The S3 Patterns Handbook

Bernhard Bockelbrink
James Priest

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Part I.

Introduction

1. What is Sociocracy 3.0?

Sociocracy 3.0 (also known as S3) is a **framework of patterns for collaboration in organizations** that wish to grow more **effective, agile and resilient**.

It be applied in organizations of **any size,** from small start-ups to large international networks and nationwide, multi-agency collaboration.

S3 contains patterns ready to use for many different aspects of collaboration, including patterns that enable organizations to discover and develop new patterns according to their needs.

The patterns in S3 form a pattern language, i.e. while each pattern can be applied independently, patterns mutually reinforce each other, because they are all based on the same set of principles (see the *Seven Principles* at the end of the introduction).

S3 patterns facilitate positive transformation for individuals, teams and whole organizations by enabling people to..:

- ...**dynamically steer and evolve** their organizations.
- ...commit to agreements and account for the consequences
- ...learn, transform and grow
- ...incrementally process available information into **continuous improvement of products, processes and skills***.

- ... make the best use of the skills already present
- ... grow flexible organizational structures in support of effective flow of information.
- ... take an **open, iterative approach to adoption** that meets organizations where they are and enables them to move forward at their own pace.
- ... draw on the *collective intelligence* of the group.
- ... develop creative strategies that are "**good enough for now**" and "**safe enough to try**".

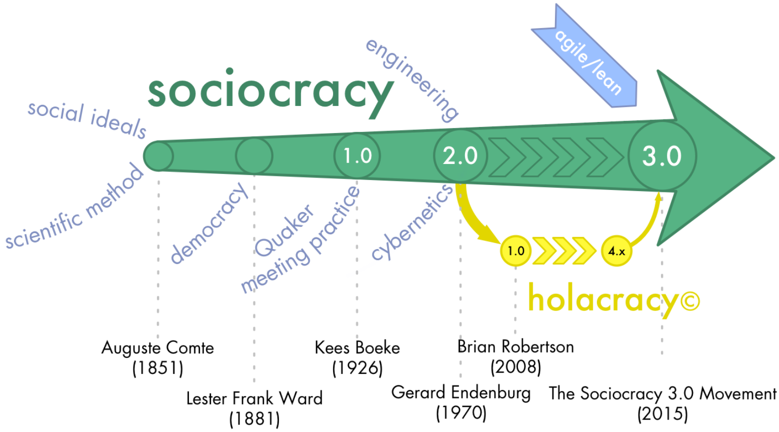
The focus of this handbook is mostly on S3 in the context of organizations. The patterns themselves are valuable to any group of people who wish to collaborate effectively, including communities, municipalities, families, and even one-to-one relationships.

2. A Brief History of Sociocracy from 1851 to today

What's in a word?

- *socio-* from Latin *socius* - companion, friend
- *-cracy* from Ancient Greek krátos - "power, rule"
- different to the rule of the *demos* (i.e. the general mass of people with voting privileges)

- 1851 – Auguste Comte
  - Scientific method applied to society
  - Sociocracy is "*the social order of the future*" - not yet achievable but inevitable!
- 1881 – Lester Frank Ward
  - redefined the term Sociocracy to describe the rule of the people with relationships with each other
- 1926 –1954 - Kees Boeke
  - Established the first sociocracy in his residential school (based on Quaker consensus principles)



- Book "*Sociocracy: Democracy as it might be*" (1945)

- 1970's - Gerard Endenburg
  - Student in Kees Boeke's school
  - Integrated principles from Engineering and Cybernetics
  - In his company Endenburg Electrotechniek he evolved "*The Sociocratic Circle-Organization Method*" (later becoming "*The Sociocratic Method*")
- 1978 - Sociocratisch Centrum Utrecht
  - created to promote "*The Sociocratic Method*"
- 1994 - New law in the Netherlands
  - Sociocratic organizations are no longer required to have a worker's council

- 2000 - emergence of a now wide-spread grassroots movement
- 2007 - *We the People*
  - John Buck /Sharon Villines make Sociocracy accessible to the English-speaking world
- 2014 The Sociocracy 3.0 Movement is born

3. The S3 Movement

The S3 Movement is a **distributed network consultants and trainers** from a variety of fields, who…

- …dedicate their time to developing and evolving S3 to make it **available and applicable to as many organizations as possible**.
- …provide resources under a **Creative Commons Free Culture License** to learn, practice and teach Sociocracy 3.0.
- …share a deep appreciation for the transformational potential of S3 to help organizations and their members thrive.

4. Why "Sociocracy 3.0"

Respect to the lineage of Sociocracy, and a step forward:

- an approach towards organizational change that meets organizations where they are
- integrated with lean and agile thinking
- new ways to evolve organizational structure
- patterns for all aspects of collaboration, not just for governance

4.1. Design Goals

Open: Principle-based and modular patterns make it easy to choose and adapt according to context

- do with it what you want
- take just what you need
- remix, extend and adapt it as you like

Free: Un-centralized distribution and a Commons license eliminates barriers to entry:

- free and accessible resources


open
free
lightweight
actionable
effective
design goals

- no hidden fees
- no certifications
- no small print

Effective: Principles and patterns have been tried and tested in many organizations, often for decades.

- need-driven
- value-driven
- customer/user focus

Actionable: There's something any organization can use right now, regardless of their unique context. S3 contains lots of ideas anyone can try out within their area of influence.

- patterns for individuals
- patterns for groups
- patterns for organizations

Lightweight: Just the essentials: common-sense practices, bare-bone processes:

- free of stuff that gets in the way
- no busywork or unnecessary bureaucracy

{{seven-principles.md}}

5. Patterns

A **pattern** is a template for successfully navigating a specific context.

S3 patterns are discovered through observing many organizations as they solve problems, innovate, and respond to opportunities. Patterns may need to be adapted and evolved to suit differing contexts and needs.

The more than 60 patterns on S3 are organized in 7 pattern groups.


coordinating work
making and evolving agreements
effective meetings
governance
S3
bringing in S3 patterns
building organizations
people and roles
organizational structure
alignment

Part II.

The Patterns

1. Making And Evolving Agreements

The way we make, keep and evolve agreements largely determine both the effectiveness of collaboration and the happiness of an organization's members.

S3 contains patterns to cover you from identifying the motive for your actions and agreements (Driver), to co-creation of and commitment to an agreement (Proposal Forming and Consent Decision Making), to evaluating and evolving agreements (e.g. Evaluation Criteria, Intended Outcome, Deliverables).

...

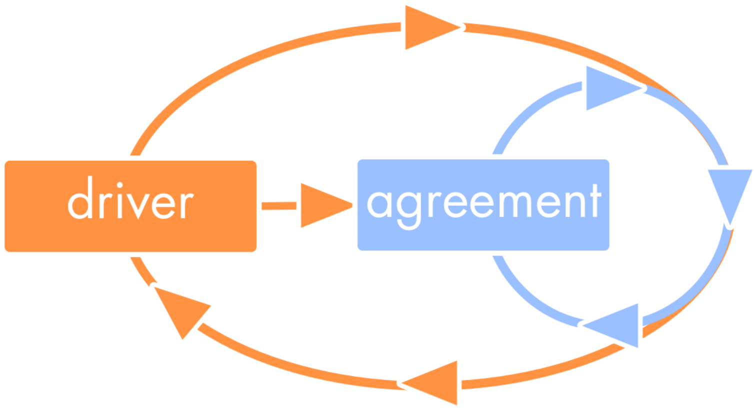
1.1. Agreements

We respond to drivers through agreements.

Definition: *A agreement is an agreed upon guideline, pattern, process or protocol designed to guide the flow of value.*

- agreements are created in order to satisfy drivers
- agreements are the **accountability of the circle** that created them

- each agreement includes **evaluation criteria** and is subject to **regular review**
  - review dates are specific to each agreement
  - agreements are reviewed in context to its driver

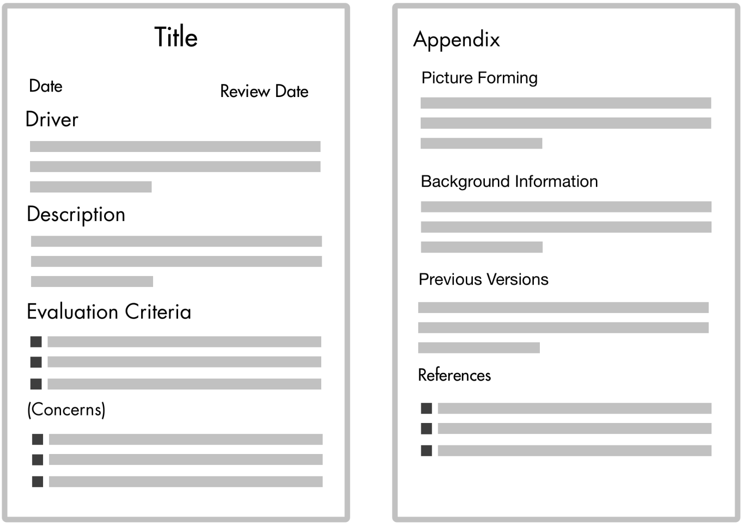


1.1.1. Template for Agreements

1.2. Circle

A circle…

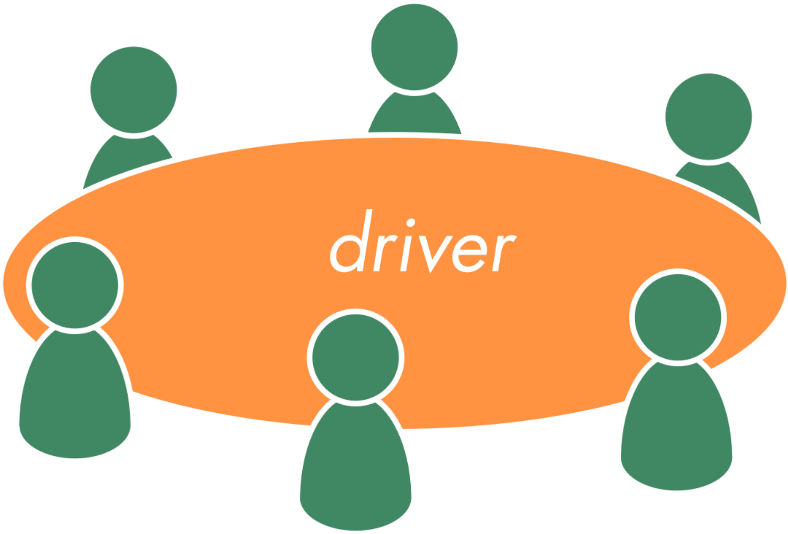
- …is the basic building block of an organization
- …is a group of people gathered around a driver (permanent or temporary)



- ... makes all agreements by consent
- ... is accountable for its own development

Definition: *A circle is a semi-autonomous, self-organizing and self-governing group of people gathering around a driver.*

- ... **semi-autonomous**:
  - each has a unique driver and can create value independently
- ... **self-organizing**:
  - independent in organizing day-to-day-work
- ... **self-governing**:


driver

- independent in creating strategy and agreements

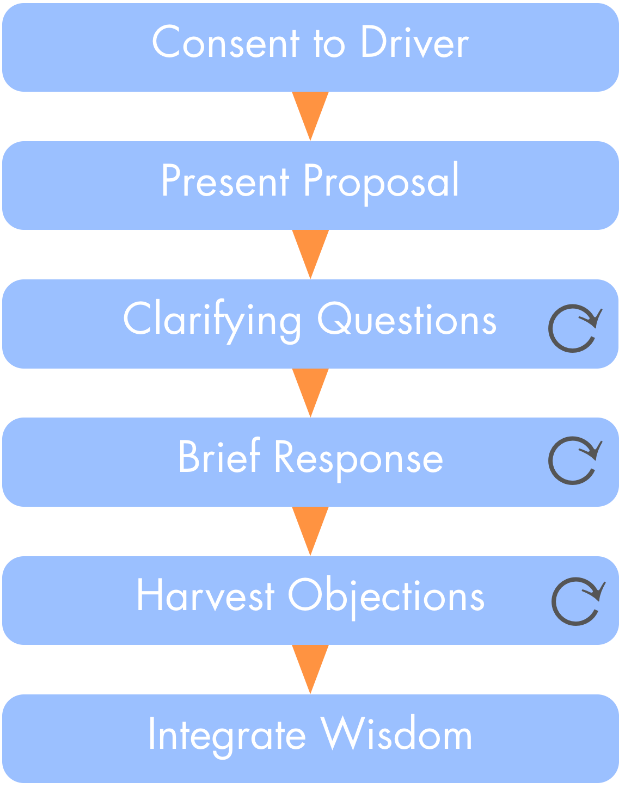
1.3. Consent Decision Making

- Consent is the absence of objections
  - everyone affected by a decision can "live with it"
  - consent is not consensus with unanimity
- Consent is used to make and evolve all agreements in a circle
- Objections stop proposals becoming agreements
- Withholding objections could harm the aims of a group or organization
- Being able to raise objections at any time means that proposals only need to be *good enough for now, safe enough to try*
- Every agreement has a review date

Consent Decision Making...

