

Top-Down Network Design

Chapter One

Analyzing Business Goals and Constraints

Top-Down Network Design

- Network design should be a complete process that matches business needs to available technology to deliver a system that will maximize an organization's success.
 - In the LAN area it is more than just buying a few devices.
 - In the WAN area it is more than just calling the phone company.

Start at the Top

- Don't just start connecting the dots.
- Analyze business and technical goals first.
- Explore divisional and group structures to find out who the network serves and where they reside.
- Determine what applications will run on the network and how those applications behave on a network.
- Focus on Layer 7 and above first.

Layers of the OSI Model

Layer 7

Application

Layer 6

Presentation

Layer 5

Session

Layer 4

Transport

Layer 3

Network

Layer 2

Data Link

Layer 1

Physical

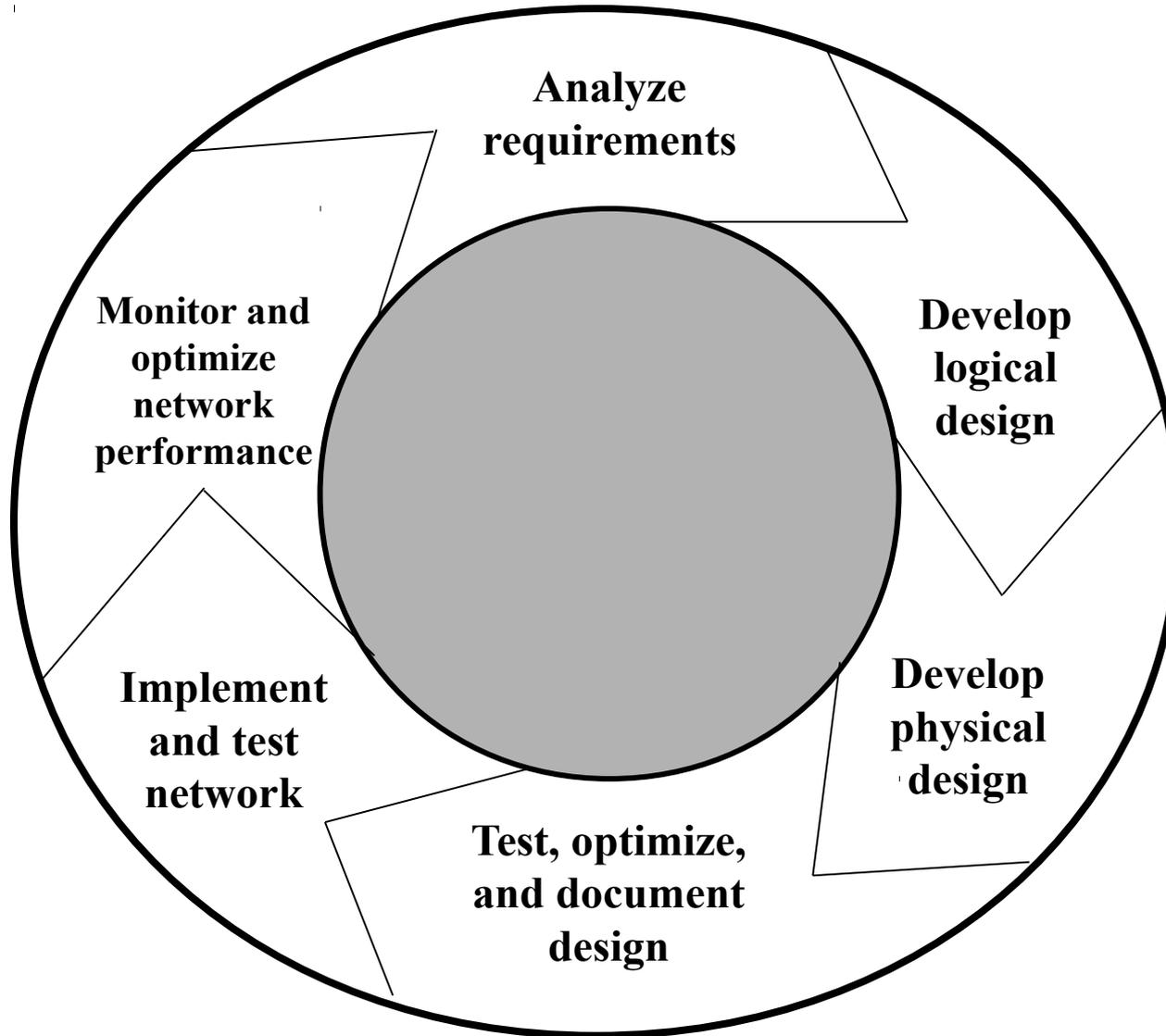
Structured Design

- A focus is placed on understanding data flow, data types, and processes that access or change the data.
- A focus is placed on understanding the location and needs of user communities that access or change data and processes.
- Several techniques and models can be used to characterize the existing system, new user requirements, and a structure for the future system.
- A logical model is developed before the physical model.
 - The logical model represents the basic building blocks, divided by function, and the structure of the system.
 - The physical model represents devices and specific technologies and implementations.

