



2013

Plan D – Finding design solutions

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Suggested citation:

Korjan, Dinesh (2013) Plan D – Finding design solutions. In: Relating Systems Thinking and Design 2013 Symposium Proceedings, 9-11 Oct 2013, Oslo, Norway. Available at <http://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/2185/>

Plan . D

....finding **design** solutions

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How should **design** deal with
problems of the real world?

Should it?

Design is purpose led. It is intentional. There is always **creation** involved. The act, invariably, imparts **newness** and **elegance** to the created.

Which when set forth into the
real world creates its own
repercussions / consequences
by

Re-aligning the complex forces
and **connections** between the
components of the problem /
situation and changing it for
for better or worse.

This is '**systems**' territory - and can be approached from **both** ends. The complex fuzzy end of the 'problem state' and the seemingly innocent end of creating a product.

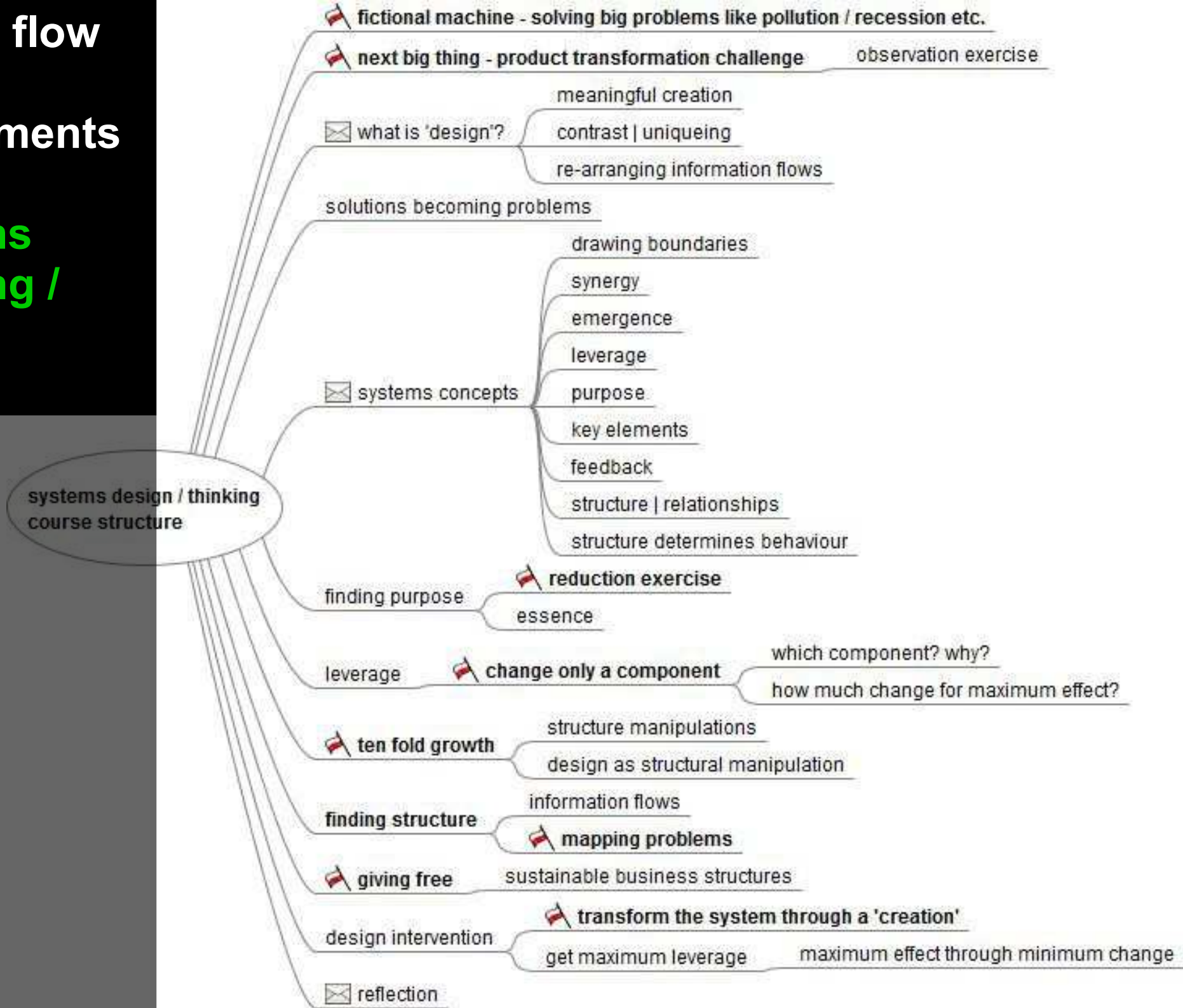
Both journeys help find the **structure** of the problem state and bring about a significant transformation - if design can be practiced at a '**leverage point**'.

