 12/16 ----------- Thursday 12/9 10:00-12:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Go over minutes/completed logic models (30 minutes) a. Worker step by step manual – update from Jess b. Check in about progress with job description tasks i. Did they go out to supervisors ii. Commissioner re: funds for consultant for manual c. survey rankings with the added issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Break (15 minutes)</td>
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<td>5. Logic model of 2nd issue (45 minutes)</td>
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B. Design Team Facilitator Competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To introduce specific DT facilitator competencies</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 4, Tool 3: “Initial Tips for Design Team Facilitators”</td>
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<th>TIME</th>
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<tr>
<td>As needed</td>
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<tr>
<th>PROCESS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review and discuss Unit 4, Tool 3: “Initial Tips for Design Team Facilitators” by Carenlee Barkdull (below)</td>
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</table>

Trainer refers participants to the Unit 4, Tool 3 and “walks participants through it carefully and interactively.

HIT HARD the following competency:

“Agree to summarize, synthesize, and report back team progress and priorities at the end of each meeting and to follow up with a written summary before the next meeting.”

**Rationale:**

- DT members are busy people, and the DT process is new to them.
- For these reasons and others, DT members often leave a meeting and come to the next one feeling that they have been “all talk” without accomplishing anything.
- This record keeping and, in turn, agenda setting, led by the DT facilitator, shows that the DT IS making progress and also indicates that good work is getting done.
- Experiences with DT facilitation indicate that this is one of the most important of the early functions of the facilitator.
Unit 4, Tool 3

Initial Tips for Design Team Facilitators

Carenlee Barkdull
With James Caringi and Hal Lawson

The following tips for team facilitators are organized under the following four categories: (1) Recommended orientations and actions (“Do’s”); (2) Orientations and actions to avoid and prevent (“Don’ts”); (3) Back-up plans; and, (4) Improvisations.

Do’s

✓ Agree to ground rules of conduct and team member responsibilities at the first meeting, if possible.

✓ Agree to summarize, synthesize, and report back team progress and priorities at the end of each meeting and to follow up with a written summary before the next meeting.

✓ Cultivate leaders within the team and encourage them to share responsibility for process, outcomes, and barrier-busting strategies.

✓ Consider co-chair leadership models: These models spread out the work, and encourage members to volunteer, especially those who would not do so without support.

✓ Plan to rotate leadership responsibilities (6- or 12-month terms)

✓ Plan a concrete, short-term, and “doable” objective as soon as possible, ensuring that this objective solves a concrete problem and meets members’ needs. (Nothing gives the group more momentum than their shared perception that they are accomplishing something important, i.e., that they are doing more than "meeting just to meet.")

✓ Prepare and keep updated orientation packets for new or potentially new members.

✓ Develop a "buddy system" of design team members with an eye toward the needs of new members; encourage “buddies” to take a new member to lunch or coffee to bring him or her up to speed.

✓ Keep going over old ground for new members, at the same time building a sense of accomplishment among veteran members.
✔ Take roll at every meeting and follow up when individuals miss multiple meetings.

✔ Prepare immediately after every meeting and distribute quickly the action minutes (decisions made, accomplishments to date): Good minutes reinforce the team’s work.

✔ Honor the principles of participatory action research--plan and build in indicators of progress toward desired goals, including new knowledge gained, at least once per quarter.

✔ Celebrate successes--no matter how small.

✔ Some people like to start the meeting with “a Weather Report.” This is a technique that facilitators use to review and debrief from the past meeting. A question might be “How was the weather at the last meeting?” Or “What was the climate like?” This allows the group members to debrief the feelings and issues that arose at the last meeting or other issues that are present in the current day’s meeting. The weather report is a tool for balancing the social-developmental process with the task.

✔ If you use “family experts” and “community consultants,” determine how many you need; obtain recruitment help from team members; compensate experts for their time; and provide child support and transportation assistance as needed.

**Don'ts**

- Don’t make yourself irreplaceable by encouraging the team to depend exclusively on you.
- Don’t burden yourself with voluminous clerical tasks: recruit help and use e-mail.
- Don’t let the group become mired in political “no-win” situations. Help the group identify them; place them in a parking lot list; and steer clear of them until much later.
- Don’t change meeting places, dates, times unless absolutely necessary--try to pick a fixed time and place and stick to them!
- Don’t allow a member who is "stuck" or very negative to bog down the whole group.
- If you add clients (family experts) to your teams, don’t permit them to become token members.
### Back-up Plans

- Prioritize your goals in advance so you can drop down to a lower priority if you are blocked for the time being and there is no other choice.

- Think ahead about how the group might survive the loss of an important member or an important champion or sponsor (e.g., a change in leadership at the agency).

- If the design team grows too large and unwieldy, break into task groups. For example, task groups may meet monthly, while the whole design team may meet quarterly.

### Improvisations

- Have a bag o' tricks handy for days when group energy is low--figure out creative ways to get people off their feet and encourage to sit in a different place.

- Stuck? Use round robin techniques for brainstorming to get people thinking and to prevent individuals from dominating the team and taking up too much time.

- Remember what you know about adult learning and development. Mix up learning modalities. Use visuals, have people draw, use exercises that use movement, and rely on members with media talents. Your group is a treasure trove of untapped resources.
C. Structure for the First Three Meetings and Beyond

PURPOSE

- To emphasize how the first three DT meetings progressively build shared responsibility and leadership.
- To learn how this shared responsibility and leadership are facilitated during the first three team meetings.

MATERIALS

- Unit 4, Tool 4: “A Capsule Summary of the First Three DT Meetings: A Facilitator’s Reflections”
- Unit 4, Tool 5: “An Example of A DT Initial Meeting To-Do List”
- Unit 4, Tool 6: “An Example of A DT Handout: Responsibilities of Each Design Team Member”
- Unit 4, Tool 7: “An Example of Design Team Minutes: County Design Team Minutes”

TIME

As needed

PROCESS

Trainer draws on the description below (Unit 4, Tool 4 by James Caringi) to lay out and discuss the structure of the first three DT meetings. This discussion should emphasize how these meetings progressively build shared responsibility and leadership.

Refer Participants to Unit 4, Tool 4:

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Unit 4, Tool 4: “A Capsule Summary of the First Three DT Meetings: A Facilitator’s Reflections”

The first three meetings are essential in “setting the stage” for design team (DT) work. It is essential that teams (and facilitators) work together to engage in this work. It is not uncommon to hear that the first three meetings “made or broke” the overall process, and also that the DT facilitator’s role is critical to the success of the meetings. Facilitators need to be familiar with the stages of group development and can use many tools to facilitate this work. It is important that systematic, careful, and patient facilitation at “the front end” is indispensable. The goal in these meetings is to get teams to the state where they are ready to engage meaningfully in the process.

Meeting 1

The first meeting is critical since it is a day-long session. It is also a crucial moment of orientation and information exchange. It is the first opportunity for the facilitators to provide guidelines and expectations for the entire team. The facilitators may use any: warm-up activities, ice-breakers, brainstorming exercises, or other activities that can help the facilitators begin to build a sense of shared responsibility and direction. The facilitators’ role is to set the agenda and, in general, control the meeting. It is also important for the facilitators to provide a clear and concise overview of the process at this stage. This is essential in setting the stage for the next meeting.

Meeting 2

Meeting 2 is a critical moment in the process. It is the first opportunity for the facilitators to facilitate the team in making decisions about their future course of action. The facilitators need to help the team prioritize their actions and identify the necessary steps to be taken to move forward. The facilitators need to work with the team to set clear goals for the next meeting and to determine the agenda for the next meeting.

Meeting 3

Meeting 3 is the most important meeting of the three. It is the time when the team begins to work together as a team and to develop the strategies that will be used to achieve the goals set in the previous meetings. The facilitators need to help the team make decisions about the next steps and to set the agenda for the next meeting.

This discussion should emphasize the importance of these meetings and how they contribute to the success of the overall process. The facilitators should be aware that the first three meetings are crucial in setting the stage for the entire process and that these meetings require careful planning and facilitation.
The first three meetings of the DT are essential in “setting the stage” for design team work:

- It is essential that teams:
  - Learn what teams are and do.
  - Make commitments to engaging in this work.
- The first three meetings “make or break” the overall process.
- The DT facilitator’s role is a critical determinant of DT trajectories and successes:
  - The process cannot be rushed.
  - Systematic, careful, and prudent facilitation at “the front end” is indispensable.
  - “Be prepared” is a good motto.

**Meeting 1: The first meeting is much more facilitator-dependent any other:**

- The structure provided by the facilitator is perhaps the most important part of the launching phase for teams.
- involves more elements of conventional training
- The facilitator teaches DT members about:
  - teams
  - the dynamics and requirements for team formation

**An Example of A First Meeting:**

- The DT facilitator and a colleague (recorder and co-facilitator) pick up some snacks and refreshments for the team.
- Go through security and wait to be escorted to meeting place.
- Do introductions to start the meeting, including name, position, and time at the agency.
- Do some ice breakers to help people feel more comfortable.
- Present and discuss team norms [refer participants to Unit 3, Tool 1].
- Ask if there are any other norms to add:
  - Asking is the first moment in obtaining engagement and joint ownership.
  - Team members know best the kinds of problem behaviors that need to be prevented.
  - Responsive norms will prevent harmful, damaging “storms.”
- Go over teams work and the basics of their structure [Unit 3, Tools 2-10].
- Emphasize the purposes and importance of the teams.
• Emphasize how design teams are different than other change efforts they may have experienced.
• End the meeting by setting the stage for action.
• Determining the agenda for the next meeting.
• “Debrief” this first meeting with an eye toward future meetings.
• End with a brief “check-in” or “pulse taking” with the deputy commissioner serving on the team.

Meeting 2:
• As mentioned above, the agenda for the second meeting was set at the end of the first meeting. This agenda should emphasize concrete tasks that need to get done at the next meeting and in between meetings.
• Importantly, DT members need to be driving this agenda.

The purpose of the second meeting:
• Set the list of priorities the team would like to work on.
  o Teams will have little or no difficulty coming up with priorities.
• Team members need help from the facilitator in addressing these priorities.
• Four Suggestions for helping DTs come to grips with these priorities:
  1. Determine which ones need to be addressed first, including the possibility of combining two or more priorities.
  2. Help DT members think logically about these priorities.
     a. Provide safeguards against a few persons’ “pet peeves” being viewed as the agency’s realities and needs.
     b. (If time permits AND if the team is ready, the logic model template may be introduced at this early stage. Many teams are not ready for this model at this time, however.)
  3. Decide which priorities are under the influence and control of the team:
     a. Can anything be done to address this priority?
     b. DT members need to agree that the priority is “actionable.”
        i. Something can be done about it.
  4. Help DT members understand and accept that aspects of their regulatory environments cannot be changed by teams or even by commissioners:
     a. Facilitators help DTs accept this fact and not waste precious time and energy discussing regulations that cannot be changed immediately.
Meeting 3:

- Begin as with all DT meetings, with a review of the agenda, minutes, and any business items.
- Set future meeting dates at this time.
- Scheduling is important given team members’ competing demands.

