

# **“The A Team” Working Strategy of AEDI Design Bureau in Achieving Optimal Design**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Every design consultant has a strategy that serves as the foundation for running operations effectively to achieve a shared vision as a team. This strategy will define every step that needs to be taken by the team to be able to face every challenge, as well as maintain and continue to develop the company. The team consists of various individuals with different traits and characters. Therefore, a team in a design consultant needs proper strategy for planning and design standardization to provide a single reference view and attitude for individuals to provide optimal performance. This research discusses how AEDI Design Bureau achieves its optimal design standard, through “The A Team” working strategy. The analysis technique was conducted using an intrinsic case study. Data collection was carried out by the author acting as an observer participant and insider researcher, as well as using interview techniques, during the author’s internship program at AEDI Design Bureau, within the period of 10 months.

Keywords: Working Strategy, Optimal Design, Shared Vision, Interior Design, AEDI DB

## **INTRODUCTION**

AEDI Design Bureau is an interior design firm located in Kemang, South Jakarta that has been established since 2003. Immersed in AEDI DB’s work system and design process for 10 months, the author discovered that AEDI DB’s has its main motivation called “PASSION”, which drives AEDI DB in carrying out its role as a design consultant. This is reflected in the four aspects of work strategy that form AEDI DB’s optimal design standards: (a) Teamwork, (b) Problem Solving, (c) Communication, and (d) Knowledge is Key.

AEDI DB believes that when a designer carries out his role with passion as fuel, it will create the right work motivation in themselves so that they can bring an empathy to every design process they do. Therefore, the work strategy ultimately affects how AEDI DB defines its design standards, namely through four aspects, (a) Functional, (b) Problem Solving, (c) Impactful Innovation, and (d) Emotional Value.

Design standards that begin with these functional aspects are believed to be the right first step in providing design results that empathize with clients as the users. It is interesting for the author to research how these aspects of work strategies can form the optimal design standards and how these optimal design standards can give an effect on the work strategies.

This research aims to understand that through the motivation of passion reflected in the work strategy and design standards that only AEDI DB has, there is a unique process in unifying the vision between AEDI DB as a team, without neglecting the aspects of collaboration with clients and company partners.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

To understand how each aspect of AEDI DB’s “The A Team” work strategy works, two main theories will be used to analyze it:

1. Shared Vision (Coleman, 2002), with three parameters: (a) Think critically and deeply about every complex problem to utilize the potential of many thoughts from all stakeholders to produce higher quality solution, (b) Taking innovative actions and coordinated to create “operational trust”, and, (c) Working as a team to make the best decision to encourage motivation for exploration.
2. Team Dynamics (Coleman, 2002), with five parameters: (a) The importance of having specific team performance-related challenges to provide the impetus for everyone to develop collective performance, (b) Avoiding individualistic attitudes that can hinder the potential of team performance, (c) The team facilitates problem-solving, build trust and confidence in each other’s abilities, be prepared to face any pressure, realize the wide-open space for solutions, (d) Persistence and discipline have a very significant impact on team performance. Everyone should adopt the mindset “get an A on all of the basics”, (e) Made up of the right combination of technical or functional, problem-solving, decision-making, and interpersonal skills, that enables learning within a team.

Team success will not be achieved when all individuals in the team have not succeeded in holding themselves accountable as a whole team (mutual accountability). Teams that can excel from other teams are not easy to create, those who succeed will usually be referred to as high-performing or extraordinary teams (The A Team).

To understand how each aspect of the AEDI DB optimal design standard works, one main theory will be used to analyze it: Gauging Successful Design (Coleman, 2002; Piotrowski, 2020), with six parameters: (a) Project and client needs are met. The essence of interior design is problem solving, (b) The project affirms the identity of the client, (c) The space is functional not just decorated. It should not only be visually and sensually pleasing but should support the movement, operation, circulation, and activities of the occupants, (d) The environment has ambiance and atmosphere, related to the positive user experience of the space, (e) The creative process and resulting design stimulate the mind, to direct the designer in making design breakthroughs, and, (f) The design result is long-lasting, meaning

that it anticipates and adapts to the client’s future needs, not only in terms of visuals and trends but also durability.