Key stages in these journeys would include:

- Finding purpose
- Mapping main components
- Mapping the feedback loops that cause observable behaviour / symptoms,
- Imagining 'what-if' scenarios and
- Identifying the leverage points that could transform the state.

Examples...from two courses
taught at various design
schools in India.

Typical flow of assignments in the Systems Thinking / Design course



Making sense through ...



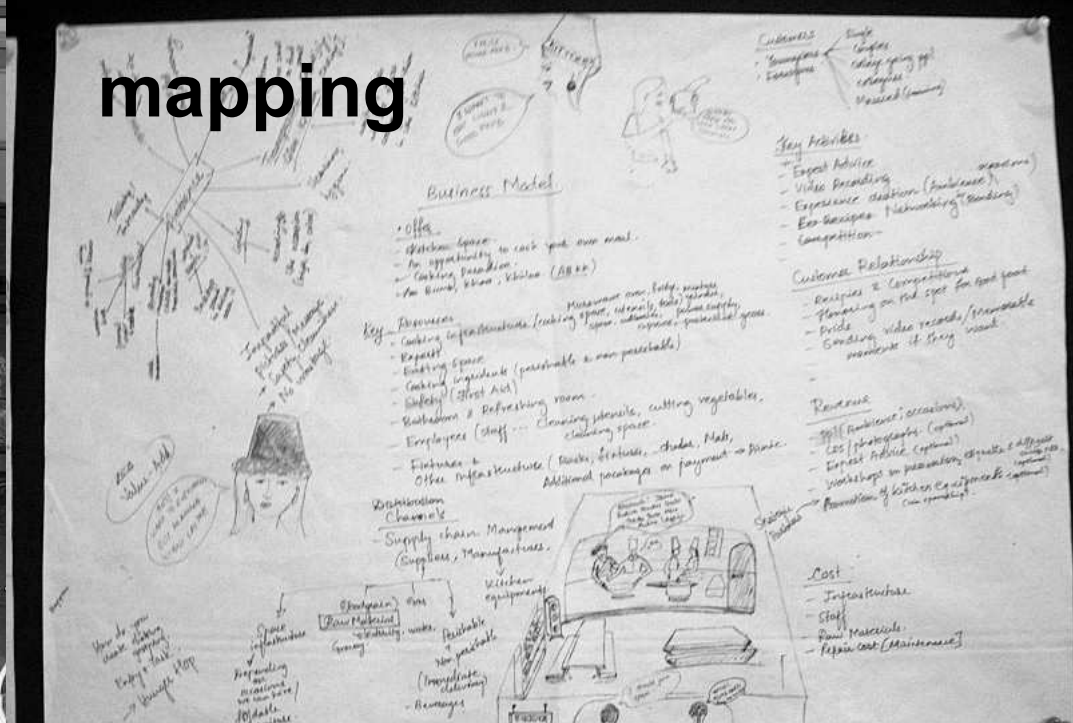
doing



enacting

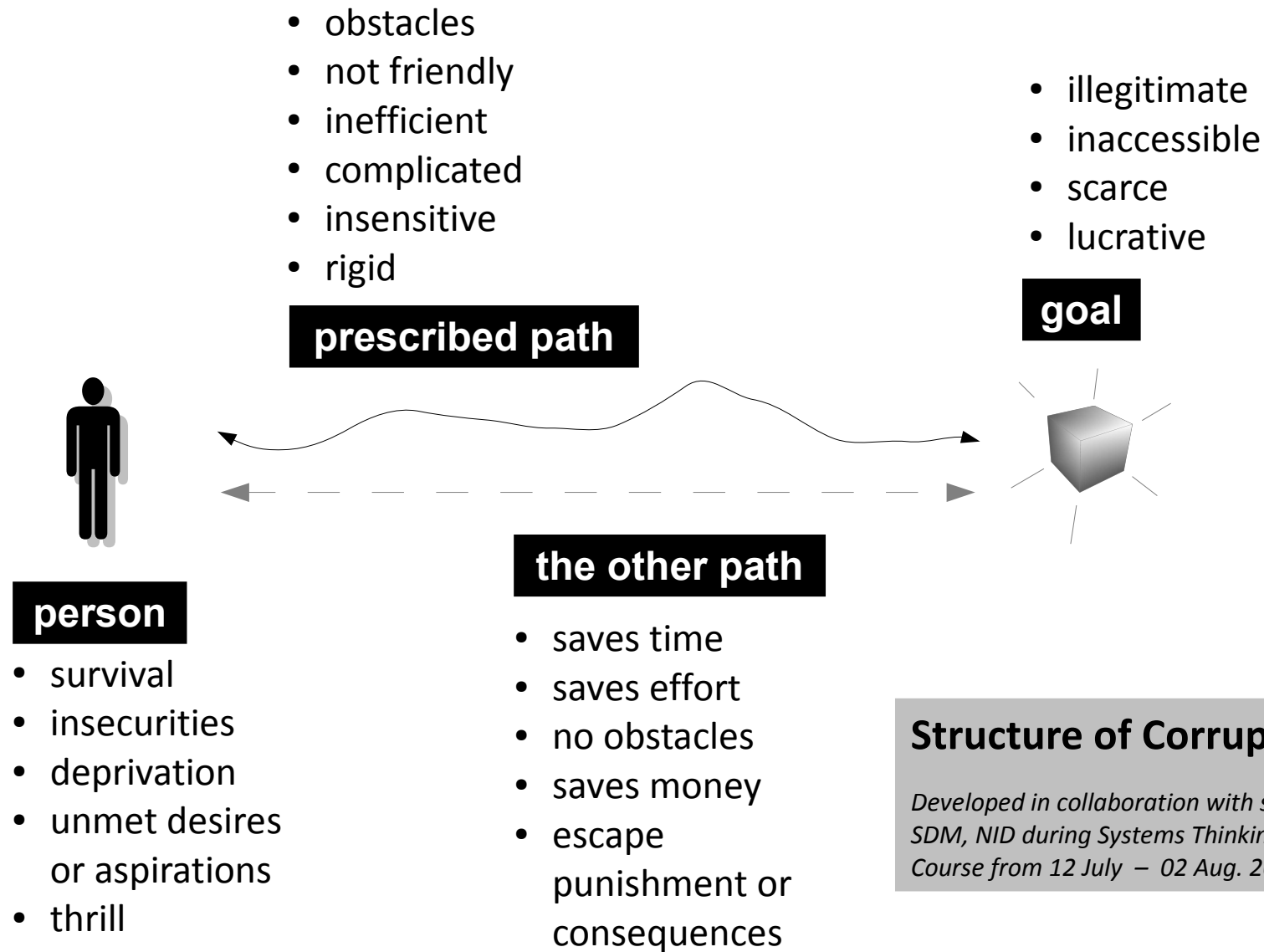


picturising



mapping

The conditions that could lead a person to choose the **wrong** path?



Example of a 'structure' developed in class as applied in...

