

Sociocracy 3.0 - Patterns for Agile Organizations

All Patterns Explained

Bernhard Bockelbrink

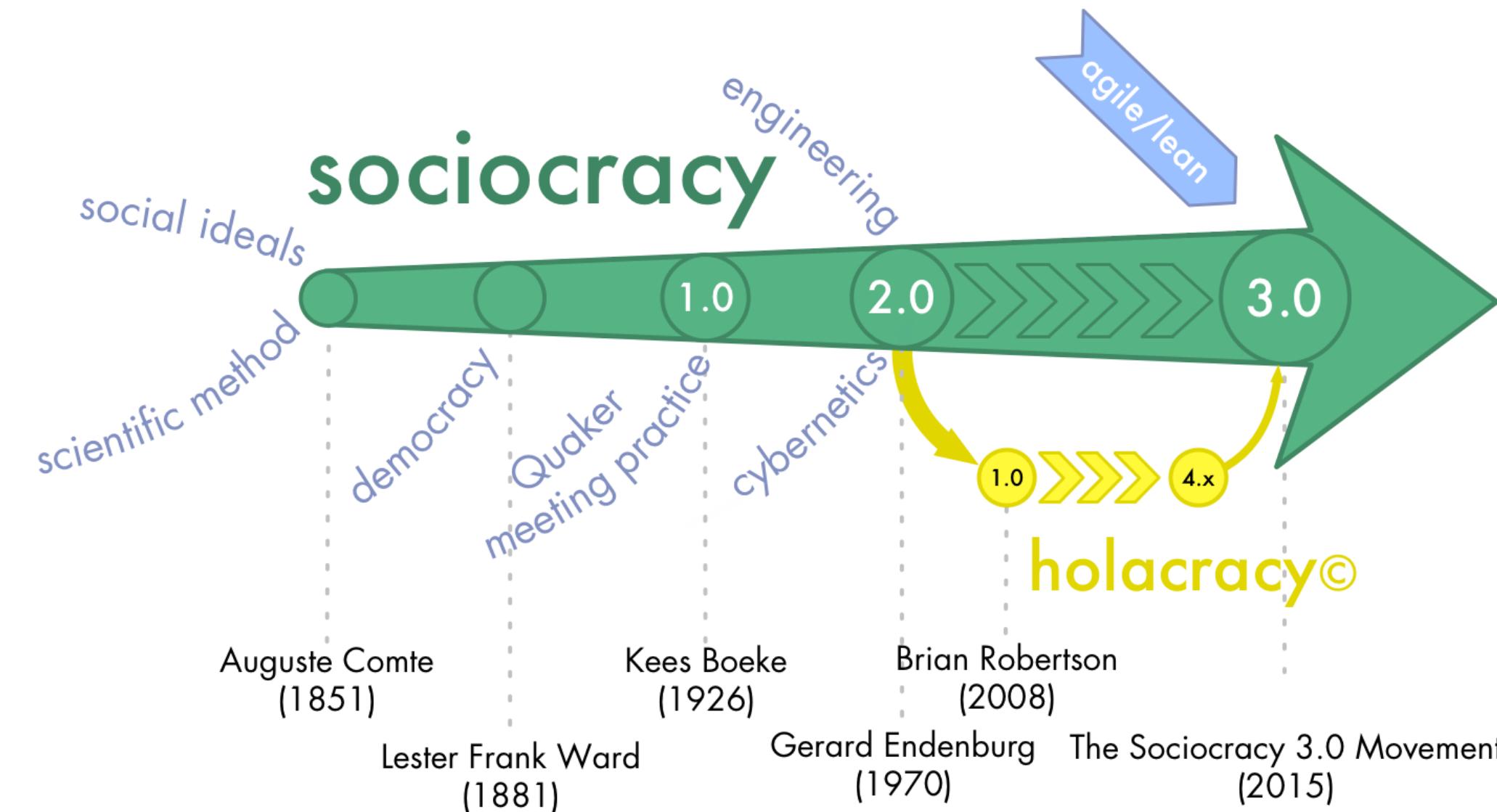
<http://evolvingcollaboration.com>

Sociocracy 3.0 is a Framework of Patterns for Collaboration in Agile Organizations

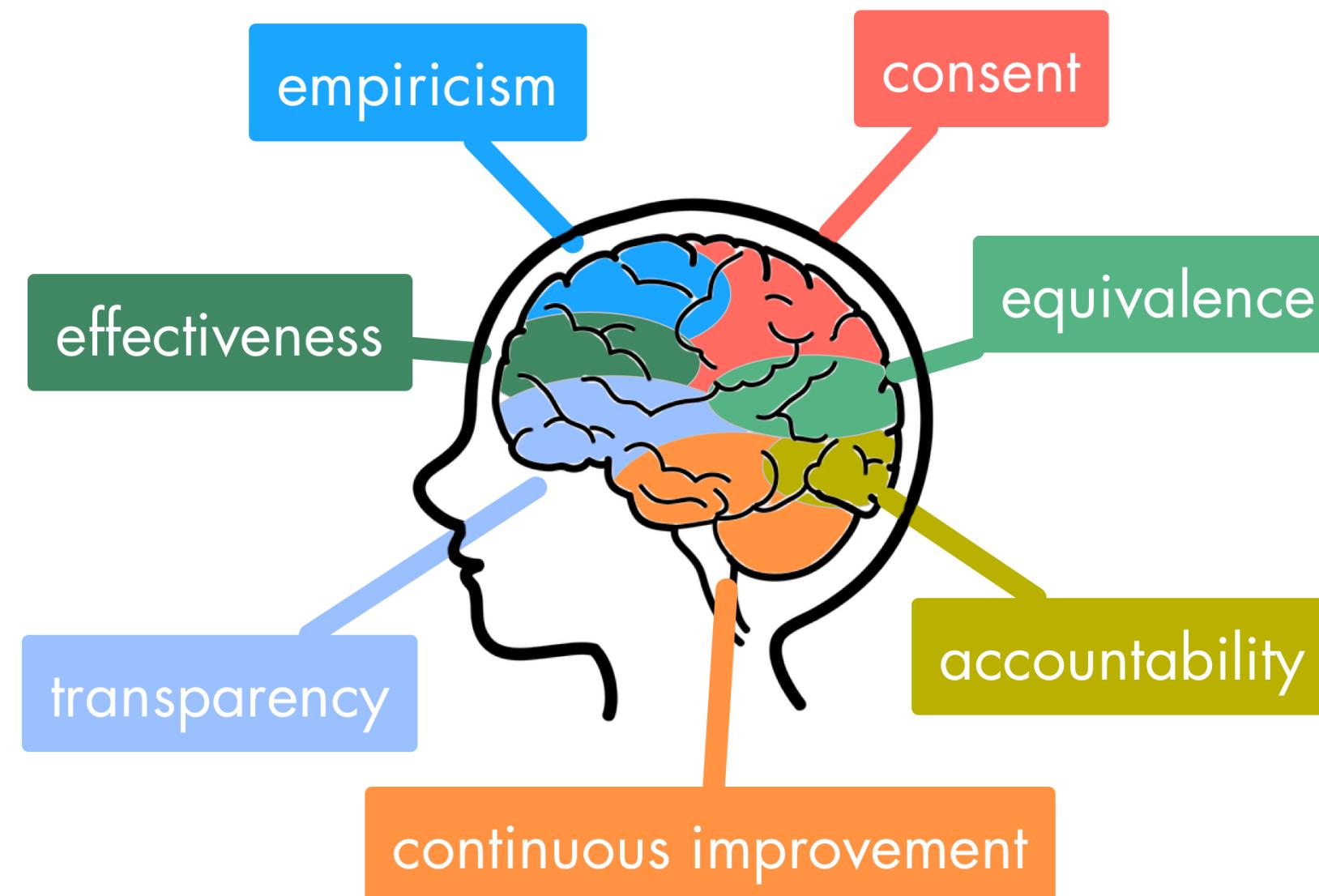
A **pattern** is a template for successfully navigating a specific context.

- patterns are discovered through observing many organizations as they solve problems
- patterns may need to be adapted and evolved to suit differing contexts

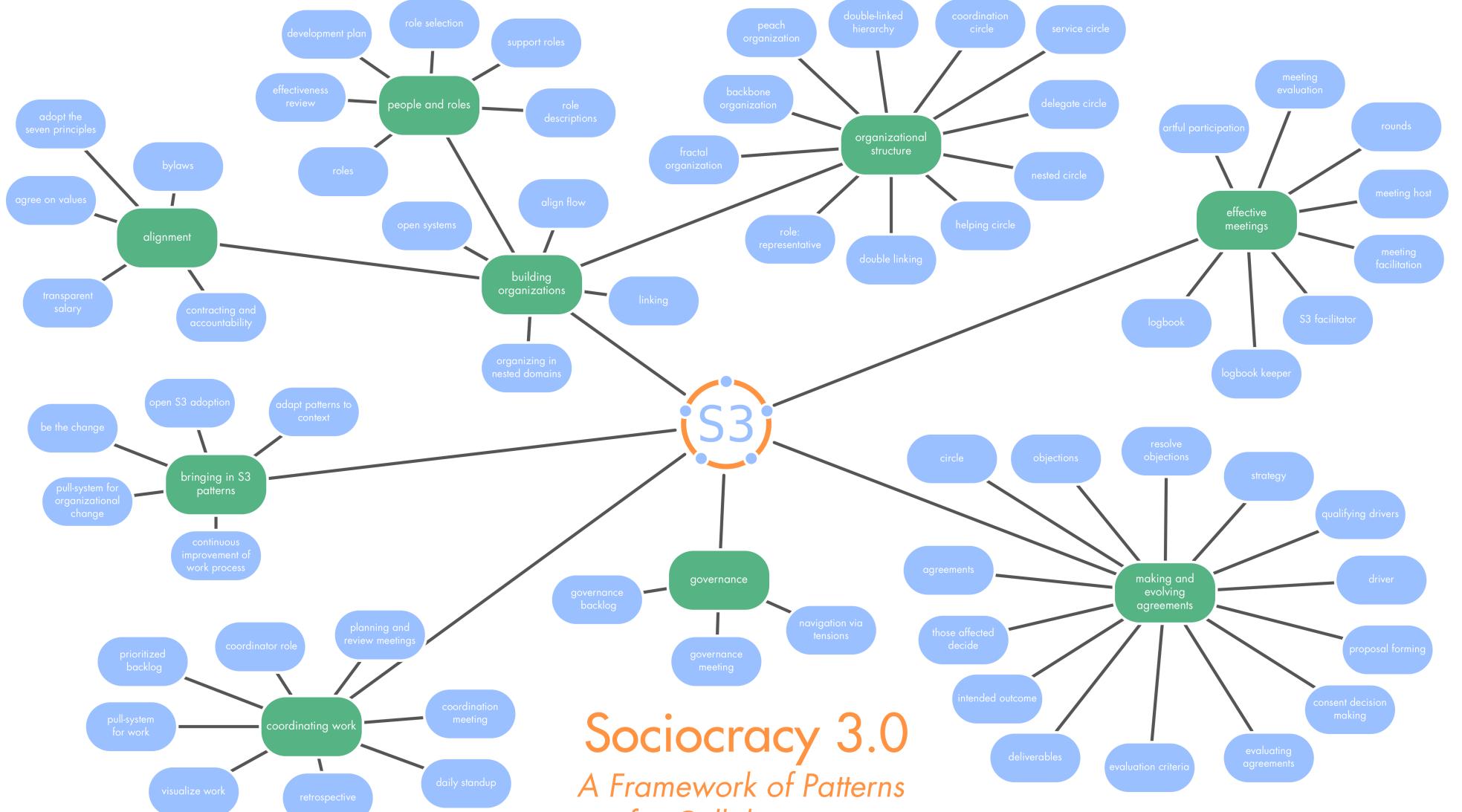
Influences and History



All Patterns are based on The Seven Principles



65 Patterns



Sociocracy 3.0
A Framework of Patterns
for Collaboration

Revision: 2016-03-03



Bernhard Bockelbrink
James Priest

9 Pattern Groups



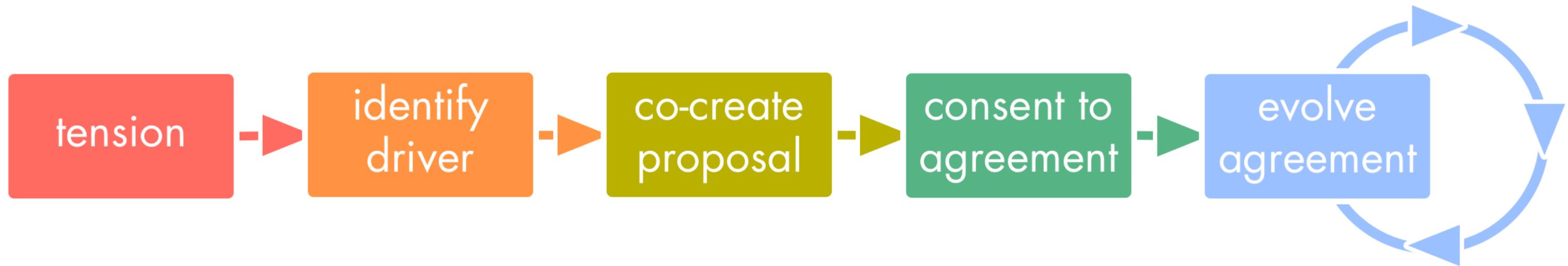
1. Making And Evolving Agreements



S3 promotes a hypothesis-driven approach to decision making



Agreement Life-Cycle



Making And Evolving Agreements

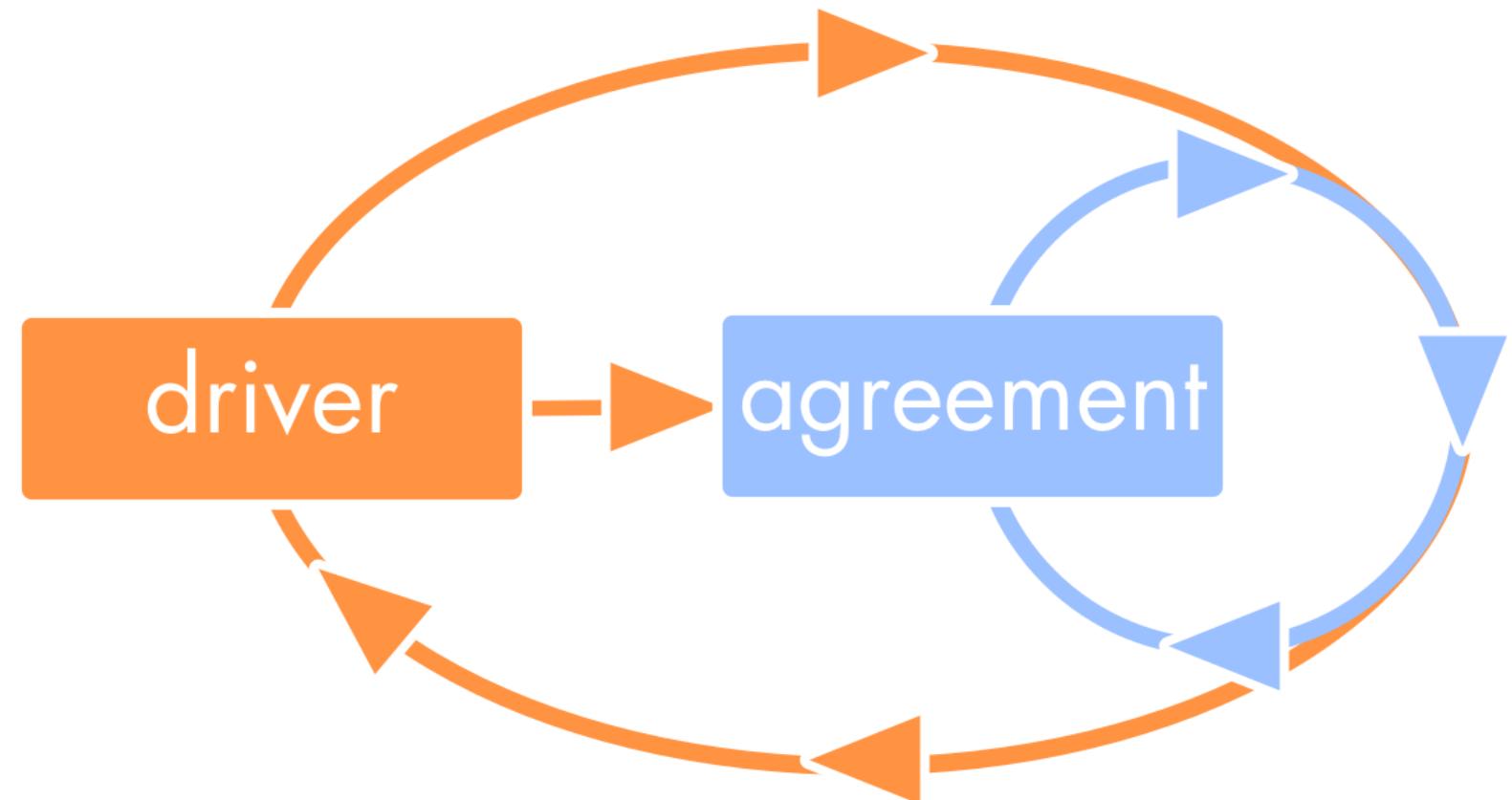
Pattern Index:

- P1.1: Agreements
- P1.2: Circle
- P1.3: Consent Decision Making
- P1.4: Deliverables
- P1.5: Driver
- P1.6: Evaluate Agreements
- P1.7: Evaluation Criteria
- P1.8: Intended Outcome
- P1.9: Objections
- P1.10: Proposal Forming
- P1.11: Qualifying Drivers
- P1.12: Resolve Objections
- P1.13: Strategy
- P1.14: Those Affected Decide

P1.1: Agreements

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

- agreements are created in order to respond to drivers
- agreements are the **accountability of the circle** that created them
- each agreement includes **evaluation criteria** and is subject to **regular review**



Template for Agreements

Title	
Date	Review Date
Driver	
Description	
Evaluation Criteria	
■	
■	
■	
(Concerns)	
■	
■	
■	

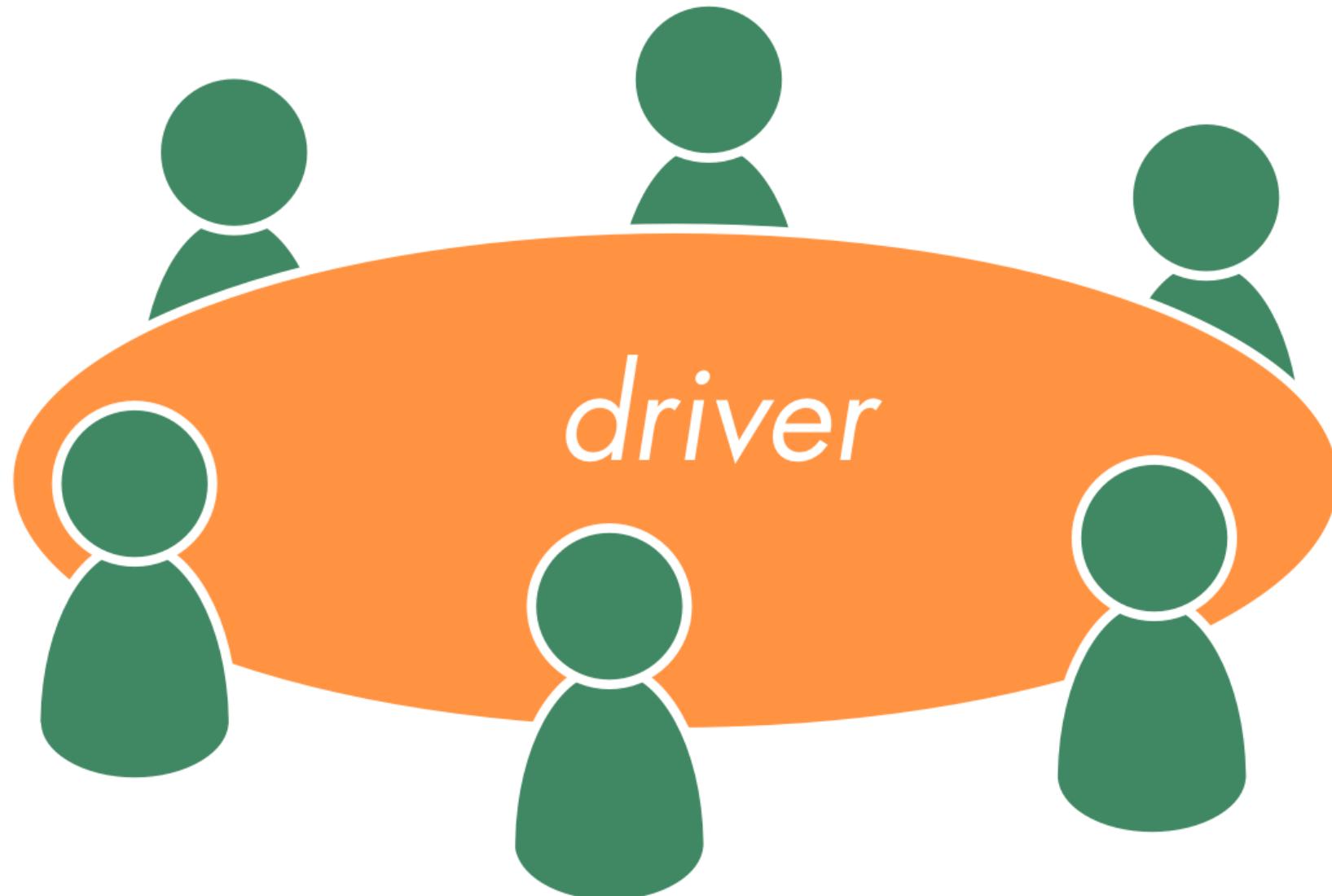
Appendix	
Picture Forming	
Background Information	
Previous Versions	
References	
■	
■	
■	

P1.2: Circle

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

A circle...