The Purpose of 3rd meeting:

- Begin work on the logic model:
  - Because this process is new, it will most likely take a whole meeting.
  - There are many ways to facilitate the process of logic model development, but all involve a common element—namely, “piecing out” the work in manageable chunks and tasks. For example:
    - When teams wrestle with the causes of a retention-related problem, facilitators can use “sticky” or “post-it” notes.
    - Each team member’s views can be solicited when they are asked to list causes of problems, for example, on stickies or post-its.
    - Then these notes can be posted and organized on large newsprint pages.
    - Each newsprint page displays the title of a specific part of the logic model, and as team members came up with ideas, they place their stickies or post-it under the appropriate categories.
    - Teams then brainstorm the alternatives on the way to reach consensus. Some of this brainstorming reveals differences, which need to be ironed out.
      - The facilitator’s role is very important here, especially when strong opinion-leaders are on the team.
      - The facilitator is in the position to offer research findings on retention-turnover and also to encourage team members to resolve their differences by reviewing research on their own agency.
      - Facilitators ensure that all of the “raw information” on the newsprint is typed up and included in the minutes. This latter measure allows teams to return to the main ideas and issues, and it also serves as a bridge between the third and the fourth meetings.
  - Before ending, make sure there is consensus on who will to do what for follow-up for the next meeting.
  - The meeting ends in the usual way, debriefing and setting the agenda for the next time.
About Subsequent Meetings:

- Subsequent meetings proceed with the same approach to systematic problem-solving.
- DT move forward being careful not to “talk and love the problem to death,” but to develop solutions.
- Some actual examples:
  - A few DT members may volunteer to collaborate with co-workers and supervisors in developing clear, coherent job descriptions.
  - In another agency, the DT may recommend training for post-traumatic stress and set about planning for its implementation and the recruitment of workers who need and want it.

Most of these solutions involve top level leaders, especially the commissioner

- This means that the deputy commissioner, a team ambassador, the DT facilitator, or some combination of them communicates these priorities and needs in a timely fashion to the Commissioner, gaining this person’s commitments and resources in support of the implementation plan.
- Once it becomes apparent to DT members and others in the agency that commissioners are “on board” and support the team and its recommendations, good news spreads and relationships among people in the organization improve.
- Mis-perceptions no longer thrive.
- For example, in some agencies, commissioners join design teams later in the process because team members learn to trust them—and no longer view them as insensitive adversaries.

The DT process, once structured and set in motion, follows a recurrent pattern:

- As a logic model for each retention-turnover problem is completed, teams develop solutions.
- The solutions are shared with top level leadership.
- Top level leadership commits resources and supports and may also offer expanded, improved solutions.
- In this fashion, teams and top level leaders work together in support of improved agency structures and processes, which prevent undesirable turnover and improve desirable retention.
**Trainer refers** participants to Unit 4, Tool 5 “DT Initial Meeting To-Do List”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 4, Tool 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design Team Initial Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>To-Do List</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Arrange meeting time and room with leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Obtain all materials needed for meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Arrange refreshments</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Develop agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Make copies of all DT materials needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Norms, DT guidelines, etc (in toolkit)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Send email to all members in advance</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Recommend twice: one week before and the day before</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Practice your facilitation and be organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. After meeting check in with leadership to see how meeting went from their perspective</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Trainer refers participants to Unit 4, Tool 6: “An Example of a Design Team Handout: Responsibilities of Each Design Team Member”

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**Unit 4, Tool 6**

**An Example of a Design Team Handout**

Responsibilities of Each Design Team Member

Hal A. Lawson & Gary V. Sluyter*


*Shape the Agenda:* Solicit co-workers’ views of recruitment needs and retention problems and share this information with the team.

*Contribute to Team Formation and Functioning:* Identify and help enforce shared norms, rules, and operational guidelines; welcome and help orient new members; help pick up the slack when someone leaves or needs help; and follow through on assignments.

*Engage in the Design Team Process:* Attend every team meeting, come prepared, build trust among team members, do not withhold important information, listen actively to other members' views, participate in problem-solving dialogue aimed at consensus.

*Search for Relationships and Root Causes:* When it's possible to do so, identify patterns involving recruitment needs and retention problems and pinpoint their primary causes.

*Focus on Solutions:* Identify improvement models and strategies that respond to needs, solve problems, and build on individual, group, and organizational strengths.

*Identify Constraints, Obstacles, and Barriers:* Identify the factors and forces that limit, inhibit, and prevent effective improvement strategies and promising innovations.

*Develop Barrier-Busting Strategies:* Identify people, resources, strategies, and models that reduce, eliminate, and prevent problematic constraints, obstacles, and barriers.

*Request Training and Learning Resources:* Enlist the team facilitator’s assistance in providing responsive training and mobilizing learning supports and resources.

*Identify Competencies:* Identify individual, group, and organizational competencies that will improve recruitment, retention, well being, and performance.

*Design and Implement Training Programs:* Plan and deliver training, enabling co-workers to contribute to improved recruitment, retention, well being, and performance.
Trainer refers participants to Unit 4, Tool 7: “An Example of Design Team Minutes”

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**Unit 4, Tool 7**

**An Example of Design Team Minutes**

County Design Team

Minutes

11/16/04

**Review Minutes and agenda**

- Minutes approved from last meeting.

**Schedule for upcoming meetings**

- January 6 will be the next meeting – 12:30 – 2:30pm
- January 20 – Hal will come to discuss intranet evaluations

**Review Minutes and recommendations for KBL**

- Team building is necessary because we are at war with each other in services

**Plans for Vicarious Trauma Training**

**Update on Current Work for Safety Issue**

- Paul talked about the lights and found out that the lights are on all night where the county cars are.

- Commissioner spoke with the under sheriff about the dead spots throughout the county. Sheriff’s also run into this issue on all cell phone services. If you are going into an area where there is no cell service, the handheld radios are possible but then again the signal isn’t really all that strong. A base car unit has a stronger transmitter. In Sharon Springs the handheld radios do not work there. If we want to be set up on dispatch’s system, they will help us out with no problem.

- The department will get a brand new car and a minivan within the next few months.

- The on call policy was amended so that workers contact dispatch to tell them where they are going.

- Receptionist upon request will call the worker; worker will speak with them on the phone and therefore will take the threat away from the worker. The implementation will go into effect after the division meeting on Dec. 1.

- Metal detector update – The equipment is for the office of court administration / court system only and technically is not for use by any other purpose. A policy needs to be developed and we need to collect information on how often we actually use this option will determine whether we need to buy a handheld.

  - If we want to walk clients through the metal detector, caseworkers can do that at any time.
  - We can also buy a wand for $300-$500.
  - If there is a problem then we call dispatch and the closest officer, probably the deputy downstairs will respond. He is going to send a deputy into the building to make rounds on a regular basis.
Board committee Meeting
- Board committee meeting in February – usually meets 2\textsuperscript{nd} Tuesday of month
  - What do we want? What is our purpose in talking with them? For the time being we want to educate them and begin to establish a relationship with them, so that in the future it may be easier to make changes if needed in the future.

Where to go from here:
A group of caseworkers will convene to discuss agenda for quick educational session and introductions. Jan volunteered to facilitate and Terry & Tina will also attend. Carol will do a power point presentation if someone gives her the info. End with we would like X$ for a radio, etc. Extend an invitation at the end of presentation to come out for a day to see what a caseworker does.

On call
Caseworkers came to Commissioner to discuss on call is a contentious issue. There are too many workers who want on-call. Commissioner would like to have a 100\% agreement with on call.

Mandatory constraints
  - We need to have on call
  - People can trade
  - If an on call day is not covered they use inverse seniority
  - No one would be required to work more than one holiday per year

Problem:
  - Workers are signing up for days and giving them to their friends
  - How do you avoid this issue?

Possible Solutions:
Unit Five:

Developing Shared Responsibility and Leadership in the Design Team

A. Developing Shared Responsibility and Leadership in the Design Team

B. Strengthening Shared Leadership
Unit Five

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of Unit Five, participants will:

- Describe and explain the need for shared responsibility and leadership for the DT
- Identify opportunities for increasing the degree of shared responsibility and leadership in the design team
- Identify and explain tools and strategies for making teams democratic entities with shared responsibility and leadership
- Describe the key components in the first three DT meetings
Unit Five

A. Developing Shared Responsibility and Leadership in the Design Team

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<thead>
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<th>PURPOSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• To enable participants to understand the need for shared responsibilities and team leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To enable participants to assess and develop shared responsibilities and team leadership</td>
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Trainer’s introduction to shared responsibility and leadership:

Let’s begin by reflecting on today’s experiences. We began by networking with each other. During this networking, you identified the conditions needed to maximize your learning and development. Starting in this fundamental way, this training is your training.

The remainder of our day has been spent learning about, and developing beginning level competence for facilitating, retention-focused design teams. Each unit was structured with the intent of providing everyone with shared understanding, knowledge, sensitivities, and skills. Together these units and the learning experiences they provided were structured to empower you—and to provide you with a solid foundation for tomorrow’s deeper learning and capacity-building experiences.

As we stated at the start today, we hope and expect you to use this foundation by asserting your needs and demonstrating your leadership. We truly want and need your expertise as we proceed toward the conclusion of our two-day training.

If you commit to providing your expertise, ensuring that you get all that you want and need from this training, the overall experience will be more successful. Furthermore, we will be able to improve this training, thanks to the suggestions, input, and criticism you provide.

In this fundamental sense, our time together in this training mirrors what needs to happen in design teams. In teams, everyone’s voice needs to be heard. This requires skillful facilitation by you, but it also requires trusting, equitable relationships. These special relationships depend on three important conditions:
1. Team members need to “check at the door” their roles, status, and differential power and authority in the agency. All need feel that they have equal say-so in team deliberations.

2. Team members need to accept shared responsibility and even leadership for DT deliberations, improvements, and outcomes.

3. Team members, especially the least powerful ones in the agency, need to feel genuinely empowered by the most powerful ones. This requires special care and stewarding by top-level leaders, managers, and supervisors on the team. It especially requires that these powerful persons do not punish or squelch other members during and outside of team meetings.