- is a facilitated decision making process
- deliberately harvests reasoned objections in order to integrate the wisdom they contain in proposals or existing agreements
- helps balance equivalence and effectiveness
- experienced groups can move quickly through the stages of Consent Decision Making

1.3.1. Harvesting Objections to Capture Emergent Wisdom



1.4. Deliverables

A **deliverable** is something which is provided as a result of an agreement, usually framed as a product or a service. Deliverables can be defined for organizational strategy, circle strategy, *development plans*, *role descriptions*, or any other *agreement*.

Since a deliverable is part of an agreement, make sure the amount of detail is reasonable - sufficient to allow for shared understanding, but not too much. Consider the context in which and by whom this description will be referred to. Think about the significance of the deliverable, and how long this description needs to be referred to.

For example simple task which will be implemented in the next week needs less written detail than continuously reviewing updates for a large product for compliance with several complicated national standards.

Reference other documents when helpful or necessary, e.g. contracts, previous projects, specifications, drafts, or other agreements.

1.5. Driver

The **driver** is the reason and the motivation for action in a specific situation: the needs a team or organization identifies and chooses to address, and the conditions relevant to understanding these needs.

{>> older version: A **driver** is what motivates us into action in a specific situation: the **needs** we perceive, and the **conditions** from which these needs arise. <<}

A driver can apply to an individual, or describe **collective motivation for a group**. Developing shared understanding of drivers fosters **alignment towards the motive** instead of towards our assumptions about the future. The response to a driver always involves the **adaptation of an existing agreement, or creation of a new one**, including:

- changing the plan: adding a task or project
- adaptation or creation of a role
- creation of a new circle

However, sometimes we may decide against responding to a driver, because there is more important things to tend to.

Needs and Conditions

A **need** is the lack of something that is necessary (required?) or important

Needs are identified when analyzing a situations, and may related to the organization itself, its members, stakeholders, customers or the environment. Needs can be objective (physical) or subjective (psychological), and may be controversial on a social level. An organization's values may help resolving controversies

Some examples for needs, from more abstract needs to personal needs:

- revenue, profit, shareholder value, capital
- customer value

- autonomy, mastery, purpose
- connection, collaboration, recognition
- sustenance, happiness

Each need emerges through one or several conditions. In order to understand a driver, we need to identify relevant and important conditions for each need, and describe them, usually as facts or observations.

Over time, we will develop better understanding of a driver, and, as the needs and conditions change, update the driver's description.

We review a review whenever we review a strategies or agreements which respond to that driver. In a driver review we discover new or changed needs and conditions, sometimes the driver no longer falls into our domain, or is no longer relevant.

1.5.1. Drivers and Lean Thinking

Value and Waste

Lean Thinking is centered around the ideas of value and waste, both can easily be defined in relation to a driver:

- **value** is the importance, worth or usefulness of something for responding to a driver.
- **waste** is anything not necessary (or essential) for - or standing in the way of - effective response to a driver.

In this context, value is **not** an **inherent** property as it only exists in relation to a driver. This is why value is not necessarily expressed in currency or time, but it often can be quantified by identifying metrics related to the needs or conditions contained in a driver.

Adopting the concept of value and waste makes many tools and ideas from **lean production** and **lean software development** available to support organizations running on Sociocracy 3.0:

- value stream mapping
- various strategies for eliminating waste
- the Kanban Method

Waste and Continuous Improvement

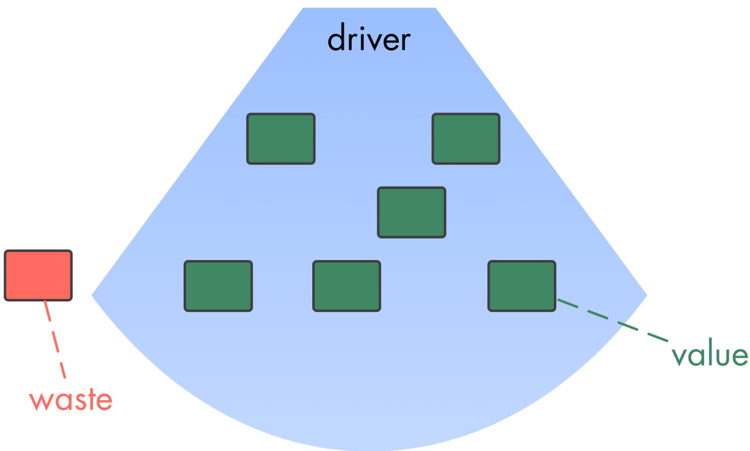


Figure 1.1.: Identifying Waste

Waste exist in many different forms and on different levels of abstraction, e.g. in tasks, agreements, work processes, organizational structure or mental models. Waste makes itself known as tensions, learning learning to identify waste is a long journey, but along the way we also discover wisdom that helps us evolve our understanding of our drivers.

Establishing a process for ongoing elimination of waste enables the natural evolution of an organization towards greater effectiveness, optimizing the flow of value through an organization. As a side effect, the organization will so naturally adapt to changes in the environment.

1.6. Evaluate Agreements

A pattern for ensuring agreements remain effective.

Motivation for this pattern: To keep an organization's or team's body of agreements effective in the face of emerging knowledge and changes in context, each agreement needs to be periodically reviewed and updated.

Agreements[1] guide action and behavior. They are created as a response to a specific situation that affects an organization or team.

Team and organization wide agreements are kept up-to-date with what is happening, what is learned, and how expectations compare to actual outcomes.

[1] in some organizations these agreements are referred to as a "policy").

1.6.1. Indicators for this pattern

Conditions:

- existing agreements don't make sense any more (out of date, slow, rigid, ineffective)
- lack of clarity about why things are done in certain ways and what outcomes an agreement is meant to have
- lack of opportunities taken to integrate new learning and improve

Needs:

- adapting to changes in the inner and outer environment of the organization
- improve and evolve agreements previously made
- integrate learning from new experiences

1.6.2. The Details

Changes in context can make an agreement less effective or even obsolete. Putting an agreement into action often reveals new ways an agreement can be improved.

Organizations or teams periodically evaluate their agreements, usually in periodical meetings, or even a dedicated workshop to review a complex agreement (e.g. an organization's values or strategy).

Evaluating agreements has **four basic steps**:

1. preparation

2. hear reports (optional)
3. the actual review
4. addressing any consequences

Step 1 - Preparation

Preparing for the review helps to keep it brief and effective.

Inform everyone affected of the upcoming review and make sure they have access to documents describing the agreement and its iterations, and if applicable, data relating to evaluation criteria and metrics.

Ensure all documents related to the agreement are up to date, and reports are prepared (see next step).

Step 2 - Hear Reports

For more complex agreements its useful to have a temporary "owner" who is familiar with the agreement and its effects. They review the evaluation criteria and other data and prepare a short report.

In some cases it may require several people to prepare and present a report.

The report is presented immediately before the actual review.

Step 3 - The Review

The review itself is often split in two parts:

- review of the motive for the agreement
- review of the agreement itself

Review the motive In order to prime the group about the context, it's a good idea to first review the motive for creating the agreement, i.e. needs or requirements the agreement should address, and the conditions or context in which the needs or requirements were identified.

If an agreement does not contain a description of the motive, this may be a good time to collaborate on describing it.

Helpful questions to review the motive include:

- *Is the description of the motive still accurate, or does it need to change?* (e.g. because we changed the conditions, learned something, or discovered something else is needed)
- *Is this situation still relevant for the organization or this team?*

Sometimes the review ends here, because:

- the authority to respond to the situation falls to someone else: Pass it to relevant team or individual
- the motive for agreement no longer exists or ceased to be relevant: Close the agreement

In both cases, address any consequences (Step 4).

Review the agreement Review the agreement itself in its latest form by asking these questions:

Considering any reports heard, the updated understanding of conditions and needs and what is known today:

- *Is the agreement still good enough for now and safe enough to try?*
- *Do you see any reason why NOT to continue with this agreement in its current form?*
- *Are there any concerns about this agreement?*

Depending on the answers to these questions there are several possible outcomes:

1. keep the agreement without change
2. use what's learned to update the agreement on the spot, or, for more substantial changes, schedule a separate session for the update
3. drop the agreement

In all cases, consider recording answers and concerns for future evaluations, and **agree on a next review date.**

Step 4 - Addressing any consequences

After the review, ensure consequences of any decisions are dealt with.

This may include:

- assigning tasks
- recording the latest version of the agreement
- updating other agreements affected by decisions made

- sharing results with those affected by the decision
- scheduling further pending decisions if required

Considerations for an effective review process

Use the idea of **falsification** instead of merely focusing on what would make an agreement a success. Describe what would need to happen to consider that it failed. This information can be used to describe the intended outcome, and to define criteria for evaluation.

Adjust the review cadence according to the stability of the agreement.

Consider having an early review when people affected by the agreement raise concerns or explain reasons why continuing without change may not be effective, or how changing the agreement could improve effectiveness.

1.6.3. Related patterns

Agreements are evaluated in *Governance Meetings* by the *Circle* that created them.

The description of an agreement can include the *Driver* it responds to, the *Agreement* itself, any *Intended Outcomes* and *Evaluation Criteria*.

In Step 2 people review the *Driver* of an agreement.

In Step 4 *Consent Decision Making* can be used to test the agreement.

If the circle decides a new agreement is needed, its members might use *Proposal Forming* to come up with one.

1.7. Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation criteria help you understand whether or not an agreement has the desired effect.

Make them simple and unambiguous so you avoid discussing opinions when reviewing your agreements: Go for "the number of items sent back from the customer for re-work should have dropped from 10 per week to 5 or less by January 10th" instead of "Quality is improved.."

One very effective way of defining Evaluation Criteria is as *actionable metrics*, i.e. a set of measurements which you can continuously refer to to see whether you're on the right track. Actionable metrics make it easy to spot deviations from your intended outcome, and to take action accordingly. Consider this example: you have a steady trickle of new users for your website, and you want to increase popularity of your site. If you track number of website users per day, the graph will rise even without your new agreements being effective. However, tracking new users per day will give you a much clearer picture, if this metric is increasing, you know you're on the right track, and if it's shrinking, you know that you need to get together and take action.


Intended Outcome
Metrics
Evaluation Criteria

1.8. Intended Outcome

The *Indended Outcome* is a brief description of what we expect to happen as the result of an agreement or strategy. It's a good idea to also include specific *Evaluation Criteria* to enable an effective review of the strategy or agreement.

1.9. Objections

Definition: *An objection is a reason why doing what is proposed stands in the way of (more) effective satisfaction of an existing driver.*

In sociocracy we deliberately seek objections as they reveal wisdom that can be used to improve proposals and agreements.

Objections…

- …are gifts
- …reveal wisdom seeking expression into the consciousness of a circle
- …reveal opportunities or impediments
- …emerge through individuals and belong to the whole circle
- we love objections in sociocracy

1.9.1. Questions That Help to Validate Objections

- Does the objection relate to this specific proposal or agreement?
- Does this objection reveal how a (proposed or existing) **agreement**…
  - …jeopardizes the satisfaction of a driver?
  - …is in conflict with the organization's values?
  - …prevents or diminishes someone's contribution to satisfying a driver?

  - …can be improved significantly?