- ...is the basic building block of an organization
- ...may be permanent or temporary
- ...makes all agreements by consent
- ...is accountable for its own development



Circle (cont.)

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

Consent to Driver

P1.3: Consent Decision Making

- facilitated decision making process
- collect objections from everyone affected and integrate the wisdom they contain in proposals or existing agreements
- withholding objections could harm the aims of a group or organization
- unresolved objections stop proposals becoming agreements
- can you *live with it* until the review? ➤ proposals only need to be *good enough for now, safe enough to try*

Present Proposal

Clarifying Questions



Brief Response



Harvest Objections



Integrate Wisdom

Contact of Consent

- in the absence of objections against an agreement you support following through on the agreement as good as possible
- as soon as you become aware of an objection, or a tension with the agreement, you bring it to the circle to process it.

P1.4: Deliverables

A **deliverable** is something which is provided as a result of an agreement, usually framed as a product, a service, or an expectation.

Describing deliverables:

- goal: shared understanding
- include reasonable amount of detail
- reference other documents when helpful or necessary

Deliverables (cont.)

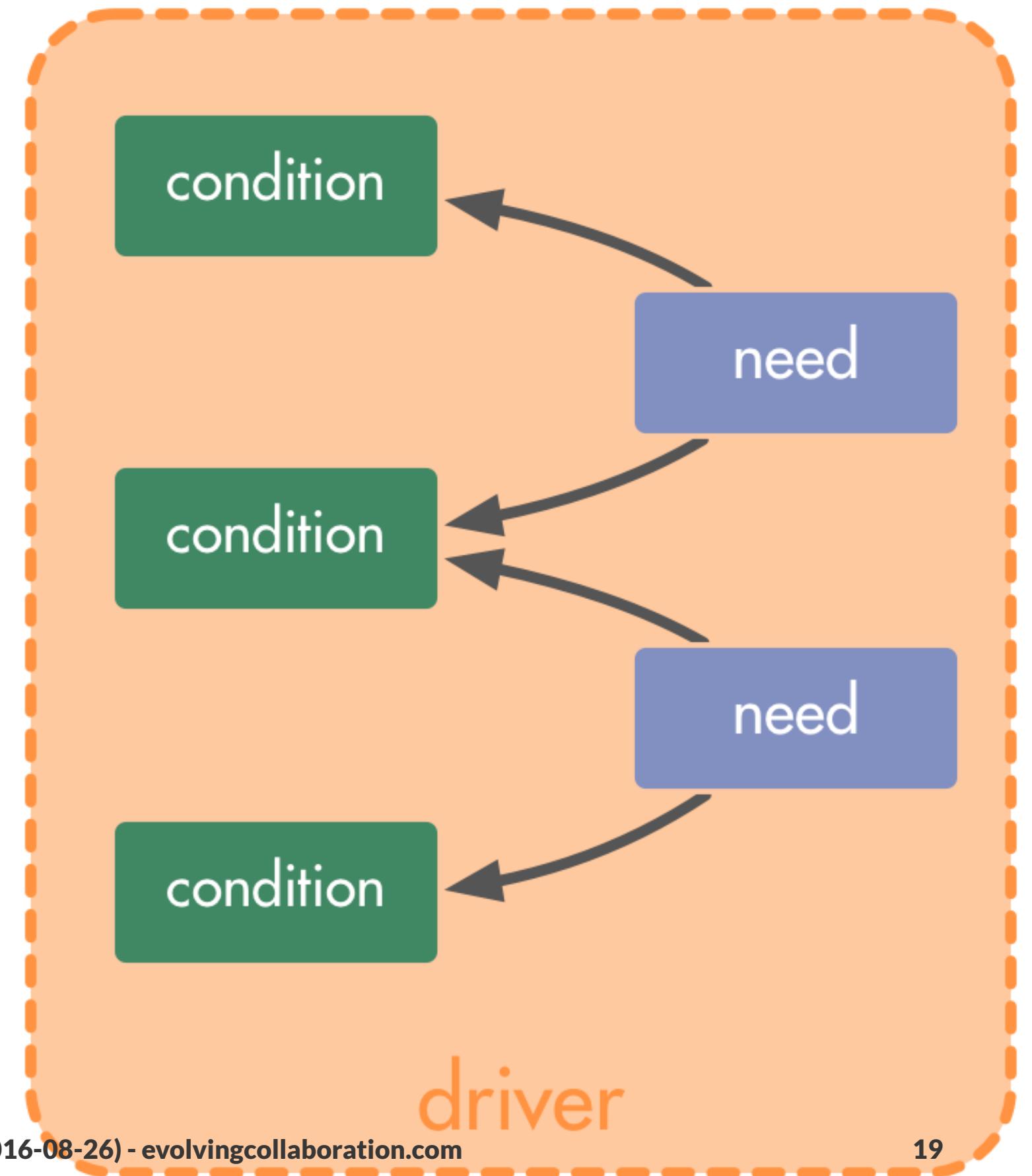
Deliverables are useful for:

- organizational strategy
- circle strategy
- development plans
- role descriptions
- process policy
- any other agreement

P1.5: Driver

- **shared understanding** of our motivation for action (the "why")
- describes a **specific situation**: conditions and the **needs** we associate with it
- focus on the **present**, not future or assumptions
- precedes goals, objectives, aims, mission, vision, purpose
- **incrementally refined**, easy to review

The response to a driver is usually an experiment, that evolves over time with what is learned along the way.



Review of Drivers:

- Is the description of the situation still correct?
- Do we still associate the same needs with the situation?
- Is the driver still within our domain?
- Is the driver still relevant?



Drivers: Value and Waste

Value is the importance, worth or usefulness of something in relation to responding to a driver.

Waste is anything not necessary for - or standing in the way of - effective response of 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

P1.6: Evaluate Agreements

The periodical review of agreements is an essential practice for a learning organization: continuously improving the body of agreements, and eliminating waste:

- adapt to changes in context
- integrate emerging knowledge
- adjust expectations and actual outcome

Is the agreement still relevant?

Is the agreement still good enough for now and safe enough to try?

Is there a reason why NOT to continue with this agreement?

Evaluate Agreements (cont.)

- preparation
 - schedule review
 - update documents and metrics
 - prepare report(s) (optional)
- address consequences
 - agree on next review date
 - documentation / notification
 - tracking tasks and decisions
 - effects on related agreements



Evaluate Agreements (cont.)

- schedule a separate session for updating agreement if necessary
- review usually takes place in *Governance Meetings*
- reviews are scheduled per agreement
- adjust review cadence with **expected stability** of the agreement
- trigger early review when necessary

P1.7: Evaluation Criteria

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

- go for **simple and unambiguous** criteria and document them (avoids discussing opinions when reviewing your agreements)
- define **actionable metrics**, to continuously track effects and spot deviations from your intended outcome

Intended Outcome



Metrics



Evaluation Criteria



P1.8: Intended Outcome

- brief description of the expected effects of agreement (or strategy)
- consider including specific *Evaluation Criteria* for a more effective review

Intended Outcome



Metrics



Evaluation Criteria



P1.9: Objections

An **objection** is an important reason why doing what is proposed stands in the way of (more) effective response to a driver.

Objections...

- ...stop proposals from becoming agreements.
- ...contain emergent information that can be used to improve proposals and agreements
- ...reveal both opportunities or impediments

Objections (cont.)

It's the decision of the individual who raised the objection to stay or withdraw the objection.

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*

Questions to Understand Objections

- Does the objection relate to this specific proposal or agreement?
- Does this objection reveal how a (proposed or existing) **agreement...**
 - ...jeopardizes the response to a driver?
 - ...is in conflict with the organization's values?
 - ...prevents or diminishes someone's contribution to responding to a driver?
 - ...can be improved significantly?

Concerns...

- ...are not objections
- ...are not important enough to prevent an agreement
- ...often contain wisdom
- ...can be recorded in the logbook
 - ...to further evolve agreements
 - ...to set evaluation criteria (including review date)

Consent to Driver

P1.10: Proposal Forming

Proposal Forming...

- ...is a facilitated format for co-creating a response to a drivers
- ...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

Questions about Driver C

Record Considerations C

Collect Ideas C

Select Tuners

Create Proposal(s)

Proposal Forming Process

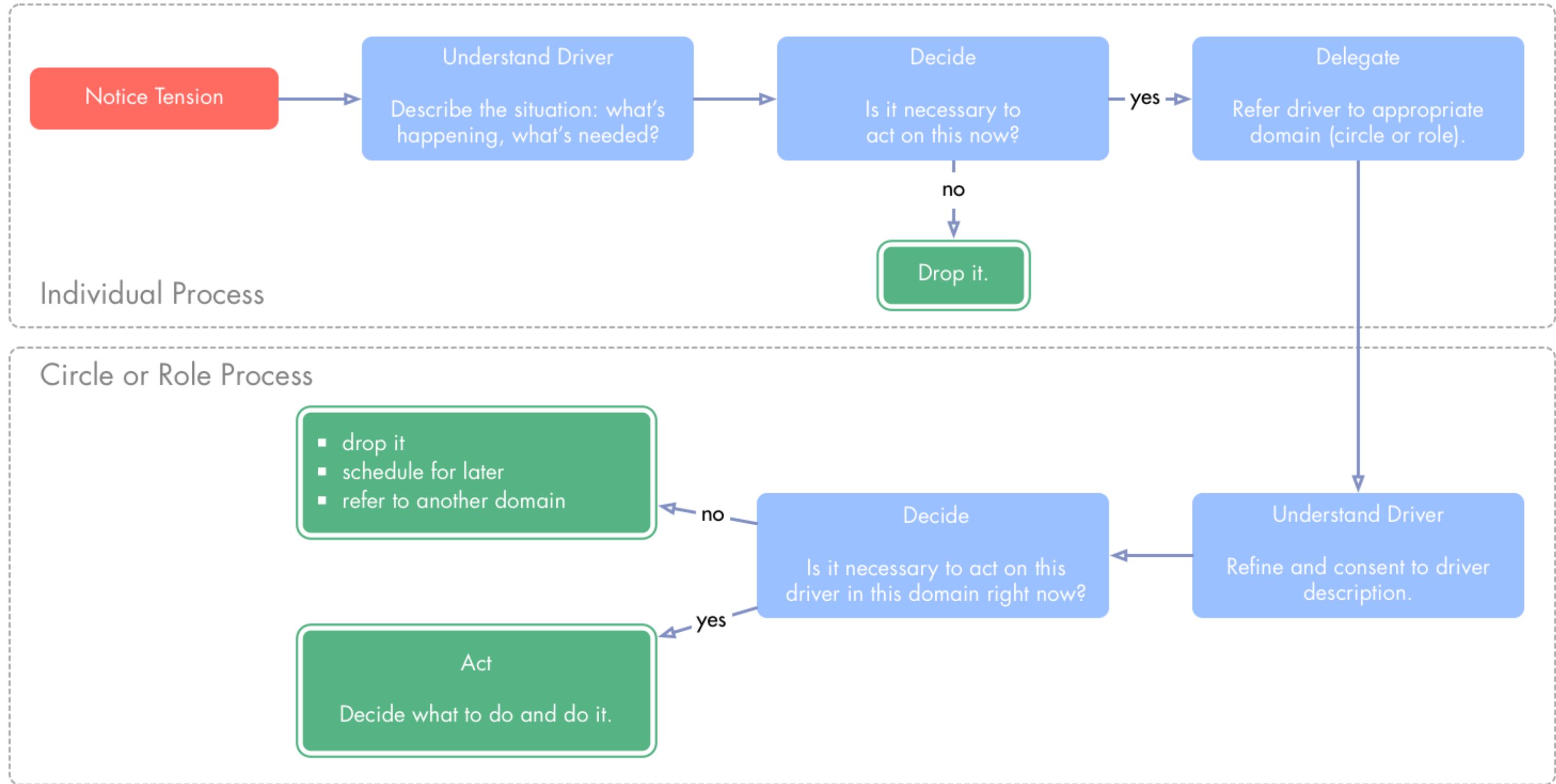
- 1. Identify** the driver
- 2. Consider:** Collect considerations as questions that reveal the scope of the issue
- 3. Create:** Gather ingredients/ideas for solutions
- 4. Refine:** Design a proposal from some or all of the ingredients
- 5. Review:** process with consent decision making

P1.11: Qualifying Drivers

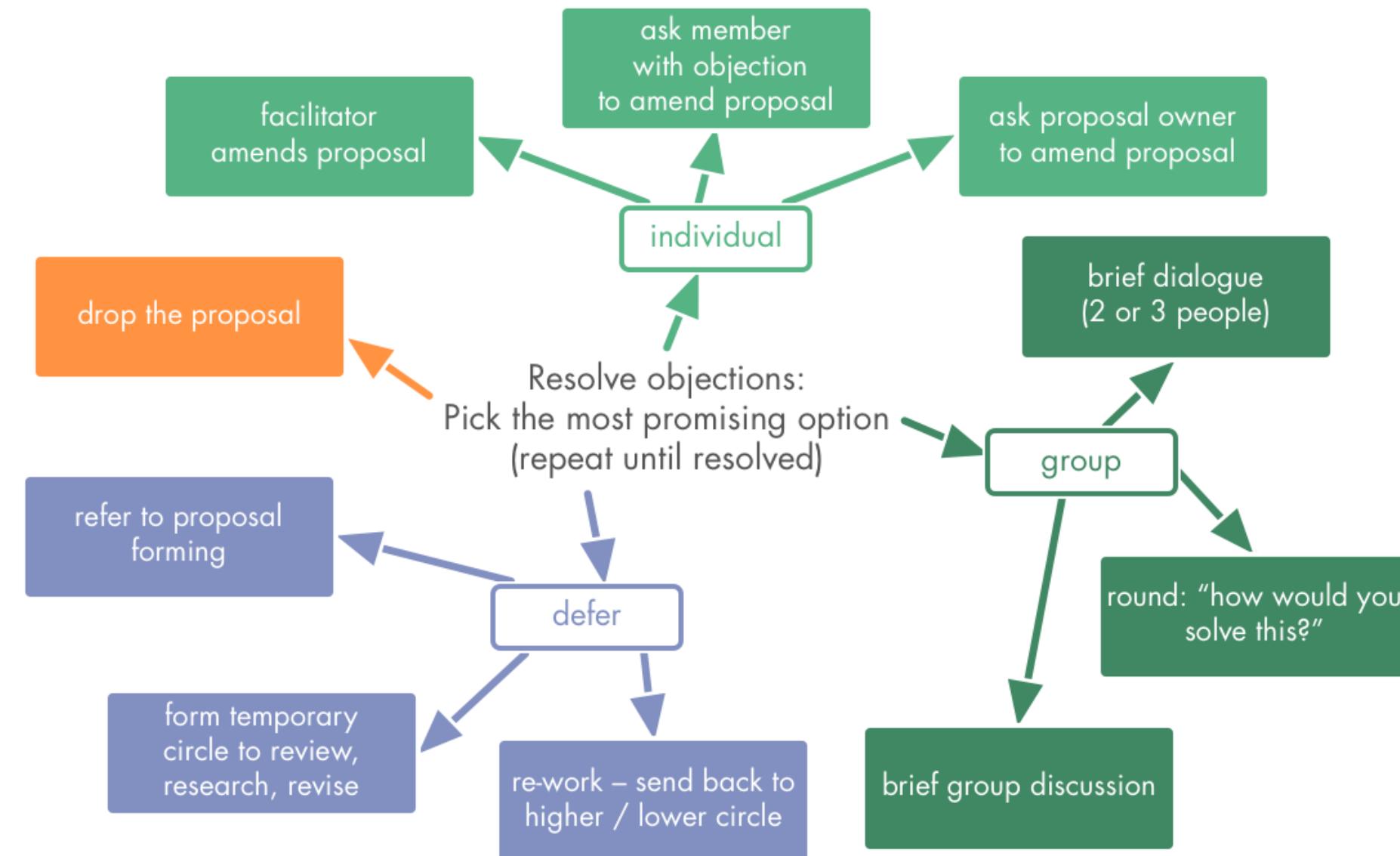
Consider why, how and when to respond to a stimulus, instead of defaulting to action.

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)

- only act on **important** drivers
- take drivers to the **appropriate domain** (role or circle)
- both the individual sensing tension and the domain is accountable for making a conscious choice whether or not to act on the driver



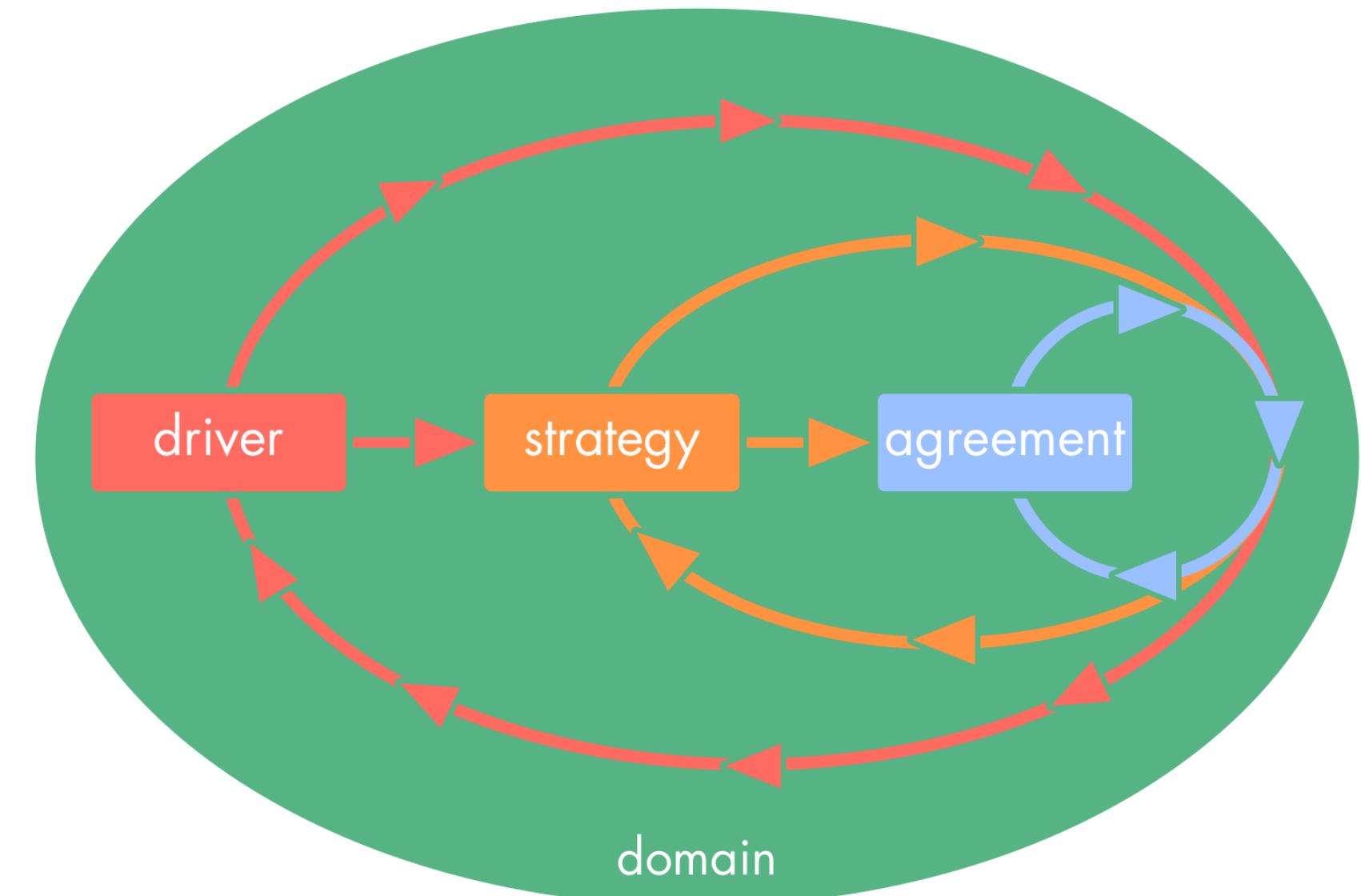
P1.12: Resolve Objections



P1.13: Strategy

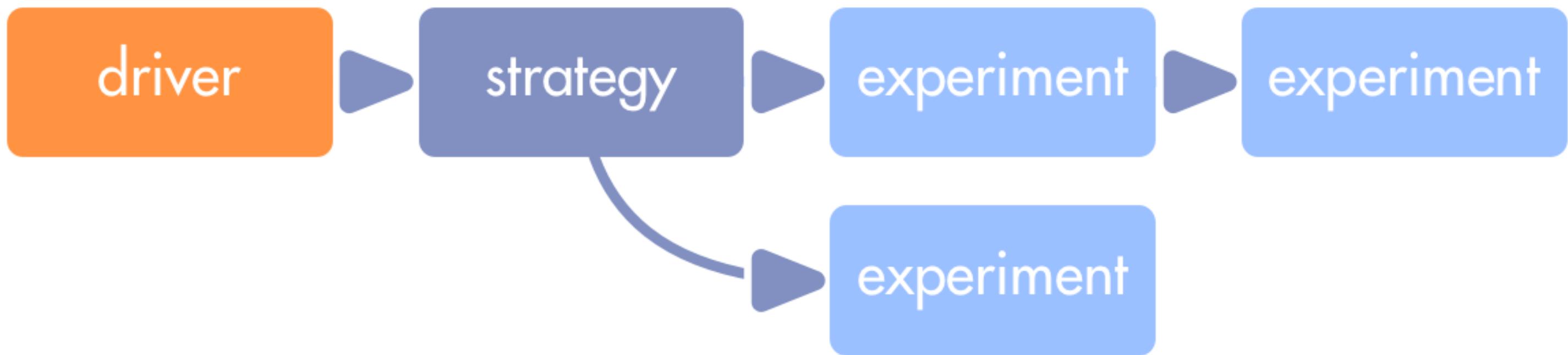
A **strategy** is the approach towards creating value within a domain.