Together these three conditions provide a safe, secure, nurturing environment for team deliberations and problem solving.

Today and also tomorrow, our training has been structured to establish the same three conditions (equity, shared responsibility and leadership, empowerment and trusting relationships). The question is, have we accomplished these things?

We have designed this final session for today to find out—by asking and involving you.

In brief, we’ll now ask you whether we have been successful in promoting shared responsibility and leadership. In other words, to what degree has shared leadership occurred within this group?

We’ll do an activity to help us answer this question. This activity is one you can use, with modifications, with your design team.
B. Strengthening Shared Leadership Activity

**PURPOSE**

To provide an experiential learning opportunity for assessing and developing shared responsibility and team leadership

**MATERIALS**

- 3 x 5 Shared Leadership Activity cards (see below)
- Unit 5, Tool 1: “Strengthening Shared Leadership – Activity Guidelines”

**TIME**

As needed

**PROCESS**

In advance the trainer cuts out “Shared Leadership” statements and numbered cards and places one set per envelope. Prepare enough envelopes so that each group has a complete set of cards.

**Shared Leadership Activity Cards:** [see full-sized cards in “Additional Materials” at end of unit]
Unit 5, Tool 1

Strengthening Shared Leadership

Activity Guidelines

1. As a group, examine the statements provided to you.

2. Rate each statement as it applies to your mock design team experience by putting it in one of four possible piles on top of the appropriately numbered cards (cards numbered 1-4 are provided)

   1- This does not apply to our group at all
   2- This does apply to our group to some degree
   3- This applies to our group for the most part
   4- Yes, this definitely describes our group

3. Identify the three statements which require the greatest improvement or that you perceive to be the most important. Identify and agree to specific actions that can be taken to move toward achieving these improvements.

4. Designate one person in your group to report out to the large group, sharing one necessary improvement and one action step that your group would take to arrive at stronger shared leadership.

Trainer divides participants into small groups of no more than 5 people per group. For a small size training have entire class form one group.

Direct the small groups to follow the activity guidelines. Inform them that they have 15 minutes to complete the activity.

Structure a large group discussion of activity:

- Each small group will report one necessary improvement and one action step they would take. [Trainer Note: write out on newsprint]

- Discuss when and how you might best use the activity to encourage shared responsibility and leadership with your design team.
Trainers’ Summary for this Activity

- DTs are structured to encourage members to steward their agencies, making commitments to improve them and, in turn, the quality and stability of the workforce.
- As DT members become committed stewards, they are in a position to encourage and support co-workers to do the same.
- DTs cannot be successful without team members’ shared responsibility and leadership.
- DTs cannot be successful unless every member feels genuinely empowered in a safe, secure, trusting environment.
- DTs cannot be successful when outside power and authority relationships intrude into team development and problem-solving.

NOTE TO TRAINERS: An end-of-the day informal social activity for all participants, if possible, is a great idea! Ditto a dinner together!
Additional Materials for Unit 5
Statement 1

We each have equal influence.

Statement 2

Power and authority differences have been minimized.

Statement 3

My responsibilities and accountabilities are clear and appropriate.
Statement 4

Each member is sharing responsibility for the success of the team experience

Statement 5

We keep one another fully informed through open, accurate communications

Statement 6

Each member participates fully in decision-making.
Statement 7

Each member feels genuinely empowered

1
This does not apply to our team-group at all

2
This applies to our team-group to some degree

3
This applies to our team-group for the most part

4
Yes, this describes our team-group completely

5
We don’t know
Unit Six:

Helping Design Teams Plan and Act Systematically: The Logic Model

A. Introducing the Logic Model

B. The Logic Model Activity

C. Debriefing the Logic Model Activity
Unit Six

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of Unit Six, participants will:

- Explain the rationale for the components of the logic model
- Explain the logic model’s contributions to the development of systematic, data-based problem-solving
- Explain how and why the logic model enables diverse people, some with a history of conflicts, to function effectively as a team
- Experience logic model completion using genuine retention-related priorities
Unit Six
A. Introducing The Logic Model

**PURPOSE**
- To understand the purpose and uses of the logic model
- To prepare participants to implement it in team planning and problem solving.

**MATERIALS**
- Unit 6, Tool 1: “A logic Model Template for Design Teams’ Problem Solving”
- Unit 6, Tool 2: “An Example of a Logic Model”

**TIME**
45 minutes

**PROCESS**

LECTURE: The logic model is a tool developed to meet several agency needs. Chief among these needs are: (1) The need for systematic, data-based problem-solving instead of problem-solving based on pet peesves and rumors; (2) The need to get diverse people on the team “on the same page”, working effectively together in spite of prior conflicts and differences; and (3) To develop individual and team capacity for self-directed problem-solving via the logic model format.

Trainer: Refer participants to Unit 6, Tool 1: “A Logic Model Template for Design Teams” and point out that it includes six components: problem statement, causes of problem, effect on retention, ideal situation, solutions in place, and solutions needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 6, Tool 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Logic Model Template for Design Teams</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Need / Problem</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Emphasize the importance of the problem statement. Point out that every other component in the logic model—and ultimately, the effectiveness of the team’s recommended improvements—depends on the DT’s ability to completely and correctly identify “what’s wrong that needs fixing”, including the problem’s effects on retention.

- Emphasize the connection between “solutions needed” and the problem statement, including the causes of the problem. Make sure that trainees
understand that these solutions are interventions. Also make sure that they
understand that, as with all interventions, the DT’s solutions’ will only be
effective if they fit the problem and its causes.

➤ Explain the need for the “solutions in place” component, emphasizing that, in
many cases, current solutions are not necessarily wrong; rather, they are
insufficient by themselves to produce better retention outcomes. Also
emphasize that, by acknowledging solutions in place, previous efforts by other
agency staff are not automatically discounted—and this contributes to a
stronger team and a better organizational climate.

➤ Above all, emphasize with trainees the need for team members to provide
concrete examples (data) in support of their claims about problems and
solutions; and especially for team members to agree on the fact that the
problem is widespread, and not just one team member’s perception or “pet
peeve.”

➤ Help trainees understand that this logic model approach paves the way for
data-based, systematic problem-solving in substitution to “scatter-gun”
approaches driven by rumors, powerful personalities, and personal agendas.

➤ In short, this logic model format is a positive turn-around for the agency’s
approach to identifying and solving problems, and the success of the DT
approach hinges in part on team members’ “buy in” and use of it.

Refer participants to Unit 6, Tool 2: “An Example of a Logic Model” as an illustration of
a completed model (see below):
Unit 6, Tool 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need / problem</th>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Effects on Retention</th>
<th>Ideal Situation</th>
<th>Solutions in place at one time or another</th>
<th>New Solutions Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. There is a focus on negative feedback rather than positive strengths</td>
<td>1. Society as a whole, and Agency and DSS more specifically are focused on the negative.</td>
<td>1. There would be “warm fuzzies” given as positive feedback</td>
<td>1. There used to be a newsletter “Treading Water” that would detail caseworker accomplishments, unit accomplishments, caseworker anniversaries, and birthdays.</td>
<td>1. A positive feedback box outside of each unit supervisor’s office where workers from that unit can write tell tell about positive things coworkers have done. (Secretaries can type up in a newsletter and hand out monthly)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. There is a feeling that what we are doing is not “good enough”</td>
<td>2. We have learned how to process the negative, but learning a new way of thinking and judging performance is a difficult task to accomplish.</td>
<td>2. There is naturally positive interactions that occur between supervisors and workers.</td>
<td>2. Acknowledgement of work anniversaries</td>
<td>2. Supervisors give stickers for positive accomplishments. The worker with the most stickers at the end of the month wins a much needed office supply (corkboard, stapler, white out pen, etc). It is delivered at the monthly staff meeting or can be posted in an email sent to everyone (including commissioner) each month</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Supervisors provide workers with daily positive feedback that is visible.</td>
<td>3. Once a month there is a coffee and donut meeting where the commissioner comes to speak with and encourage caseworkers</td>
<td>3. When a worker has gone above the call of duty, such as putting in extra hours a letter of recognition is placed in the employee’s file, with a copy to the employee and the commissioner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Positive work environment where people are smiling, there is good teamwork, supportive coworkers and mutual acknowledgement of workloads.</td>
<td>4. There are great emotional supports from coworkers</td>
<td>4. There is a monthly coffee and donut Friday where the first 20 minutes of the day is spent increasing unit morale. Caseworkers/units take turns bringing in food.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. There is acknowledgement from coworkers and supervisors</td>
<td>5. We have flex time which makes us feel appreciated</td>
<td>5. New and goods start off unit meetings. Each case worker says something new or good about their life for that day.</td>
<td>5. Employee of the quarter. Every three months one worker is nominated by their coworkers as the employee of the quarter for managing a tough case or being extra helpful. This person receives a $20 gift certificate to a local restaurant and is acknowledged at an end of the year caseworker reception thrown by the Agency.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. There have been certificates of appreciation given out to units in the past.</td>
<td>6. Have a rotating sticker fairy who puts stickies containing “warm fuzzies” on other’s computers.</td>
<td>6. Have a rotating sticker fairy who puts stickies containing “warm fuzzies” on other’s computers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Letters of recognition have gone in files in the past.</td>
<td>7. Supervisors put little sticky notes on work saying good court report/UCR, etc</td>
<td>7. Have sticky notes that are given to workers that say things like “Good Job!” or “Keep up the Good Work!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8. Personally model positive feedback</td>
<td>8. Personally model positive feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9. Have an occasional luncheon or reception for the entire staff to show appreciation and give positive feedback</td>
<td>9. Have an occasional luncheon or reception for the entire staff to show appreciation and give positive feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. The Logic Model Activity

**PURPOSE**
To practice using the Logic Model

**MATERIALS**
- Unit 6, Tool 3: “Tips and Tools for DT Facilitators as they Help DTs Implement the Logic Model”
- Unit 6, Tool 4: “Four Vignettes for Use in Logic Model Activity”
- Unit 6, Tool 5: “Guidelines for Logic Model Activity”

Other Materials:
- Post-it notes (10 pads)
- Flipchart/white board prepared for the Logic Model activity
- Markers

**TIME**
60 minutes

**PROCESS**
Refer participants and read through Unit 6, Tool 3: “Tips and Tools for DT Facilitators as they Help DTs implement The Logic Model” [See below].
Unit 6, Tool 3:

**Unit 6, Tool 3**

**Tips and Tools for DT Facilitators as they Help DTs implement The Logic Model**

James Caringi

- It is important to balance group process with staying focused on solutions and the task at hand.