1.10. Concerns…

- …are not objections
- …don't stop us from making agreements
- …often contain wisdom
- …can be recorded in the logbook
  - …to further evolve agreements
  - …to set evaluation criteria (including review date)

1.11. Proposal Forming

Proposal Forming…

- …is similar to condensed design thinking process
- …taps the collective intelligence of a group
- …involves people in co-creating agreements
- …fosters accountability and a sense of ownership

1.11.1. Proposal Forming Process

1. **Identify** the driver
2. **Consider**: Collect considerations as questions that reveal the scope of the issue

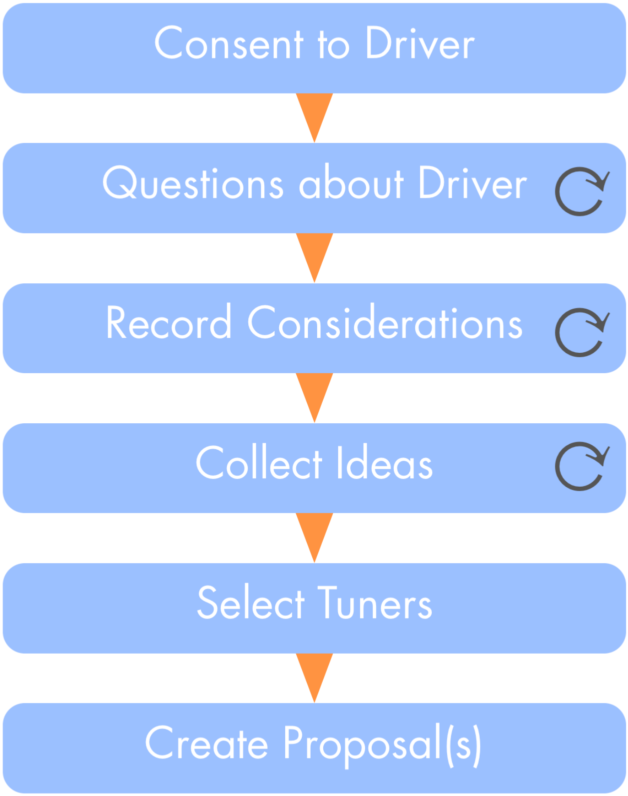


Figure 1.2.: Co-Creating a Response to a Drivers

3. **Create**: Gather ingredients/ideas for solutions
4. **Refine**: Design a proposal from some or all of the ingredients
5. **Review**: process with consent decision making

1.12. Qualifying Drivers

A pattern for…

Driver:

Summary

1.13. In a General Context

- depending on our sensitivity, we might discover many different drivers
- some of the drivers we identify are not in our domain
- some drivers are more important than others
- discussing every driver with the circle may be not effective
- we need to make a conscious choice which drivers respond to, where to respond to them, and to discuss in the circle in the first place

We consider why, how and when to respond to a stimulus, instead of defaulting to action.

> *Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our*

> *response lies our growth and our freedom.* (Viktor E. Frankl)

The individual sensing a tension is accountable for understanding the driver and making a decision on how to proceed, whether do drop it or refer the driver to a domain (a circle or a role). In that domain, we again make a decision whether or not to act on the driver.

1.13.1. Individual Process

- understand and describe driver
  - what's happening and what's needed. relate each need to the conditions relevant for its existence
- Can you identify the domain (circle or role) to address this driver?
  - No: decide where to refer the driver to, or drop it.
  - Yes: refer driver to circle or role (e.g. add it to Governance Backlog)

1.13.2. Circle or Role Process

- understand the driver
  - refine and consent to driver description
  - Would responding to driver improve flow of value in this domain?
    - Yes: Is it important to act on this now?

        - Yes: decide what to do, and do it.
        - No: Drop it, put it in backlog, or schedule it for review?
    - No: Might responding to driver improve flow of value in another domain?
        - Yes: refer driver to that domain
        - No: Drop it

1.14. Resolve Objections

Driver:

- making decisions by consent invites objections
- need: use the wisdom contained in objections to evolve a proposal

1.14.1. Methods for Resolving Objections

- ask proposal owner
- ask member with objection to amend proposal
- facilitator amends proposal
- "how would you solve this" – round
- brief dialogue – 2 or 3 people
- brief group discussion
- refer to proposal forming
- drop the proposal

- re-work – send back to higher /lower circle
- form a temporary circle to review, research, revise

1.15. Strategy

A **strategy** is the generic approach we choose to address a problem or a driver.

When facing a complex problem or driver, we usually don't know what will be the best way of responding to it. In order to reduce uncertainty, we first decide which general approach - our *strategy* - sounds most convincing.

A strategy is implemented through breaking it down into a series of decisions (or agreements) supporting the strategy. Along the way we need to discover both how to effectively execute on the strategy and the strategy's overall effectiveness.

In this context, all decisions we make are experiments, and how we slice our experiments, and in which order we run them affects how fast we learn - generally we would favor small experiments over large ones, and start with those which promise to reduce uncertainty or risk the most.

We can specifically design experiments so they support learning about creating a better experiment next time, and help us decide whether or not to persevere with the strategy.

As soon as we discover that the strategy is not effective or successful, we need to "pivot", i.e. use what we learned from our experiments to adjust the strategy or create a new one.

1.16. Those Affected Decide

. . .

2. Governance

Governance is the process of creating and evolving agreements in response to drivers.

2.1. Navigation Backlog

The Navigation Backlog is the place where agenda items for the Navigation meeting are collected and prioritized. It is accessible for everyone in the circle, and members can highlight items to be included in the next Navigation Meeting. The final agenda is agreed upon at the beginning of the meeting.

The backlog can easily be maintained on a wall with sticky notes, or in digital tools like Google Spreadsheets, Trello, task managers for teams or agile backlog apps.

2.2. Governance Meeting

Circles meet at regular intervals to create and evolve agreements in response to drivers.

- usually ~60 min
- regular cadence, usually 2–4 weeks

2.2.1. Navigation Meeting Structure

- Opening Round
  - attune to one another and to the driver the circle serves
- Administrative Matters
  - consent to last minutes, dates, consent to agenda
- Agenda Items
  - Short Reports
  - Processing Tensions
  - Proposal Forming and Consent to Proposals
  - Review of Agreements, Strategy and Driver
  - Defining Roles and Selecting People for Roles
  - Consent to Role Improvement Plans
- Closing Round
  - evaluation of meeting and results, future agenda items

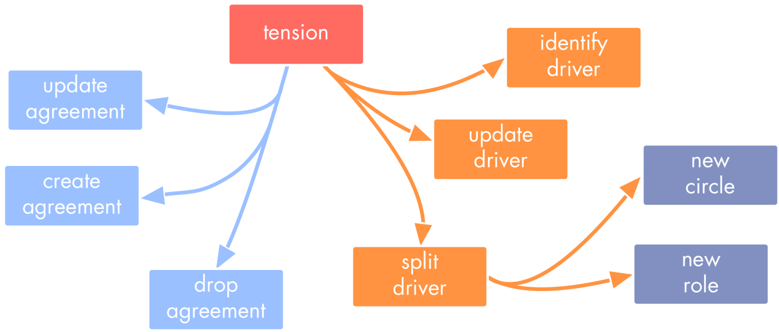
2.3. Navigating via tension

Definition: *A tension is the subjective experience of contradiction between reality and that which we desire or anticipate.*

- individuals act as sensors (nerve endings) for the organization
- tension is experienced whenever our perception of our environment is in conflict with:

- that which we desire or had anticipated
- our values (and principles)

- problems, challenges, and feelings of unease are all tensions



2.3.1. From Tension to Driver

- investigating tension leads to the discovery of drivers
- to identify a possible driver behind a tension we:
  - **describe** the current reality
  - **identify** the needs we associate with that reality
- in the process, we resolve some tensions as **misunderstandings**
- we validate drivers
  - some tensions are **outside the domain** we can address

3. Effective Meetings

Effective meetings are a cornerstone of effective collaboration and continuous improvement. S3 contains patterns to support you with different aspects of meetings, from preparation (Logbook, Secretary) to the meeting itself (S3 Facilitator, Meeting Facilitation, Rounds, Evaluate Meetings) and beyond (Logbook Keeper and Logbook).

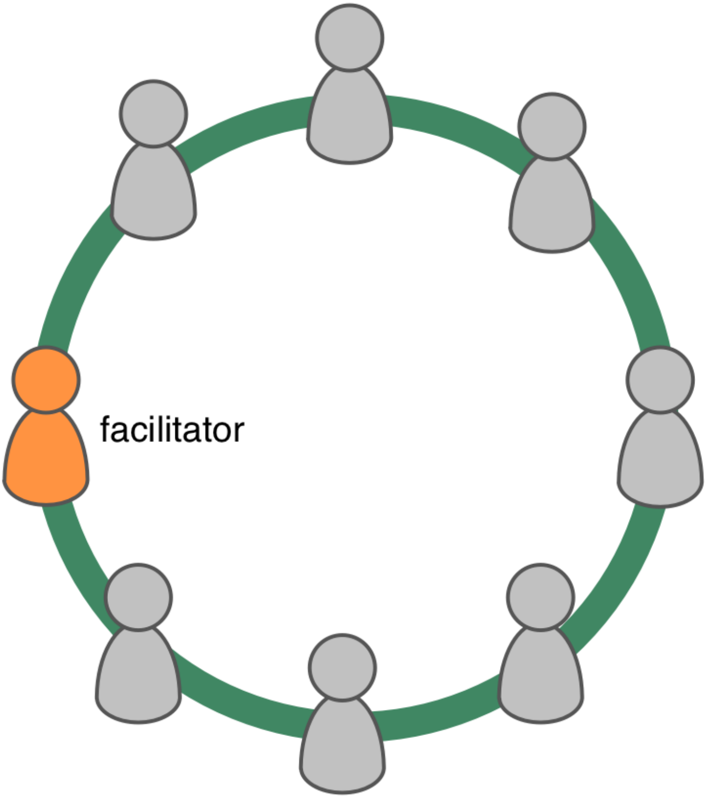
3.1. S3 Facilitator

3.2. Artful Participation

A commitment to developing helpful interactions and effective collaboration.

Motivation for this pattern: People wishing to collaborate effectively benefit from identifying, understanding and developing the necessary skills to engage with each other, and with their chosen practices, processes and all agreements they make.

Artful participation is the commitment of an individual to participate in a proactive, coherent and elegant way in all aspects of collaboration in teams and organizations they are a part of.


facilitator

3.2.1. Indicators for using this pattern

Conditions:

- People disengaged or not fully engaged
- People unsure how to contribute
- Ineffective participation, despite explicit agreements * Dysfunctional communication

Needs:

- Effective collaboration
- Engagement
- People accountable for their agreements and actions
- Helpful interactions

3.2.2. The Details

Being accountable is a learned skill and while making an agreement may be (relatively) easy, keeping up with the implications is hard: many agreements require discovering necessary skills and developing them.

Intentional commitment to agreements amplifies learning, and the more participants learn about how to support agreements, the more they learn about the agreements themselves.

Intentional effort of participants to support each other makes stronger teams and full engagement makes happy people, better agreements, and closer collaboration.

Elements of Artful Participation

A brief guide for what makes collaboration effective, and how to develop accountability for agreements:

Artful participation is a individual commitment to...

- actively keeping and following-up on all agreements made, in the best way possible, given the circumstances
- consciously balancing personal needs with those of a team and the organization as a whole
- developing the necessary skills to do so
- supporting others in doing the same

Whenever the individual discovers impediments or obstacles to their contribution or to existing agreements, which they can't resolve on their own, they bring them to the attention of everyone involved in the agreement to resolve the problem together.

Although anyone can commit to artful participation on their own, the effect is much greater when a full team or even an entire organization embraces artful participation together.

Some questions to help with artful participation:

- How will I support myself and others in participating more artfully?
- Where are my interactions with others not particularly helpful or effective?
- Which are the agreements I find hard to keep or contribute to? What can I do to change that?

- What are skills that would support me in artful participation?
- What would artful participation mean in relation to...
  - ... my daily activities
  - ...collaboration and interaction with others?
  - ...the organization? ...our clients?
  - ...the wider environment?