Systems Development Life Cycles

- SDLC: Does it mean Synchronous Data Link Control or Systems Development Life Cycle?
- The latter for the purposes of this class!
- Typical systems are developed and continue to exist over a period of time, often called a systems development life cycle (SDLC).

Top-Down Network Design Steps



Network Design Steps

- Phase 1 – Analyze Requirements
 - Analyze business goals and constraints
 - Analyze technical goals and tradeoffs
 - Characterize the existing network
 - Characterize network traffic

Network Design Steps

- Phase 2 – Logical Network Design
 - Design a network topology
 - Design models for addressing and naming
 - Select switching and routing protocols
 - Develop network security strategies
 - Develop network management strategies

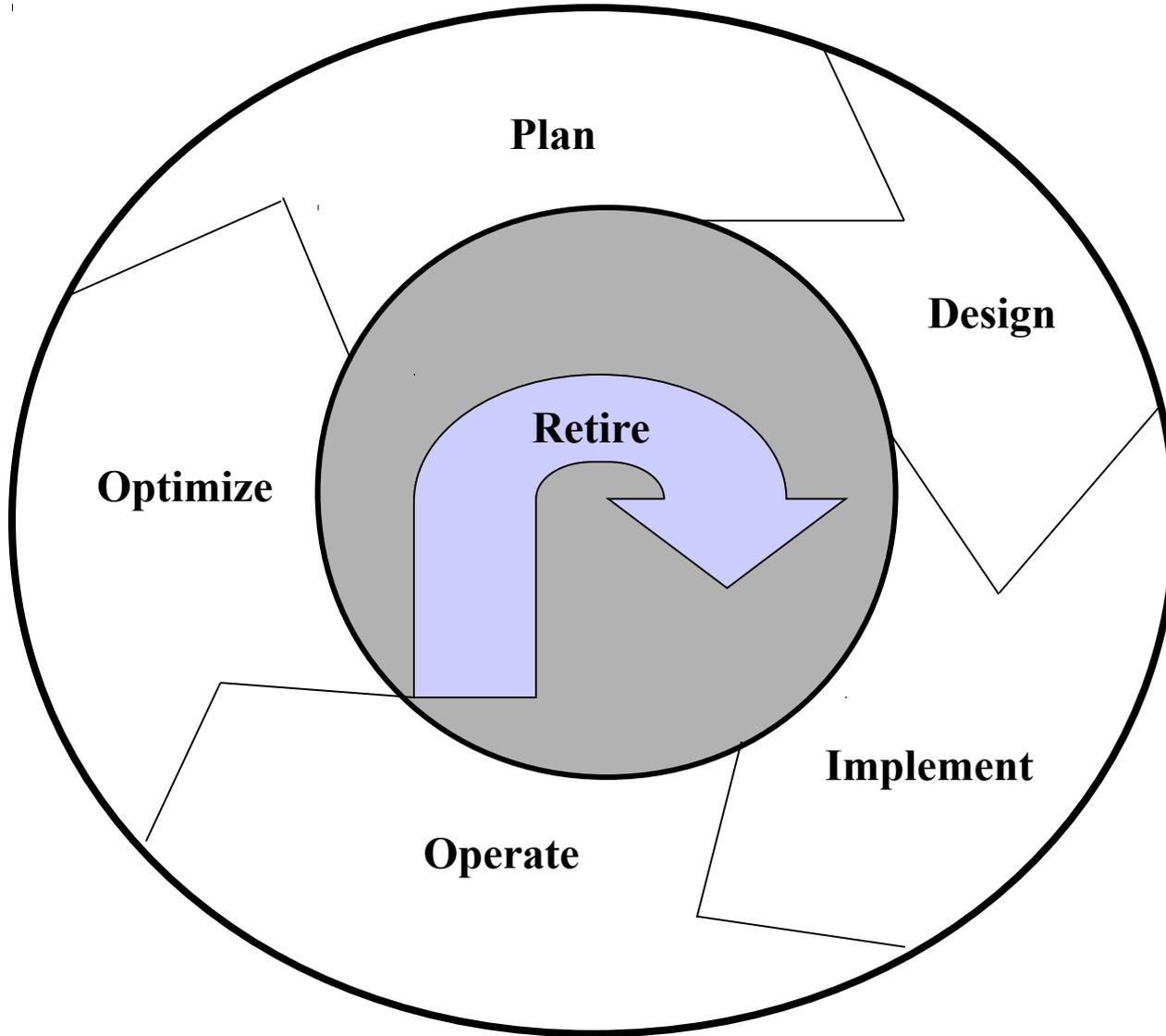
Network Design Steps

- Phase 3 – Physical Network Design
 - Select technologies and devices for campus networks
 - Select technologies and devices for enterprise networks