- Expect some resistance from DT members, not only because logic models are new, but also because they must confront and resolve differences in “what’s wrong that needs fixing to improve retention,” especially the causes of problems.

- Allocate a specific time frame for completion to keep the team on task with a sense of urgency and accountability.

- Be directive and task-oriented.

- Stick to logic model “as is” until you are comfortable with it—later, when the DT has gained skills and capacities for systematic, logical analysis, they may adapt the model.

- Continue to ask for specific examples and concrete data for each segment of the logic model.

- Make sure that one or two powerful personalities do not dominate the discussion; and that a substantial number of team members agree on “the problem”, including its causes and effects on retention.

- Vote as needed to resolve differences. Alternatively, try two or more solutions if the team and the agency have sufficient capacity.

- Focus on the fit between solutions and the causes of the problem!

- Do not let the group digress into complaining; keep them strengths-based, action- and improvement-oriented.

- Do not permit the team to engage in finger-pointing and blaming dynamics.

- Make sure the facilitator leads the group through each segment of the model within the allocated 25-minute time frame.
Trainer leads group in the Logic Model Activity (A mock meeting)

1. Split the group up into smaller groups (no more than 5 persons per group).

2. Give each group the blank logic model template, post-it notes, markers and a vignette (refer participants to Unit 6, Tool 4).

3. Group chooses one facilitator and one recorder (note taker).

4. Refer participants to Unit 6, Tool 5: “Guidelines for Logic Model activity” (see below):

5. Explain that the group’s “facilitator” will follow lead the group through the activity, following these guidelines.

   [Trainer Note: Make sure the “facilitator” leads the group through each segment of the model within the 25 minute time frame.]
Unit 6, Tool 5

“Guidelines for Logic Model activity”

1. Make sure your group has post-it notes.

2. Based on your group’s vignette, group members will write examples for each component of the Logic Model template, one example per note.

3. The notes will then be pasted on the appropriate segment of the logic model on the flip chart.

4. Read the vignette you have been assigned (Unit 6, Tool 5) and begin the logic model process.

5. Complete logic model, making sure that you lead your group through each segment of the model within the time allotted!

6. Set agenda for next meeting

7. Debrief
   - What went well/what should we keep doing
   - What needs to change
C. Debriefing The Logic Model Activity

**PURPOSE**
To explore what was learned from the Logic Model activity

**MATERIALS**
Flipchart

**TIME**
45 minutes (or longer if needed)

**PROCESS**

**DEBRIEF with larger group**

Ask the following questions and record responses on flipchart:

1. What was helpful about the logic model? What was the purpose?
2. What was challenging about using the logic model?
3. What were some group dynamics that arose during the process?
4. How were these dealt with?
5. Were you able to keep team members solution focused and on task?
6. How might this logic model be useful in your agencies? What issues might you use it with?
7. What challenges would you need to confront in your agency as you introduce logic model-driven planning?

**SUMMARY:** Design teams begin as loosely structured groups, and like any other groups will go through various phases of development as previously discussed. It will be the case that your design team will “ebb and flow,” even with the logic model. Your main challenge, as facilitator, is to develop and maintain positive momentum—and this requires visible, concrete progress.

Expect two significant challenges:
1. In the beginning design teams will work on the most important and actionable items. This will lead to quick progress and success. However, once the team has worked on these items, they will be left with the more difficult ones to fix (i.e. agency culture, staff morale, etc.). These issues will take more time and energy to impact.

   - In order to combat this problem, have the team work on more actionable items at the same time.

   - Another strategy is to form sub-committees in and outside the team to do additional work.

2. Realize that it is normal for the team to get stuck from time to time. As a facilitator it is up to you to normalize this and discuss it with the team. Involve the team in finding solutions to get beyond being stuck.

   **Remember**: The logic model and the evaluation data (described in the next unit) are essential tools in this DT process. They generate knowledge and, at the same time, promote learning and improvement planning.

   **Moreover**, this model and the data provide a common focus for diverse team members who may not like each other or work well together. A common focus helps counteract unhealthy and problematic relationships among DT members. It enables them to work together in spite of their differences.
Day 3
Unit Seven:

Obtaining and Using Data in Design Team Problem-Solving

A. The Importance of Getting Good Information

B. Helping Design Teams Use Data
Unit Seven

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of Unit Seven, participants will:

- Describe their roles and responsibilities in helping design teams use retention-related research findings
- Identify and describe alternatives for teams to obtain and use agency-specific data
Unit Seven

A. The Importance of Getting Good Information

**PURPOSE**

To prepare participants to help their teams use available retention research findings and also to get turnover and retention data from their agency.

**MATERIALS**

- Unit 2, Tool 2: “Push Factors”
- Unit 2, Tool 3: “Pull Factors”
- Unit 7, Tool 1: “SWEC Reports and Publications web page”
- Unit 7, Tool 2: “List of Survey Instruments for Ongoing Evaluation”
- Unit 7, Tool 3: “Demographics Survey”
- Unit 7, Tool 4: “Job Satisfaction Survey”
- Unit 7, Tool 5: “Physical Work Environment Survey”
- Unit 7, Tool 6: “Support Systems Survey”
- Unit 7, Tool 7: “A Turnover Prevention Inventory”

**TIME**

As needed depending on trainee readiness.

**PROCESS**

Primarily lecture-discussion.

**Trainer:** The Importance of Getting Good Information (Data) for Logic Model Completion and Retention-focused Problem-Solving (Lecture-discussion)

- Research findings are important to DT process and outcomes:
  - Teams use research findings to test rumors, misperceptions, and revolutionary hunches against the research; and then they tend to discard them because they are at odds with the research data.
  - Thanks to facilitators, teams have learned how to use research findings in their decision-making processes and structures.

- Research findings perform another vital function in teams:
  - They serve to equalize relations among team members because the data speak for everyone not just the design team members.
  - Power and authority differences outside the team, differences associated with jobs, roles, and responsibilities, shrink when the research is shared among the entire agency.
- The team’s problem solving is thus improved because of the data and also because reliance on the data equalizes relations among team members.

- **Design Teams develop an accurate understanding of the problem needing to be solved:**
  - enabling them to tailor an improvement strategy or innovation to it
  - Teams gain new knowledge, especially action-oriented knowledge that otherwise would not be available to the team, their co-workers, and agency leaders. This is a huge benefit.

- **Workforce Surveys:**
  - Design teams in New York State and their facilitators had the advantage of extensive information (data) from workforce surveys.
  - These surveys are available to you and the agencies you work with free of charge. You’ll find in your toolkit the website and contact information [Unit 7, Tool 1 “SWEC Reports and Publications web page” (http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/ohrd/swec/reports.asp)].
  - Not every agency will have access to comprehensive workforce surveys such as the one completed in New York State.
  - Even so, teams need accurate information or data about the causes of undesirable turnover and the solutions that will improve desirable retention.

**Ask: How will you get this information?** Trainer solicits ideas from participants about sources of data and what they can do to help obtain good data.

Alternatives provided by the trainer:

1. Summaries of research findings such as the two regarding push factors and pull factors (Unit 2, Tools 2 and 3). Teams can use these findings to assess their own agency.

2. Access to the New York State Executive Summaries for Workforce Retention research as a point of departure for team dialogue, also available on SWEC website [Unit 7, Tool 1]

3. Access to the PDF written for New York State Commissioners on Retention and Turnover also available at the SWEC website under “Five Year Compendium of SWEC Work (2005)”

4. Access to data from exit interviews conducted by agency leaders when workers leave

5. Developing a plan whereby design team members interview co-workers on why people leave and what it will take to get them to stay.
Using the turnover prevention inventories or components of them (developed in New York State and available free of charge) for team deliberations and agency research by team members.

6. Using any one of the several easy-to-complete and analyze survey instruments now available to DTs and their facilitators [Refer participants to Unit 7, Tools 2-8]. Teams can implement these instruments early in the deliberations. Alternatively, teams and facilitators can implement surveys to validate team members’ perceptions about the causes of undesirable turnover. For example, if some members believe that the quality of the office environment pushes workers out, this perception can be validated by data from the Physical Work Environment Scale listed below.

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**Unit 7, Tool 2**

**List of Survey Instruments for Ongoing Evaluation**

1. **Demographics Survey** – 10 minute Survey – Asks typical demographic information about you.

2. **Job Satisfaction** – 10 minute Survey – Asks questions about employee satisfaction with the job.


4. **Physical Work Environment Scale** – 10 minute Survey – Asks questions about employee perceptions of the work environment.

5. **Support Systems Survey** – 5 minute Survey – Asks questions related to employee social support systems.

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**Important Tip**

Many research studies qualify as “spectator research.” Here, the researcher remains distant from the participants and the agency so as not to bias the research. The research findings are understanding-oriented; they describe and explain what’s been studied. In contrast, teams are action systems. Their research-related, planning task is to develop “actionable” plans. Teams need help from facilitators in making every recommendation “actionable.” Emphasize this.
B. Helping Design Teams Use Data

PURPOSE
To provide an example of effective use of data in Design Team problem-solving

MATERIALS
Unit 7, Tool 8: “An Example from a New York State DT Facilitator”

TIME
As needed depending on trainee readiness

PROCESS
Present and discuss Unit 7, Tool 8 – “An Example from a New York State DT Facilitator”

Refer participants to Unit 7, Tool 8

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Unit 7, Tool 8
An Example from a New York State DT Facilitator
James Caringi

I have helped DTs look at their baseline information (data) about retention and turnover. There is no one way to do this. The important thing is to do it so the teams stay focused, at least at the beginning, on the research findings and do not resort to “he said, she said” rumors and personal impressions.

In one county system, for example, the team looked at the survey data, added what was missing, and then identified retention priorities. Examples of these priorities included worker safety in the field; salary; worker stress; and job descriptions.

Then the team decided that salary was most important turnover-retention. The team then examined the “actionability” of each item. Here, the most important priority, salary, was tabled because team members did not view it as an “actionable item”. After all, salary increases would require action by the workers, commissioner, and most importantly, the county legislature. In short, working on salary would take enormous time, and would not yield immediate returns and benefits because so much influence and control resided outside the team and even the commissioner.

The DT thus decided to keep salary on its “radar screen,” but not to make it the first actionable priority. Subsequently, the team decided that “clear, coherent job descriptions” was the most actionable and important item they should work on.

All the while, I, the facilitator, was active in teaching the team why this was a good approach.