## METHODOLOGY

A ‘participant observer’ method approach was used to collect data, where the author involves directly and shares every experience that occurs during the research. Through this involvement, the researcher could gain a deeper understanding of the research subject’s point of view (Neuman, 2020). In the data collection process, the author acted as an ‘insider researcher’, participating in the working system and design process of AEDI DB for 10 months.

Data collection was also supported by interview techniques with related subjects that were written with thick descriptions in field notes. This research is analyzed using an intrinsic case study (Crouch and Pearce, 2012), by intensively examining each aspect brought in AEDI DB’s working strategy to achieve a shared vision of optimal design through the performance of the team of designers (The A Team) in the project.

The intrinsic case study will help the author explore the uniqueness of the case under study to obtain data from the project in-depth to conclude AEDI DB’s working strategy in achieving the optimal design.

## RESULT & DISCUSSION

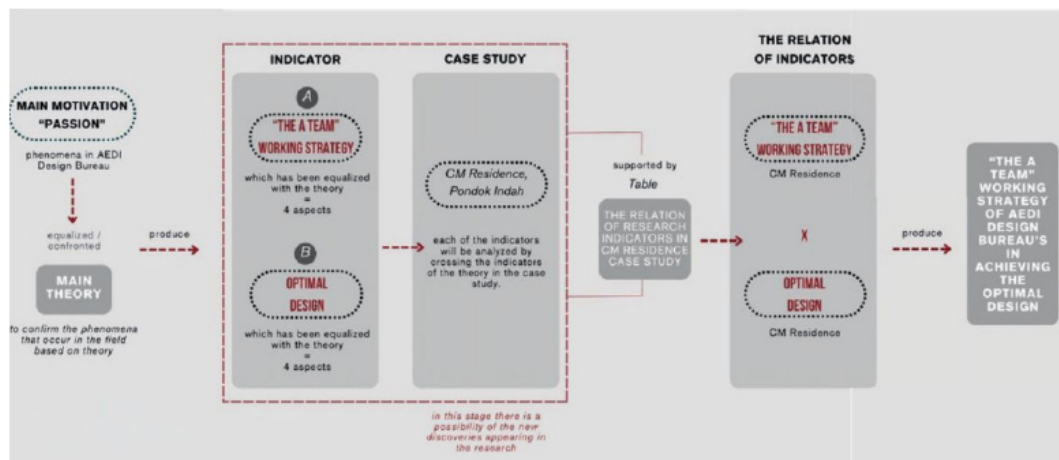


Image 1 Analysis Strategy. (Source: Wonggow, 2024)

The analysis strategy used by the author departs from the phenomenon of AEDI DB’s main motivation “passion” which is confirmed by the main theory and produces two main indicators. (i) “The A Team” working strategy, (ii) Optimal design. Each has four aspects that are also confirmed by the grand theory. These four aspects will be analyzed in the CM Residence case study crossover, using the indicators theory from each aspect. Lastly, how the relationship between indicators will be seen in producing the working strategy of “The A Team” AEDI DB in achieving optimal design.



Image 3 CM Residence Design Development. (Source: AEDI Design Bureau, 2024)



Image 4 CM Residence Site Condition. (Source: Wonggow, 2024)

The case study used is CM Residence Pondok Indah residential project. This project focuses on field phenomena related to the collaboration of designers with principals, clients, and vendors to achieve the main problems in the project related to the client's space function needs within a limited budget and time.

CM Residence has three floors with a large building size (22m x 16 meters) and the height of each floor is approximately 5 meters high. So, the size of the building is quite magnificent.

