D-Lab

After the spring break, we will be having a discussion about <u>Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World</u>, by Alan Weisman. There is no written assignment for the text, but some of the following questions may be good to reflect on before the class discussion.

Technology
1. What dictated the priorities and particular types of technology developed at Gaviotas?
2. Describe the design process in Gaviotas. What kind of environment facilitates this process?
3. During the project evaluation towards the end of the book, there was some discussion of cultural failures. What examples of cultural failures were given? How could these kinds of issues affect your projects?
4. What should Gaviotas have done, and when, in the village Boca del Rosario? (around p.192)

Policy and Organizations
1. Consider the many policy failures that affected Gaviotas throughout the 1970s and 1980s. What was their origin? How could they have been averted?
2. What are the prerequisites for starting a community like this? What has to be present, or must not be present?
3. Frequently, distinctions were made between life in los llanos and in Bogotá. Would an experiment like Gaviotas be possible in an urban setting? Why (not)?
4. As the community became more stable, it faced the possibility of developing a commercial component to its identity. How can a social enterprise become compatible with open-market business practices?
5. What factors were responsible for the success and decline of the Plan Nacional de Rehabilitación?

Thematic
1. What did development mean to the people who started Gaviotas? What does it mean to D-Lab? To the world at large?
2. How did the definition of development change over the span in the book? How was it reflected in their choice of projects?
3. (How) was Gaviotas a success? (How) was it a failure?
4. There are many choice passages in the book that reflect the messages of the author and Gaviotas. Write down a couple that may help your team in the process of design or implementation of your technology.