3.2.3. Related Patterns

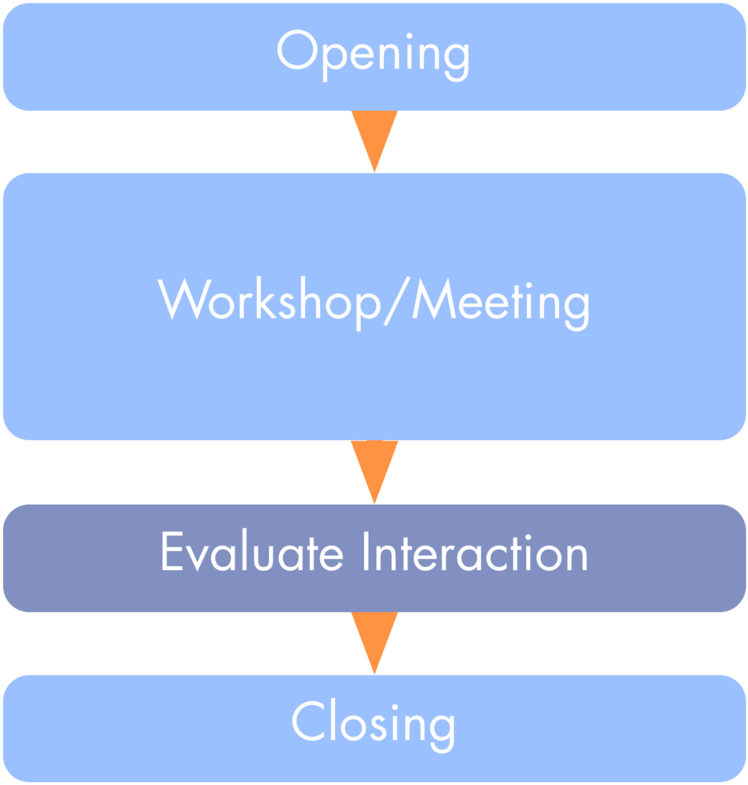
- *Adopt the Seven Principles* provides a powerful guiding framework around artful participation
- *Agree on Values* supports a team align on their chosen values, which provides both focus and guide for artful participation
- *Be the Change* is another pattern to support an individual in bringing S3 to their team or organization
- *Effectiveness Review* provides feedback on one's participation in a role
- *Meeting Evaluation* supports learning about a group's participation after a meeting
- Understanding the concept of *Objections* helps to decide when the team needs to evolve an agreement
- *Qualifying Drivers* is a proactive way of understanding things before bringing them to the team

3.3. Logbook

- Organization:
  - driver, strategy
  - organizational values
  - organizational structure
  - agreements
- Circle:
  - driver, strategy
  - agreements
  - role definitions and role improvement plans
- Personal logbooks
  - role descriptions
  - tasks
  - personal strategy and personal policy

3.4. Logbook Keeper

...


Opening
Workshop/Meeting
Evaluate Interaction
Closing

3.5. Meeting Evaluation

3.6. Meeting Facilitation

When we meet, we want to develop shared understanding, exchange information, learn, and co-create responses to the driver of the meeting. Facilitation keeps meetings and workshops crisp, joyful and effective by

- giving everyone a voice and thus enabling different perspectives
- selecting activities to support the development of shared understanding, learning, and solutions
- supporting the group by mirroring and visualizing what is happening
- helping the group navigate the agenda in the time available

As a facilitator, you would:

- prepare for the meeting
  - prepare room and materials
  - design the workshop, select activities and interactions for the different phases of the workshop:
    - opening the workshop, ground rules
    - understand driver/intended outcome
    - activities to generate insight and develop shared understanding
    - selecting what topics to work on

    * make decisions /action planning
    * evaluate the outcome and learn for the next workshop
    * closing

- during the workshop
  - time-box workshop and each activity
  - document process and results in real time
  - navigate the workshop
- after the workshop
  - take photographs of all the artifacts created and share with the group

3.7. Meeting Host

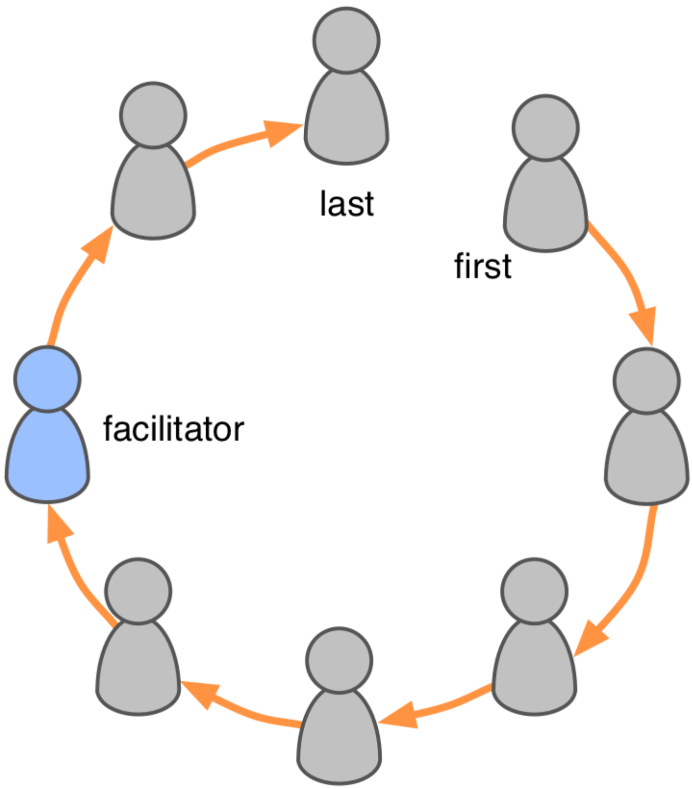
...

3.8. Rounds

A group facilitation technique to maintain equivalence.

1. Pick a random person to start
   - begin with a different person each time to maintain equivalence
2. Go around the circle, give everyone the chance to speak

There's a number of ways that experienced groups can fast track certain rounds.



4. Coordinating Work

S3 specifically addresses self-organization through a collection of patterns for coordinating work that go beyond the role of a coordinator or a simple operations meeting.

4.1. Coordination Meeting

...

4.2. Coordinator Role

...

4.3. Daily Standup

A pattern for enabling self-organization.

{>> removed “in daily activity”, as the standup also enables self-organization beyond daily activity – Bernhard <<}

Motivation for this pattern: Teams need to coordinate work, identify impediments and opportunities, and adapt processes according to changing context.

The **daily standup** is a short, daily meeting where a team coordinates daily work and identifies impediments and opportunities to improve their work process.

{>> fixed a lot of style: line breaks within paragraphs, line breaks between elements of a list, lists elements beginning with dash and tab instead of asterisk and blank. Other than that, no changes in the text. – Bernhard <<}

4.3.1. The details

For the daily standup, the team gathers around a task board every day at the same time, and makes decisions about how to move forward with their work items.

It's helpful to appoint a facilitator to keep the meeting on task and within time (if possible under 15 minutes).

The facilitator facilitates quick decisions on the spot and identifies discussions and decisions requiring more time, to be scheduled after the standup, or added to a backlog to process later.

Daily standups enable teams to

- make quick decisions about work using the knowledge of the whole team
- rapidly identify impediments and respond as needed
- accelerate learning
- improve their work processes as required

There are two common patterns for daily standups, one is **value focussed**, the other one is **people-focused**.

Value-focused standup

The *value-focused standup* helps a team focus on effectively collaborating on the most valuable work items.

In this approach, the facilitator points out the most valuable work item on the board (often the one closest to the upper right corner of the board), and asks the team members: **"How can we move this item forward?"**

Team members can volunteer to contribute to that work item, and then the facilitator moves to the next item, and so on, until the circle members cannot pull in more work for the day.

Impediments or blocked items can be discussed during or after the standup.

People-focused standup

Team members answer three questions in a round:

- What did you do yesterday?
- What are you going to do today?
- What stands in your way?

The facilitator supports people to be brief and to the point, making a note of all impediments mentioned in order to make sure they are addressed - either by scheduling brief discussions after the standup, or by adding them to a backlog.

The *people focused standup* is helpful when each team member mostly works in their own silo and tasks are not commonly shared.

Team members are constantly up to date with the state of the team's work and get the opportunity for contributing to other people's tasks when there's a bottleneck.

Over time this approach might translate into improvements for closer collaboration, with a team finally adopting the *value-focused standup* (above).

Iterations or Continuous Flow

Teams working on products often use an iterative approach, planning work in regular intervals lasting for a certain period of time (the iteration). Other teams work from a prioritized backlog and hold planning sessions as needed. Teams delivering ongoing services often work without explicit planning.

The daily standup can be combined with any of these approaches and can benefit all types of work process.

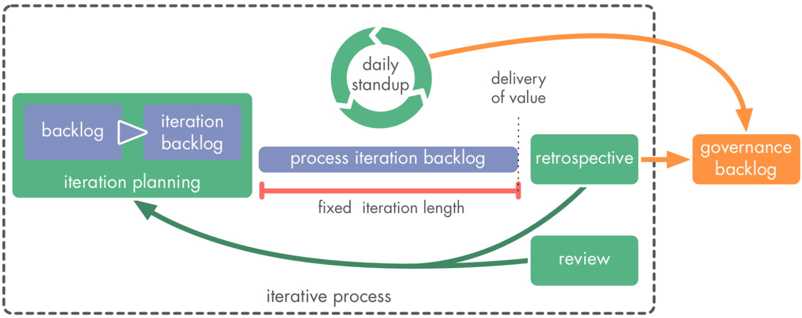


Figure 4.1.: Daily Standup and Continuous Flow

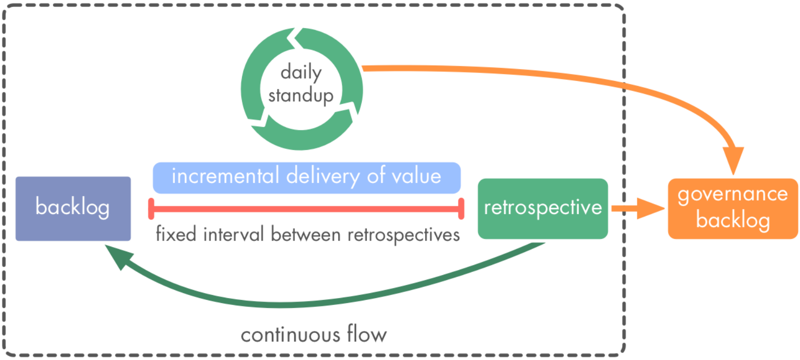


Figure 4.2.: Daily Standup and Iterations

4.3.2. Related Patterns

Coordinating work - Another way to coordinate daily activity is through assigning the function of coordination to the *Coordinator Role*, *Coordination Circle*.

Coordination meeting for synchronizing, organizing and aligning daily workflow within and across teams.

Organizing in Circles of semi-autonomous teams

Some content from daily standups inform the *Planning and review meetings*

Work items can be visualized (*Visualize Work*) in a *Prioritized Backlog*, and can be dealt with through a *Pull System for Work*.

4.4. Planning And Review Meetings

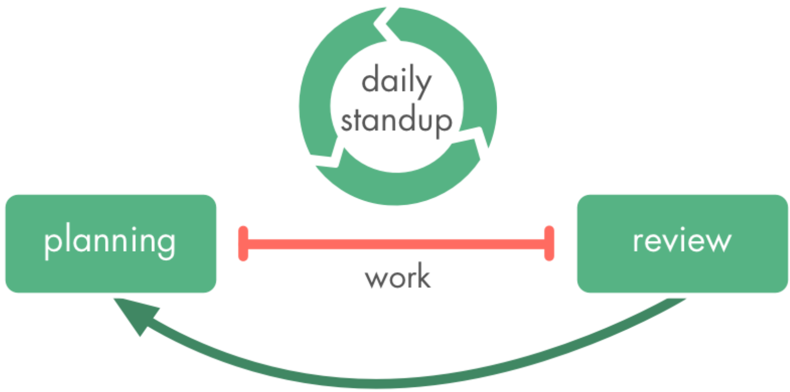
When working on products or larger projects that will take weeks or even months to finish, it's often helpful to break them down into smaller parts in order to effectively manage both work itself and expectations of stakeholders.

These parts are commonly called *milestones*, which usually take more than an month to achieve, and whose duration usually extends until work is finished, or *iterations*, which are fixed in duration (usually 1–4 weeks), unfinished items are handed over to the next iteration.

At the beginning of the milestone or iteration there is a *planning meeting* where the circle decides on the timeframe and on how much work to pull in for that period. It's helpful to timebox the meeting to just a few hours, and prepare a prioritized product or project backlog with the topmost items already estimated by the circle.

During the planning session, value, risk and dependencies between work items are discussed, work items are estimated, and, if time allows, broken down into small tasks that can be executed independently. For a successful milestone or iteration, circles often identify a theme, topic or goal, and select work items accordingly.

In the *review meeting* at the end of the iteration or milestone, the circle inspect the results, sometimes bringing in external stakeholders, the output of the review meeting is fed back into the next planning meeting.



4.5. Prioritized Backlog

When work extends a certain complexity, we need way of identifying what to focus on now, and what can be dealt with later, and at the same time being sure nothing slips to the cracks.

One way to do this is through maintaining a *Prioritized Backlog*, a list of all the uncompleted work and other matters needing to be dealt with need, the most important bits on top. That it's easy to pull in new work when there's capacity: simply take the topmost item you're confident you can work on.

4.5.1. Benefits

There's multiple benefits to a prioritized backlog:

- when pulling in work, we know that we need to pull from the top of the backlog, so the choice is easy and frictionless

- when we see that we are repeatedly unable to pull from the top, this is a strong indicator of a need to reorganize work processes, development of new skills, and maybe even a new mindset
- agreeing on work items and prioritization is helpful for developing shared understanding about what needs to be done and how to best approach it
- prioritization enables us to optimize the value we create by working on the most important things first
- also, priorization helps reduce the cost of change by enabling just-in-time specification, we only talk about the details of what needs to be done when we're close to actually starting work, so we can avoid discussing detail of less important or less urgent work items which might change again before we can even begin working on it.