Network Design Steps

- Phase 4 – Testing, Optimizing, and Documenting the Network Design
 - Test the network design
 - Optimize the network design
 - Document the network design

The PDIOO Network Life Cycle



Business Goals

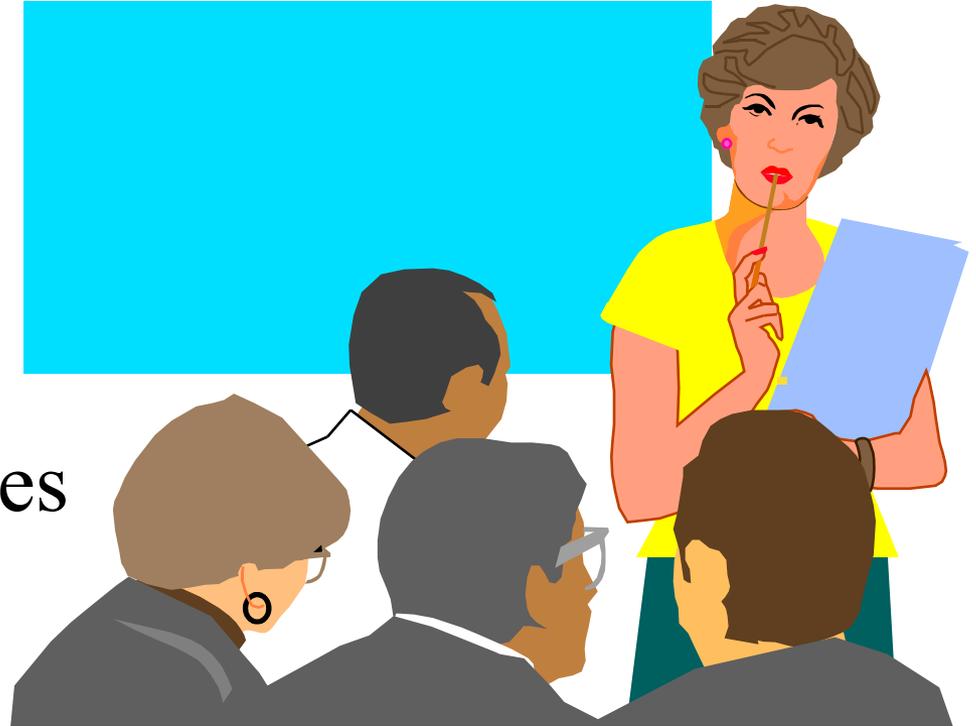
- Increase revenue
- Reduce operating costs
- Improve communications
- Shorten product development cycle
- Expand into worldwide markets
- Build partnerships with other companies
- Offer better customer support or new customer services

Recent Business Priorities

- Mobility
- Security
- Resiliency (fault tolerance)
- Business continuity after a disaster
- Network projects must be prioritized based on fiscal goals
- Networks must offer the low delay required for real-time applications such as VoIP

Business Constraints

- Budget
- Staffing
- Schedule
- Politics and policies



Collect Information Before the First Meeting

- Before meeting with the client, whether internal or external, collect some basic business-related information
- Such as
 - Products produced/Services supplied
 - Financial viability
 - Customers, suppliers, competitors
 - Competitive advantage

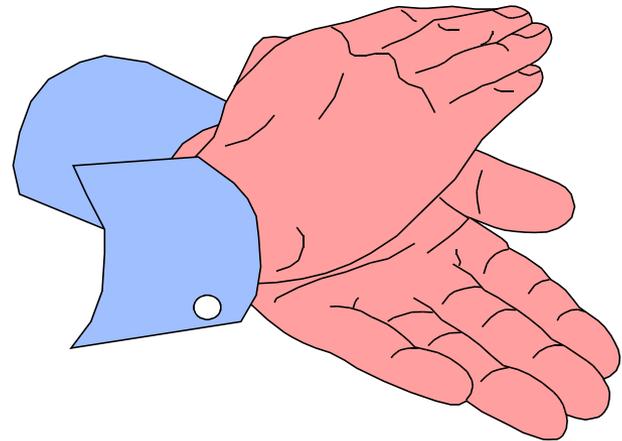
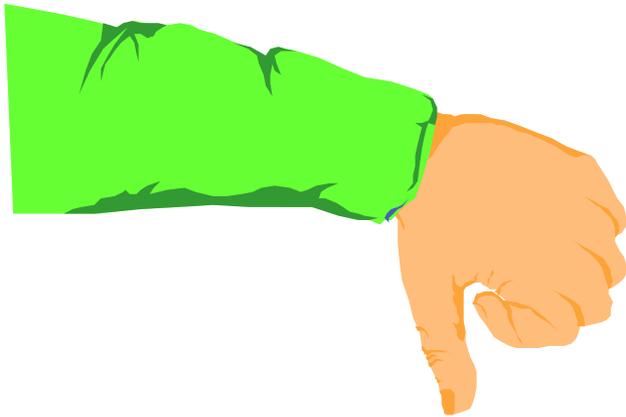
Meet With the Customer

- Try to get
 - A concise statement of the goals of the project
 - What problem are they trying to solve?
 - How will new technology help them be more successful in their business?
 - What must happen for the project to succeed?