- describes high level approach
 - not a detailed plan or a full product description
- an organization, circle or role can have their own strategy
- often includes a description of the intended outcome (a.k.a. "vision")
- is regularly reviewed and updated as necessary
- helps in the decision whether to continue or change course (*pivot or persevere*)



Strategy (cont.)

Strategies are implemented and refined through a serieses of experiments.



P1.14: Those Affected Decide

To make decisions with the maximum amount of information on the subject, involve everyone who is affected by the decision.

For large groups, facilitate a process in several stages and create smaller groups who select delegates.

This also applies to review and evolution of decisions.

2. Governance



Governance

Pattern Index:

- P2.1: Governance Backlog
- P2.2: Governance Meeting
- P2.3: Navigating Via Tension

P2.1: Governance Backlog

The governance backlog is a prioritized list of agenda items a circle needs to deal with:

- tensions to process
- proposals
- agreements for review
- selections to roles
- upcoming effectiveness reviews
- other agenda items

P2.2: 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

Opening Round



Administrative Matters

Agenda Items

Meeting Review

Closing Round



Governance 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

P2.3: Navigating Via Tension

- individuals act as sensors for the organization
- tensions arise whenever our perception of what is happening is in conflict with our **expectations** or our **values** (and principles)
- problems, challenges, and feelings of unease are all tensions
- investigating tension leads to the discovery of drivers
- to identify a possible driver behind a tension we:
 - **describe** the situation
 - **identify** the needs we associate with it
 - in the process, a tensions may be resolved as **misunderstandings**

Notice Tension

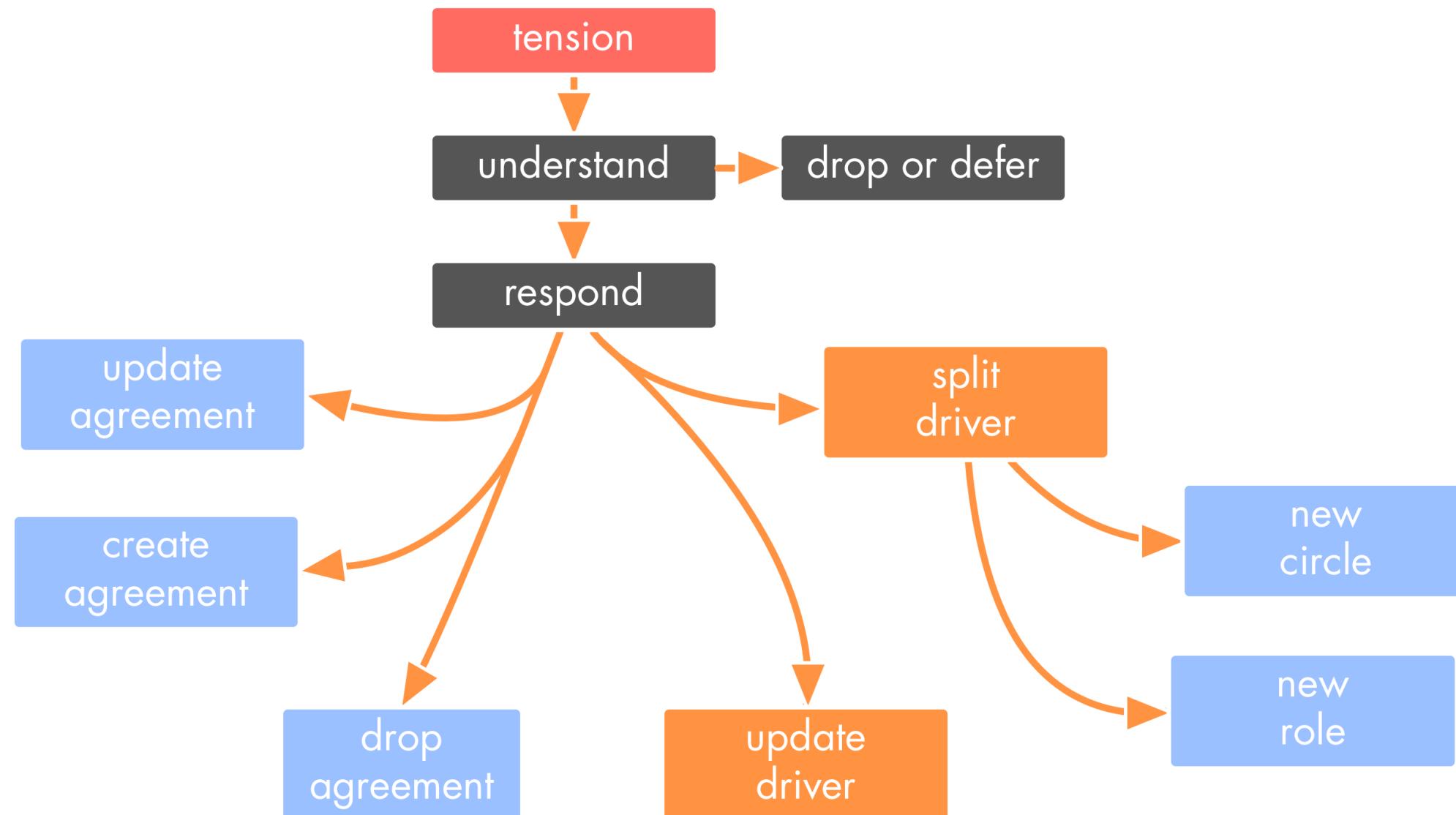
Understand Driver

Verify Relevance

Decide What To Do

Do It

Navigating Via Tension (cont.)



3. Effective Meetings



Effective Meetings

Pattern Index:

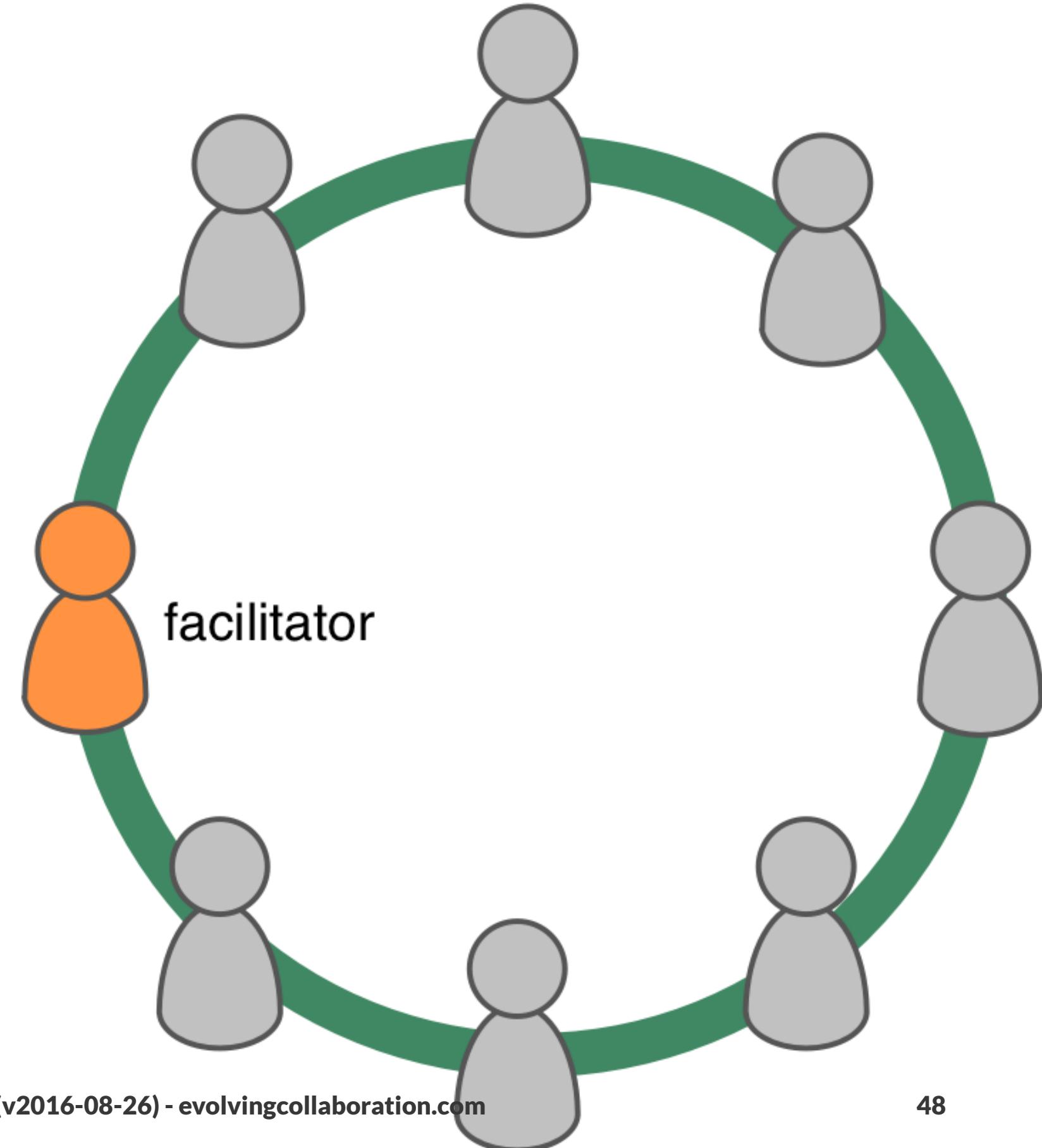
- P3.1: S3 Facilitator
- P3.2: Artful Participation
- P3.3: Logbook
- P3.4: Logbook Keeper
- P3.5: Meeting Evaluation
- P3.6: Meeting Facilitation
- P3.7: Meeting Host
- P3.8: Rounds

P3.1: S3 Facilitator (Role)

The facilitator supports the circle in developing their interactions and is responsible for making sure all meetings and workshops are facilitated and evaluated, e.g.

- governance meeting
- retrospectives
- daily standups
- planning and review or coordination meeting

Often the actual facilitation is shared between several circle members.



S3 Facilitator (cont.)

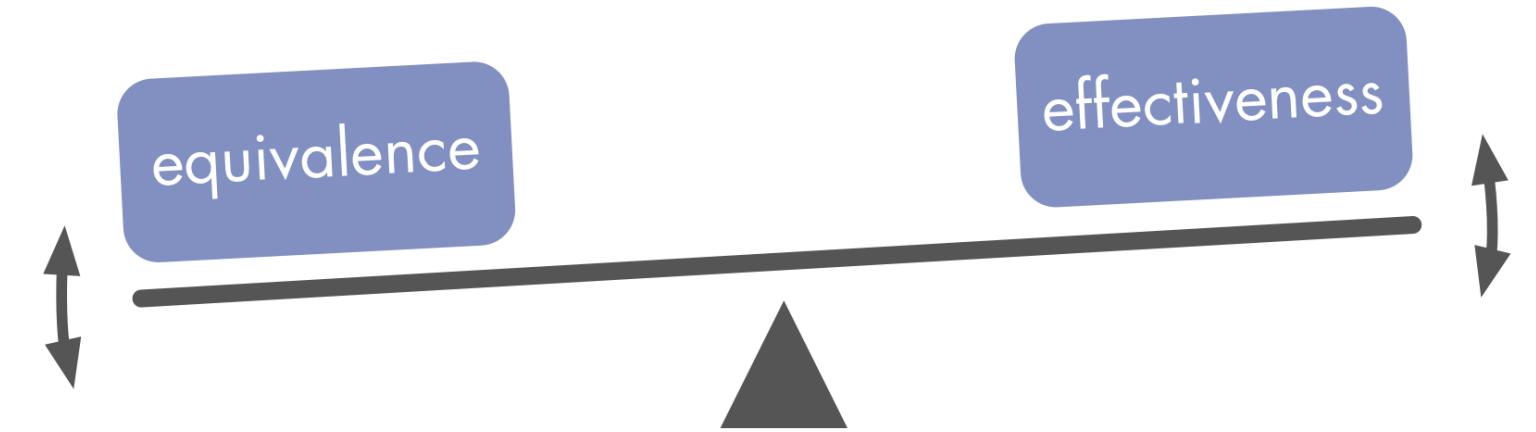
The facilitator should make themselves familiar with the following formats:

- rounds
- proposal forming
- consent decision making
- selections to roles
- meeting evaluation
- resolving objections

P3.2: Artful Participation

Artful participation is the commitment of an individual to participate in a **proactive, coherent and elegant way** in all aspects of collaboration.

- makes better agreements and more effective evolution
- is an individual choice, but much more powerful when embraced by the whole team
- develops trust (being accountable is a learned skill)
- makes stronger teams (collaboration is an individual skill)
- makes happier people (culture of mutual support and close collaboration)



Artful participation (cont.)

An **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
- bringing impediments to the attention of the circle if necessary

Artful Participation: Self-Assessment

- 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 customers or clients?
 - ...the wider environment?

P3.3: Logbook

A logbook is a (digital) system to store all information relevant for the running an organizations or circle. The logbook is accessible to all members of an organization, information is hidden only when there is a good reason to do so.

Common platforms for logbooks are Wikis (e.g. Dokuwiki or MediaWiki, Content Management Systems (e.g. Wordpress), or Google Drive, Evernote or Trello.

Logbook Contents

- Organization:
 - driver, strategy
 - organizational values
 - organizational structure
 - agreements
- Circle:
 - driver, strategy
 - agreements
 - role definitions and role improvement plans

Logbook Contents (cont.)

- Personal logbooks
 - role descriptions
 - tasks
 - personal strategy and personal policy

P3.4: Logbook Keeper (Role)

The logbook keeper is responsible for maintaining a circle's logbook:

- recording all relevant information and adding it to the logbook
 - all agreements, role descriptions, selections etc.
 - making sure minutes of meetings are recorded and approved by participants
- keeping the logbook is up do date
- continuously improve organization of the logbook
- making the logbook and accessible to everyone in the circle (and in the wide organization as agreed)
- tending to all technical aspects of logbook keeping

P3.5: Meeting Evaluation

At the end of each meeting or workshop, take the time to evaluate your interactions and learn what can be improved.

- before the closing round
- reserve 5 minutes for 1 hour, and 15 minutes for a full-day workshop
- record the results in the logbook
- proposals for improvements are implemented by facilitator and meeting host, or added to the governance backlog
- short formats:
 - more of/less of/start/stop/keep
 - positive/negative/suggested improvements

Opening

Workshop/Meeting

Evaluate Interaction

Closing

Meeting Evaluation: Long Format

Ask everyone in a round to briefly contribute to any or all of the following topics:

- effectiveness
- facilitation and format
- emotional tone
- I liked... (acknowledgments and achievements)
- I wish... (growing edges and improvements)
- What if... (wild ideas and radical suggestions)

P3.6: Meeting Facilitation

Make sure all meetings are facilitated. Even an inexperienced facilitator makes a difference.

- prepare an agenda of topics
- select a facilitator who
 - picks an activity or format for each topic that fits the topic and the number of participants
 - holds the space, keeps the time and navigates the agenda during the meeting
 - evaluates the meeting at the end

P3.7: Meeting Host (Role)

The meeting host is accountable for proper preparation and follow-up of meetings, workshops or other events.

The role may be assigned temporarily (i.e. for one specific event) or permanently. e.g. for all events of one circle.

Meeting Host: Responsibilities

- preparation
 - identify goals and deliverables
 - select facilitator and keeper of the minutes
 - prepare and distribute agenda and schedule
 - estimate required time
 - identify and invite participants
 - schedule the meeting/workshop
 - book location (and transportation if required)
 - set up the space, provide required materials and information
- follow-up
 - clean up location, return keys etc.
 - make sure minutes are distributed and approved

P3.8: Rounds

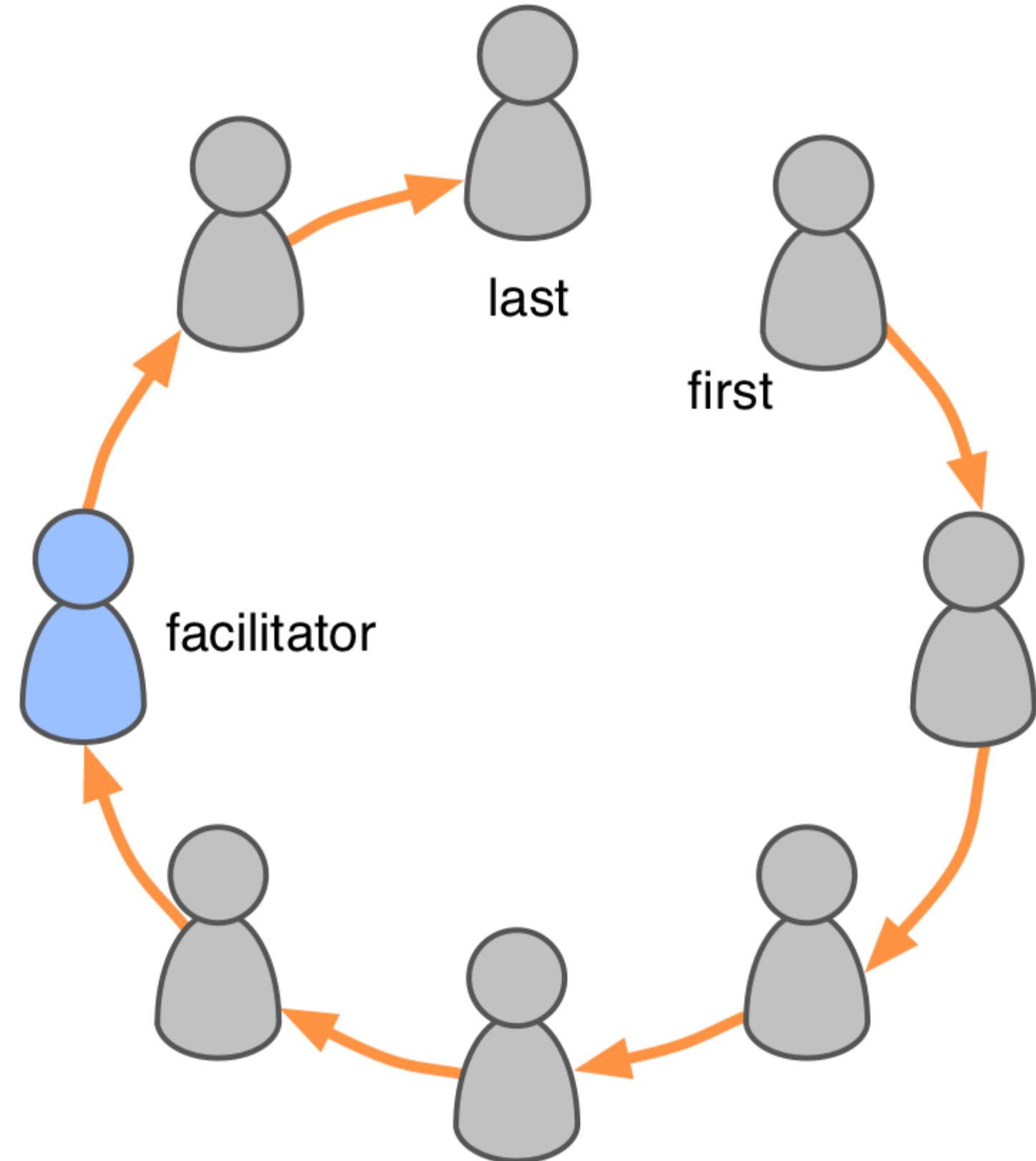
A group facilitation technique to maintain equivalence.

