

(RE)SETTING THE TABLE FOR GENERATIVE THINKING

Sara A. Peterson, JD, Management Consultant



THREE SESSIONS

Demystifying Generative Governance

12–12:30 pm, Monday, Regency T

Challenging the Notion of "Efficient" Meetings

11–11:30 am, Tue, Regency T

(Re)Setting the Table for Generative Thinking

10–10:30 am, Wed, Regency T

- Principles of decision making,
*how we focus and
signal change*
- Revising agendas, packets, roles
and responsibilities, technology,
room sets, and more.
- Reflecting on key decisions

(RE)SETTING THE TABLE FOR GENERATIVE THINKING

Look at your meetings
Which parts help or
hinder deep discussion
on complex issues?

Are there simple
changes you can make?

1. Room Set up & Seating
2. Scheduling
3. Agendas & Materials
4. Minutes & Documentation
5. Roles & Responsibilities
6. Technology & Virtual Participation

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WHAT IS THE GOAL?

CONSEQUENTIAL GOVERNANCE

FRAMING THE PROBLEM TO SOLVE

- **Bringing GENERATIVE thinking to**
 - Fiduciary duties
 - Strategic direction
 - Organizational learning and insight
- **Effectively, efficiently achieve mission**
- **Maybe you want to**
 - Get un-stuck, over a hump; fix dysfunction
 - Orient and integrate a new member
 - Tackle a novel discussion or topic

**principled
leadership**
**durable,
clearly defined
decisions**

FOCUS !

LOOK BACK
Reflect, Analyze, Learn

RIGHT NOW
Scan, Experiment, & Clarify

LOOK AHEAD
Anticipate & Strategize

FIND & FRAME

FOCUS

What we need...

TIME
to think and discuss

SPACE
to explore and play

PERMISSION
to question and change

Free from
~~DISTRACTIONS~~

SIGNAL CHANGE FOR THE GROUP & YOUR OWN MIND

- Explicit and implicit
- Physical and mental space
- Personal and group
- Format and formality
- Timing and environment
- Habits and distractions

What helps or hinders:

- Deep discussion of complex topics
- Thoughtful decision-making
- Group dynamics

Are you trying to:

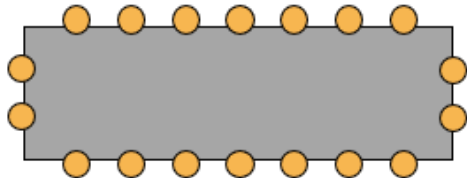
- Break a habit; get un-stuck
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LET'S DIVE IN

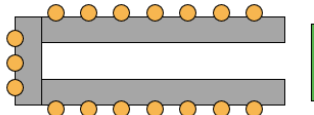
1. ROOMS

TYPICAL SET UPS

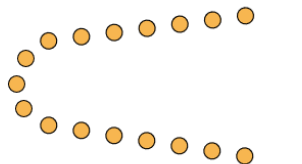
Boardroom



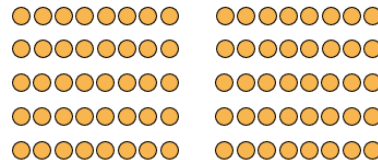
U-Shape with tables



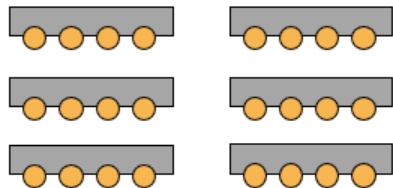
U-Shape without tables



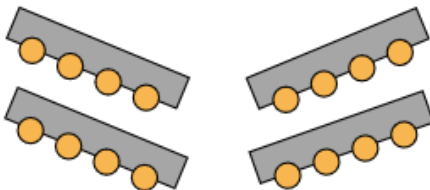
Auditorium



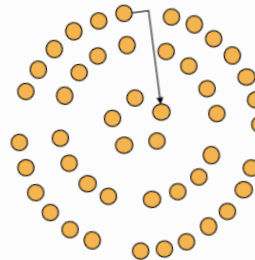
Classroom



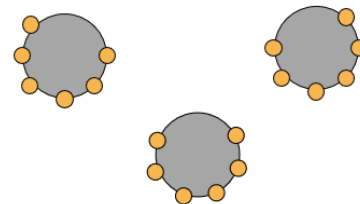
Chevron



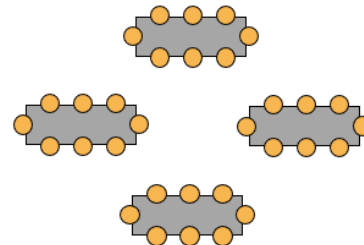
Fishbowl



Crescent (Half) Rounds



Team tables



<https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/room-setup/>

CONSIDERATIONS

- **Power / Authority**
 - Implied or explicit hierarchy
 - Formality / informality
- **Access / Interaction / Engagement**
 - Lighting (sun?), sound
 - Sight lines, acoustics
 - Distractions (hiding?)
- **Comfort**
 - Personal space
 - Relationships, tensions
 - Temperature etc.