4.5.2. Implementation

For collocated circles a backlog can be crated with sticky notes on a wall, or with index cards (A5 or A5 recommended) and magnets on a whiteboard. There's also many ways of implementing a digital backlog, from Excel or Google Spreadsheets, to generic tools like digital whiteboards or task planning systems, to dedicated backlog tools. It's a good idea to use the simplest tool that does the job for you. Often the minute details about work items do not need to be tracked in the backlog, if necessary we can use a reference number or a link to point us to another location, e.g. a Google Document, a Trello card, or in page in a Wiki.

Things you need to track in the backlog:

- a **unique reference number** for each work item, so you can reference the item in other documents or systems
- a **title or short description** of the work item
- the **order of work items**
- **dependencies**: other work items this item is dependent on or related to
- a **due date**, e.g. delivery date agreed on with an external party, or a date where the work item will begin to lose value rapidly (e.g. two weeks before christmas for a christmas special). Many items do not have a due date.
- (optional) a measure for **value**
- (optional) a measure for **investment** (often an estimate of time or complexity)

4.5.3. Limitations

Priorization requires making tough choices, and some teams are not yet ready to make them: if a team repeatedly considers two or more items as being "of equal importance", and can not agree on a default order for these cases, the backlog will fall short on helping the team deliver the most valuable items first.

4.6. Pull-System For Work

In a pull-system, people or circles pull in new work when they find they have capacity. The opposite would be a push-system, where work items are assigned from a third party.

A pull-system will shift from optimization of capacity - which makes an organization vulnerable to the effects of unforeseen circumstances - towards optimization for throughput, building resilience and organizational agility.

A pull system fosters self-organization, because those who do the work make the call when to build the fence and when to chase the cattle. Since the system is no longer optimized for running on full capacity, people are free to use the now available "slack time" for investments in infrastructure, evolution of work processes, and building new skills.

4.6.1. Creating a Pull-System

In order to create a pull-system, both trust and transparency are necessary to empower everyone to be able to contribute effectively. This does not only affect those doing the actual work, who now need access to all information they need to make the right choices when pulling in work, but also "external" stakeholders or customers, who now, instead of pushing work items, need to learn a different way of communicating their requirements, and who might also need transparency about the state of work items and projects.

S3 contains many patterns to help with that, here's a selection:

- *Those Affected Decide* to hand over responsibility for work process to the ones doing the work
- *Consent Decision Making* and *Proposal Forming*: to use all information available for effectively creating and evolving the agreements which guide pulling in work, such as priorities, plans, contracts etc.

- *Visualize Work* makes available the information what needs to be done and what is the current state of work
- in the *Daily Standup*, a team or circle can collaborate on pulling in work
- a *Prioritized Backlog* makes the choice about which work items to pull in much easier, as do *Planning and Review Meetings*

4.6.2. Limitations

In a low-trust environment, it will be difficult to establish a pull system, as a pull-system requires trust, first in the ability of people to pull in work items appropriate to the context at hand, and second in the ability and willingness of people to use slack time productively, to the benefit of the organization. What is often overlooked is that also the people need to build trust that a pull-system is not merely a new way for setting up competition.

In these circumstances, trust can be built through first implementing the patterns *Those Affected Decide*, which brings those who used to push work together with those who now will pull, and learn to understand each other's perspective while creating agreements as peers. This is best done in combination with *Proposal Forming* and *Consent Decision Making.*

4.7. Retrospective

Reflect on a longer period of work and improve agreements.

- ~60 min
- cadence, usually 2–4 weeks
- helps seeing the bigger picture, and identifying more complex types of waste
- What can we learn from the last iteration of work?
- Are our tools still sharp enough?
- Are we still going in the right direction?

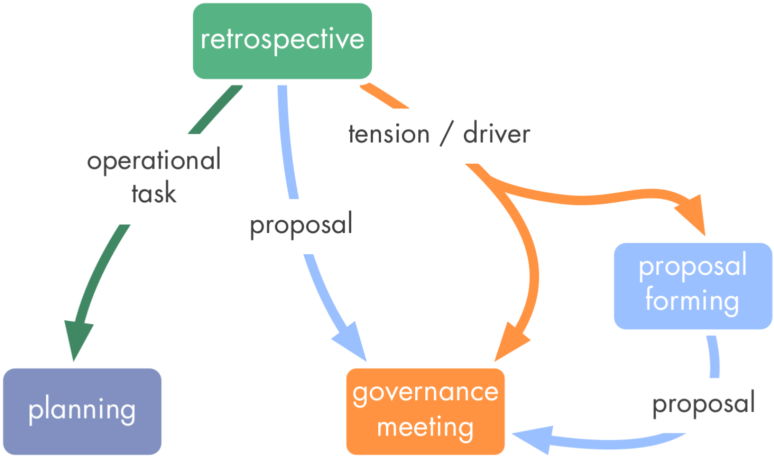
Building in continuous improvement of process:

- goal: reflection on the past to guide process improvement
- output: proposals for agreements, tensions, drivers or tasks
- facilitated meeting (~1hr)
- regular intervals (1–4 weeks)
- adapt to situation and context:
  - 5 phases with many different patterns for each phase

4.7.1. A time to reflect on process improvement

4.7.2. 5 Phases of a Retrospective Meeting

1. Set the Stage
2. Gather Data
3. Generate Insights
4. Decide What to Do
5. Close the Retrospective



Activities for each phase can be found at plans-for-retrospectives.com[1]

4.8. Visualize Work

In order to empower a circle for self-organization, we need to make transparent both the agreed upon work process and the state of all work items currently in planning, in progress or completed transparent. Only if all work items are visible to all circle members, people can pull in work when they have capacity, instead of work being pushed by a coordinator.

Collocated teams can do this with post-its on a wall, or with index cards and magnets on a white board. Distributed teams can use

[1] http://www.plans-for-retrospectives.com/

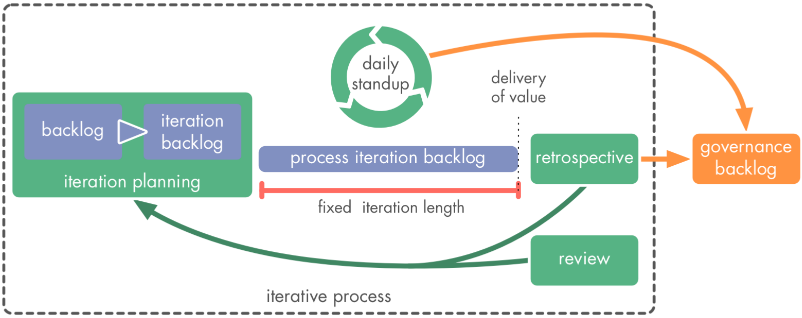


Figure 4.3.: Retrospective and Continuous Flow

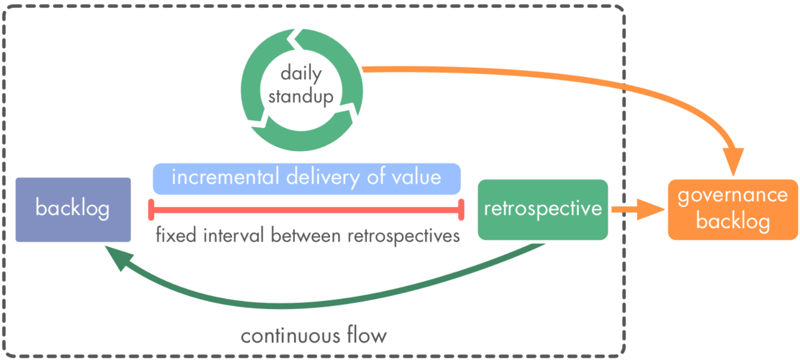


Figure 4.4.: Retrospective and Iterations

an ever increasing number of apps available for this use case , from generic tools like Google Spreadsheets or digital whiteboards, to task management systems for teams (e.g. Asana, Todoist) or dedicated apps for task boards (Trello, Kanbanery, Leankit). Many teams use both a digital system and a card wall, and synchronize them once a day, commonly around the daily standup.

When visualizing work, first try to identify what different types of work items you have, e.g. customer request, project tasks, reporting tasks, rework. Decide whether or not it is necessary to distinguish between these types of work items, and how you are going to make that visible on your board, will you use colors, or symbols, or highlights? Are there different priorities, expedite items that take priority, and if so, how do you express ?

Then figure out what stages these work items go through, like "to do", "in progress", "review" and "done". At this stage, simply visualize what you're doing already, don't make any changes to your process. You might end up with a very simple layout, or something rather complicated. Implement the layout in the system you thinks makes the most sense for you now, on a wall, or with software.

If you have any agreements guiding your workflow, e.g. which items have priority over others, or what is necessary for an item to move forward, quality standards and the like, it's a good idea to make them visible next to your board, so you can get together and review, discuss and update these agreements to improve the flow of items through your board.

5. Building Organizations

Patterns for growing an organization along the principles behind S3. In the addition to the patterns in this sections there's also two subsections: Patterns for People and Roles, and patterns for Organizational Structure.

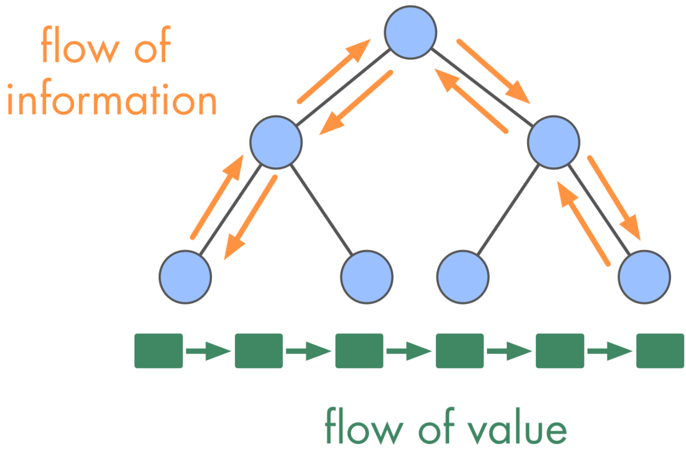
5.1. Align Flow

5.1.1. Flow of Value

- flow of value is guided by agreements (explicit and implicit), and assumptions
- work in progress is considered waste as it ties up resources
- continuous flow of value prevents accumulation of waste
  - it also makes for shorter feedback loops and amplifies learning

5.1.2. Flow of Value and Flow of Information

- in an effective organization, the **flow of information and influence supports the continuous flow of value**



- alignment is achieved and maintained through continuous improvement of agreements

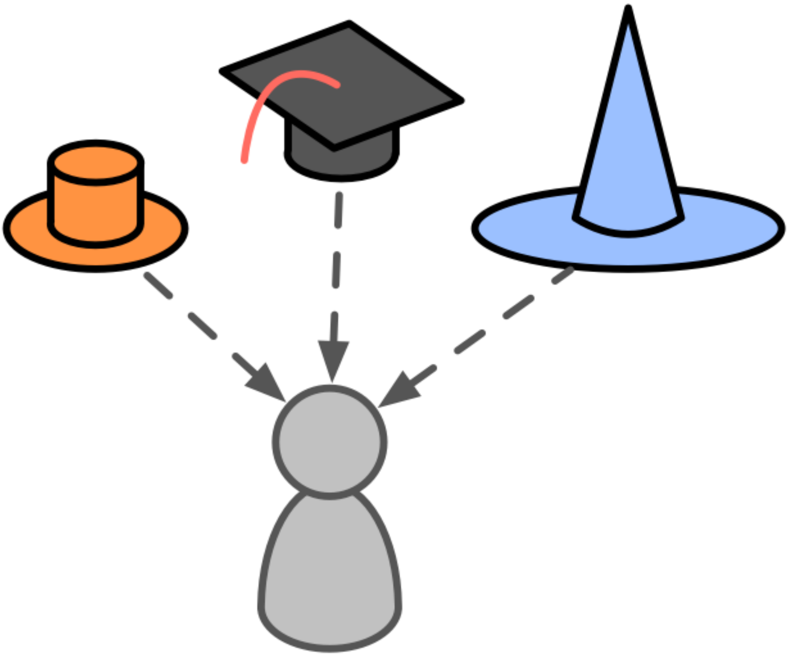
5.2. Open Systems

...

5.3. Organize in nested domains

...