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



Coordinating Work

Pattern Index:

- P4.1: Coordination Meeting
- P4.2: Coordinator Role
- P4.3: Daily Standup
- P4.4: Planning And Review Meetings
- P4.5: Prioritized Backlog
- P4.6: Pull-System For Work
- P4.7: Retrospective
- P4.8: Visualize Work

P4.1: Coordination Meeting

Meet on a regular basis (usually weekly) for reporting on and coordinating work.

- facilitate the meeting, use rounds instead of discussions
- Status Reports:
 - circle metrics (if any)
 - projects and tasks
- Agenda Items:
 - sharing of information
 - add or update tasks or projects
 - propose new or updated agreements
- if possible agenda items are compiled before the meeting
(some items will come up during the status reports)

Opening Round

Status Reports

Agenda Items

Meeting Review

Closing Round



P4.2: Coordinator (Role)

The coordinator is accountable for **coordinating a circle's collaboration**, and is **selected by the circle for a limited term**.

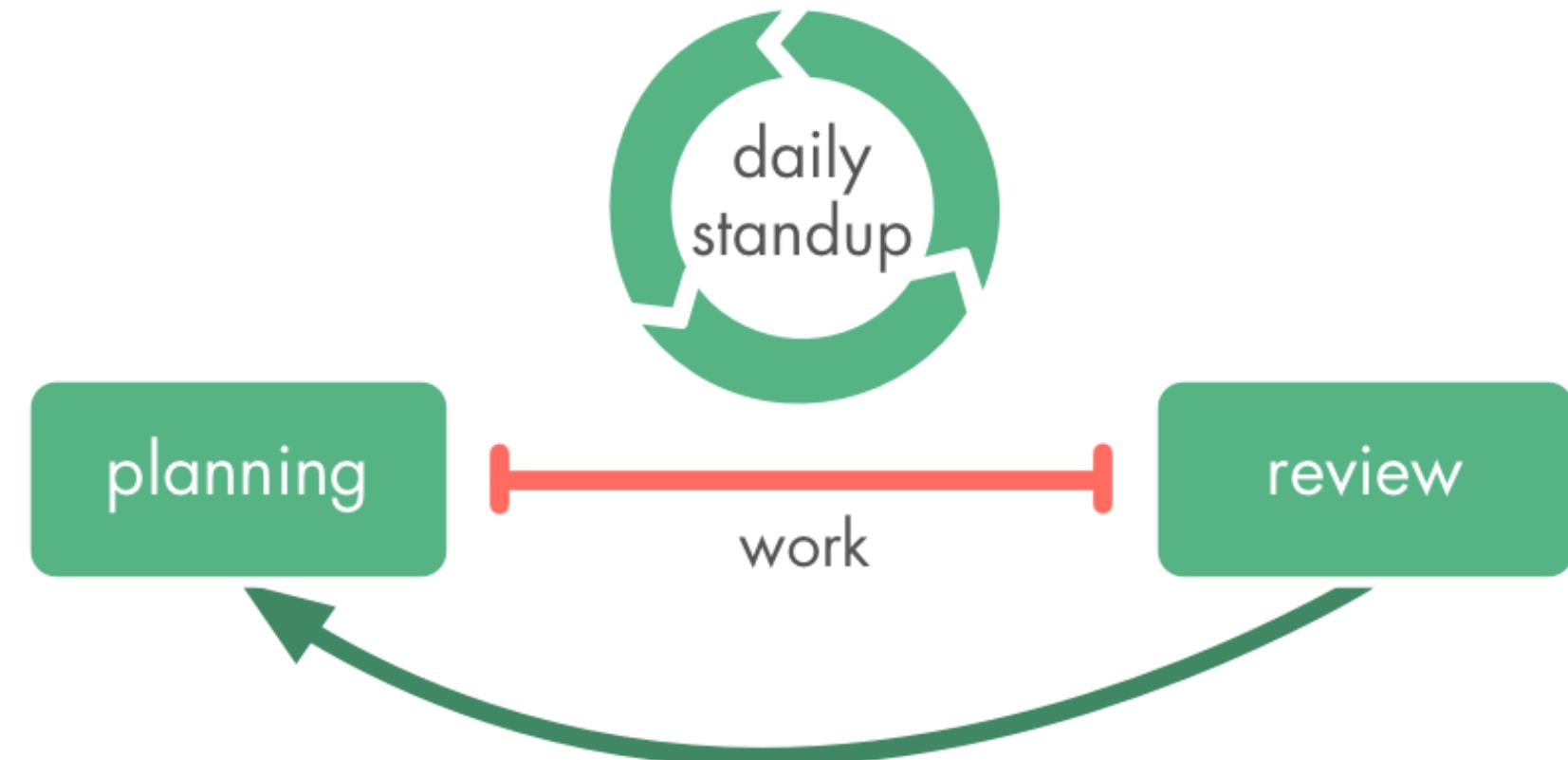
Responsibilities:

- project management
- task assignment
- stewarding development of the circle
- supporting circle members in
 - keeping agreements
 - personal development
 - developing artful participation
 - understanding S3 principles and patterns

P4.3: Daily Standup

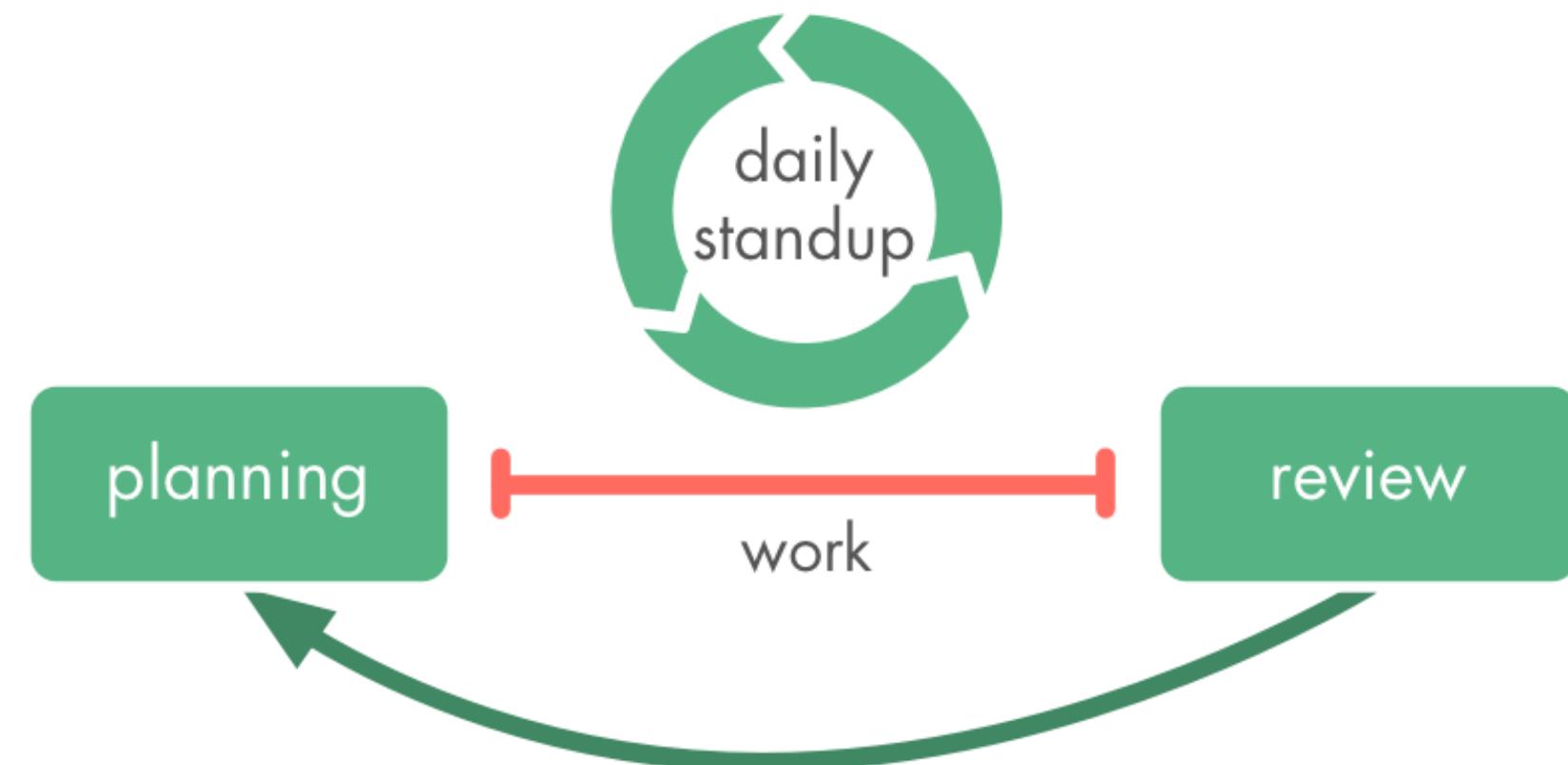
Speed up learning and improvement.

- ~15 min
- every day at the same time
- circle gathers around the task board
- coordination of daily work
- adaptation of existing agreements or creation of new agreements on the spot



P4.4: Planning And Review Meetings

- planning and review happen at regular intervals (1-4 weeks)
- planning meeting:
 - select and estimate work items for iteration
- review meeting:
 - review finished work items
 - decide on re-work and changes for next iteration



P4.5: Prioritized Backlog

A prioritized backlog is an **ordered a list of all uncompleted work items**, with the **most important items on top**.

Work items are pulled from the top whenever there's new capacity.

No two items can be of equal importance, it's essential to agree on priorities and make tough choices.

Prioritized Backlog (cont.)

- **Benefits**
 - focus in most important items
 - keep track of everything
 - just-in-time specification, reduced cost of change
 - shared understanding of priorities enables more effective collaboration
- **Implementation**
 - **analog backlog:** sticky notes on a wall, or index cards, magnets and whiteboard
 - **digital backlog:** e.g. Google Sheets, Trello

Elements of a prioritized backlog

- a **unique reference number** (or ID) for each work item
- a **title or short description**
- the **order of work items**
- **dependencies**
- **due dates** (does not apply to all items)
- (optional) a measure for **value**
- (optional) a measure for **investment** (often an estimate of time or complexity)

P4.6: Pull-System For Work

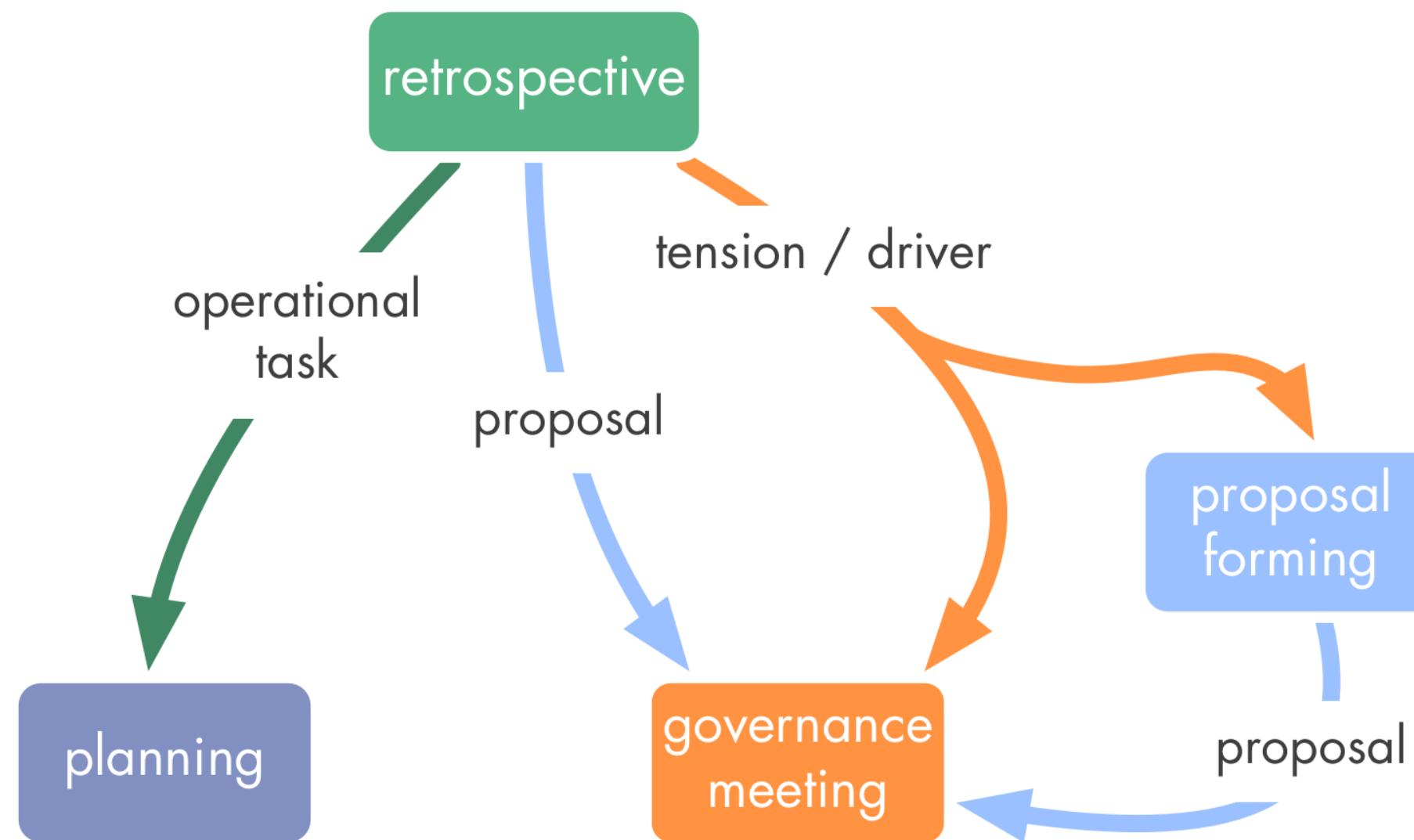
- people pull in new items when they have capacity (instead of work being pushed at them)
- prioritize available work items to get make sure important items get worked on first
- prevents overloading the system, especially when amount of work in progress (WIP) per person is limited

P4.7: Retrospective

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

Retrospective: A time to reflect on process improvement



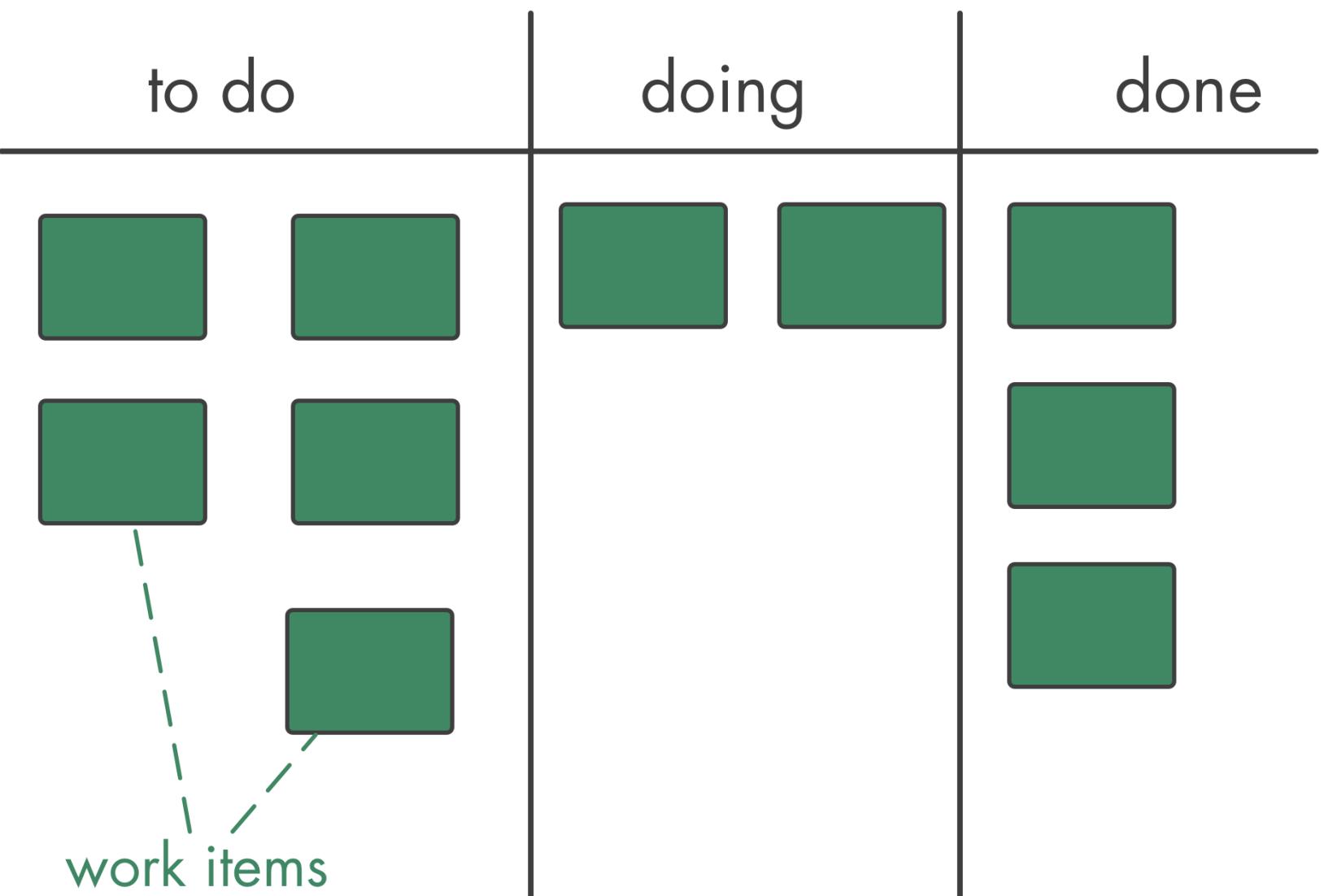
Five Phases of a Retrospective Meeting

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

P4.8: Visualize Work

- transparency about the state of all work items currently in planning, in progress or completed.
- essential for self-organization and pull-systems
- system must be accessible to everyone affected
- **analog:** post-its on a wall, or index cards, magnets and white board
- **digital:** Google Sheets, Trello, Kanbanery, Leankit, Google Sheets, etc.



Things to track:

- **types of work items** (e.g. customer request, project tasks, reporting tasks, rework)
- **start date** and optionally **due date**
- **priorities**
- **stages of work** (e.g. "to do", "in progress", "review" and "done")
- blocks
- who is working on which items
- agreements and expectations guiding workflow (e.g. definition of done, policy, quality standards)
- use colors, symbols, highlights etc.

1.4.2015

due: 1.4.2015

Update the fiddly things
doesn't break
somebody looks at
sideways.

BLOCKED:
ask Carl about
deployment,
he's on on
holiday.

#37



5. Building Organizations



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:

- People and Roles
- Organizational Structure.