What helps or hinders:

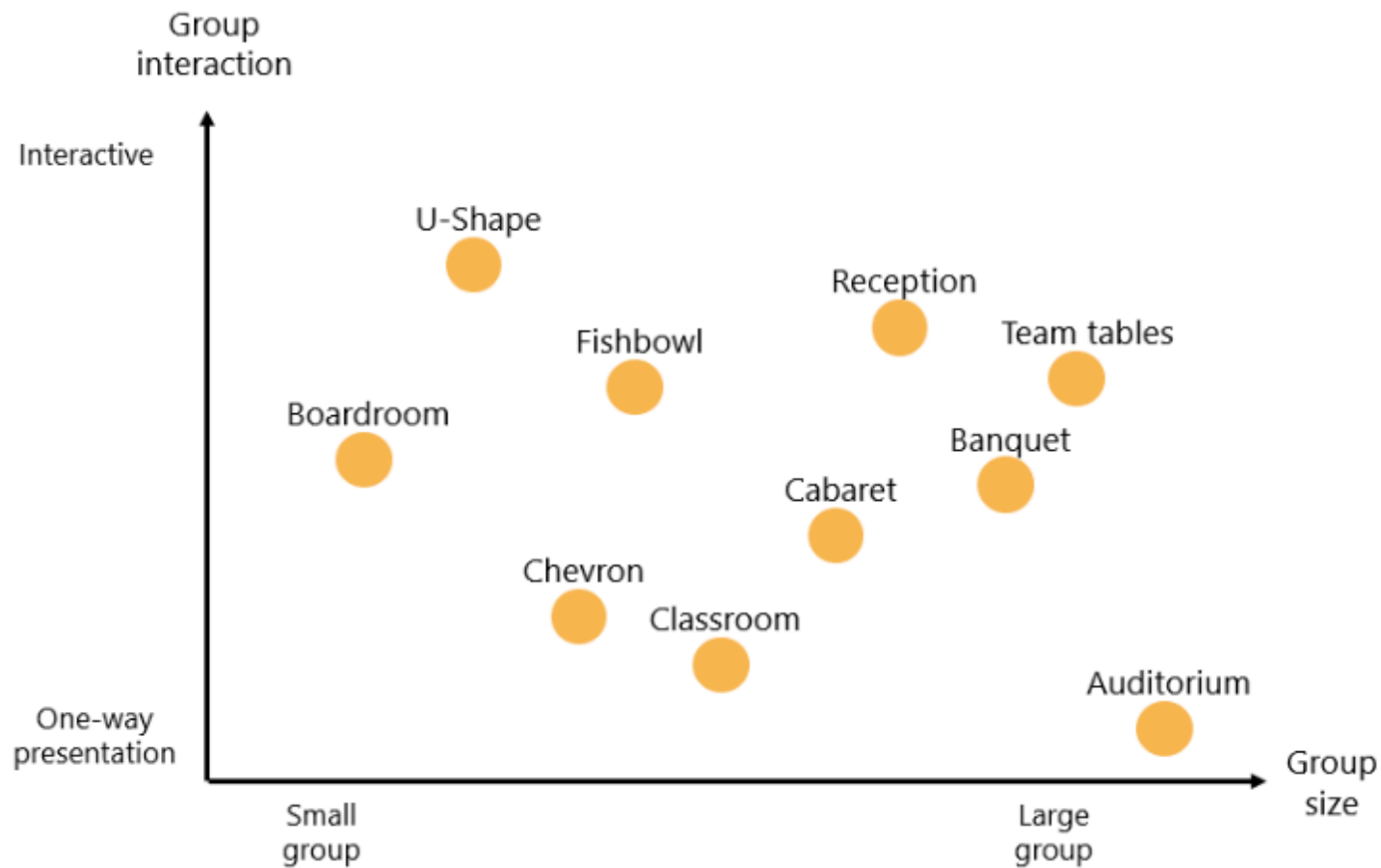
- Deep discussion of complex topics
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- Group dynamics

Are you trying to:

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WHAT KIND OF
CONVERSATION
WILL EACH
TABLE HAVE?