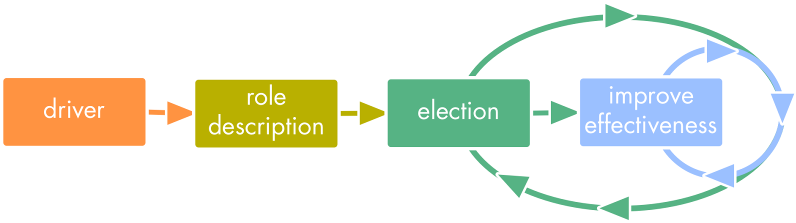
6. People and Roles



6.1. People, Functions and Roles

- identify functions required to respond to a driver
- if a function is best addressed by a role:
  - define the role
  - select people for the role
  - support development of people in the role

6.2. Role Definition and Improvement

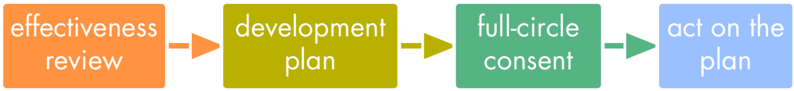


6.3. Performance Improvement Process

Continuous improvement of the effectiveness of people in roles ##

1. Conduct effectiveness review
2. Create development plan
3. Full circle consents to development plan
4. Act on the plan

...



6.4. Development Plan

Contents:

- current role description
- appreciations
- areas for improvement
- action items to improve effectiveness
- evaluation criteria
- suggested amendments to role description

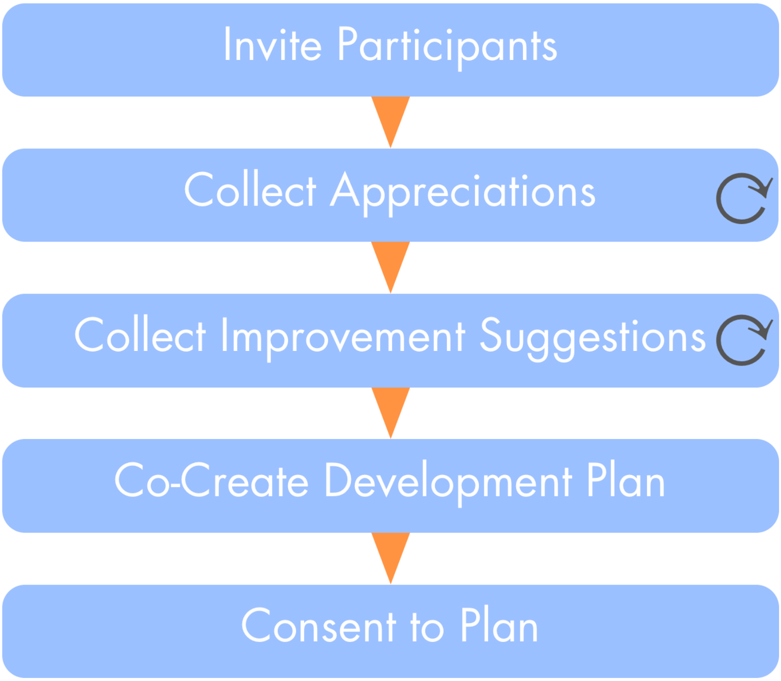
6.5. Effectiveness Review

- a process to harvest appreciations, identify opportunities for improvement and evolve the role
- the individual holding the role initiates the process and begins each step

6.5.1. Steps

1. Invite people with complementing perspectives to contribute to the review, and a facilitator

2. Collect appreciations
3. Identify areas for improvement
    - personal development
    - updates to role description, function or driver
4. Co-create and consent to a development plan



6.6. Role

...

6.7. Role Description

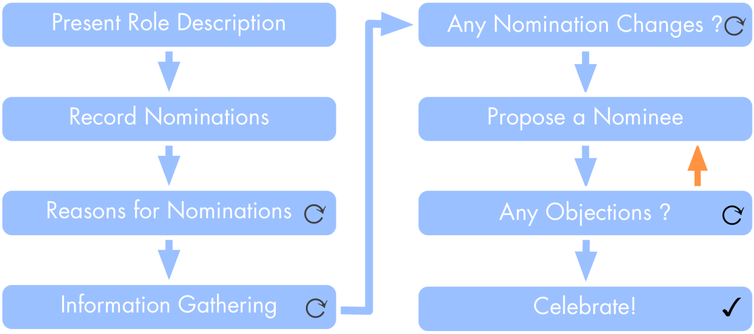
- role descriptions can be created using proposal forming
- a minimal role description contains:
  - driver
  - term
  - key responsibilities
  - preferable skills, experience and qualities
  - cadence of effectiveness reviews

6.7.1. Template for Role Descriptions

6.8. Role Selection

- People avoid expressing interest before elections
- Nominations are made on the strength of the reason
  - not according to the majority
- You can nominate yourself or pass
- When harvesting objections, ask the candidate last
- Objections may be resolved by amending the role description or by nominating someone else


Name of the Role
Date
Term (date of next selection)
Driver
Responsibilities, Resources
Skills, Experience, Qualities, Time
Schedule for Effectiveness Reviews



6.9. Support Roles

...

7. Organizational Structure

The primary function of organizational structure is **to enable effective collaboration** by aligning the flow of information to support the flow of value..

Organizational structure needs to evolve continuously in order to adapt to a changing environment.

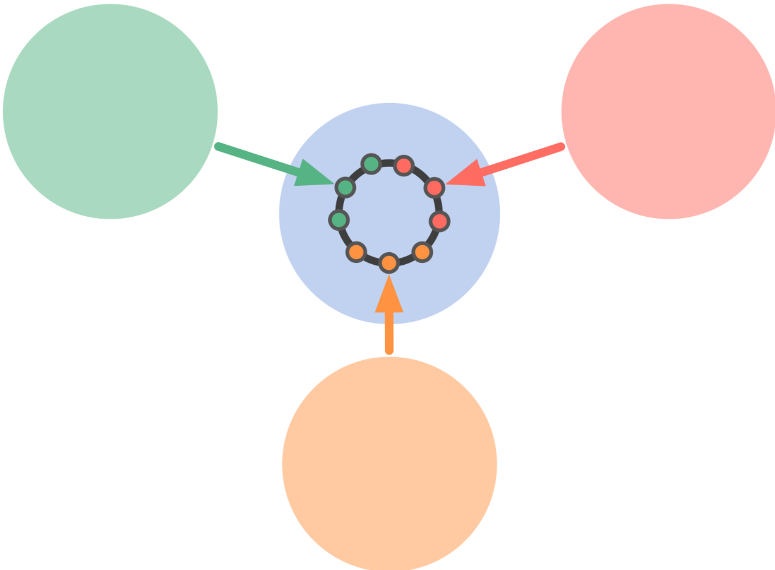
Semi-autonomous, self-organizing and self-governing circles are the basic building blocks for organizational structure.

7.1. Structural Patterns

- Sociocracy 3.0 describes a variety of patterns to grow organizational structure
- patterns apply to different layers of abstraction (basic, micro, macro and meta)
- different patterns serve different drivers
- patterns can be combined as needed
- more patterns are out there and will be discovered

7.2. Backbone Organization

A pattern for multi-stakeholder projects or services.

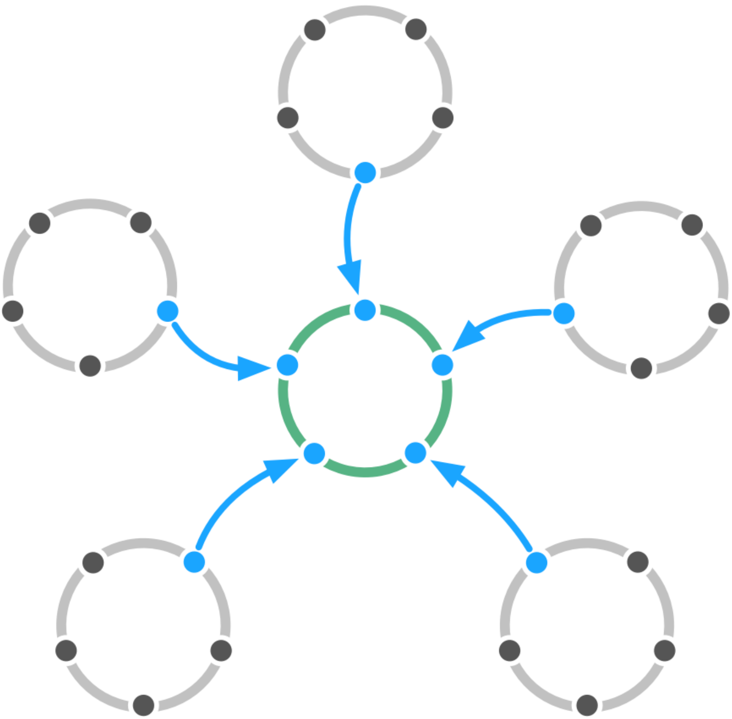


7.3. Coordination Circle

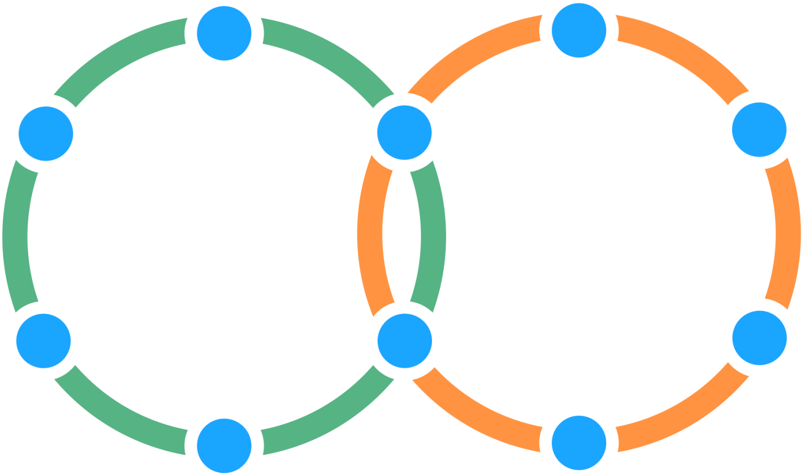
...

7.4. Delegate Circle

A pattern for coordination



7.5. Double Linking

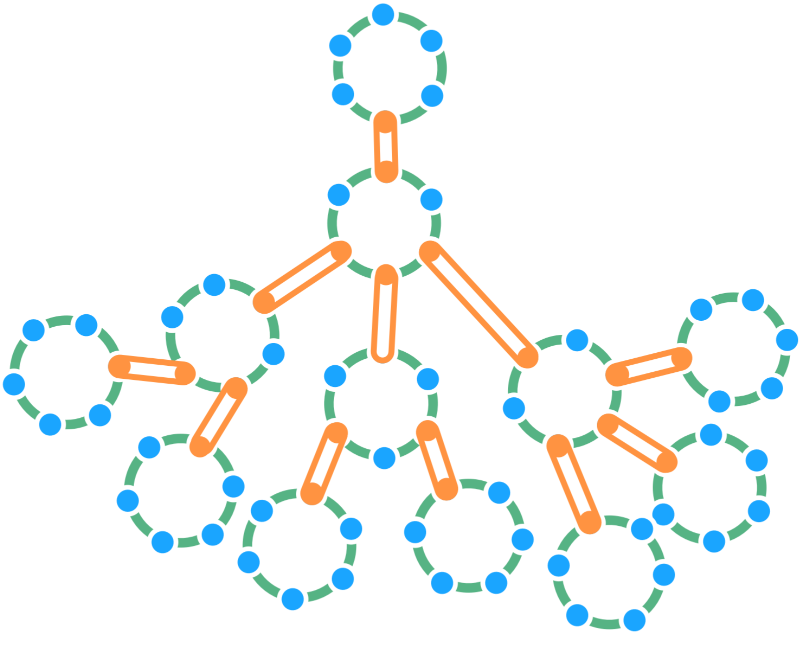


7.5.1. Facilitate two-way flow of information and influence

- Two interdependent circles each elect a representative to participate as full members in both circles' governance meetings
- can be used to prevent tensions in hierarchical structures

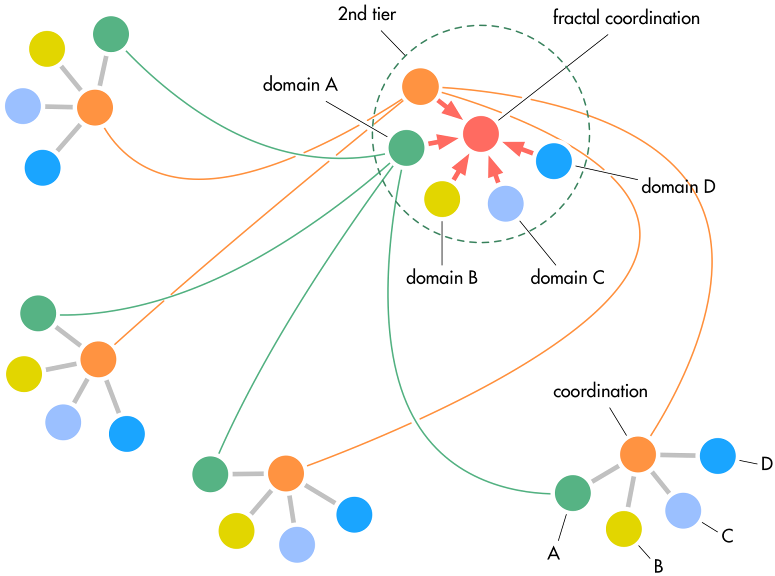
7.6. Double-Linked Hierarchy

A pattern for the early phase of a transformation ##



7.7. Fractal Organization

A Pattern for learning, coordination and alignment across organizational boundaries.