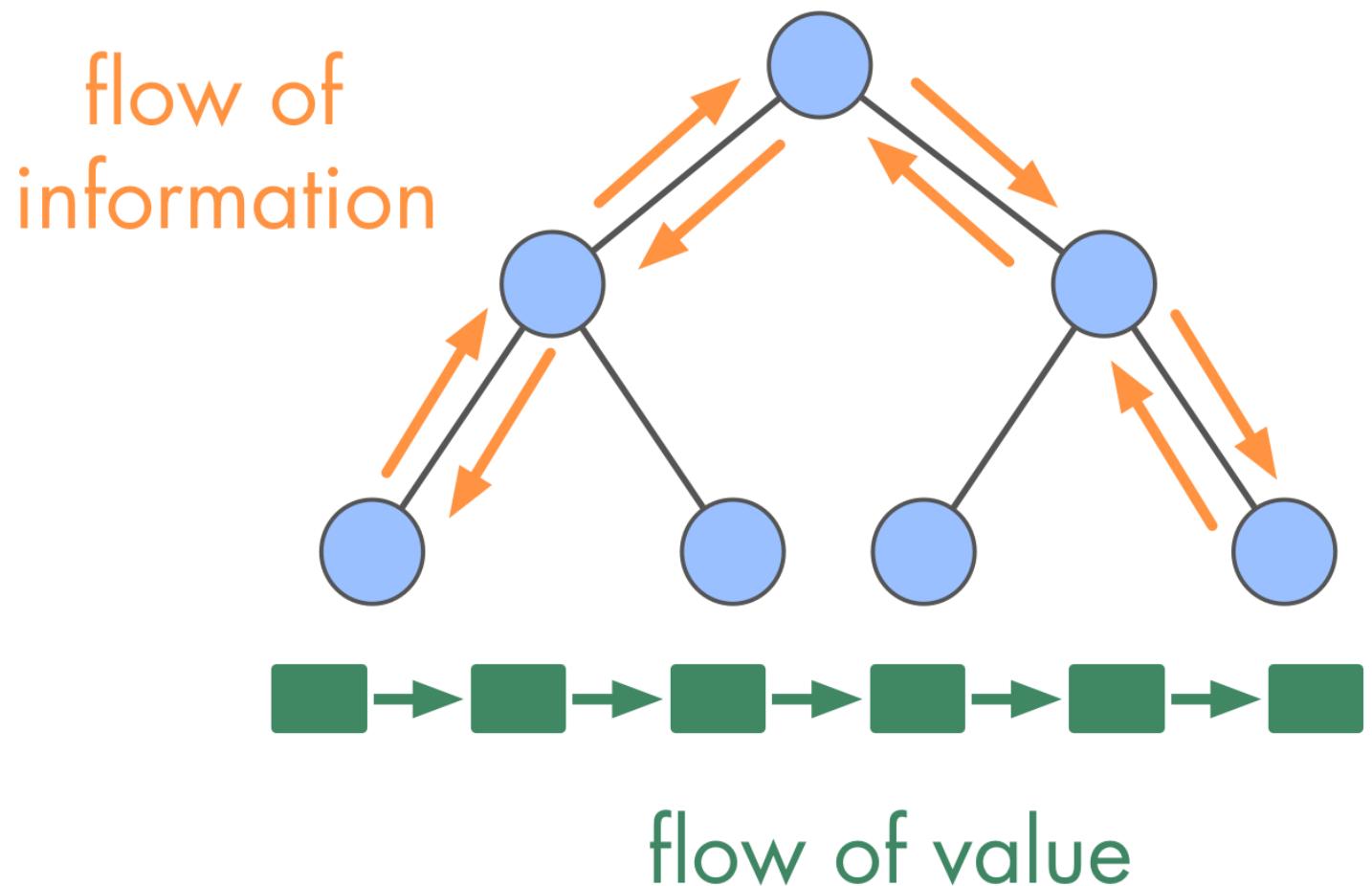
Building Organizations

Pattern Index:

- P5.1: Align Flow
- P5.2: Open Systems
- P5.3: Organize In Nested Domains

P5.1: Align Flow

- 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



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

P5.2: Open Systems

An organization is not a closed system, it is an open network with many connections to the "outside".

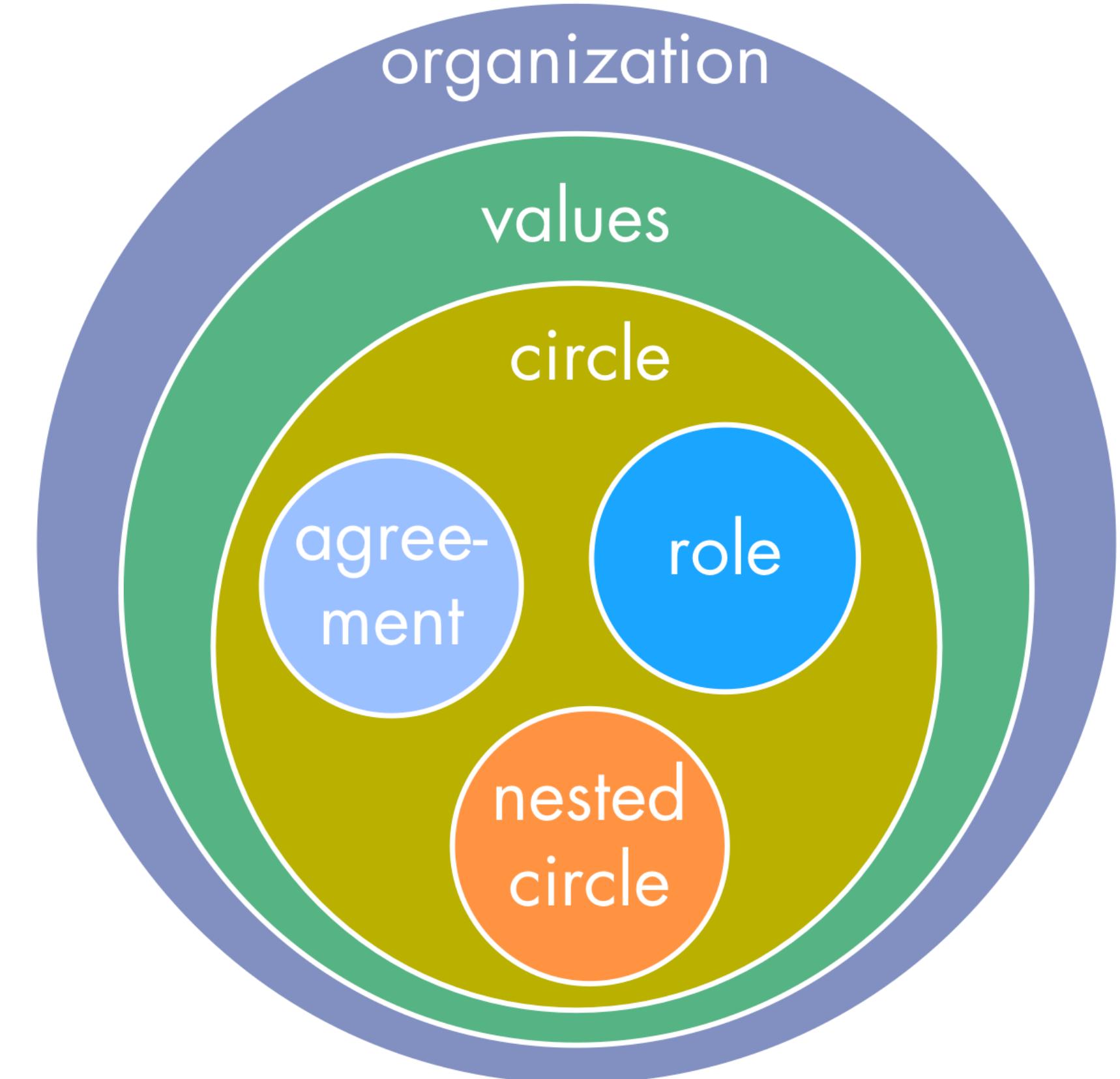
Keep the system open by adding connections as temporary or permanent members in decision making and experiments:

- external experts: benefit from outside perspective and knowledge
- representatives of affected parties: integrate existing relationships (➤ Those Affected Decide)

P5.3: Organize In Nested Domains

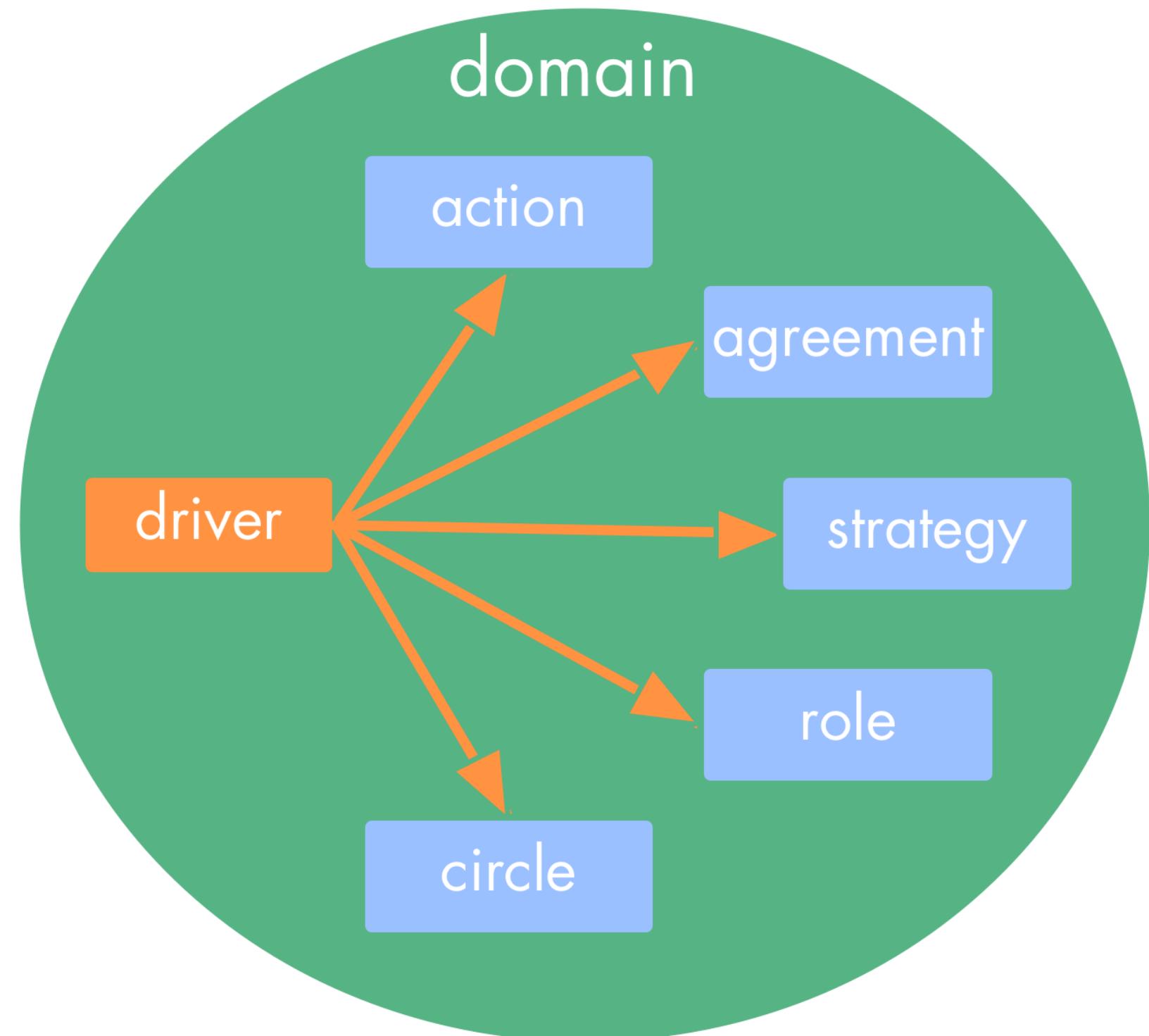
A **domain** is an area of influence, autonomy and accountability.

Building an organization from domains defined along organizational drivers facilitates effective collaboration by creating enabling constraints and clear and logical boundaries for accountability.



Drivers Define Domains of Accountability

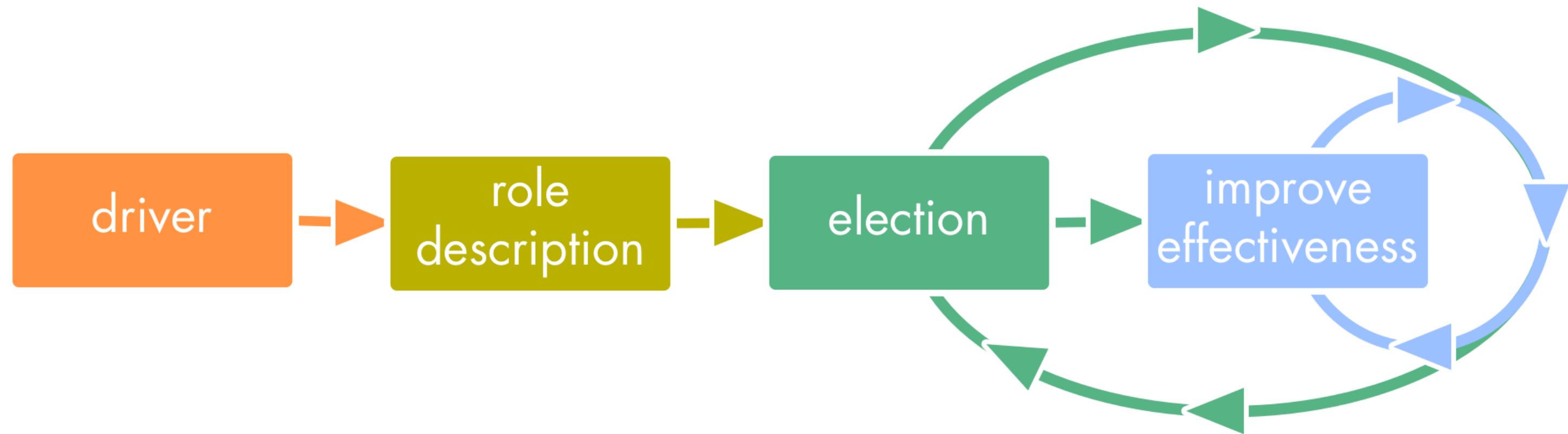
- accountability applies to all agreements, including the organization itself, circles, and roles
- everyone's primary accountability is for effective collaboration in response to drivers
- circles are accountable their work, their body of agreements and for their own development
- everyone in an organization is accountable for upholding organizational values and principles



6. People And Roles

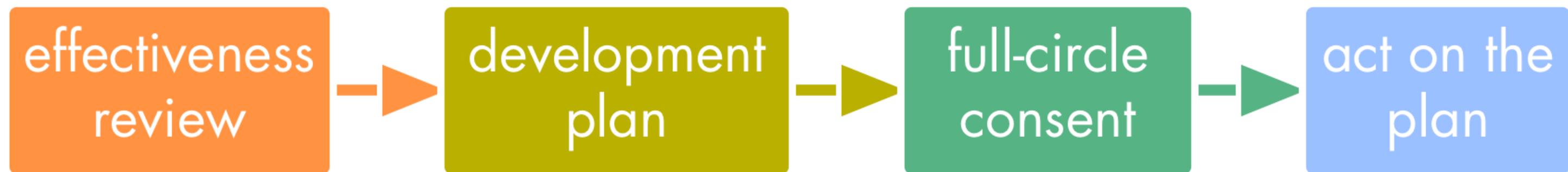


Roles implement functions



Performance Improvement Process

Continuous improvement of the effectiveness of people in roles



People And Roles

Pattern Index:

- P6.1: Development Plan
- P6.2: Effectiveness Review
- P6.3: Role
- P6.4: Role Description
- P6.5: Role Selection
- P6.6: Support Roles

P6.1: Development Plan

- an agreement for developing greater effectiveness in a role
- contents:
 - current role description
 - appreciations
 - areas for improvement
 - action items to improve effectiveness
 - evaluation criteria
 - suggested amendments to role description

Template for Development Plan

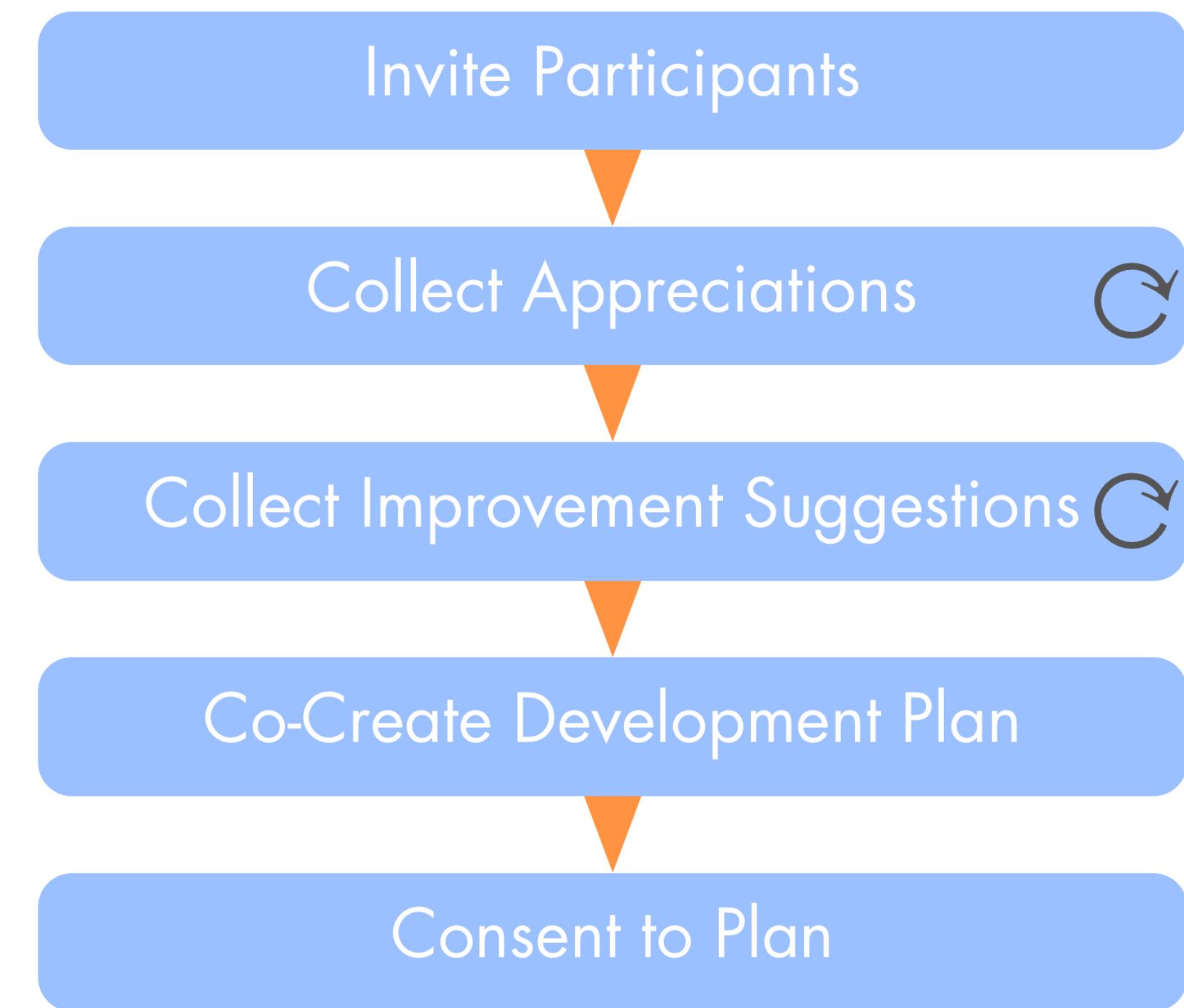
Title of Role (Development Plan)	
Date	Review Date
Current Role Description	
Appreciations	
Areas for Improvement	
Action Items	
■	
■	
■	
Evaluation Criteria	
■	
■	
■	
Amendments to Role Description	
■	
■	
■	

P6.2: Effectiveness Review

- development in roles supported by peers
- the individual holding the role initiates the process and begins each step
- harvest appreciations, identify opportunities for improvement and evolve the role