After a break, I introduced the concept of the “logic model”. I decided to introduce it at this second meeting because I determined that this team was ready for it; and also because we had enough time left to do so.

This logic model is an essential element of the design team process. It enables teams to understand the “theory of the problem” before designing and implementing solutions. You can help teams understand this complex idea (theory of the problem) by asking three questions:

- What’s wrong that needs fixing, and what are the causes?
- What’s good and strong that needs to be kept as part of the solution?
- How can we be sure that solution(s) we identify will fix the problem because it addresses its causes?

This logical, systematic approach is new to DT members. It takes time, patience, and persistence to cultivate it. Staff members in child welfare have seen many interventions...
come and go without real change. Many such change efforts were not well thought out from the beginning.

When I do this work with the logic model and its use in DT planning process, I am again a teacher, a group process clinician, and a capacity-builder. By helping DTs understand, endorse, and use the logic model template, I am, in essence, “teaching them to fish”, enabling them to do more of this work on their own in the future (and after I leave).

So, I explained all parts of the model with team members and entertained their questions. As this process was new, we went slowly and there were many questions. We went over an sample logic model developed by another team. This model was “sanitized” for confidentiality, but it served its purpose. It showed team members how others had proceeded and, most importantly, it showed them that others had done this difficult work.

Finally, I completed our debriefing process. I also prepped the team that the next meeting. We set the agenda based on our need to work on their first logic model; and to learn more about how to do this work efficiently, effectively, and successfully.
Unit Eight:

Starting a Design Team:
The Facilitator’s Role in Meeting Agency Leaders

A. Storyboard Activity

B. Additional Focus on The Facilitator’s Role in Developing Working Agreements With Agency Leaders
Unit Eight

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of Unit Eight, participants will:

• Obtain knowledge of how a facilitator begins a mutually-beneficial relationship with the agency’s leadership

• Construct the storyboard as guide they can use with their own team

• Reflect on their feelings about the challenges of engaging leadership, engaging teams, and connecting the two
Unit Eight:

A. Storyboard Activity

**PURPOSE**

- To provide preliminary understanding of DTs and their team facilitation via a storyboard technique
- To develop competence for approaching top level agency leadership with a proposal to start a retention-focused design team.

**MATERIALS**

- Prepared flipchart titled: “Preparing to Meet Agency’s Leaders: Steps for Success”
- Post-its
- Unit 8, Tool 1: Blank “Facilitator’s Role in Developing Working Agreements with Agency Leaders” form

**TIME**

60 - 90 Minutes

**PROCESS**

Trainers’ Lecture:

- We have just spoken about the role of a Design Team as an intervention to reduce turnover and improve retention in a child welfare agency. Now we are going to specifically visualize the role of a facilitator, newly assigned to start up a design team in a child welfare agency.
- Have any of you already begun the process of starting a design team? (Trainer spends time sampling this expertise. Experience and expertise in this area, will be valuable the entire group and helps to advance networking.)
- Introduce this session’s activity. State the objectives of the activity.
- Emphasize that this activity will assume that you are an outsider to the agency. In other words, it assumes that you are not familiar with the agency you have been assigned to and that the leadership (Commissioner or Director) of agency is not familiar with the Design Team Model.
- In short, leadership is expecting to hear from you about setting up a meeting to discuss the start up of a design team in their agency. You realize the importance of good preparation for the meeting to be a success. This is a fast brainstorm activity, to look at as many angles and considerations as you can, in a short time through the use of a technique called Storyboarding.
Storyboard Activity:

Prepare a blackboard or flip chart/white board titled, “Facilitator’s Role in Preparing to Meet with Agency’s Leaders: Steps for Success” displayed with 3 columns.

[Refer participants to Unit 8, Tool 1: A blank “Facilitators Role in Preparing to Meet with Agency Leaders” Form]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 8, Tool 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Facilitator’s Role in Developing Working Agreements with Agency Leaders (Blank Form)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research the Agency</th>
<th>Schedule a Meeting and Plan the Agenda</th>
<th>Develop a Working Agreement with the Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Column 1 Research the Agency

- Goal: What information about an agency would be helpful for the facilitator to know prior to the first meeting with leadership?

Column 2 Schedule a Meeting and Plan the Agenda

- Goal: Identify some steps you will want to take prior to scheduling a meeting and what items need to be on the agenda for discussion?

Column 3 Develop a Working Agreement with the Agency.

- Goal: What will a positive working relationship look like and accomplish? How will you weather unforeseen storms?

Directions for Story Board Game:

Explain that this Story Board activity is a technique used to gather a great deal of information in a short period of time. The collective goal is to look at the facilitator’s critical role in the start up of a design team at a specific agency.
1. Each person is asked to seek a partner, preferably someone whom they have not worked with previously. Post-its are distributed.

2. You and a partner, with a stack of post-it’s will be assigned to brainstorm using post-its and place them on column 1, 2 or 3 on the large flip chart.

3. Depending on class size, there may be several groups of partners working on same column or a group with 3 persons.

4. Give time limit -10 minutes or less

5. Have teams **place their written post-its on flip chart/white board** in assigned column on flip chart/white board.

6. Acknowledge the work of the group.

*Directions for processing activity*

- Ask for a volunteer to facilitate the processing of the activity.
  
  1. Trainer suggests that post-its be read aloud by a team member who placed it on flip chart/white board (especially if their writing is not legible to the volunteer).
  
  2. After all post-it tips are read, the group will decide if a post-it is more useful in another column then move post-it to the most appropriate column.
  
  3. Ask the group “what was left out”? Additional information should be added.

Trainer thanks the volunteer for facilitating this activity and asks how this person felt about facilitating.
B. Additional Focus on The Facilitator’s Role in Developing Working Agreements With Agency Leaders

**PURPOSE**

To develop competence for approaching top level agency leadership with a proposal to start a retention-focused design team.

**MATERIALS**

- Unit 8, Tool 2: Completed “Facilitator’s Role in Developing Working Agreements with Agency Leaders” form
- Unit 8, Tool 3: “Vignette A: Meeting the Administrators: Southside Design Team”
- Unit 8, Tool 4: “Vignette B: Meeting the Administrators: Starting a Design Team in a Rural County”

**TIME**

As needed

**PROCESS**

**Discuss:** Unit 8, Tool 2: Completed “Facilitators Role in Preparing to Meet with Agency Leaders” form (See below) as a reference for the following activity:
### Unit 8, Tool 2

The Facilitator's Role in Developing Working Agreements with Agency Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research the Agency</th>
<th>Schedule a Meeting and Plan the Agenda</th>
<th>Develop a Working Agreement with the Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is motivation for change?</td>
<td>Always be polite and respectful—you are a guest in their work family.</td>
<td>Use active listening skills, show empathy, and be responsive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the history of agency? Has it enjoyed successes with innovations?</td>
<td>Clearly state who you are, why you are there, and what you hope to accomplish.</td>
<td>“Know your stuff”—be able to articulate the design team model as well as your role and responsibilities clearly and concisely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are its retention and turnover statistics?</td>
<td>Carefully and systematically summarize goals also indicating what can go wrong and why.</td>
<td>Agree on how DT processes and outcomes will be reported to top-level leadership and also to others in the agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the agency’s unique needs?</td>
<td>Explain how you will proceed with the DT.</td>
<td>Agree on trouble-shooting procedures in the event that something goes wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What can you learn about its climate and culture?</td>
<td>Emphasize that you that you need shared leadership for the DT.</td>
<td>Sow the seeds for self-managed, sustainable DTs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the workforce size?</td>
<td>Agree on a start-up procedure and the agenda for the first meeting.</td>
<td>Follow-up with a written summary of this meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What units or departments structure the agency?</td>
<td>Either send in advance or leave a copy of the commissioner’s brief.</td>
<td>Maintain consistent communication with leadership throughout your tenure in the agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do workers, supervisors, managers, and leaders treat each other fairly and nicely?</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What conflicts exist? Is the agency good at conflict resolution?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the agency able to stop damaging gossip?</td>
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**Trainer summarizes Unit 8 by restating the objectives:**

1. Trainer asks if this exercise has achieved its stated objectives. [Note to Trainer: Inquire about each objective, especially the affective objective about future DT facilitators' feelings.]

2. Now that you have experienced a Storyboard technique, can you see a situation where you might want to use this tool with your own design team?

3. Then turn to Unit 8, Tools 3 & 4: “Vignette A: Meeting the Administrators: Southside Design Team” and “Vignette B: Meeting the Administrators: Starting a Design Team in a Rural County” (See Below)
Give participants a chance to review the Vignettes, entertain reactions and continue discussion as needed.

**Unit 8, Tool 3**

**Vignette A:**

**Meeting the Administrators: Southside Design Team**

The Big City Children’s Services (BCS) is one of the largest public child welfare agencies in the country consisting of 8,000 employees with over 17 offices located in a large urban environment. It offers child protection, prevention, foster care and adoption services. In addition it oversees contracts with 75 private community based agencies. One local district, “Southside” from the Child Protection Division, was chosen to host the design team pilot.

Southside has 6 sites with approximately 400 social service employees. It has a moderate, comparative turnover and a reputation as a stable, well functioning office. Ed Thomas, the director, is a well respected, competent administrator, open to change. He volunteered to “take a risk”, understanding that a Design Team could pose organizational challenges. Southside’s workforce comprised of different cultures and countries of origin relates to a community representing residents with approximately 80 different languages. The majority of staff is women.

Two outside facilitators were hired; both having extensive years of experience in child welfare and a good knowledge of The Big City Agency. Their first job was to engage Mr. Thomas and his colleagues in the process of initiating a Design Team in Southside. The first meeting was critical and set the tone for all future interactions. Facilitators, Nan and Rose knew that it was important to be sensitive to the agency norms and protocols. At the first meeting they presented the DT Model- benefits, unique challenges, addressed concerns and most importantly, established an open, working relationship. Together, they agreed on protocols and determined how to begin planning for a Design Team.

**Decisions:**

- The team(s) to consist of all levels of staff from a deputy director to support staff and have more caseworker representatives.
- DT to meet at lunch time from 12:00-2:00P.M. (each site would have representatives)
- All members to be volunteers
- Two teams to be established- no more than 12 in each team
- Confidentiality to be maintained
- The Union to be made aware of the DT team and be notified by central office
- Nan and Rose agreed to develop a DT fact sheet for the workforce and the Union, hold orientation sessions, recruit volunteers and ensure that all sites be represented
- All agreed that ongoing communication and periodic meetings be held to assess progress, determine team and administrative needs
- Mr. Thomas to appoint a deputy director manager to serve on the team
Unit 8, Tool 4

Vignette B:

Meeting the Administrators: Starting a Design Team in a Rural County

After initial agreement from the county “A” that they would like to form a design team to address workforce issues in their county, a meeting was arranged with the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner. I, the design team facilitator and two other members of workforce research and development team attended. We met for approximately 2 hours.