7.8. Helping Circle

Driver

- a circle requires a simple service, but has not enough capacity

A group of people with the mandate to execute on rules and guidelines set by the circle that encloses or "owns" the helping circle.

Within the boundaries defined by the rules and guidelines the helping circle might self-organize, or work with a coordinator or leader. A helping circle usually has no navigation meeting, but may raise objections to rules and guidelines to the parent circle.

7.9. Nested Circle

A pattern for expanding functions

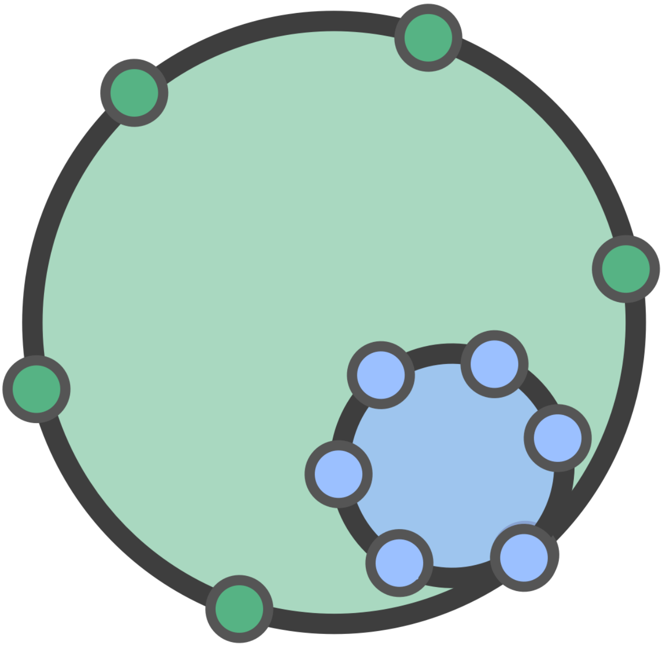
7.10. Peach Organization

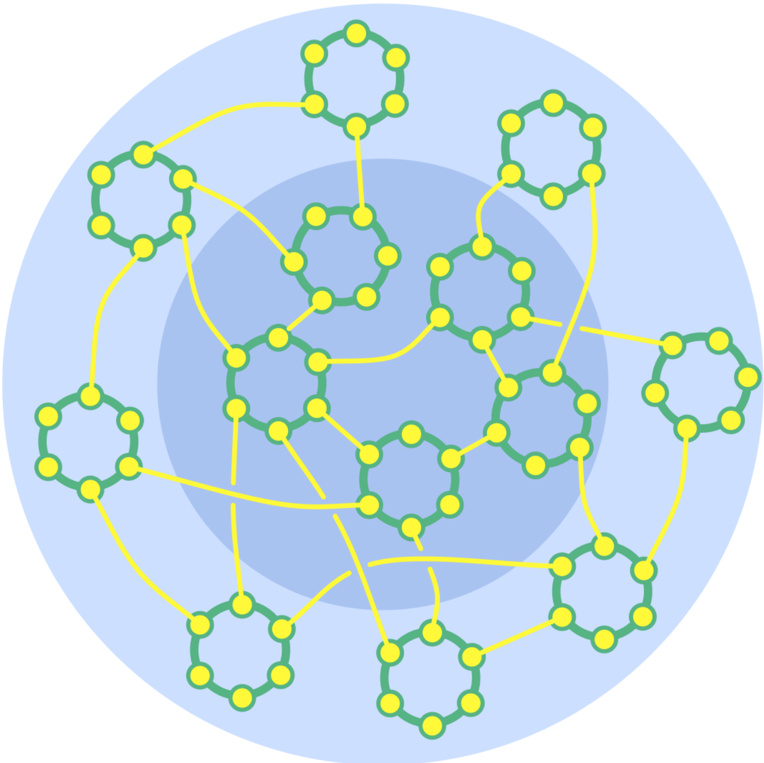
Periphery drives the organization, the center provides services.

7.11. Representative

Representatives (a.k.a Links)...:

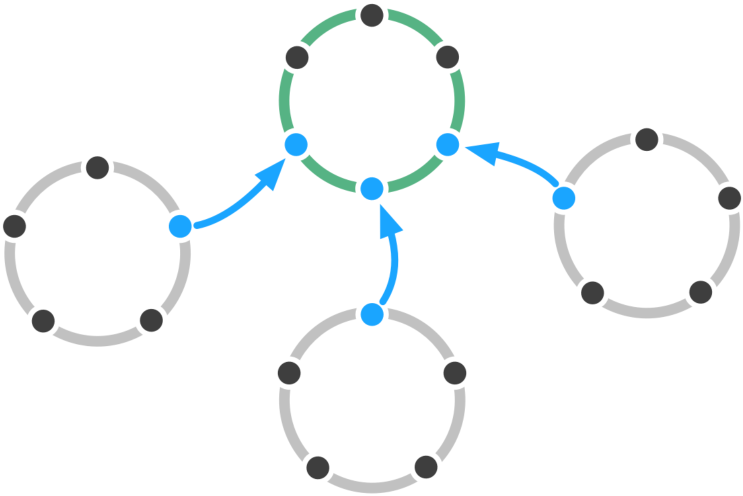
- ...stand for the interests of one circle in another circle
- ...are elected for a limited term
- ...participate as full members in governance meetings of the other circle and can:
  - raise items for the agenda
  - object to agreements and proposals





7.12. Service Circle

A pattern for outsourcing shared services



8. Bringing In S3 Patterns

The patterns for introducing an organization to S3 are all based on the paradigm of inviting change.

8.1. Adapt Patterns To Context

Patterns are merely ideas that worked for somebody somewhere, in their culture, their perception of the world, their strengths and growing edges. Your context is certainly different, so if you simply copy and paste a pattern, it might not work for you. This is why you sometimes need to adapt a pattern to your context.

8.1.1. Context for Successful Application:

In order to successfully adapt a pattern, a circle needs to develop shared understanding of both the pattern and their specific context. In almost every case it makes sense to gather the circle for this, to ensure both buy-in of all circle members and availability of all the knowledge and experience present in the circle. Often it's a good idea for everyone to review the pattern before the workshop.

8.1.2. Application

The basic steps of the process of adapting a pattern are very simple, and can be implemented in various levels of detail:

- develop shared understanding of the pattern and your context
- co-create an adaptation of the pattern
- evaluate effectiveness and evolve your adaptation
- share your experience with others, and consider feeding back successful adaptations to the S3 handbook

Understand the Pattern and Your Context

Here's a set of activities to guide you, pick those you find valuable for you. It's up to the facilitator to facilitate them in rounds or as a brainstorming, and to visualize all the results in a way they can be seen by all participants. Give space for questions, so at the end everyone feels they understand the outcome.

- What is the **problem the pattern aims to solve**? How does this match to your driver for seeking out this pattern? Note similarities and differences.
- What is the **context for successful application** of the pattern? List both the common ground and the differences to your context?
- If the pattern describes **variants**, determine which variant might be the best fit for you. It is this variant you would attempt to adapt first.

- Does your context match one or several of the **known limitations** or disadvantages of a pattern? Make a note which ones.
- If the pattern description lists **advantages**, mark the ones you would want to preserve.
- If the patterns contains **references** to other patterns, go and see if they contain something to help you.
- How does the pattern relate to each of the **seven principles behind S3**? Note what is important and should be preserved.

Co-Create an Adaptation of the Pattern

A simple an effective way for creating an adaptation of a pattern is Proposal Forming[1], where you can use the output of the first phase as considerations or ingredients for your adaptation.

Considering Intended Outcome[2] and Evaluation Criteria[3] of your proposed adaptation will help you evaluate and evolve the patterns later.

The proposal needs to be agreed upon by the circle, e.g. by using Consent Decision Making[4]

[1] proposal-forming.md
[2] intended-outcome.md
[3] evaluation-criteria.md
[4] consent-decision-making.md

8.1.3. Variants

If you feel that everyone has a solid understanding of the context and the pattern anyway, e.g. because you are already using it for a while and experience limitations, you might skip the first part and go right into *Proposal Forming*.

A circle might also appoint one or several members to create a proposal for an adaptation in any way they see fit, e.g. by using the activities for understanding pattern and context suggested above, and then present the proposal to the circle, e.g. in the Navigation Meeting[5].

8.1.4. Known Limitations

Adapting patterns works best when everyone involved is invested in understanding S3 principles, the pattern in question and the context of the circle. Some circles have a culture of high resistance to things they did not develop themselves, or they have pain points or blind spots which make it difficult to approach some patterns with an open mind.

8.2. Be The Change

Be the change you want to create, tell the story how you discovered S3. Invite others for experiments, invite them to share their stories, learn and grow together.

[5]navigation-meeting.md

8.3. Continuous Improvement Of Work Process

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8.4. Open S3 Adoption

Instead of mandating S3, the formal authorities make the call for members of the organization to get together in an Open Space and invite them to co-create experiments they'd like to conduct around S3 patterns. This usually happens after some small experiments in an organization demonstrated the potential of S3.

Conducting the first Open Space:

- explain boundaries for experiments: S3 principles and patterns
- explain Open Space rules and principle
- co-create agenda
- provide space to share experiences and ideas between sessions
- provide a platform for announcing initiatives and experiments
- announce next Open Space

In regular intervals, usually twice a year, the whole organization will get together again in an Open Spaces to evaluate experiment and design new ones. In between Open Spaces formal authorities support the experiments and collect stories.

This pattern is based on OpenSpace agility (formerly Open Agile Adoption) by Dan Mezick.

8.5. Pull-System For Organizational Change

Change in organization (e.g. reorganizations), is commonly designed by a small group of people, often without even consulting many those affected by that change. This is not only a sure way of creating resistance to change in people, it also does not take into account the actual capacity for change, often overloading the system and therefore reducing the overall capacity of the system - the exact opposite of the intended outcome of the change. This often leads to the even more change in search of increased effectiveness.

When instead of mandating change, we create a pull-system for change by giving the people decision making power over all agreements which affect them, they will be able to navigate both scope and speed of organizational changes themselves, growing a learning organization with a much greater chance of recovering from overload and usually preventing it altogether.

Over time, this will allow for the transition from organizational change as a mere reaction to changes in the environment (e.g. the market) towards intentional change.

In context to S3, organizational change is creating and evolving agreements about how we organize and collaborate, sometimes in the form of agreeing to experiment with new patterns from S3.

S3 contains various patterns which are helpful for empowering people to pull in organizational change, here's a shortlist of where to look first:

- At the very beginning, you need to invite people to learn more about S3, e.g. through the pattern *Be The Change*
- when the group understands and *Adopts S3 Principles*, the principles can serve as an anchor for discussing potential solutions
- *Consent Decision Making* helps people to make decisions without becoming overwhelmed
- even if you don't go for decisions by consent right away, e.g. because you operate in a low trust environment, *Proposal Forming* can be used to tap creativity and wisdom of the group when preparing organizational change
- developing shared understanding of *Drivers* enables groups to find more effective solutions to problems
- *Navigate via Tensions* helps identify and tackle the most relevant challenges

Of course, taking responsibility for all decisions that affect them is tough to swallow for many groups, and different members will have a different understanding of what makes a good decision making process. To reduce resistance, simply invite the group to try *Proposal Forming* and *Consent Decision Making*as an experiment for a month. In the absence of objections, schedule a review session with everyone one month in the future. This will create a safe space for each participant to develop an understanding of their contribution in this new way of making decisions a being accountable. They will learn to trust in the circle to make decisions every can live with, and to bring about change in a pace the circle can sustain. Depending on an organization's culture or a circle's history, mentoring and coaching is helpful to support the circle in moving out of their comfort zone and discovering their true capacity for change.