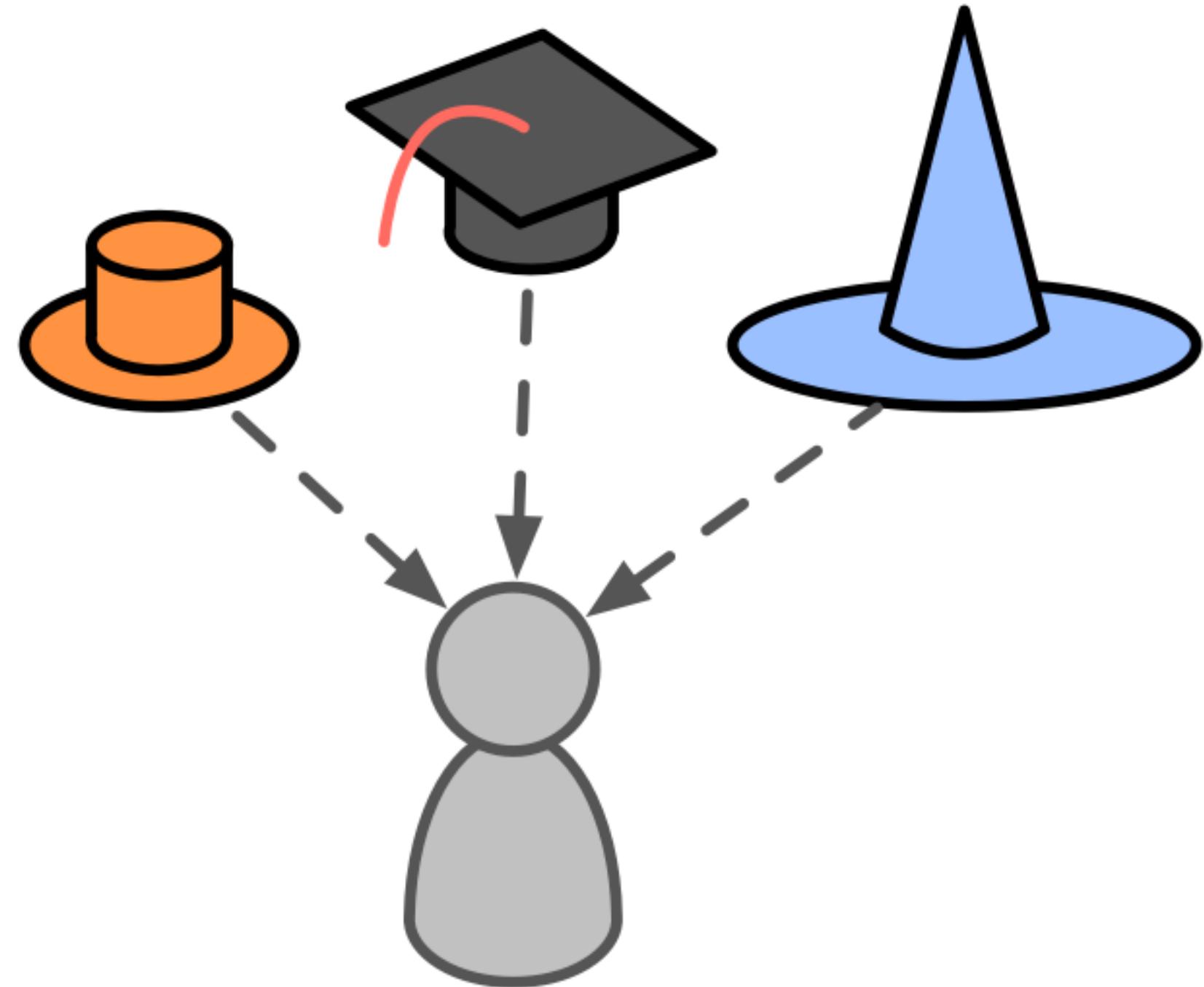
Steps of an Effectiveness Review

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



P6.3: Role

- roles are more flexible than positions
- people can wear many hats
- (s)election by consent...
- ...and for a limited term
- peers support development in roles



P6.4: Role Description

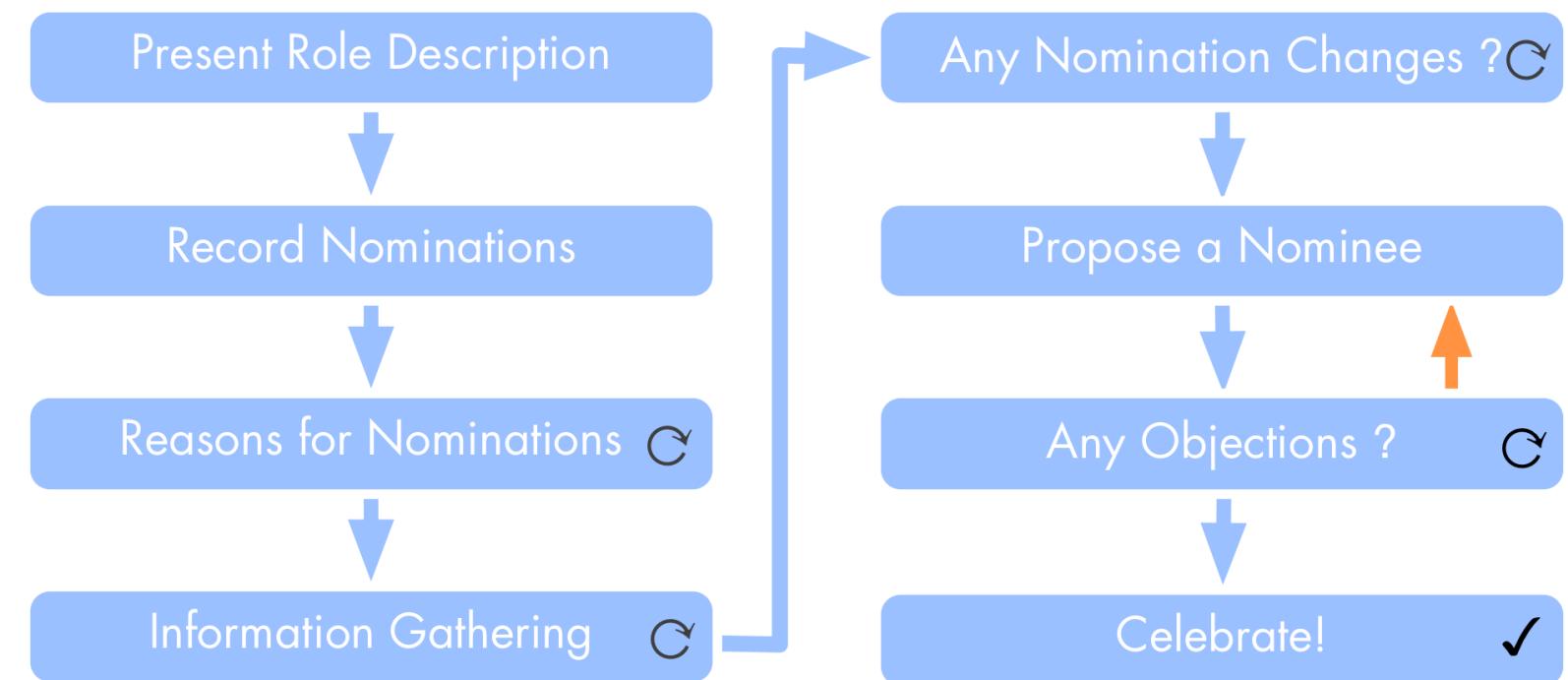
- manage expectations for roles
- role descriptions can be created using proposal forming
- a minimal role description contains:
 - driver
 - term
 - key responsibilities
 - time requirements
 - resources, budget, privileges
 - preferable skills, experience and qualities
 - cadence of effectiveness reviews

Template for Role Descriptions

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

P6.5: 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



P6.6: Support Roles

Apply roles to external contractors

- identify function
- create a role description
- implement a selection process
- limit term of the contract
- initiate development process

Support roles may be operational only, external contractors opt-in to role descriptions.

7. Organizational Structure



Organizational Structure

- enables effective collaboration
- delegates decision making power
- evolves continuously to adapt to changing environments

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

Circles can be linked in a hierarchy or a **heterarchy** (a.k.a. complex adaptive system, or network), where different functional structures co-exist.

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

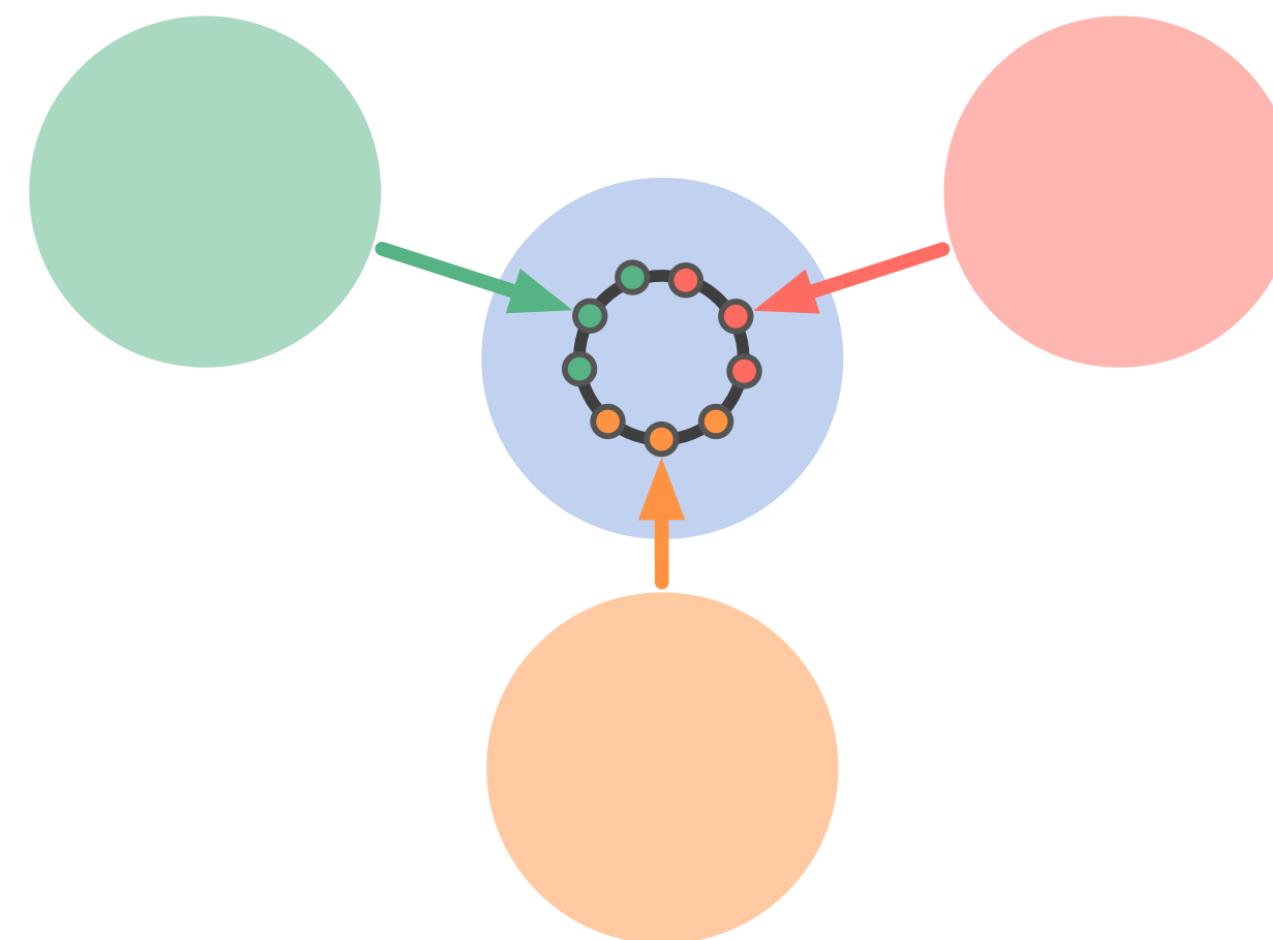
Organizational Structure

Pattern Index:

- P7.1: Backbone Organization
- P7.2: Coordination Circle
- P7.3: Delegate Circle
- P7.4: Double Linking
- P7.5: Double-Linked Hierarchy
- P7.6: Fractal Organization
- P7.7: Helping Circle
- P7.8: Nested Circle
- P7.9: Peach Organization
- P7.10: Representative
- P7.11: Service Circle

P7.1: Backbone Organization

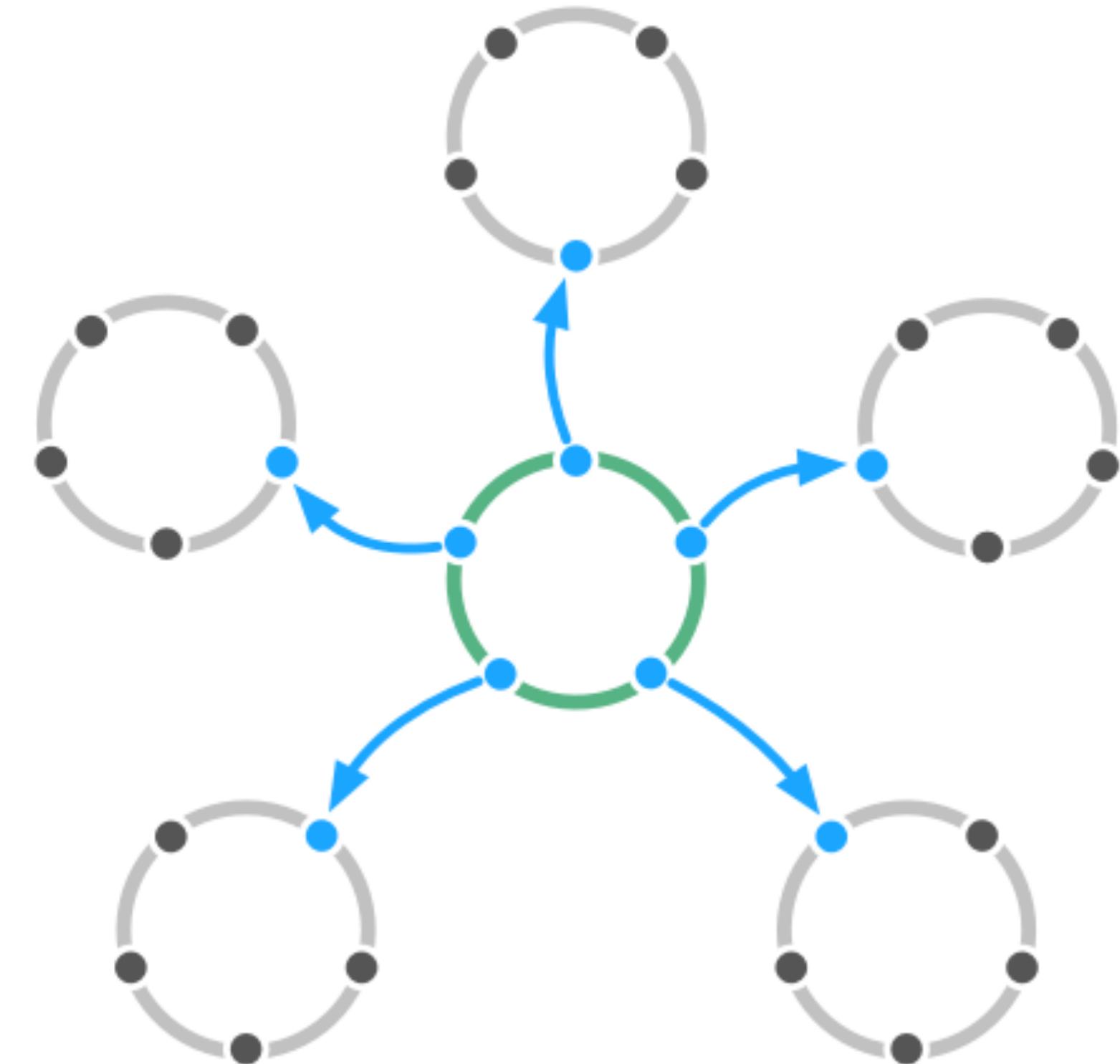
A pattern for multi-stakeholder projects or services.



P7.2: Coordination Circle

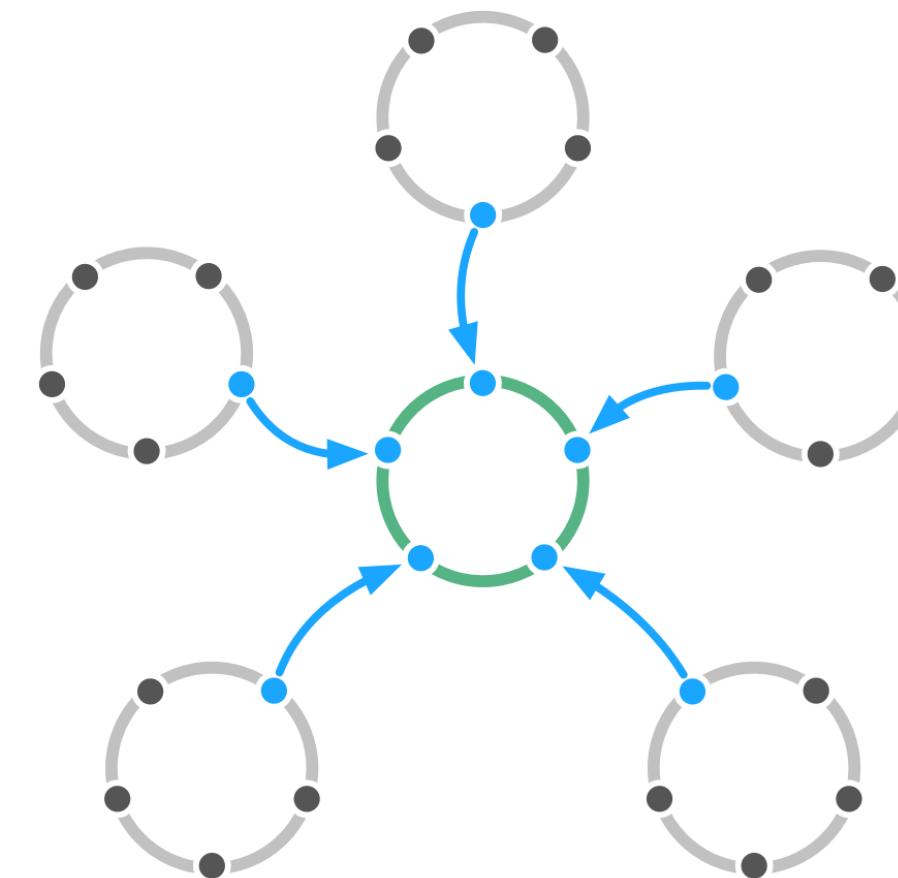
A coordination circle coordinates decision making and collaboration of several circles.

Coordination circles may be accountable for all aspects of collaboration, or just for a specific subset (or subdomain).



