



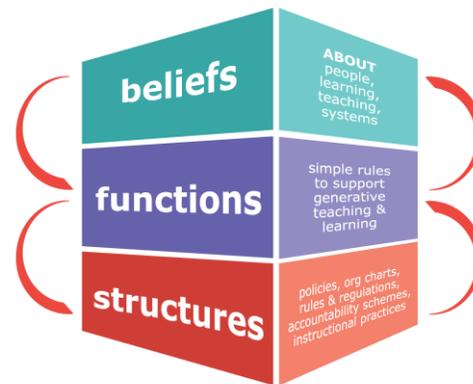
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## Architectural Model

### Description of Architectural Model

The Architectural Model is designed to help you visualize coherence and alignment across scales in your system. It ensures that the organizational and operational structures you establish provide the greatest fit between what you do, how you work, and what you hold to be true.

### — Architectural Model —



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### What?

Using the Architectural Model you name what you believe and know to be true about the work you do. You identify the Simple Rules that help you function in alignment with what you know and believe. Then you establish organizational and operational structures that support your work, communications, decision making, and accountability across the system.

### So What?

In the complexity of today's world, organizations set themselves up with the structures and relationships that have worked in the past. Often no one questions why processes and procedures are established as they are. Organizational, community, and cultural systems and structures work according to a blueprint that was designed and valued for a simpler time. In a complex system, coherence across scale and location is more difficult than in the past. Shared understanding of the work to be done and the expectations or culture for accomplishing that work creates clarity and transparency. It ensures system-wide alignment, informs coherence in near- and far-horizon decisions, and empowers individuals and groups to make decisions that "fit" system patterns.

Nothing is intractable.

## Now What?

Use the Architectural Model in your next sticky issue to:

- ▶ Clarify what you believe and know to be true about the work you do.
- ▶ Identify a short list of Simple Rules that shape patterns of decision making and action to support those beliefs and truths.
- ▶ Establish expectations and processes to build adaptive capacity to support those system-wide patterns.



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### What is the Purpose of Architectural Model?

In HSD we consider the alignment of what we believe with how we work together and the ways we support that work. This alignment is important whether we need to explore new ways of working together or when we want to examine what currently exists.

In building a home or office space, the purpose a room will serve (its function) sets the parameters for the structures that create that space. Form (structure) follows function (purpose). There should be a similar alignment in organizations.

Operational and functional structures and constructs that shape the work should align with what we believe and how we live out those beliefs.

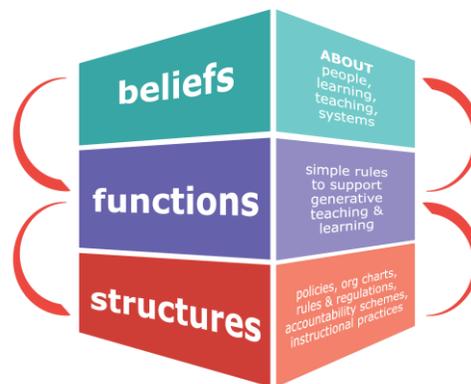
Complex systems require organizational structures that allow us to operate in adaptive and responsive ways, according to the work we have to do and according to what we believe about the work we have to do. So we take the "Form follows function" saying to the next level: "Form follows function, which flows from what we believe to be important."

### So What Can the Architectural Model Show You?

The architectural model invites you to dialogue about the following questions:

1. **What do we believe about our work?** Beliefs can be tricky to talk about. Using this model does not call for extended word-smithing about flowery belief statements. Just get clear about the basic beliefs or assumptions you carry about your work. What do you believe or value about customer service? What do you know from research about what constitutes effective practice? What do you consider to be important about how you treat people and get your work done?

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2. **How do you need to act to live out your beliefs?** Belief statements are only of value if they lead to action. So it's important to move from the discussion of what you believe about your work to a discussion of what that means about how you function together to live out those beliefs. This is one reason HSD Associates work with groups to identify their Simple Rules\*, brief, generalizable action statements that inform interactions and decision making to build coherent patterns across the whole.
3. **What organizational structures, constructs, and connections will allow you to act in those ways?** A functioning system is made up of different types of structures that work interdependently to support you as you do your work. When thinking about structures in a system, think about 1) the content and process of the work you do; 2) the ways you share resources and information; 3) how and by whom decisions get made; and 4) who is accountable for what and how you hold each other accountable.

## Now What Can the Architectural Model Do to Build Coherence in Your System?

Step into the Architectural Model; use it to examine the structures in your system. What alignment(s) do you find? Where might you shift your current structures or establish new ones that help you act in ways that let you live out what you believe about the work you have committed to do?

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\* For more information, visit [www.hsdinstitute.org](http://www.hsdinstitute.org).