NEXT UP

2. SCHEDULING

CONSIDERATIONS

- **Scheduling Variables**

- Time of day
- Day of week
- Meeting duration
- BREAKS!

- **Influences**

- Science
- Travel distance
- Meeting frequency
- Time competition, over-boarding
- Work cycles “back home”
- Settling in / checking out

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TIMING MATTERS

- Insights “a-has” = opposite your peak
- Willpower is finite
- Creative writing is early, analysis later
- Hospital mistakes rise after noon
- Most accurate decisions 8 am – 1pm

<https://science.howstuffworks.com/life/inside-the-mind/human-brain/whens-the-best-time-day-make-a-decision.htm>

...our best performance on challenging, attention-demanding tasks - like studying in the midst of distraction - occurs at our peak time of day. When we operate at our optimal time of day, we filter out the distractions in our world and get down to business.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/your-best-creative-time-not-when-you-think/>

Larks, Owls and 'Third Birds'

Scribe by COGNITIVE
www.wearecognitive.com

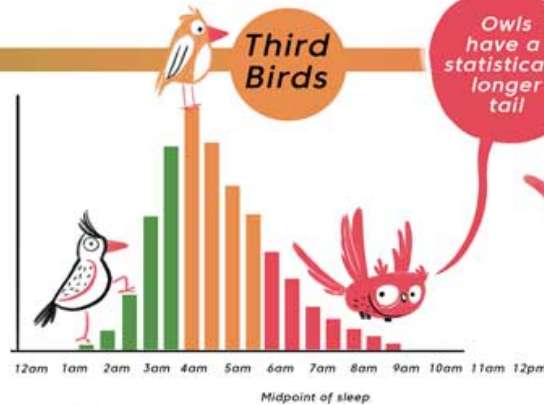
Larks

Larks are:

- Introverted
- Conscientious
- Agreeable
- Persistent
- Emotionally stable



Third Birds



Owls have a statistically longer tail

Owls



Owls are:

25%
Solid Evening Types

- Open
- Extrovert
- Neurotic
- Impulsive
- Sensation-seeking

Over 60s become earlier chronotypes

Children are Larks

Teenagers morph into Owls

Owliness peak at 22 years old

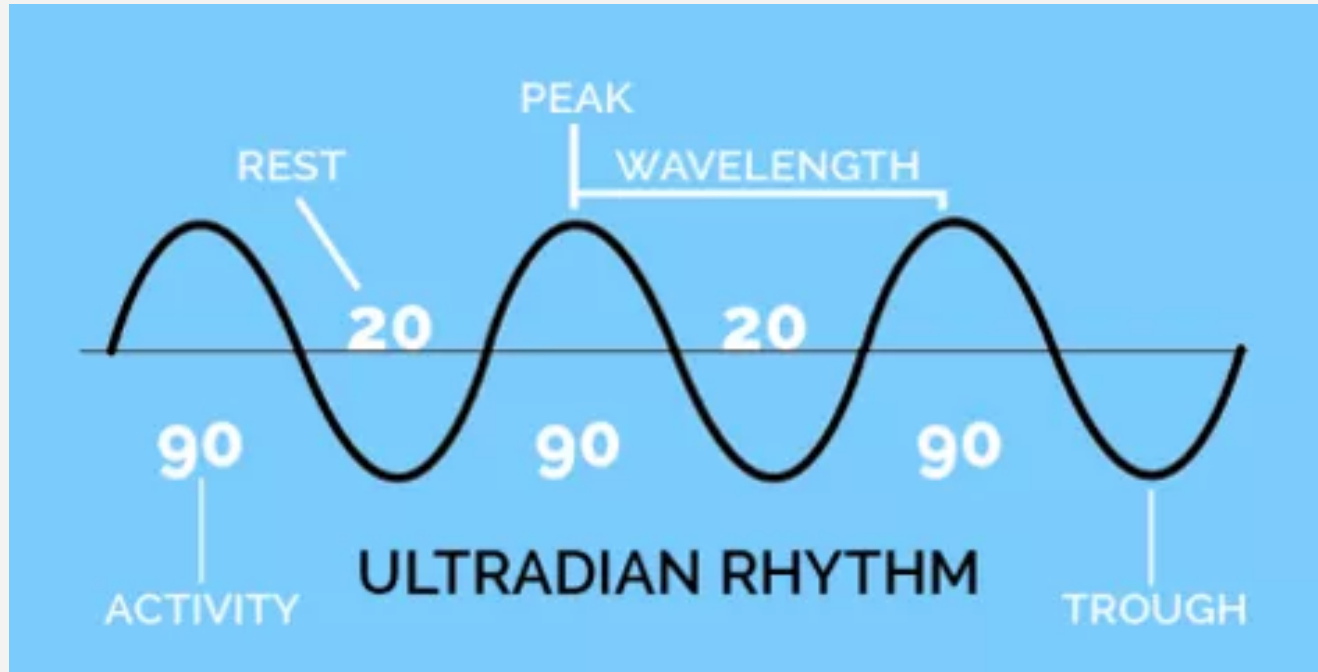
Some revert back to being Larks in their 20s