P7.3: Delegate Circle

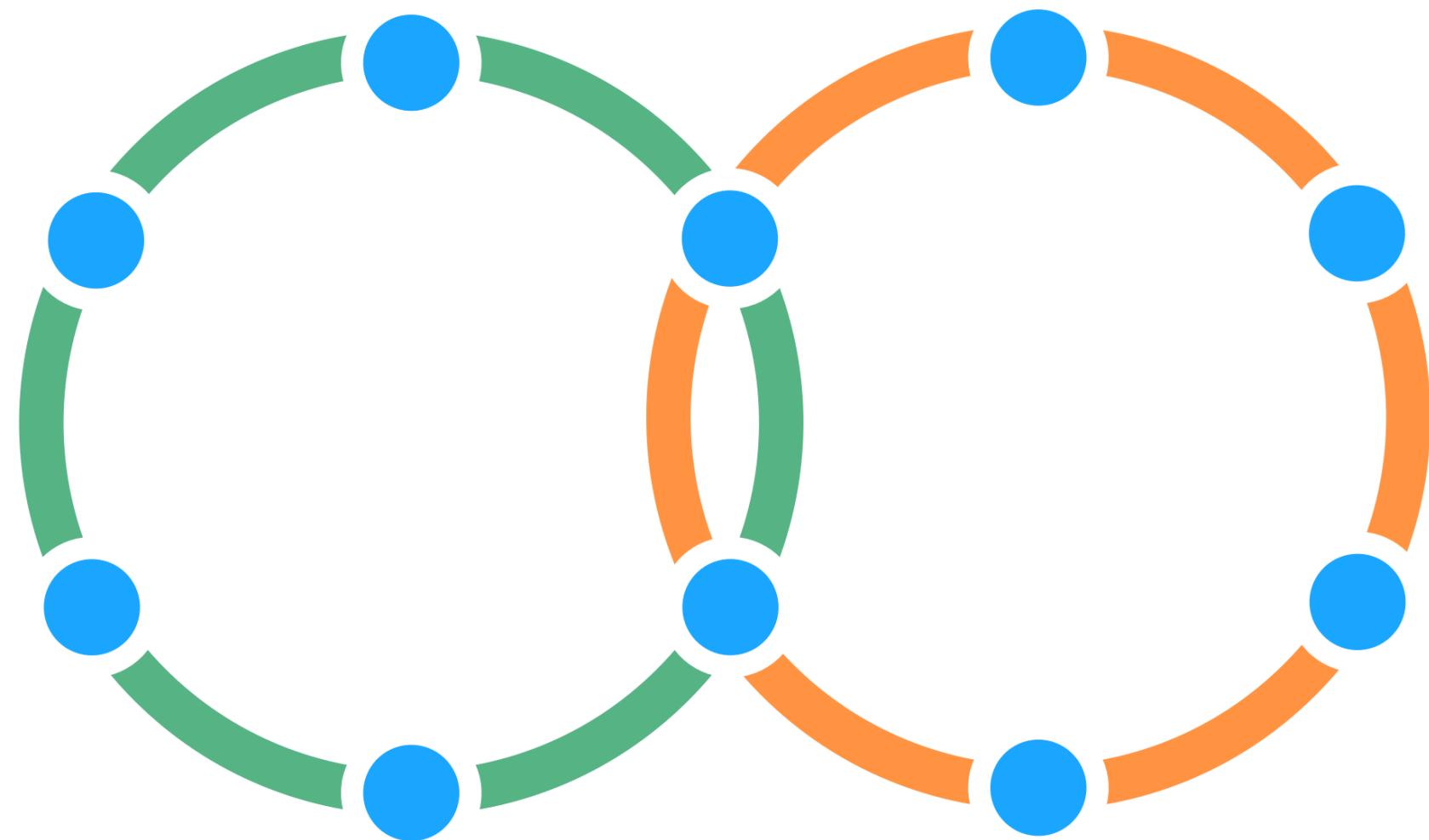
A pattern for coordination



P7.4: Double Linking

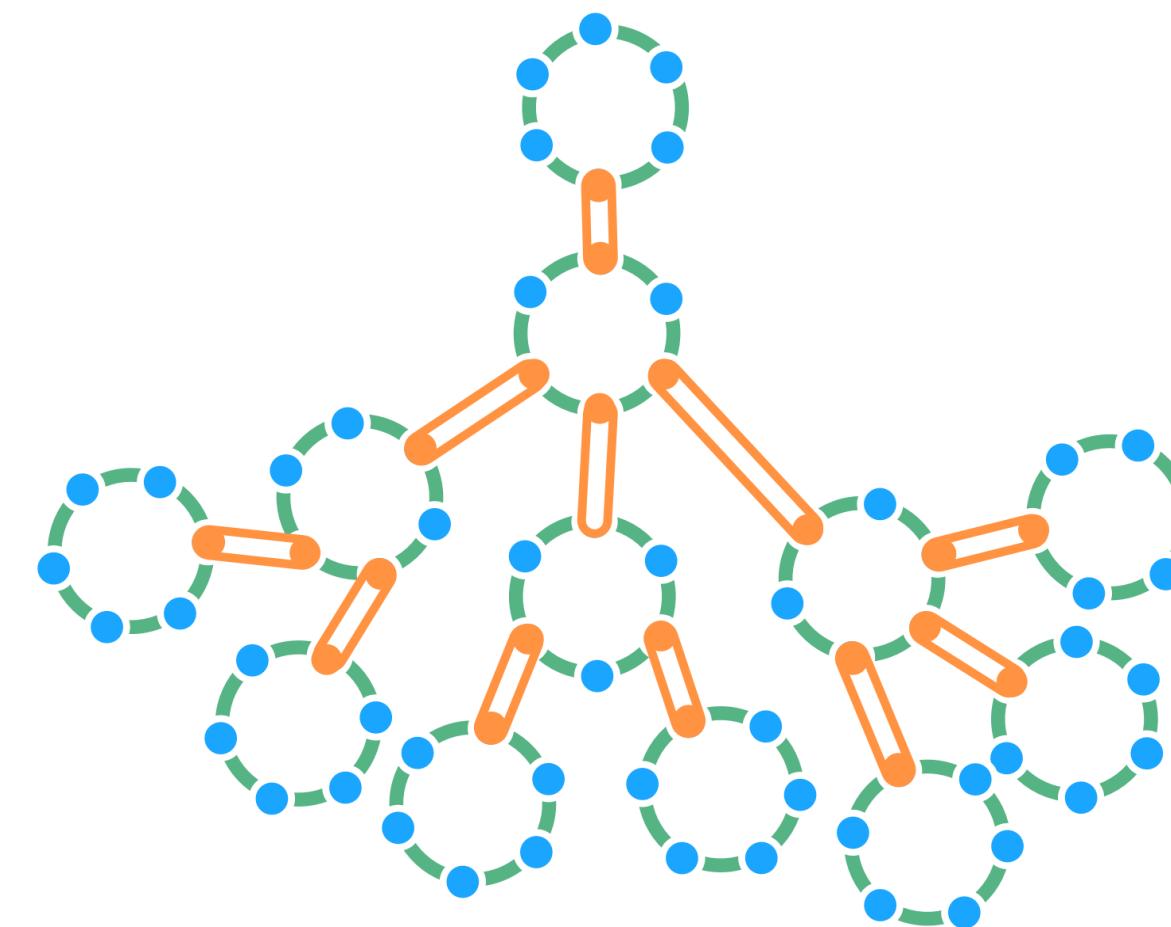
Facilitate two-way flow of information and influence

- 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



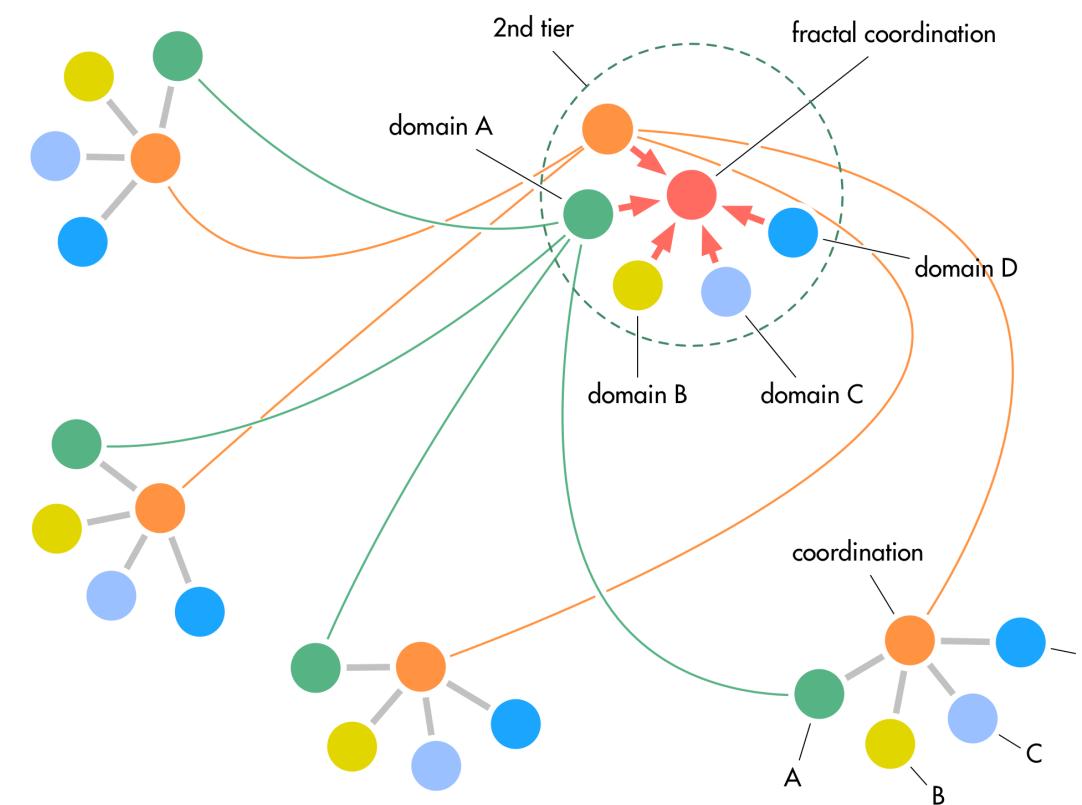
P7.5: Double-Linked Hierarchy

A pattern for the early phase of a transformation



P7.6: Fractal Organization

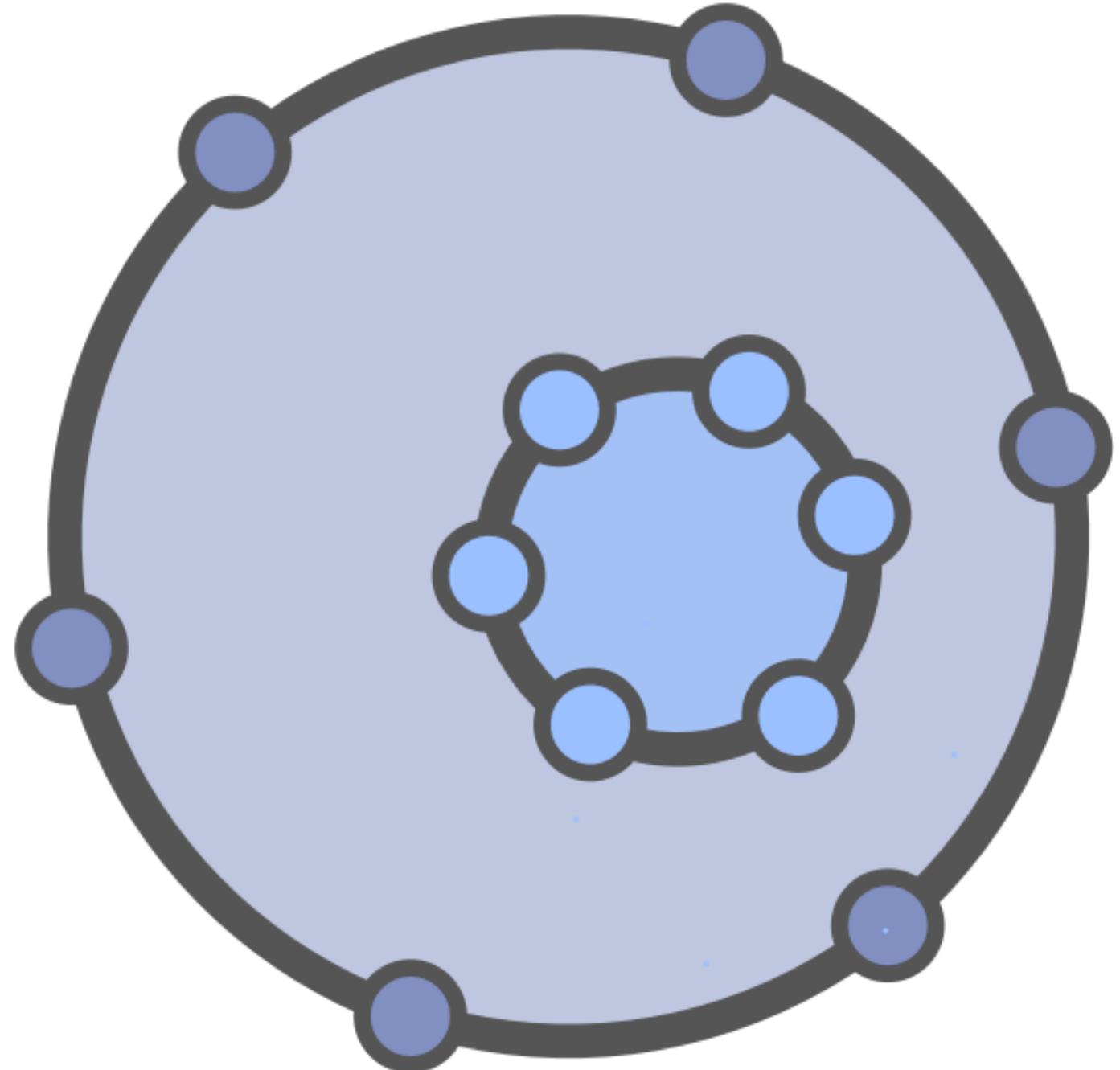
A Pattern for learning, coordination and alignment across organizational boundaries.



P7.7: Helping Circle

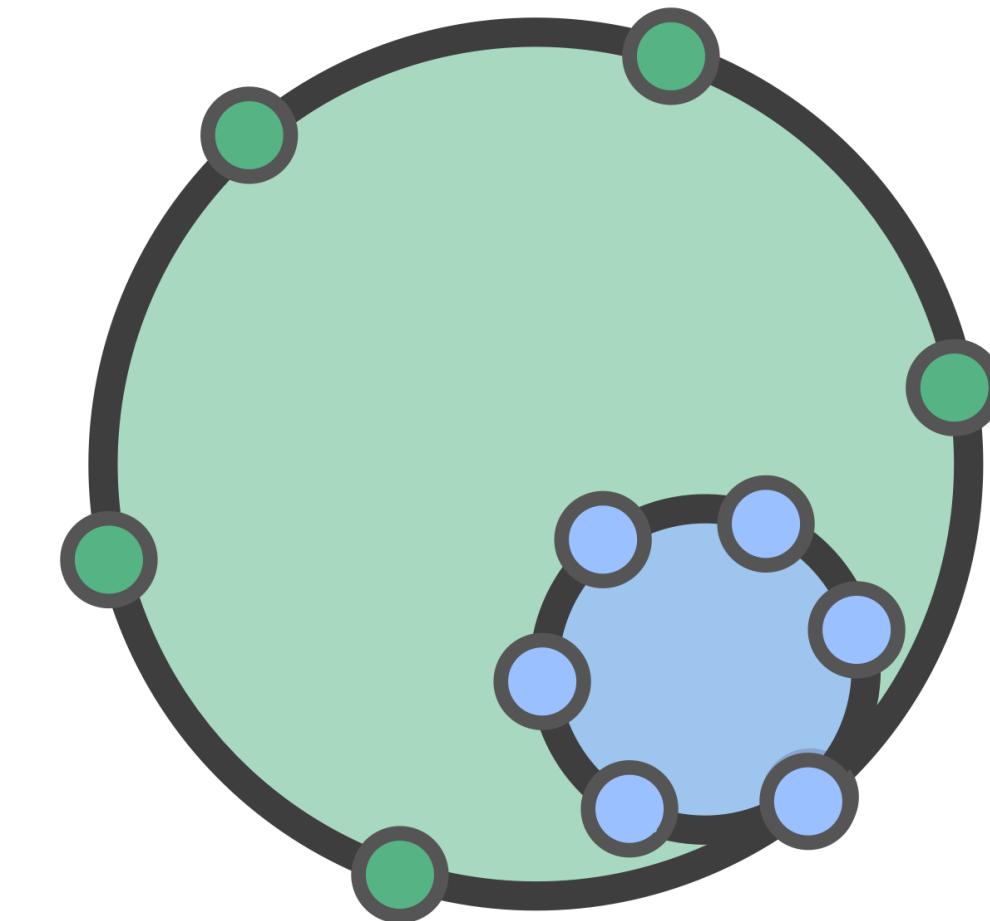
A group of people with the mandate to execute on rules and guidelines set by its parent circle.

- expands capacity of the parent circle
- self-organizing or guided by coordinator/leader.
- has no governance meeting
- can raise objections to rules and guidelines to parent circle.



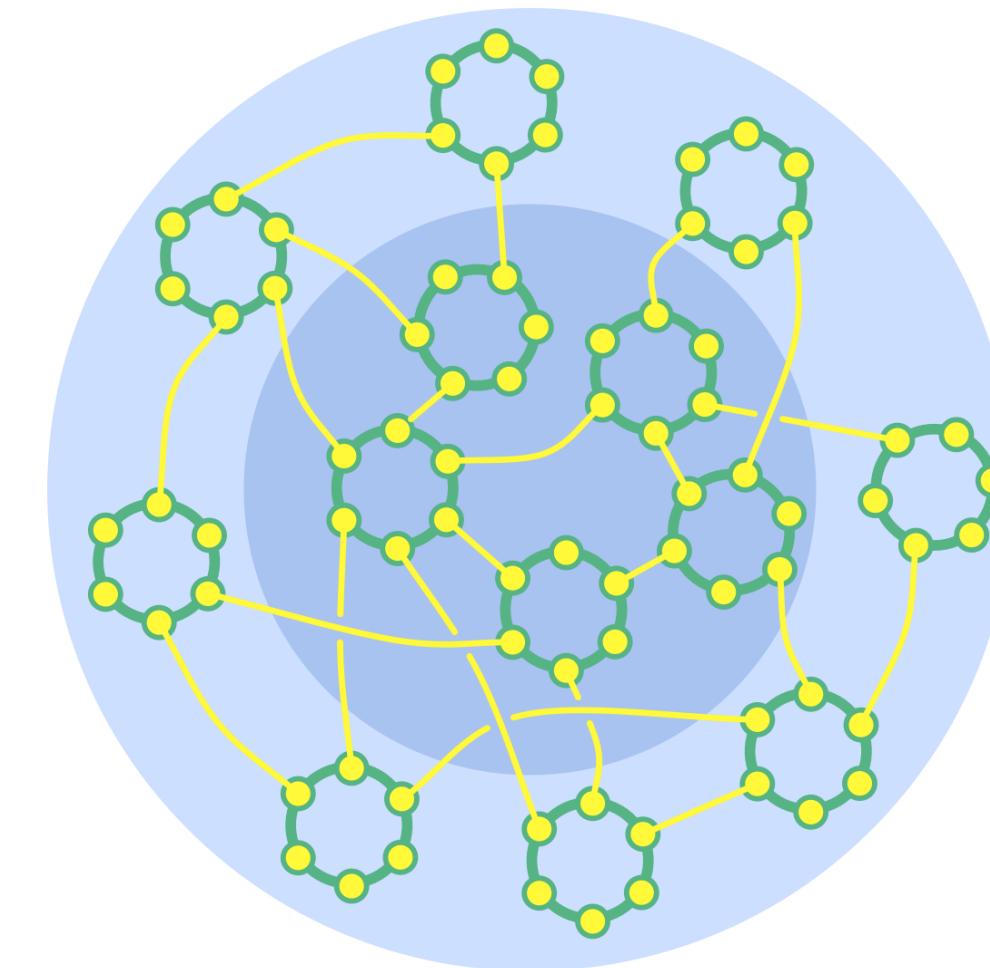
P7.8: Nested Circle

A pattern for expanding functions



P7.9: Peach Organization

Periphery drives the organization, the center provides services.