During this meeting, our three-person team outlined in detail the design team model, improvement process, intended outcomes, and expected benefits. We also discussed DT-related “bumps in the road”, or short-term impediments (see handout and also the brief prepared for commissioners and other top level leaders).

From our early work we learned that it is essential that upper management know that in deep system change, there are often uncomfortable periods not unlike the work we do with children and families in child welfare. The commissioner and deputy both had numerous questions that we answered again, in great detail being sure to let them know all we could about the process.

At the end of the meeting, we made sure to tell the commissioner and deputy that they could call us should they think of any other questions at a later time. They agreed they would contact us in approximately 2 weeks with their final decision at which point we would discuss how the team might begin in their county. (Each team begins slightly differently based on the needs and individual nature of each system). The start of this team began very smoothly due to this very important early work “setting the stage”.

Later, two months or so after we began our DT work, the deputy commissioner felt somewhat threatened and perceived that problems were being created by the team. Because we had anticipated storms like this, we were able to meet with the commissioner and the deputy, complete solution-focused problem-solving, and redirect the team and its facilitation.

Subsequently, we met with the DT, shared the new agreements and problem-solving priorities, asked for and received team members’ suggestions, and then proceeded with more focused, effective, and less blame-oriented team dialogue. As this reflection is being written, the facilitator beginning withdrawal, enabling the DT to be self-directed and self-sustaining as the top leadership so chooses.
Unit Nine:

Expecting, Managing and Benefiting from Conflict in Design Teams

A. Conflict in Design Teams
Unit Nine

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of Unit Nine, participants will:

1. Define conflict and describe some of its indicators
2. Identify and describe four kinds of team conflict
3. Differentiate between productive conflict and problematic, destructive conflict
4. Identify and describe the benefits associated with productive conflict
5. Identify, describe, and explain facilitators’ duties and actions for maximizing productive conflict and reaping its benefits
Unit Nine: Conflict in Design Teams

**PURPOSE**
- Define conflict and describe some of its indicators
- Identify and describe four kinds of team conflict
- Differentiate between productive conflict and problematic, destructive conflict
- Identify and describe the benefits associated with productive conflict
- Identify, describe, and explain facilitators’ duties and actions for maximizing productive conflict and reaping its benefits

**MATERIALS**
- Unit 9, Tool 1: “Expecting, Managing, and Benefiting from Conflict in Teams: A Training Tool for Team Leaders and Facilitators”
- Flip chart Paper
- Markers
- Post-it notes

**TIME**
2.5 Hours

**PROCESS**

Lecture/Discussion

**Trainer:** Unit 9, Tool 1 follows. It is in the toolkit, so you need not read it. Because participants have this tool, you are able to “walk them through it” systematically. Your job is to make sure that that participants finish this session with sufficient understanding to address the conflicts they will confront, turning as many as possible into productive conflicts that yield benefits.
Expecting, Managing, and Benefiting from Conflict in Teams: A Training Tool for Team Leaders and Facilitators

Conflict is endemic in teams, which is to say that it is natural and unavoidable. The key is to benefit from conflict’s positive functions and contributions, while avoiding and preventing the negative ones. This training tool for team leaders and members is structured with this key in mind.

Introducing Conflict and Cooperation

Every team strives to optimize the balance between conflict and cooperation.

Because productive conflict is a team asset—for example, it often yields multiple benefits—efforts aimed at eliminating it altogether are ill-advised.

Team leaders and facilitators thus need to learn how to manage and benefit from productive conflict alongside cooperation, at the same time avoiding conflict classified as problematic and potentially destructive.

Conflict

Conflict is present when diverse, discrepant, and even hotly-contested, oppositional views, preferences, and practices are evident among two or more team members.

- Viewed in a team context, conflict is an interpersonal phenomenon because it involves relations between two or more members.
- However, conflict oftentimes can be traced to the personalities, views, and preferences of diverse individuals (team members); and solutions to problematic conflict often start with controversial individuals.
- There are four kinds of conflict: Relationship conflict, task conflict, process conflict, and cognitive conflict. (Each is described in greater detail below.)
- For team leaders and facilitators, it also is useful to distinguish between productive conflict and problematic or destructive conflict. The key is to maximize the former, while minimizing and preventing the latter; and this is not always easy to accomplish.
- Conflict, when it is managed effectively, yields multiple benefits. For example:
  - Productive conflict is a safeguard against “groupthink”—where a team’s rush to consensus results in flawed problem solving and the elimination of the best alternatives.
  - Productive conflict produces new knowledge, which facilitates individual and team learning, which in turn promotes shared understanding.
Hal Lawson, 2007, 2

✓ Productive conflict and the new knowledge it generates comprise a main source for individual, team, and organizational innovations (emphasized at the end of this tool).

✓ Productive conflict enables team members to feel welcomed and empowered, increasing their commitments, engagement, and retention.

✓ When the above benefits associated with productive conflict occur, overall performance is enhanced and results improve.

**Cooperation**

☐ An effective team is an exemplar for cooperation. Despite members’ differences and conflicts, they learn to work together, steward the team’s development, and strive to achieve team missions and goals.

☐ Some teams become exemplars for collaboration. These teams are unique in that every team member openly depends on the others. In other words, team members enjoy interdependent relationships.

☐ A collaborative team is not inherently better than a cooperative one. Both kinds are valuable. Each kind is influenced by the agency that houses it, and each may “morph” into the other, especially as members change.

☐ *Conflict is endemic in both cooperative and collaborative teams.*

☐ Effective collaborative and cooperative teams learn how to reap the benefits of productive conflict, thanks to the work of their leader-facilitators.

**Striking an Effective Balance and Building Team Capacity**

☐ When teams are first formed and begin operating, team leaders or team facilitators are needed to mediate and manage conflicts.

☐ Team norms, rules, and meeting protocols (presented in an earlier unit) are invaluable tools for conflict mediation and resolution.

☐ Team leader-facilitators have the dual charge of helping individuals and the team as a whole appreciate conflict’s positive functions and contributions, while also building the team’s capacities to address conflict productively.

☐ Thanks to leader-facilitators, the team learns over time to accept shared responsibility for conflict mediation and resolution, ensuring that it is addressed transparently and productively and enabling the team to reap the attendant benefits.
Four Kinds Conflict in Teams

1. Relationship Conflict

Relationship conflict involves team members’ awareness of interpersonal incompatibilities and differences, especially clashes of different personalities. Emotions often are involved, and they may run high. Examples of relationship conflict include disliking other members and feeling tension, annoyance, frustration, and friction (after Jehn & Mannix, 2001).

- Relationship conflict is the most important and best example of problematic, potentially destructive conflict; it has few known benefits
- Relationship conflict often originates outside the team—and team members bring these conflicts to teams
- However, relationship conflict may arise in teams without competent leadership and facilitation.

**Primary interventions** by leader-facilitators:

- Team norms, rules, and meeting protocols, which members agree to accept and steward collectively
- Outside-of-team meeting mediation involving protagonists
- Outside-of-team meeting informal “get-togethers” involving protagonists and other team members, with some team members serving as “go-betweens” striving for fresh relationships
- As a last resort, restructure team membership
- Others?

2. Task Conflict

Task conflict involves disagreements and differences of opinion pertaining to the work at hand, i.e., the work tasks the group is expected and assigned to complete. Work tasks and associated conflicts may manifest themselves in dispassionate, impersonal ways (Jehn & Mannix, 2001).

For example: In the heat of debate, a team member will say something like the following. “This is not about you; it’s about what is expected of us.”

- So, task conflict is not the same as relationship conflict. Managed effectively, task conflict can be productive.
- However, task conflict that is mishandled or managed quickly can “morph” into relationship conflict, at which time it can become problematic and destructive.

**Primary interventions** by leader-facilitators:

- Remind team members of norms, rules, and meeting protocols, encouraging all team members to jointly enforce them.
✓ Use task conflicts as opportunities to teach the team about the importance of, and benefits associated with, productive conflict—and invite them to help you keep the problem-solving dialogue positive (e.g., strengths-based, solution-focused, blame-free, apart from personalities)
✓ Create sub-groups for comprehensive analysis of each task alternative, including barriers, constraints, facilitators, incentives, rewards, and potential for errors; and then explore, as needed, “win-win” alternatives for trying out more than one alternative
✓ Invest the time in “researching the problem” yourself and present your findings to the team
✓ Others?

3. Process Conflict

Process conflict involves disagreements and differences about how team will do its work. It especially involves key issues such as each member’s responsibilities and duties, delegation of responsibility (who should do what, when, where, to whom, how, and why).

☐ Process conflict is always possible when powerful, assertive members of the team try to dominate discussions and force their will on the team
☐ Process conflict also involves competing priorities and how to determine which ones are addressed first.
☐ Additionally, process conflicts accompany and stem from decisions about the allocation of resources, reporting procedures, and how to identify and publicize progress markers and success indicators.
☐ Perceptions and allegations of favoritism by team leader-facilitators also will stimulate process conflicts

☐ Primary interventions by leader-facilitators:
  ✓ Remind team members of norms, rules, and meeting protocols, encouraging all team members to jointly enforce them
  ✓ Develop a “parking lot” for every good idea or priority and return to it at every meeting so that no priority is lost and new ones can be added
  ✓ Help team members see the importance of early, immediate success in problem-solving; and choose initial priorities based on the criterion of quick, successful completion
  ✓ When powerful team members attempt to dominate dialogue, institute democratic participation techniques (e.g., turn taking, KIVA formats)
  ✓ Before each meeting and as the meeting draws to a conclusion, do “weather reports” on team process, obtaining members’ feedback on what needs to be done different and better and also what needs to be retained; and then implement these suggestions, asking members to accept shared responsibility for them.
✓ Consider enfranchising one or two powerful, vocal members as co-facilitators, reminding them that facilitators’ primary responsibility is to listen, clarify, and provide a focus and not to provide solutions and strong-arm preferences.

✓ Others?

4. Cognitive Conflict

Cognitive conflict involves differences in how team members think and talk. This fourth kind of conflict also involves differences in what members are prepared to accept as “valid, useful knowledge.”

1. Cognitive conflict is evident when members “talk past each other”, even though they may be using some of the same words.

2. Cognitive conflict stems in part from different frames of reference, also known as different “mental models” for a problem or a priority.