This is the design of the previous designer and is quite unsatisfactory to the client. The residence has quite a lot of circulation which is a bit difficult for the client. It can also be seen from the design development that shows a lot of social area needs and uses a lot of iconic furniture for the client's social value needs (image 3).

From image 4, we can see the site visit process, where the designer, client, and PM always coordinate together. The existing conditions in the field since the beginning have been in the development stage of the previous design so that the mass of the building has been formed, as well as the circulation of the stairs. So, AEDI DB could not change the existing mass and circulation, and this became one of AEDI DB’s challenges to keep maximizing the design that did not start from the zero stage.

The analysis process will observe the relationship of research indicators in the CM Residence case study. The table below shows that the four aspects of each indicator are related to each other and will be analyzed more specifically using the indicators theory to see exactly how the strategy forms optimal design standards, and how optimal design standards influence the work strategy in the case study.

**Table 1 The Relation of Research Indicators in CM Residence Case Study.**  
 (Source: Wonggow, 2024)

		OPTIMAL DESIGN STANDARD			
		FUNCTIONAL	TIMELESS	IMPACTFUL/ INNOVATION	EMOTIONAL VALUE
<b>“THE A TEAM” WORKING STRATEGY</b>	<b>TEAMWORK</b>	Teamwork between principals, designers, and clients in prioritizing project functions to avoid differences in projects’ vision mission	AEDI & Client unite their minds regarding the importance of paying attention to quality product specifications	AEDI designers’ teamwork creates design innovations according to the client’s budget	AEDI designers’ teamwork creates designs that can meet the client’s behavioral emotional needs related to social aspects
	<b>PROBLEM SOLVING</b>	AEDI designers’ challenge is to overcome the condition of the project regarding function, which cannot be changed much	AEDI designers’ challenge is to create designs that are not based on certain trends so that it can continue to adapt to the client’s life	AEDI designers’ team, contractors and vendors discussed together to find innovative solutions despite budget limitations	AEDI designers’ help the client to curate their wants & needs in accordance with the budget
	<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	AEDI designers’ efforts to communicate seamlessly AEDI design standards related to functional efficiency vis-à-vis to the reality of the project	AEDI designers’ efforts to communicate the clients with quality product information	AEDI designers’ openness with clients regarding the real conditions of the project regarding limitations that pose challenges to innovation	AEDI designers try to communicate seamlessly with clients so that they can encourage client openness in conveying their needs, emotional values that suit the client’s character
	<b>KNOWLEDGE IS KEY</b>	AEDI designers prioritize in-depth knowledge of materiality & construction to support functional efficiency standards	AEDI designers educate clients to prioritize product specifications & designs that are efficient in quality & budget	The role of knowledge related to materiality & construction for the AEDI designers’ team to be able to think creatively and innovatively	AEDI designers continue to be guided by the principal to absorb & explore various types of knowledge so that they can have empathy for each unique character that each client has

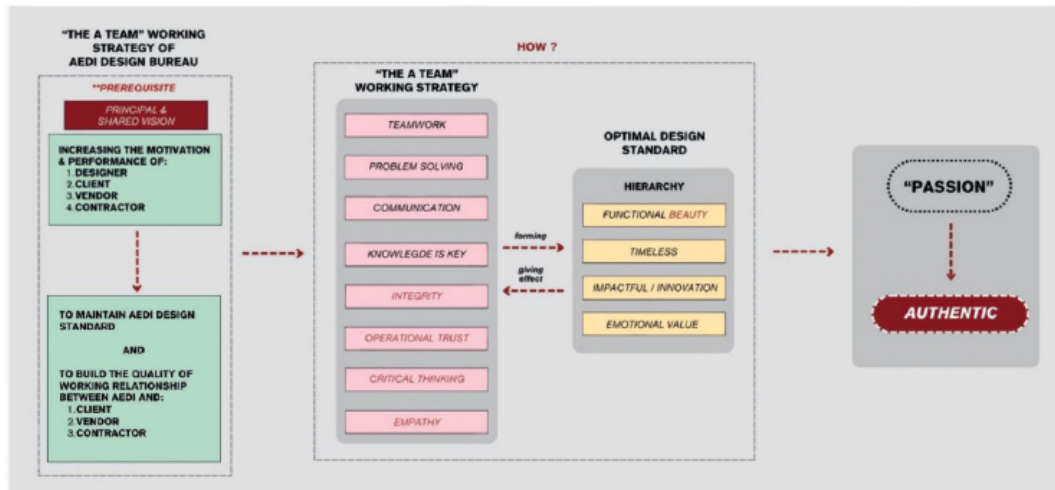
To make the delivery of information more informative, the authors are encouraged to use pictures, diagrams or charts, and tables in explaining the discussion. However, keep in mind that the visual media used still needs to be given clear and informative names and also supporting narratives so that they can be understood properly.