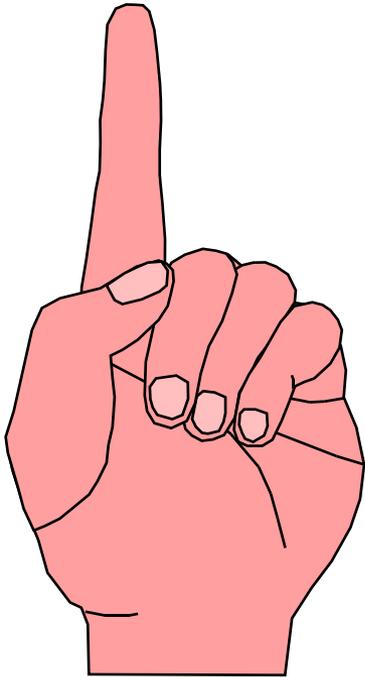


Meet With the Customer

- What will happen if the project is a failure?
 - Is this a critical business function?
 - Is this project visible to upper management?
 - Who's on your side?



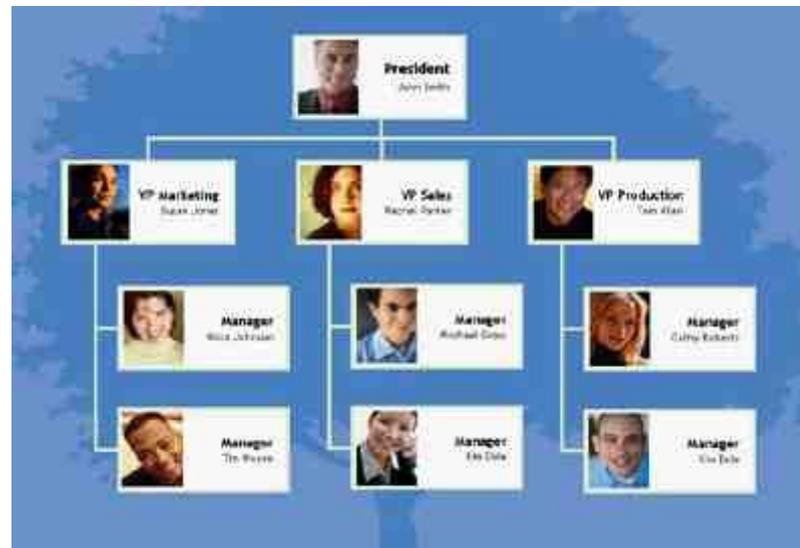
Meet With the Customer



- Discover any biases
 - For example
 - Will they only use certain company's products?
 - Do they avoid certain technologies?
 - Do the data people look down on the voice people or vice versa?
 - Talk to the technical and management staff

Meet With the Customer

- Get a copy of the organization chart
 - This will show the general structure of the organization
 - It will suggest users to account for
 - It will suggest geographical locations to account for



Meet With the Customer

- Get a copy of the security policy
 - How does the policy affect the new design?
 - How does the new design affect the policy?
 - Is the policy so strict that you (the network designer) won't be able to do your job?
- Start cataloging network assets that security should protect
 - Hardware, software, applications, and data
 - Less obvious, but still important, intellectual property, trade secrets, and a company's reputation

The Scope of the Design Project

- Small in scope?
 - Allow sales people to access network via a VPN
- Large in scope?
 - An entire redesign of an enterprise network
- Use the OSI model to clarify the scope
 - New financial reporting application versus new routing protocol versus new data link (wireless, for example)
- Does the scope fit the budget, capabilities of staff and consultants, schedule?

Gather More Detailed Information

- Applications
 - Now and after the project is completed
 - Include both productivity applications and system management applications
- User communities
- Data stores
- Protocols
- Current logical and physical architecture
- Current performance

Network Applications

Name of Application	Type of Application	New Application?	Criticality	Comments

Summary

- Systematic approach
- Focus first on business requirements and constraints, and applications
- Gain an understanding of the customer's corporate structure
- Gain an understanding of the customer's business style

Review Questions

- What are the main phases of network design per the top-down network design approach?
- What are the main phases of network design per the PDIOO approach?
- Why is it important to understand your customer's business style?
- What are some typical business goals for organizations today?