3. Language differences can be traced back to these different frames of reference or mental models.

4. Thus, one key to resolving and benefiting from cognitive conflicts, especially reaching agreements where possible and desirable, is to help members make explicit and testable their respective “mental models” for a problem or priority.

A Paradox with Task Conflict

Teams need to engage in task conflict as they survey all of the viable alternatives, while trying to avoid and prevent groupthink. At the same time, they need to reach some consensus on how to proceed without watering down the compromise solution(s).

Every team has “ebbs and flows” associated with this paradox. Mature teams come to expect them. They are resilient in the face of both task- and process-related challenges because they have experienced “break through” moments and expect more of the same imminently (after Jehn & Mannix, 2001).

☐ Primary interventions for leader-facilitators:

✓ Structure team meetings with a four component agenda:

1. Ask advocates representing different positions (mental models) and using different language to teach the others.

2. Provide opportunities for you and other team members to question what they’ve heard (in strengths-based, solution-focused, and blame-free language), asking these advocates if they have considered other ways to frame the problem and talk about it.
3. Give the entire team opportunities to help re-frame the problem or priority (using new mental models) and introducing new language

4. Seek consensus, where possible and appropriate, on mutually agreeable and beneficial changes to initial frames (mental models) and language
   - Have the entire team, or subgroups of the team, complete logic models for the problem or priority. Using sharing and reporting-out opportunities to develop agreements, including the agreement on “win-win” alternatives, i.e., more than one alternative is endorsed for implementation trials
   - Engage the team in evaluation planning for implementation, ensuring that the evaluation provides the team with feedback for their learning, development, and future planning.
   - Remind mature teams that they have encountered these conflicts before; that they have the know-how and capacity to address and benefit from them; and invite suggestions from team members regarding how they prefer to tackle this conflict.

Four Final Reminders

1. When the team’s mission, goals, and objectives are clear, compelling, rewarding, and achievable, encouraging member “buy in” and active engagement, the foundation is laid for team effectiveness and productive conflict resolution. Without this foundation, teams may have difficulty weathering conflict-rich “storms.”

2. Two or more conflicts may present themselves at the same time. Alternatively, they will nest in each other. Leader-facilitators should strive to gain clarity with the team on what kind of conflict is the top priority and engage them in addressing it productively.

3. No leader-facilitator can anticipate every kind of conflict and address it alone; collective responsibility and joint actions among team members are practical necessities.

4. Always be on the lookout for opportunities for innovation while addressing conflicts. Look for, capitalize on, publicize, and celebrate two kinds of innovations that originated with team conflicts:
   - **Process innovations**—new ways of operating and “doing business” such as new ways to communicate, new ways to complete required forms, new ways to transfer cases from one unit to another, new ways to supervise caseworkers
   - **Product innovations**—new fixtures (structures, outputs) in the team and the agency such as new reporting forms, new safety protocols, new practice models, new agency policies and rules.

Main References
Day 4
Unit Ten:

Summarizing, Integrating and Networking For Mutual Support, Technical Assistance, and Idea Exchanges

A. Networking and Establishing Formal Contacts

B. What Works and What Doesn’t With Design Teams

C. Duties and Competencies Of A Successful Facilitator

D. Overview of the Complexity of Design Team Development

E. Evaluation of the Two Day Training: A Plus-Delta Format
Unit Ten

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of Unit Ten, participants will:

- Identify, describe, and explain DT facilitators’ roles, responsibilities, and competencies
- Identifying conditions for success as well as conditions that threaten success, describing DT facilitators’ roles in maximizing success
- Raise lingering concerns and needs requiring additional training and coaching supports
- Establish contact procedures with the trainer(s) and other participants
- Provide an evaluative assessment of the two-day training
Unit Ten:

A. Networking And Establishing Formal Contacts

**PURPOSE**

- To ensure that all participants leave the training with a clear, feasible plan of how to begin their design team
- To reinforce networking among participants for future supports, technical assistance, and idea exchanges

**MATERIALS**

None

**TIME**

80 Minutes (for all 5 parts of unit 10)

**PROCESS**

Activity A: Networking and establishing formal contact procedures and opportunities:

1. Form groups of 3-4 persons:

2. Join with people it will be convenient for you to have a long term relationship with.

3. Develop plans to start a design team. This should include:
   - agency leadership that must buy into the design team process
     - set goal for meeting date to describe DT process
   - Identify steps you will need to take personally to initiate the design team up to the first meeting including target dates.
   - Use the provided worksheet to aid in this process.
   - Compare your plan with your support group and brainstorm any potential barriers and strategies to overcome these barriers.
   - As you meet your goals, email your trainer to let her know about your progress and any difficulties you may be having. The trainer can serve as a consultant in this process.
B. What Works and What Doesn’t With Design Teams

**PURPOSE**

- To ensure that all participants leave the training with a clear, feasible plan of how to begin their design team
- To ensure that participants have a comprehensive understanding of DT facilitator competencies
- To reinforce networking among participants for future supports, technical assistance, and idea exchanges

**MATERIALS**


**TIME**

As needed per trainee readiness

**PROCESS**

Activity B: Small group discussion, self-assessment, and mutual teaching and learning focused on what works and what doesn’t with implications for DT Facilitators

**NOTE TO TRAINER:** Make sure that you provide opportunities for “whole group” processing and question-answers on the following tool. Pay special attention to participants’ feelings or emotions about the prospect of doing DT facilitation.

Refer participants to Unit 10, Tool 1: “Six Examples of What Works and What Doesn’t with Design Teams: What Facilitators Can Do to Maximize Success” (See below).
Unit 10, Tool 1:

“Six Examples of What Works and What Doesn’t with Design Teams: What Facilitators Can Do to Maximize Success”

Ideal Versus Sub-optimal Condition 1

➢ When the DT is linked to top-level leadership and other members of the agency through timely, accurate, and momentum-generating communications, its potential is realized.

➢ In contrast, when the DT is viewed as a secret society, i.e., a special privilege enjoyed only by the few, and as a non-representative entity, it will fall short of its potential, and it may fail altogether.

Implications for DT Facilitators:

1. Ensure that you have established firm communications links and rules with the team and top-level leadership—and that they, in turn, have shared these links and rules with others in the agency so that everyone is “on the same page.”

2. Ensure that the team is truly representative of the diversity of the agency and includes approachable spokespersons and opinion leaders who are knowledgeable about turnover and retention.

Ideal Versus Sub-optimal Condition 2

➢ When top-level leaders are genuinely interested in listening and responding to the improvements teams prioritize, the DT intervention works.

➢ When leaders are not, the DT falls short.

Implications for DT Facilitators:

1. Ensure the commissioners and other top-level leaders understand that their responsiveness provides a timely, unique opportunity to “turn around” negative perceptions of them and their leadership.

2. When commissioners and other top-level leaders cannot implement the DT’s recommended improvements because of local, state, or federal regulations, seize this opportunity to improved understanding among leaders, the DT, and others in the agency by having the top-level leader explain these regulations and the constraints they impose to the team.
Ideal Versus Sub-optimal Condition 3

- When teams adhere to the norms, follow the rules, stay with meeting protocols, and use strengths-based, solution-focused, and blame-free language, DTs are effective and successful.
- When teams violate one or more of these requirements, they fall short of their potential, often creating more problems than they solve, and jeopardizing their continuation.

Implications for DT Facilitators:

1. *Address violations immediately and firmly with the team, re-emphasizing the potential threats and dangers; and communicate these violations (without naming the violators) to top-level leaders, warning them of possible consequences.*
2. *Re-emphasize shared responsibility and leadership for the DT and all it entails, asking others on the team to ensure that others stop violating the norms and rules.*
3. *Expect emotions to run high at any time as well as conflicts, many of which originate outside the team; and be ready to help manage and negotiate them.*

Ideal Versus Sub-optimal Condition 4

- When leaders, managers, and supervisors continue to cling to top-down, compliance-oriented, and punitive styles, the contributions of design teams will be limited.
- When participatory-democratic, commit-generating styles are substituted progressively, teams are allies, and mutual benefits accrue.

Implications for DT Facilitators:

1. *When leadership, management, and supervision styles clash with team processes and solutions, inform top-level leaders in a timely, constructive fashion.*
2. *Respond to requests from top-level leaders for consultations structured to align leadership, management, and supervision with DT recommendations and the workforce’s needs and wants for practices, norms and standards of professionalism.*
Ideal Versus Sub-optimal Condition 5

- When DT facilitation is skillful and competent, as evidenced by increasing social cohesion among team members and immediate successes in solving concrete problems, the team gains confidence and develops a “can do attitude”, which spread throughout the agency.

- When this facilitation is sub-optimal, and especially when teams take on priorities that may take months or years to implement, the team stalls, members become apathetic and commitments to the team wane.

Implications for DT Facilitators:

1. Get the DT focused immediately on solving a concrete, management turnover-retention problem, helping team members experience consensus and success.

2. Develop agreements among DT members on long-term priorities-needs, which belong in the team’s “parking lot”—i.e., these priorities and needs will be addressed later.

3. Capitalize on every opportunity that arises during retention-related problem-solving to build the “social side of the team”, helping diverse members work together and see new commonalties and similarities.

4. Complete and distribute in a timely fashion minutes from team meetings, providing reminders of progress and accomplishments. Revisit regularly prior team accomplishments to prevent perceptions that the DT is “all talk, no action, and does not make a difference.”

Ideal Versus Sub-optimal Condition 6

- When progress monitoring and “trouble shooting” procedures are prioritized before the DT is launched, impediments and constraints that arise during team formation and operation can be addressed in a productive manner—and in flight adjustments can be made.

- When these procedures are absent, predictable impediments and constraints threaten to derail the entire process, tarnishing the commissioner’s reputation.

Implications for DT Facilitators:

1. Develop agreements on trouble-shooting and barrier-busting procedures “up front” with top-level leaders; and follow up in a timely, constructive fashion as needed.
2. Continue to remind everyone that DTs are new; and also that, as with all new developments, mistakes will occur and "bumps in the road" will be encountered. By making these unforeseen incidents expected and even the norm, you are setting the stage for important individual, team, and organizational learning, development, and capacity building. These benefits will accrue if you have anticipated them and respond accordingly.
C. Duties And Competencies Of A Successful Facilitator

**PURPOSE**

- To ensure that participants have a comprehensive understanding of DT facilitator competencies
- To reinforce networking among participants for future supports, technical assistance, and idea exchanges

**MATERIALS**

Unit 10, Tool 2: “Duties and Competencies of a Successful Facilitator”

**TIME**

As needed per trainee readiness

**PROCESS**

Activity C: small group discussion, self-assessment, and mutual teaching and learning focused on the duties and competencies of DT facilitators

**[NOTE TO TRAINER:]** Make sure that you provide opportunities for “whole group” processing and question-answers on the following tool. Pay special attention to participants’ feelings or emotions about the prospect of doing DT facilitation.