**Table 2 Crossover Analysis Findings Table of “The A Team” Working Strategy & Optimal Design Standard of AEDI Design Bureau. (Source: Wonggow, 2024)**

		OPTIMAL DESIGN STANDARD			
		FUNCTIONAL	TIMELESS	IMPACTFUL/ INNOVATION	EMOTIONAL VALUE
<b>“THE A TEAM” WORKING STRATEGY: CM RESIDENCE PONDOK INDAH</b>	<b>TEAMWORK</b>	Unification of thoughts helps designers and clients sort out scale problem priorities, unifying expectations, seeing potential critical, foster empathy designer, and able to coordinate	Timeless design on AEDI achieved optimally through bringing together the minds of designers & client, designer's sense of empathy, related designer capabilities material accuracy, detail construction, & approach focus on function	Principal & designer collaboration, and designer collaboration & vendors, improve deep designer knowledge innovate	Precision in design stage, unity of thought, client's trust within AEDI & vendors produces emotions value that corresponds to the client needs
		Unification of thought with main approach to aspects "function" can provide value functional beauty in objects which was designed	Timeless approach to AEDI design style, improve designer competency & increase client confidence	Learning from the principal improve the designers' and vendors quality & nnovation	Designer excellent performance Increase trust and filter AEDIs' clients, as well maintaining AEDIs' design standard
		Balancing the role of designer & clients increase motivation & designer performance and client engagement in the project	Balance of critical designers' abilities and clients produce timeless designs that enables the design process to be effective		
	<b>PROBLEM SOLVING</b>	Unity of thought, openness to problems, opportunities to express opinions, and critical thinking abilities improves the designers team confidence in creating problem solving with functional beauty value in it	Designer excellent capabilities provide precise design specifications, empathy, unity of mind w/ clients, design approach related to function, timeless design with functional beauty	Problem solving process open opportunities to generate design innovation potentials	The importance of the role of designers, contractors & vendors as expert in helping clients determine the priority scale for designers to provide appropriate emotional value
		Client openness to problem helps clarify project expectation standards & increase designer empathy			
	<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	Designers' proactive communication	Designers' proactive	Initial project discussion	Initial discussions unite values and design standards

		skills help to analyze critically functional requirements space, ensuring accuracy design, reducing risk errors from stakeholders, and increase client confidence towards designers	communication skills help in educating & engage clients to find product with quality	clarify boundaries of clients' & AEDIs' expectations. It maintain AEDIs' design standards and help the principal to determines the designer suitable and capable creating design innovation	between clients & AEDI. It makes things easier for designers to express value on design & help to conveys client needs and values
		Opportunity for giving opportunity in the design process improves all stakeholders critical thinking, establish standard expectations & priority scale of the project	Designers' proactive communication skills are able to bridging clients with vendors, improve client's trust in vendors, creating relationships between clients, AEDI, vendors, contractor, that help to find the right product	Client openness to designers' idea & establish relationships collaboration with vendors open innovation opportunities	Client openness regarding value & needs allows designers to be able to help determining the priority scale & engage with vendor expertise
	<b>KNOWLEDGE IS KEY</b>	Designers' critical knowledge capture the essence of space function as well as materials & construction, allows designers to choose the right design elements, creating functional beauty, and creating "operational trust" with clients	Critical knowledge of the design process help designers produce designs which has a hierarchy, harmony, functional, authentic, as well save time & costs	Critical knowledge of clients' different needs regarding specifications the right material help designer & vendor to innovate authentically & creating "operational trust"	Knowledge helps designers recognize the clients' characters & value. It will help providing emotional value that corresponds to design