9. Alignment

The patterns in this section help an organization align on many different levels.

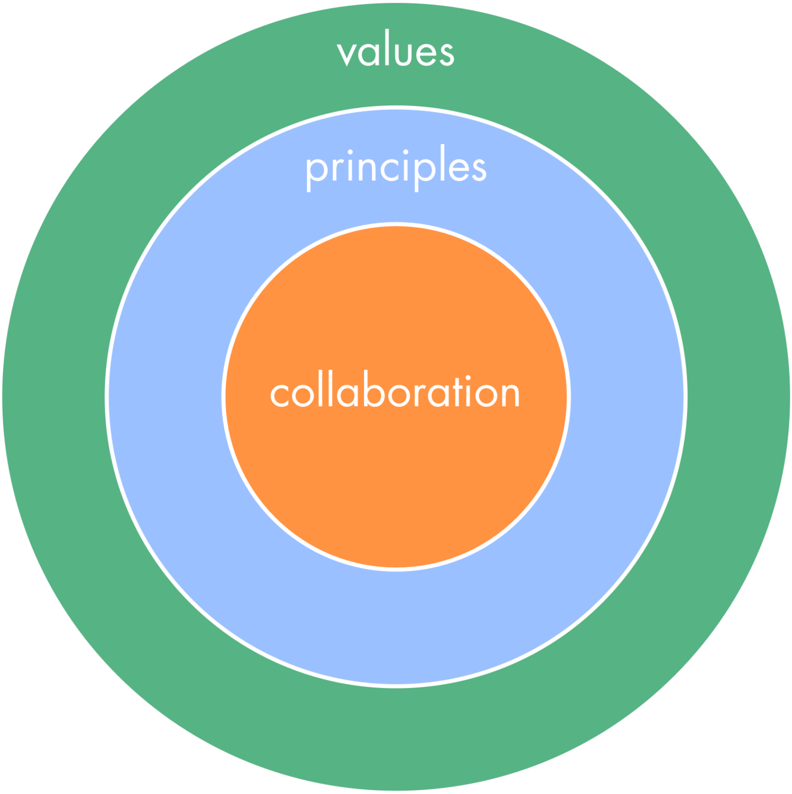
Adopt S3 Principles and Agree on Values help establish general guidelines we can all agree on, and thus reduce the number of explicit agreements we need to make, Contracting and Accountability brings clarity around the relationship of the individual to the organization, Transparent Salary offers a perspective of aligning agreements on compensation with the principles of S3.

9.1. Adopt S3 Principles

Driver:

- principles are reflected in all patterns
- chosen values (or implicit assumption) guide behavoiur
- need: align chosen values and S3 principles to reduce tension with S3 patterns
- need: understand principles for correct application of patterns

All patterns contained in S3 are built on seven core principles: consent, empiricism, equivalence, accountability, effectiveness, transparency and continuous improvement.



When we **Agree On Values**, we need to check how our chosen values relate to S3's principles, if there's a conflict, this will most likely result tensions with at least some of S3's patterns .

Our chosen values should be unique for our organization, they're how we define our specific culture.

However, we can also agree on adopting S3's principles as an additional set of general principles to guide our actions and interactions.

This agreement would include three different aspects:

- how can we make sure everyone knows and unserstands the 7 principles?
- what can we do to help each other apply the 7 principles?
- what do we do when we suspect one or more principles are violated in a certain situation?

Each organization or group needs to find their own answers for these questions, e.g. through *Proposal Forming*, here's a few examples:

- learn and understand: print the descriptions of the principles form this handbook for everyone, then get together, pick a pattern from the handbook (at the beginning stick to those you already use), and discuss how this pattern relates to each of the principles
- support each other in application: have a poster with the agreements in your meeting room, so when making an agreements, you are reminded to check how a proposal relates to each of the principles
- suspected conflict with principles: agree on a protocol for raising concerns or asking about the intended outcome of a proposal or somebody's actions in relation to the 7 principles.

9.2. Agree On Values

A pattern for setting boundaries for behavior, decisions and actions by adopting a set of values that is shared throughout an organization.

Motivation for this pattern: Culture in an organization is formed through implicit assumptions or explicit agreements about acceptable behavior. Agreements and assumptions can vary throughout an organization.

Making an explicit commitment to aligning behavior, decisions and actions along shared values improves effectiveness. A **value** is a principle of some significance that guides behavior. **Chosen values** are an intentional and collaborative effort to create the culture people want to see in an organization.

9.2.1. Indicators for using this pattern

Conditions:

- lack of shared understanding of the ethical boundaries of decisions and actions across an organization
- more or less radically different cultures in different parts of an organization
- culture in an organization appears to impede greater effectiveness

Needs:

- bring members of an organization closer together and align teams
- develop norms that compliment objectives
- reduce investment required for making effective decisions

9.2.2. The details

When discussing shared values, it can be challenging for the members of an organization to identify and articulate their shared intrinsic values, because their personal values meet with **explicit and implicit assumptions about expected and appropriate behavior** in the organization. Additionally these assumptions may depend on context, e.g. people behave differently when a CEO is present in a meeting, and there's often different cultures in different parts of the organizations, e.g. in engineering, sales and management.

Therefore it's usually easier for people to focus on what behavior they consider as supportive of effective collaboration.

These are their **chosen values** - the set of values members agree on and commit to in an intentional and collaborative effort of aligning towards both achieving organizational objectives and growing the kind of culture they want to see.

Chosen values support effectiveness of an organization by:

- offering **guidance** to determine appropriate action or behavior, often reducing the need for more specific agreements.
- reducing potential for **misunderstanding**

- **aligning** decision making and action
- **inviting contribution** of all its members
- **attracting new members, partners and customers** in natural alignment with the organization

Putting it into practice

Since commitment to a set of chosen values is an experiment, an organization benefits from developing strategies for:

- supporting each other in developing shared understanding of the values and for applying them consistently
- learning when values might be updated, refined, or even dropped
- responding to situations where individuals suspect a value may have been compromised or overlooked
- discovering and changing existing practices or agreements that stand in the way of adopting a shared value

As an organization grows structure it is natural that different flavors of culture evolve in different domains. Alignment with chosen values across an entire organization allows for diversity without compromising the wellbeing of the organization.

Articulating values

In order to make chosen values as helpful as possible, consider these guidelines:

1. Agree on the motivation for each value first and imagine the culture that's desired.
2. Limit chosen values to 5–7 if possible.
3. Express values in concrete terms that people can act on, rather than as abstract concepts.
4. Create a visual representation of each value.
5. Make chosen values visible everywhere in the organization so it's easy to remember and refer to them.
6. Make culture a priority, and get together on a regular basis to understand, develop and evolve values, e.g. twice a year in an open space (see *Open S3 Adoption*).

9.2.3. Related patterns

- *Open S3 Adoption* helps with regular review of chosen values
- a *Retrospective* offers a space to observe the effect of adhering to or ignoring values
- *Adopt S3 Principles* may help with reducing the number of chosen values necessary by providing a set of principles beneficial to all organizations
- *Driver* helps understand and articulate motivation for chosen values

9.3. Bylaws

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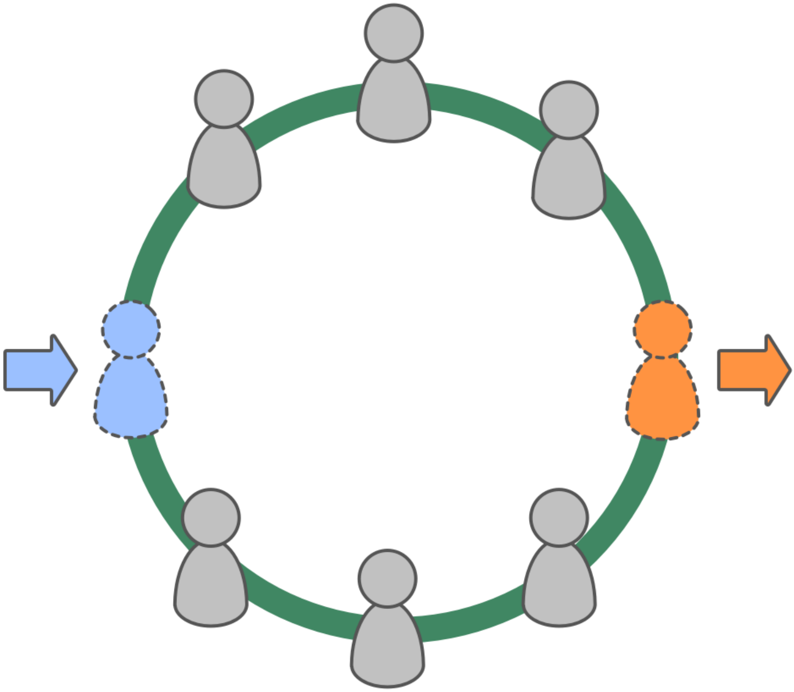
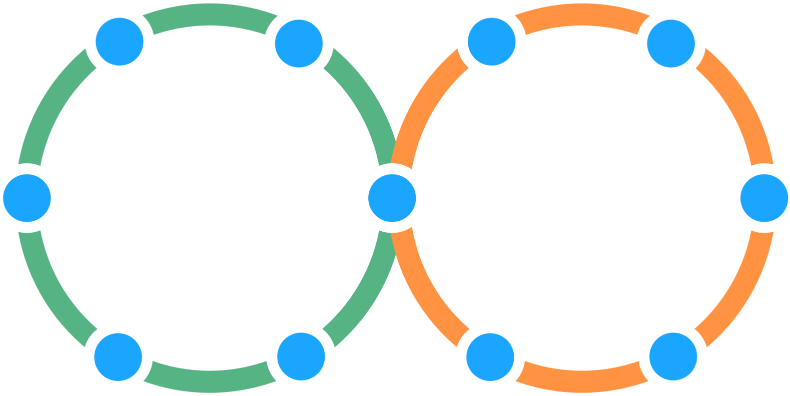
9.4. Contracting And Accountability



- define the process for entering the organization
- define default role for a new member
- define the process for leaving an organization

9.5. Linking

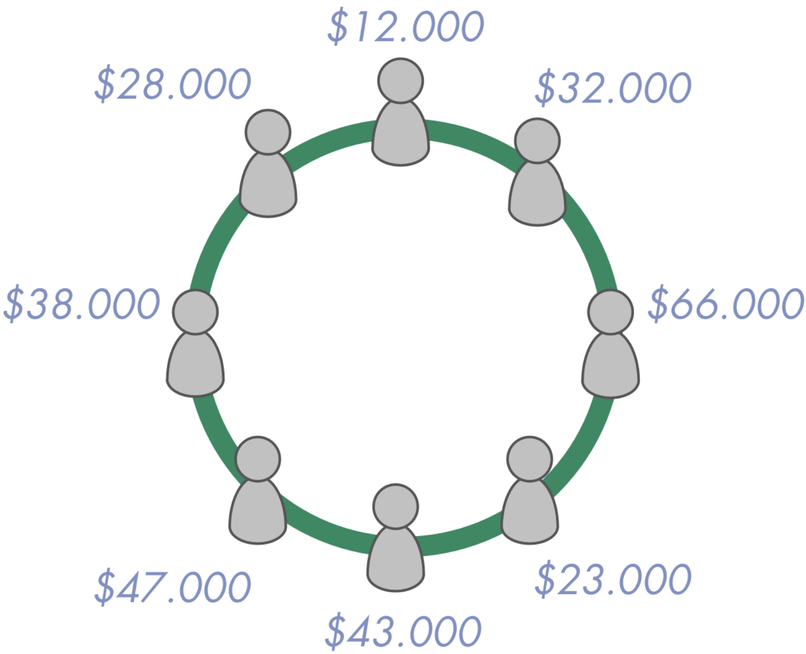
9.5.1. Connecting two circles



9.6. Transparent Salary

- transparent salaries need to be fair
- perception of fairness is specific to organization
- consider members and relevant stakeholders (e.g. investors)
- classic sociocracy: everyone feels gains and losses
- consider remuneration for changing roles

- create strategy for transitioning towards new contracts and compensation agreements



Part III.

Appendix

1. Changelog

2016–2–29

- cleaned up image folder

2016–01–28

- Conversion of the material contained in the "Introduction to Sociocracy 3.0" slide deck

2016–01–27

- Initial setup of the patterns repository.