Refer participants to Unit 10, Tool 2 “Duties and Competencies of a Successful Facilitator” (See below).
Unit 10, Tool 2
DUTIES AND COMPETENCIES OF A SUCCESSFUL FACILITATOR

Facilitators have six main duties:

1. To create a safe, secure, and supportive atmosphere conducive to team formation and effective functioning
2. To develop the team’s abilities to solve retention problems and meet retention needs
3. To serve, as needed, as an intermediary between teams and top level leaders
4. To help team members get input from co-workers and also to promote and spread good news from the team
5. To help secure whatever outside consultation, training, and technical assistance teams and top level leaders may require
6. To learn and develop expertise from their practice and as they practice through structured reflection.

Facilitators possess the following competencies, if not at the outset, then later, on the heels of DT facilitation experiences

- Clinical group work skills and abilities needed to develop and mobilize a true team.
- Group discussion and dialogue facilitation skills, including the assurance of strengths-based, solution-focused language and providing alternative frames of reference and new language for problem-solving.
- Listening skills and observational skills (hear what is not said as well as what is said—“reading between the lines” and interpreting non-verbal cues)
- Relationship-building and trust-developing skills and abilities.
- Ability to elicit and make public important heretofore “undiscussable” needs and problems that cause good workers to leave
- Ability to help team members use research findings and employ intervention logic in their problem-solving, as evidenced in the completion of sound logic models.
- Ability to help teams develop SMART goals and solutions.
- Ability to help the team implement solutions, ensuring that the team starts with a SMART goal that solves an urgent problem and meets team members’ needs.

(Nothing gives the group more momentum than the shared perception that they are accomplishing something important, that they are doing more than “meeting just to meet” and “loving the problem to death”)}
• Ability to **mediate conflicts**, developing whenever possible innovations from differences of perspective and opinion.

• Ability to **organize and mobilize team members** for collective action, ensuing follow-through after meetings and developing shared accountability for the team’s work.

• Ability to **summarize, synthesize, and report back** team progress and priorities at the end of each meeting and to follow up with a written summary before the next meeting.

• Ability to **summarize, synthesize, and report back** team progress and priorities at the end of each meeting and encompassing work that spans several meetings.

• Ability to demonstrate **empathy**, as evidenced in adaptability when team members’ emotions come into play during meetings

• Skill in **timing interventions** (an intervention too early may result in missed understanding, an intervention too late may result in a missed opportunity)

• Ability to ask exceptionally **good questions** at the correct times, especially questions that both make people think and make them feel challenged and supported rather than criticized

• Ability to make **good judgments** as to when to direct the group’s attention away from the task and toward learning

• **Avoid legislating and dictating** solutions while building team capacities for self-directed and sustaining work.

• **Capacity-building** with team members who may serve as facilitators when you leave
D. Overview of the Complexity of Design Team Development

**PURPOSE**

- To ensure that all participants leave the training with a clear, feasible plan of how to begin their design team
- To ensure that participants have a comprehensive understanding of DT facilitator competencies
- To reinforce networking among participants for future supports, technical assistance, and idea exchanges

**MATERIALS**

- Unit 10, Tool 3: “A Broad Overview of the Complexity of the Design Team Development”
- Unit 10, Tool 4: “Design and Improvement Team Accomplishments to Date”
- Unit 10, Tool 5: “Design Team Accomplishments and Progress Indicators”
- Unit 10, Tool 6: “A Third Design Team’s Accomplishments”
- Unit 10, Tool 7: “Successful Design Teams as Drivers for Complex Change”

**TIME**

As needed per trainee readiness

**PROCESS**

Activity D: small group discussion, self-assessment, and mutual teaching and learning focused on summary overview of the DT Model and Process
Refer participants to Unit 10, Tool 3: “A Broad Overview of the Complexity of the Design Team Development”
Also refer participants to Unit 10, Tools 4: “Design and Improvement Team Accomplishments to Date”

**Unit 10, Tool 4**

**DESIGN AND IMPROVEMENT TEAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE**

- Reviewed Recruitment and Retention information: surveys, personal interviews and reports.
- Identified and prioritized key areas for the team to focus on.
- Areas identified and strategic measures to address:

1. **Legal Unit, Filing of Petitions and Court Orders**
   - Conducted a Legal Process Review with outside consultant.
   - Added Office Manager and Paralegal to Legal Unit.
   - Initiated regular meetings between Legal Unit and Children’s Services Supervisors facilitated by Commissioner and/or Deputy Commissioner.
   - Developed a legal tracking system and forms.

2. **Safety and Security Issues**
   - Identified specific areas of concern.
   - Met with Commissioner to discuss concerns.
   - “John Smith” conducted a building safety and security assessment.
   - Safety and Security Training entitled “Personal Risk Management: Avoiding the Focus of Aggression” is scheduled for October 28 with two sessions being offered to all staff.
   - Currently looking at John Smith’s report to identify what can be accomplished immediately.
   - Safety in the field will be the next issue.

3. **Vicarious Trauma and Burnout**
   - “Compassion Fatigue” training offered to all staff on February 25, 2005.

4. **Professionalism**
   - Currently identifying “What is Professionalism?”
   - Currently identifying tangible behaviors with areas within the helm of professionalism.
   - The team will eventually do a in-service presentation to the Children’s Services staff on professionalism.

- A one day “retreat” is planned with the other agency cross functional team “New Directions” to share each team’s mission, goals and current actions to identify commonalities and avoid duplication of efforts.
Also, refer participants to Unit 10, Tool 5: “Design Team Accomplishments and Progress Indicators”

**Unit 10, Tool 5**

Design Team Accomplishments and Progress Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Action and Improvement</th>
<th>Identified Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job descriptions</strong></td>
<td>1. New Job descriptions were developed with input from caseworkers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency Climate/ Feedback mechanisms</strong></td>
<td>1. Design Team aided in assisted agency deal with harmful letter written by anonymous staff member. Developed a plan to manage and diffuse the toxic environment from “the letter”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Created plan and implemented it for workers to give positive feedback to each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Revise caseworker and supervisor evaluation process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Staff coffee hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dissemination of design team work throughout agency</strong></td>
<td>1. Obtained feedback from entire agency on progress and suggestions of next steps from staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Presentation of design team issues and engagement of greater staff members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Initiated suggestion box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training</strong></td>
<td>1. Vicarious Trauma training for all staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Consult with KBL for all staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentoring/ Supervision</strong></td>
<td>1. Shadowing Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Supervisory consults with outside expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Revise caseworker and supervisor evaluation process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Workers should begin to fill out self evaluation forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Revise staff evaluations to include more narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improving Casework Practice</strong></td>
<td>1. CPS Resource Manual being developed to aid caseworkers in understanding specific tasks pertaining to CPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Policy on how to transfer cases between units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Workspace</strong></td>
<td>1. Team and commissioner found space and computers needed for workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movement toward sustainability of Design Team</strong></td>
<td>1. Team took on co-facilitation with new outside member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Team identified new needs and possible new configuration of Design team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Also, refer participants to Unit 10, Tool 6: “A Third Design Team’s Accomplishments”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Action and Improvement</th>
<th>Identified Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issue of “Triage”</strong></td>
<td>Case practice issues have been reviewed and refined to increase efficiency. This is also still in progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-implementation of policies and lack of follow through on good ideas in agency / Buy-in from staff.</strong></td>
<td>KBL Consult occurred to address this. The county continues to work on a “100% Club.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crisis</strong></td>
<td>On-call manual was written and implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parking Issue</strong></td>
<td>Parking policy was revised and implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>On-call staffing</strong></td>
<td>On-call policy was revised and implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vicarious Trauma</strong></td>
<td>Vicarious trauma training occurred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administrative support</strong></td>
<td>Not addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caseload (need more workers)</strong></td>
<td>Case practice issues have been revised to increase efficiency. Case progress beyond 30 days is still in progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issues around client contact hours (quality and quantity of contacts):</strong></td>
<td>Case practice issues have been revised to increase efficiency. Case progress beyond 30 days is still in progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount of client contact hours was increased to reduce recidivism (CPS issue)</strong></td>
<td>Case practice issues have been revised to increase efficiency. Case progress beyond 30 days is still in progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In adult services, issue is that caseworkers reportedly do too much for clients</strong></td>
<td>Not addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No real accountability b/c no follow through on State requirements</strong></td>
<td>In progress via work on new policies and attempts to get more worker buy. Team make-up revisited and revised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone system:</td>
<td>Addressed but in progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No voice mail: need to consider unit-appropriate options.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some units have assigned “office day” to cover phones.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No system to screen calls.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Causes inter-office conflict.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor support</td>
<td>Addressed but in progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperwork:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• E.g. caseworker judgment calls made in the field.</td>
<td>Not addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Training and communication issue as well.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supervisors need support as well.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rewards for good casework; gift certificate, massage?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reduce UCR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Streamline Medicaid eligibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve <strong>county board’s understanding</strong> of what workers handle.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve <strong>short term parking</strong> situation. This is a <strong>safety issue</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If there are children in a county worker’s car, they need to be afforded</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safe escort into the building.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker internal and external safety.</td>
<td>Policies developed and implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of expectations for case practice before and after 30 days.</td>
<td>Polices developed and implemented. Case progress beyond 30 days still in progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for more date re: why workers leave.</td>
<td>Team participated in implementing new design team surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support by workers when they are overwhelmed with difficult cases and crises.</td>
<td>Initially, a daily morning meeting was implemented, but this did not continue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for critical incident debriefing team.</td>
<td>Team received information on what a CISM team does. No action taken at this time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues with process</td>
<td>Discussion but no action at this time, in progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recidivism</td>
<td>Discussion but no action at this time, in progress.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, the complexity of the DT model is depicted in Unit 10, Tool 7. This tool also indicates the new capacities developed via teams.
E. **Evaluation of the Two Day Training: A Plus-Delta Format**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To practice a format for Design Team Self-Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flipchart &amp; markers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As needed per trainee readiness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Activity E: Evaluation of the Training: A Plus-Delta Format**
*(Evaluation is encouraged at the end of every training day)*

Trainer audits with whole group:
- Things we did successfully
- Areas for improvement
- Things we did not cover and need to cover in the future