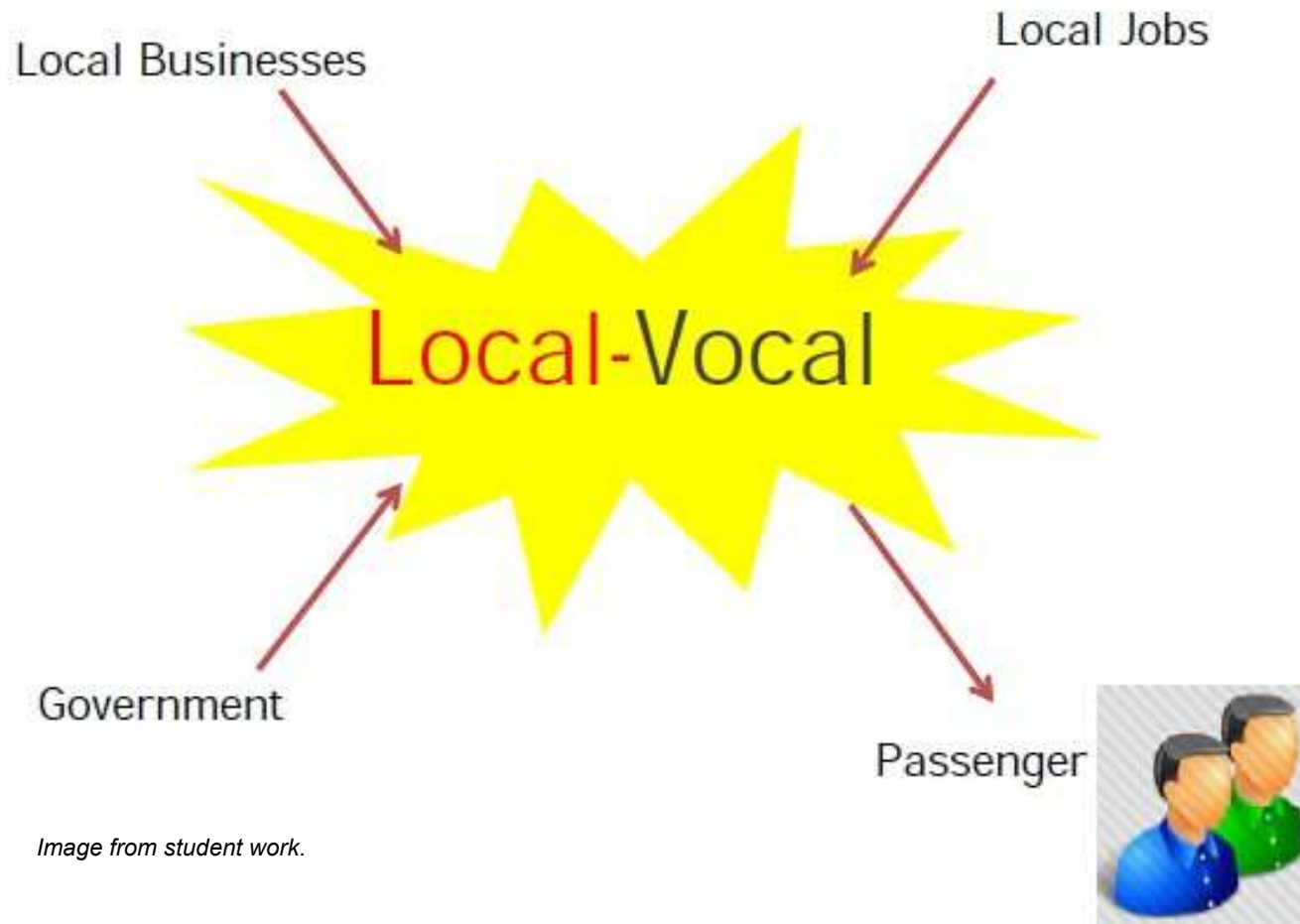


Solving the ticket less travel problem in Mumbai local trains.

The Suburban Railways network loses about Eight hundred thousand Rupees (unverified figure) everyday due to ticket less travel.

How should one tackle this?

- Prescribe severe punishment?
- Increase checking points and frequency?
- Reduce bottlenecks in ticket purchase?



The solution? - A redesigned **ticket** that is also a **lottery ticket!** And also a medium for low cost advertising for and by the commuters – household help, electrician etc.

**Ticket no.
00035467901
is the winner
of Rs. 25,000!
in today's
draw (07 Aug.
2013)**



Front



Image from student work.

(The compliance level could far exceed the prize money.
Passengers might even buy more than one ticket :)

*low
spending*

→ low
demand

less
income

less
production

*Design a new
business?*

Recession is a self sustaining entity, as in a downturn the uncertainty induces one to conserve and spend less. This 'low spending' leads to 'low demand' and therefore 'less production' which leads to 'less income' and therefore 'low demand' again.



Amongst the small businesses developed, one of them was a **Kitchen Restaurant**. A restaurant where a group of friends could go and cook together. Where the ingredients are readily available and you don't have to do the dishes. Plus it is cheaper to go to as you are the chef!

Even small can be big! At the other end, students who were being initiated into design were also led towards discovering the systemic implications of their creations as a final challenge to test their learning.


Typical flow of assignments in the Design Processes course





*Vaishali Jain
Arch Academy of Design
Jaipur*

Challenged to find a way to transform the world by redesigning a paperweight, Vaishali filled balloons with clay making it a sensual squeezable thingy that one could play with and get de-stressed when it is not keeping papers from flying. Less stressed out people in the world is a better world.



*Sakshi Jain
Arch Academy of Design
Jaipur*

Sakshi made a game out of her trinket jewellery, a cheap rubber ring. She gave it a red heart on which you could rub lipstick to leave lipstick marks while she went around boxing people on their cheeks in jest. Spreading fun and mischief – for a happier world!

Santosh discouraged smoking by making a heart shaped ashtray in wax which melted during use.



*Santosh Jha
IICD, Jaipur*

Every person should be able to act at the systems level irrespective of one's profession.

Acting at a leverage point brings better returns with minimal resources.

Design practiced systemically can provide credible alternative solutions for complex real world problems.

Plan . D is always a possibility!