Sourced from:

When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing by Daniel H. Pink – Out now! DanPink.com

ULTRADIAN RHYTHM

CYCLE REPEATED THROUGHOUT 24-HOUR DAY



Nathan Kleitman

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ultradian_rhythm

<https://www.fastcompany.com/3013188/why-you-need-to-unplug-every-90-minutes>

'Restorative Breaks' Test results improve if we take regular breaks

Scribe by COGNITIVE
www.wearecognitive.com

Taking a test after a **TWENTY TO THIRTY MINUTE BREAK** produces scores that are **EQUIVALENT TO**:

- Spending three additional weeks at school per year
- Having wealthier and better-educated parents

Francesca Gino



Harvard Business School

If there were a **BREAK** after **EVERY HOUR**, test **SCORES** would actually **IMPROVE** over the course of the day

When scheduling tests, think about **COGNITIVE FATIGUE** and **PLAN TESTS** as closely **AFTER BREAKS** as possible

Sourced from:

When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing by Daniel H. Pink – Out now! DanPink.com

HIGHER TEST SCORES

LOWER TEST SCORES

Taking the same test in the afternoon **WITHOUT A BREAK** produces scores that are **EQUIVALENT TO**:

- Spending less time in school per year
- Having parents with lower incomes and less education

HOW and **WHAT** are we teaching them?

Many younger students **UNDERPERFORM** during the **TROUGH**. This leads to an inaccurate sense of progress from teachers and administrators

CONSIDERATIONS

- **Scheduling Variables**

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THIRD UP

AGENDAS & MATERIALS

TROWER PRE/POST

Board Development Committee

- Update item
- Actions:
 - Re-elect directors
 - Nominate officers slate
 - Re-elect advisory board members
 - Nominate new directors

Trower, Cathy A.. The Practitioner's Guide to Governance as Leadership

Action: Nominate new directors

Discussion and possible action: It is the recommendation of the Bylaws Committee that the board develop and adopt a member description.

The new bylaws will describe board service generally and will rely on a member description that articulates expectations and responsibilities of board service.

The Committee recommends the attached “Member Description.” Having reviewed the draft member description, what changes (if any) should be considered?

CONSIDERATIONS

- **Adjustments**

- Discussions v. reports
- Catalytic and “So What” questions

- **Tools**

- Consent agenda
- Pre-reading
- Silent starts
- Counterfactuals

- **Speaking of reports...**

- Data
- Knowledge
- Insight

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A HERETICAL SIDEBAR

Ummm, what about...

Um, you know...

Robert's Rules?

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NEXT...
4. MINUTES ETC.

CONSIDERATIONS

- **How would you answer?**

I can:

- Understand even when absent
- Easily find past decisions by topic
- Follow board thinking over time
- Easily access history, values, principles, thinking...

- **Some suggestions, if not**

- Motion/action logs
- Change logs
- Topically compilations
- Policy manuals v. one-offs

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NEXT...

5. ROLES

DIVERSITY

— That Builds A —

CULTURE OF INQUIRY

THE COACH



THE FACILITATOR



THE CALLER



THE OBSERVER



THE
REFRAMER



THE
ANALYST



THE HEALTHY
SKEPTIC



THE
SYNTHESIZER



LASTLY...

6. TECH/VIRTUAL

CONSIDERATIONS

- Everything regarding rooms applies
- **Distraction is the enemy**
 - Multitasking is a fantasy
 - Conference calls = multitasking
 - Video is way better (but imperfect)
- **Think critically about**
 - PowerPoint
 - Laptops & Tablets
 - Cell Phones & Internet
 - How meeting timing affects everything

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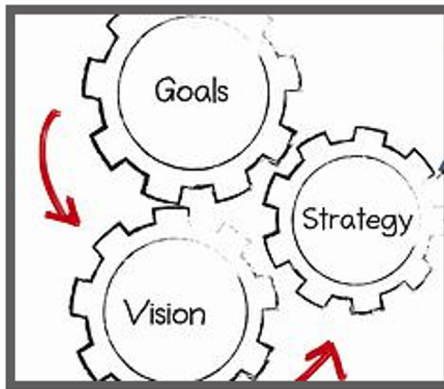
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