## CONCLUSION



**Image 5 “The A Team” Working Strategy of AEDI Design Bureau in achieving Optimal Design. (Source: Wonggow, 2024)**

Based on the findings of the analysis of “The A Team” working strategy of AEDI Design Bureau’s in achieving optimal design, it can be concluded that the initial prerequisite for “The A Team” work strategy is the role of AEDI DB’s principal as

an initiator who can increase the motivation and performance of designers, clients, vendors, and contractors through the concept of a shared vision. Through this, “The A Team” can maintain AEDI DB’s optimal design standards and build quality working relationships between AEDI DB and clients, vendors, and contractors. Then, the way AEDI DB achieves it is through several aspects of “The A Team” work strategy in achieving optimal design. “The A Team” needs to involve eight aspects in its work strategy, namely teamwork, problem solving, communication, knowledge is key, integrity, operational trust, critical thinking, and empathy. Through the application of these eight aspects of work strategy, “The A Team” will be able to achieve the AEDI DB optimal design standard which has a hierarchy in four aspects namely functional beauty (Parson & Carlson, 2008), timeless, impactful / innovation, and emotional value. “The A Team’s” work strategy shows that these eight aspects in fact shape how AEDI DB defines its optimal design standards. Meanwhile, the optimal design standard also ultimately influences how the work strategy that “The A Team” needs to do. It can be concluded that through the work strategy of “The A Team” and the optimal design standards of AEDI DB, which was initiated by the main motivation of “passion”, AEDI DB was able to produce an AUTHENTIC work strategy and design standard.

Through the research of “The A Team” working strategy of AEDI Design Bureau in achieving optimal design, an interior design work strategy is produced, and it can be used to achieve an authentic design standard as shown in image 6 below.

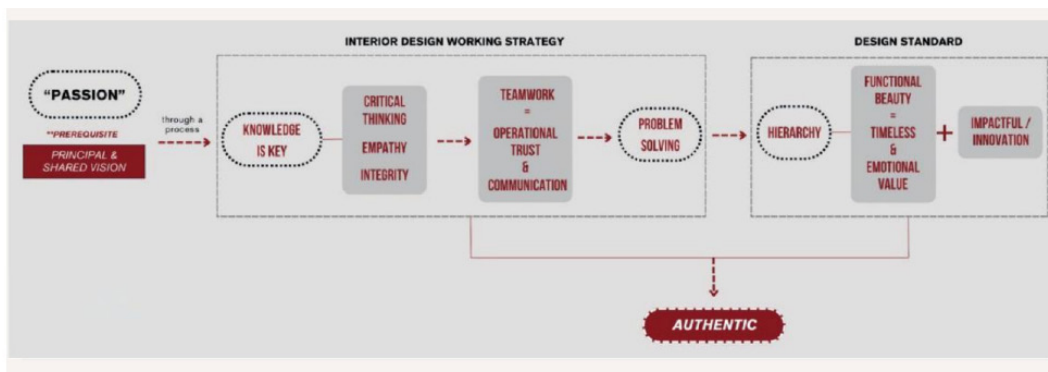


Image 6 Interior Design Working Strategy in Achieving Authentic Design.  
(Source: Wonggow, 2024)

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