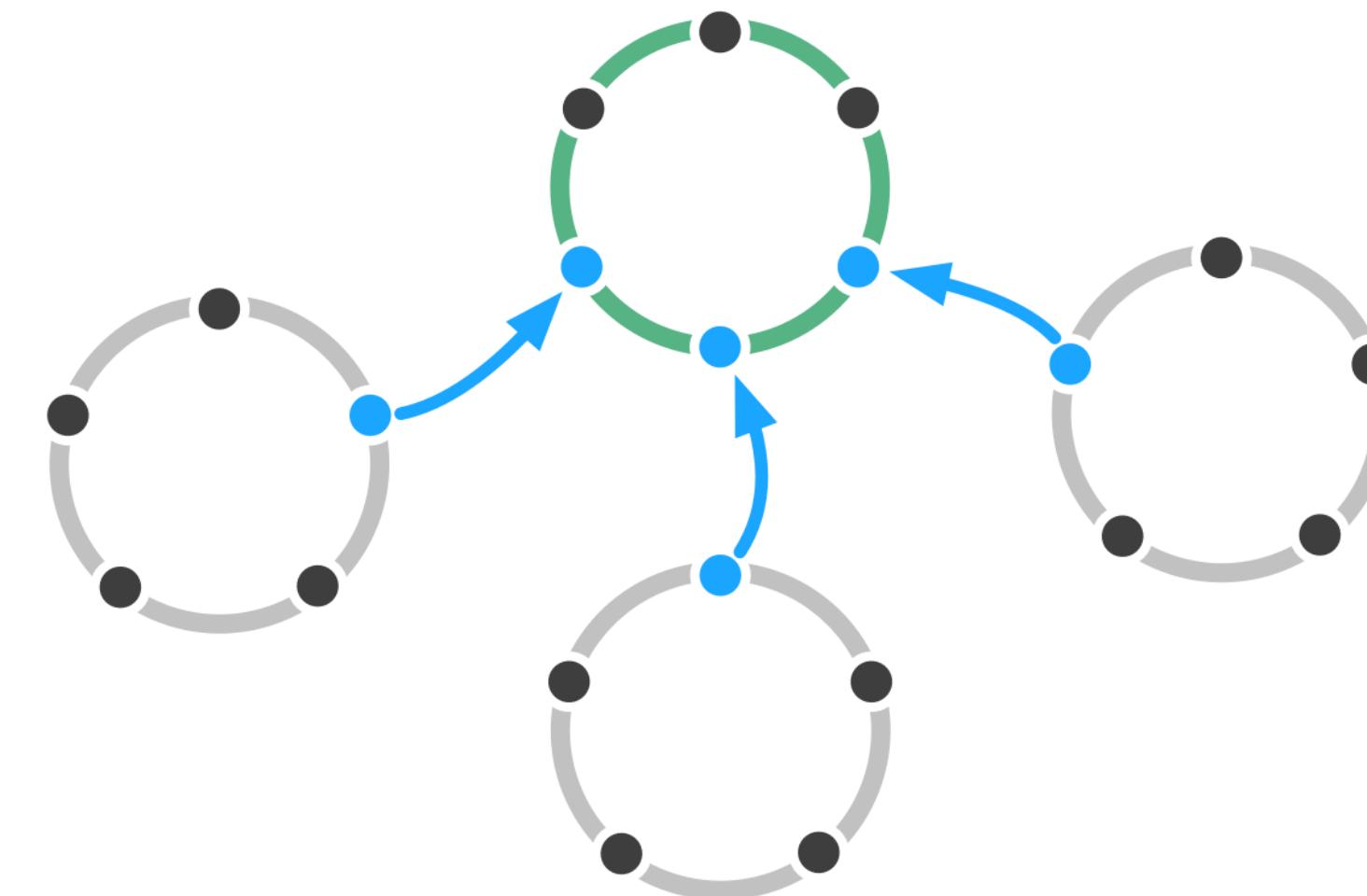
P7.10: Representative

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

P7.11: Service Circle

A pattern for outsourcing shared services



8. Alignment

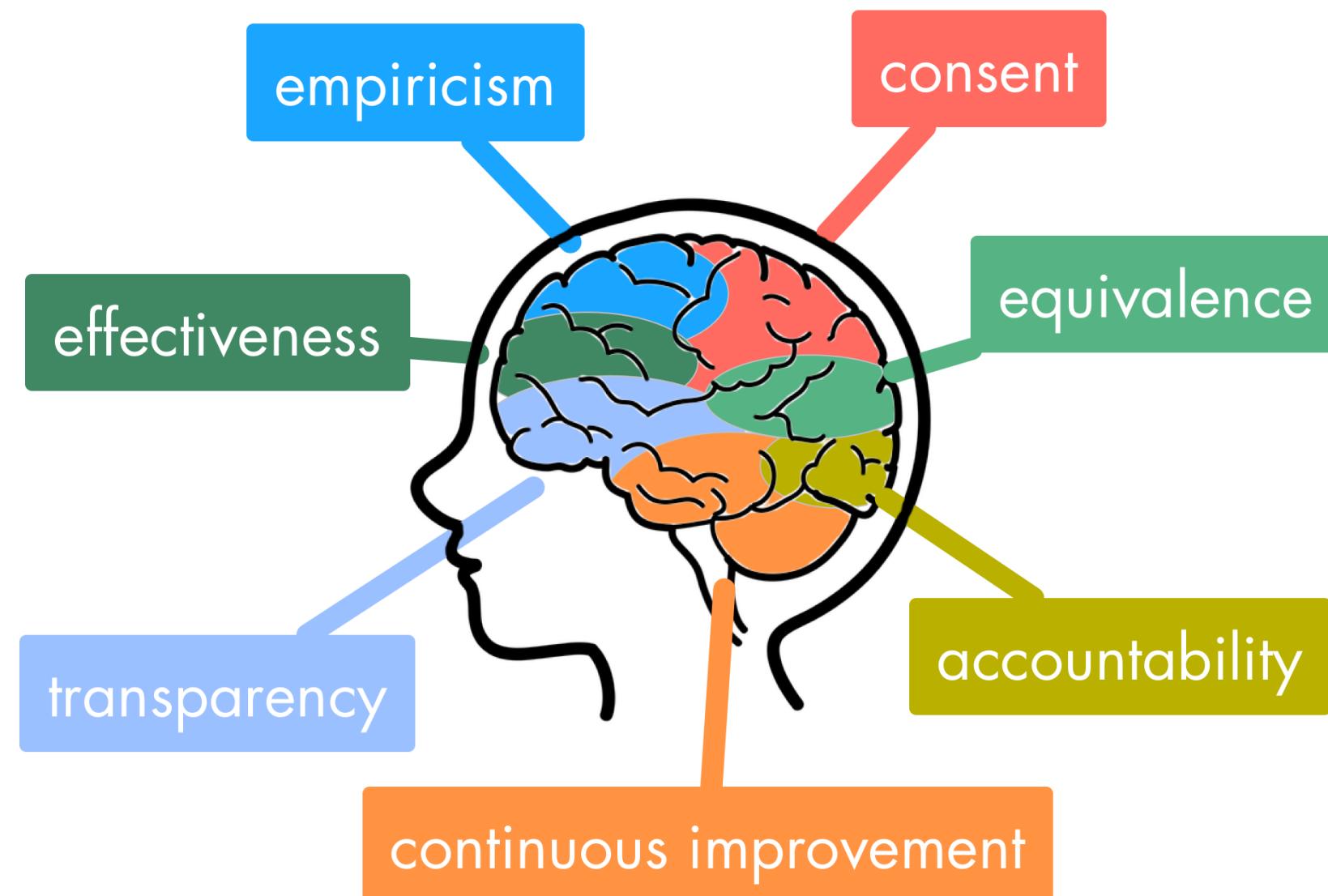


Alignment

Pattern Index:

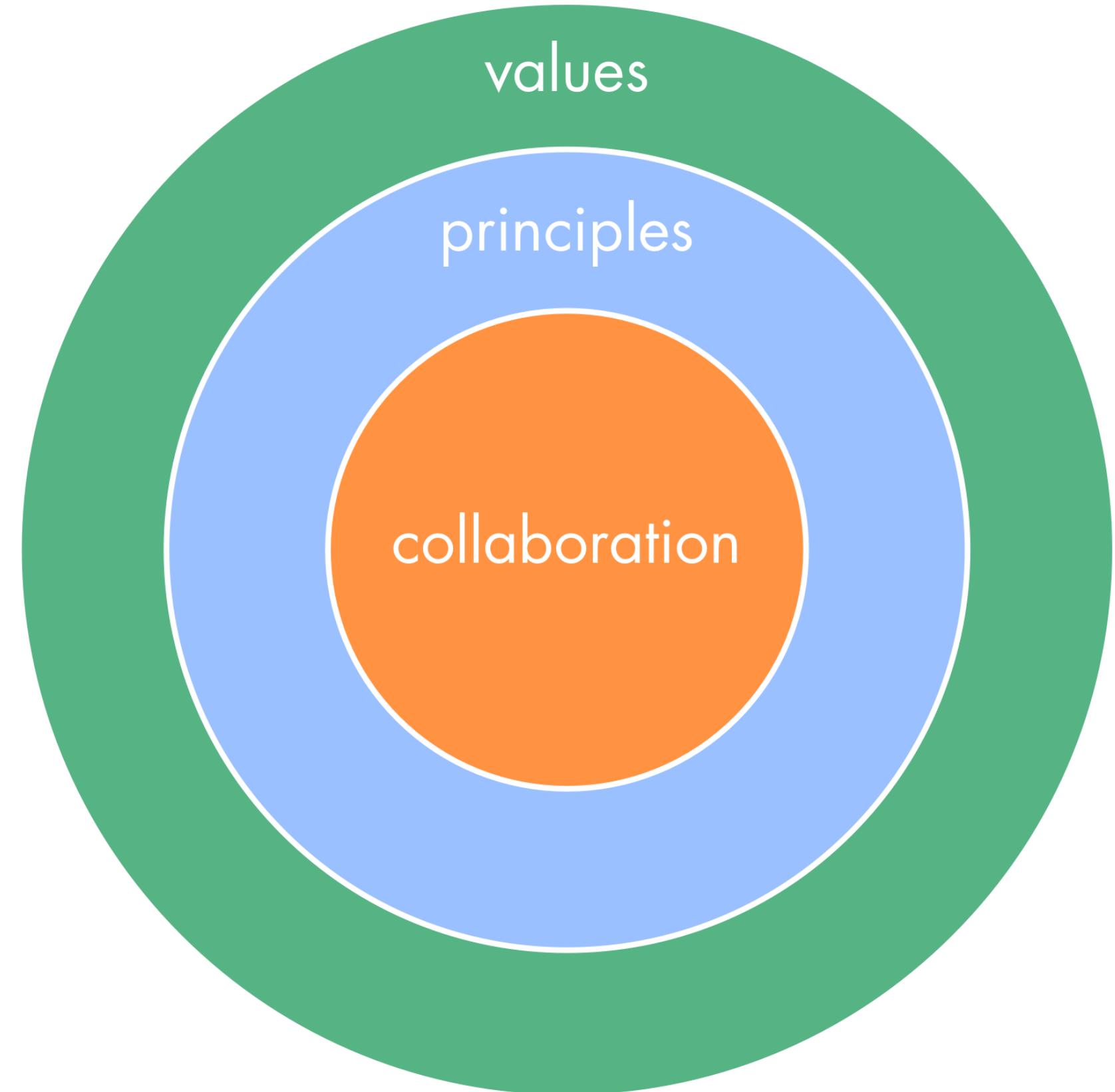
- P8.1: Adopt The Seven Principles
- P8.2: Agree On Values
- P8.3: Bylaws
- P8.4: Contracting And Accountability
- P8.5: Linking
- P8.6: Transparent Salary

P8.1: Adopt The Seven Principles



Adopt The Seven Principles (cont.)

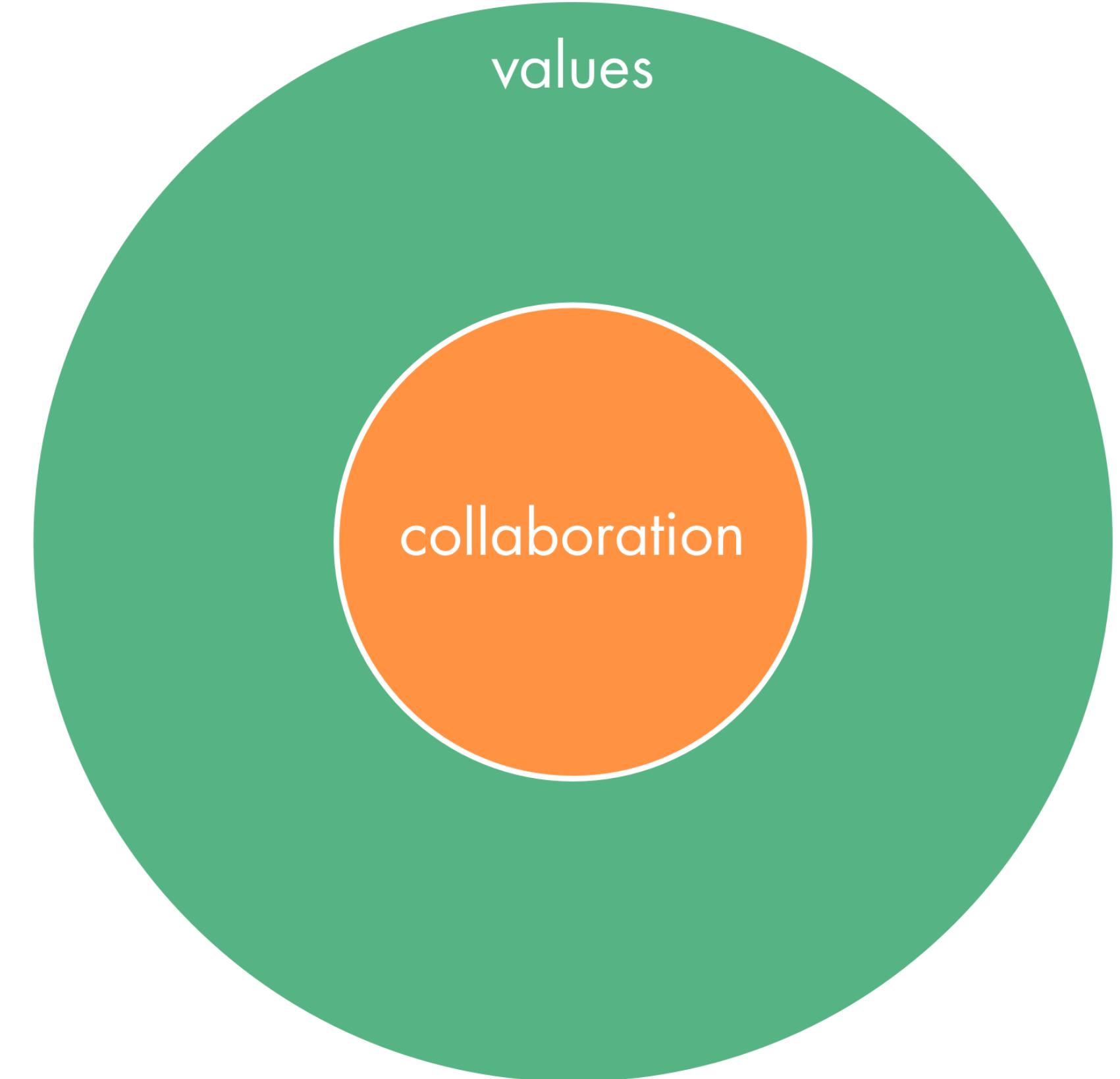
- values embrace Sociocracy 3.0 principles
- collaboration follows principles and values
- adopt the seven principles to reduce the number of agreements necessary, and to guide adaptation of patterns



P8.2: Agree On Values

A **value** is a principle of some significance that guides behavior.

- In an organization people come together to collaborate
- every individual has values that are influenced by their experiences and beliefs
- values may define ethical limitations to action



Agree On Values (cont.)

- organizational values **define culture** and set parameters for action
- values offer guidance to determine appropriate action, even in the absence of explicit agreements
- a group or organization may **choose to collectively adopt values**
- defining values is a **strategy** that supports effectiveness of an organization:
 - reduces potential for **misunderstanding**
 - **aligns** decision making and action
 - **attracts new members, partners and customers** who are aligned with the organization
- values are an agreement, and thus subject to **regular reviews**

P8.3: Bylaws

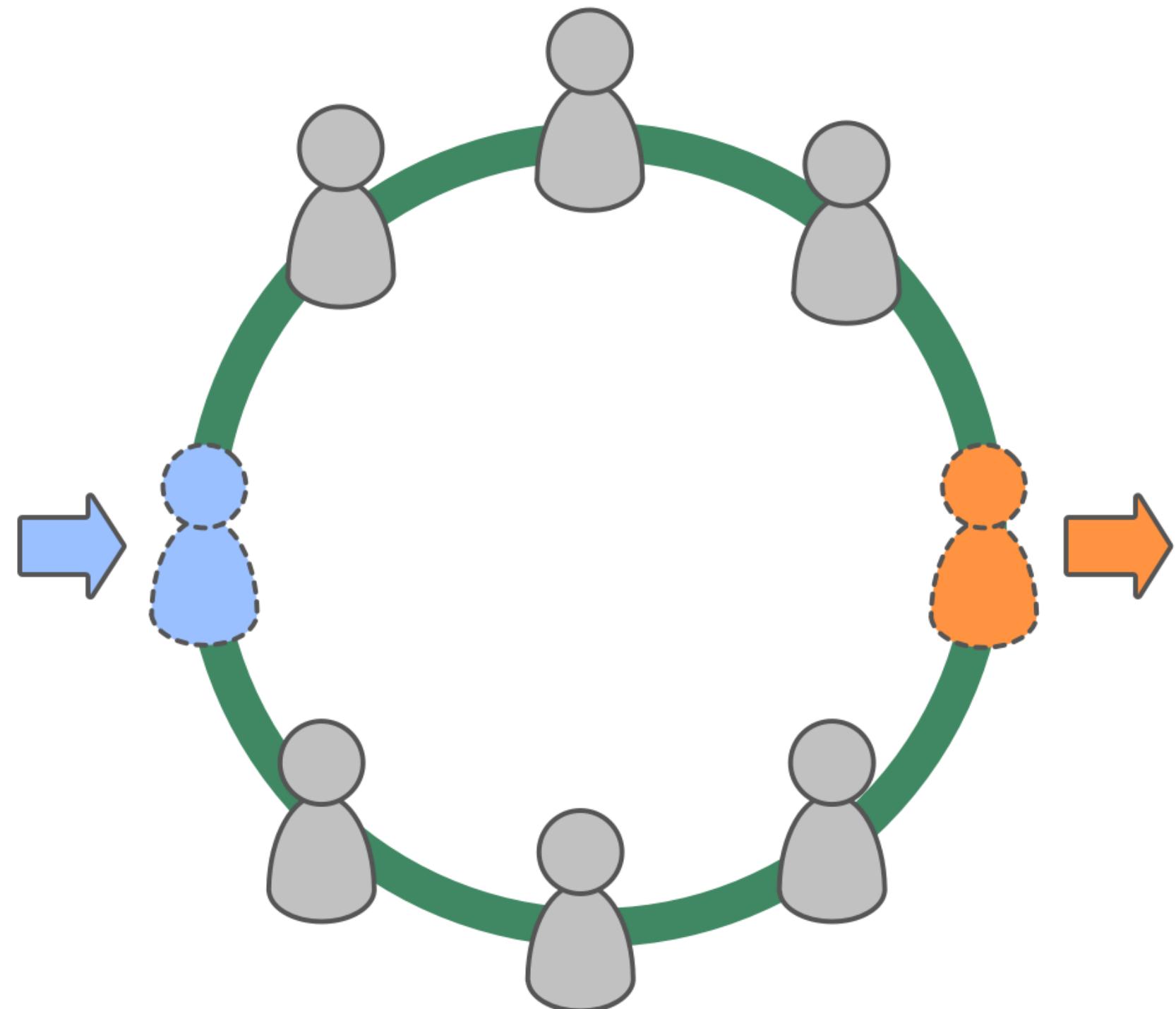
Secure S3 principles and patterns in your bylaws as needed, to protect **legal integrity** and **organizational culture**:

- consent decision making
- selection process for leadership roles
- governance structure
- influence of owners or shareholders

P8.4: Contracting And Accountability

To protect organizational culture, help new members have a smooth start, and provide for painless development of organizational structure, an organization needs to:

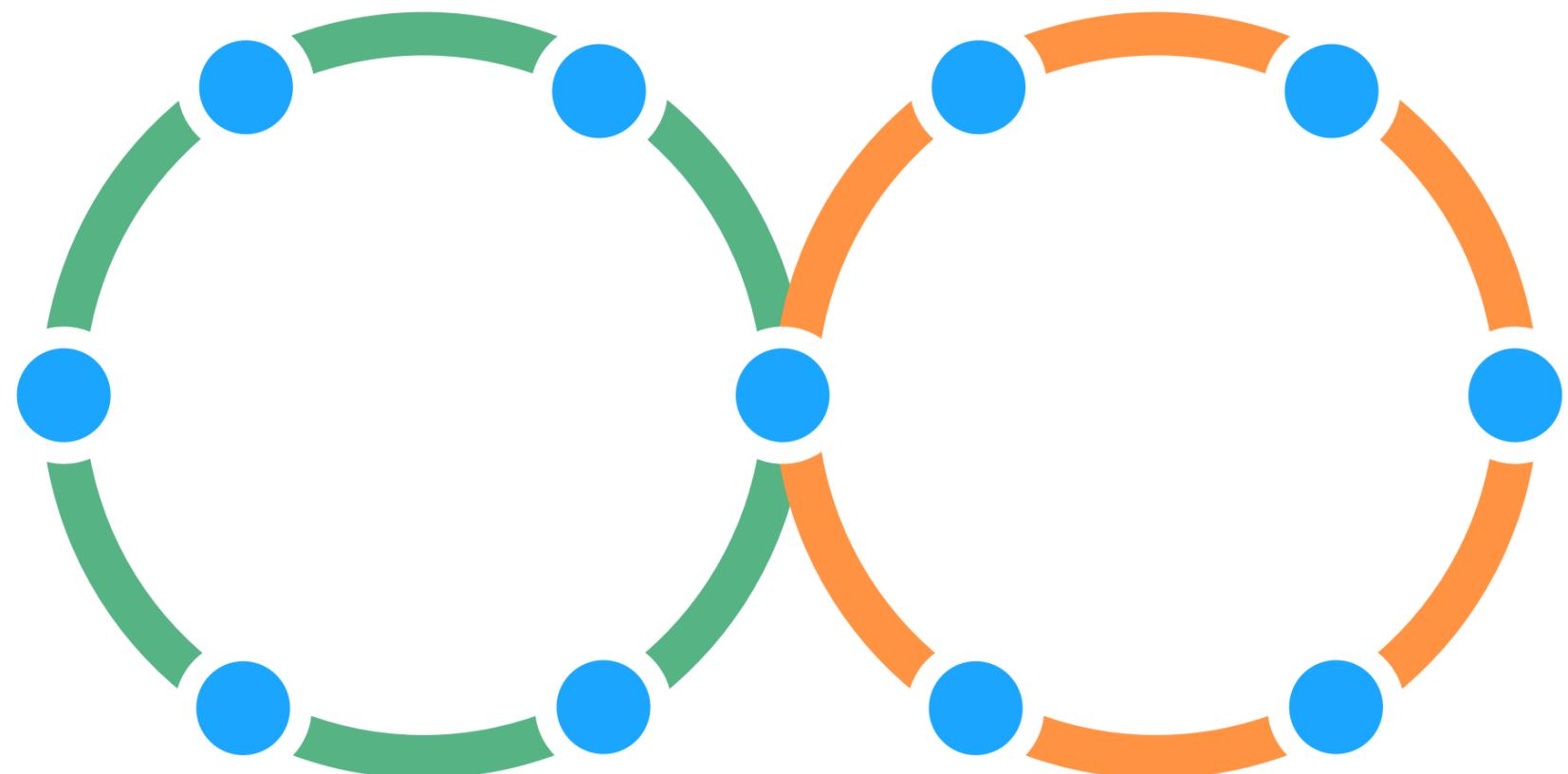
- develop a consent-based process for entering the organization that tests for both cultural fit and the skills required
- align contracts with both organizational culture and legal requirements
- define a default role for a new member
- define a process for leaving an organization
- provide a way for entering and leaving a circle



P8.5: Linking

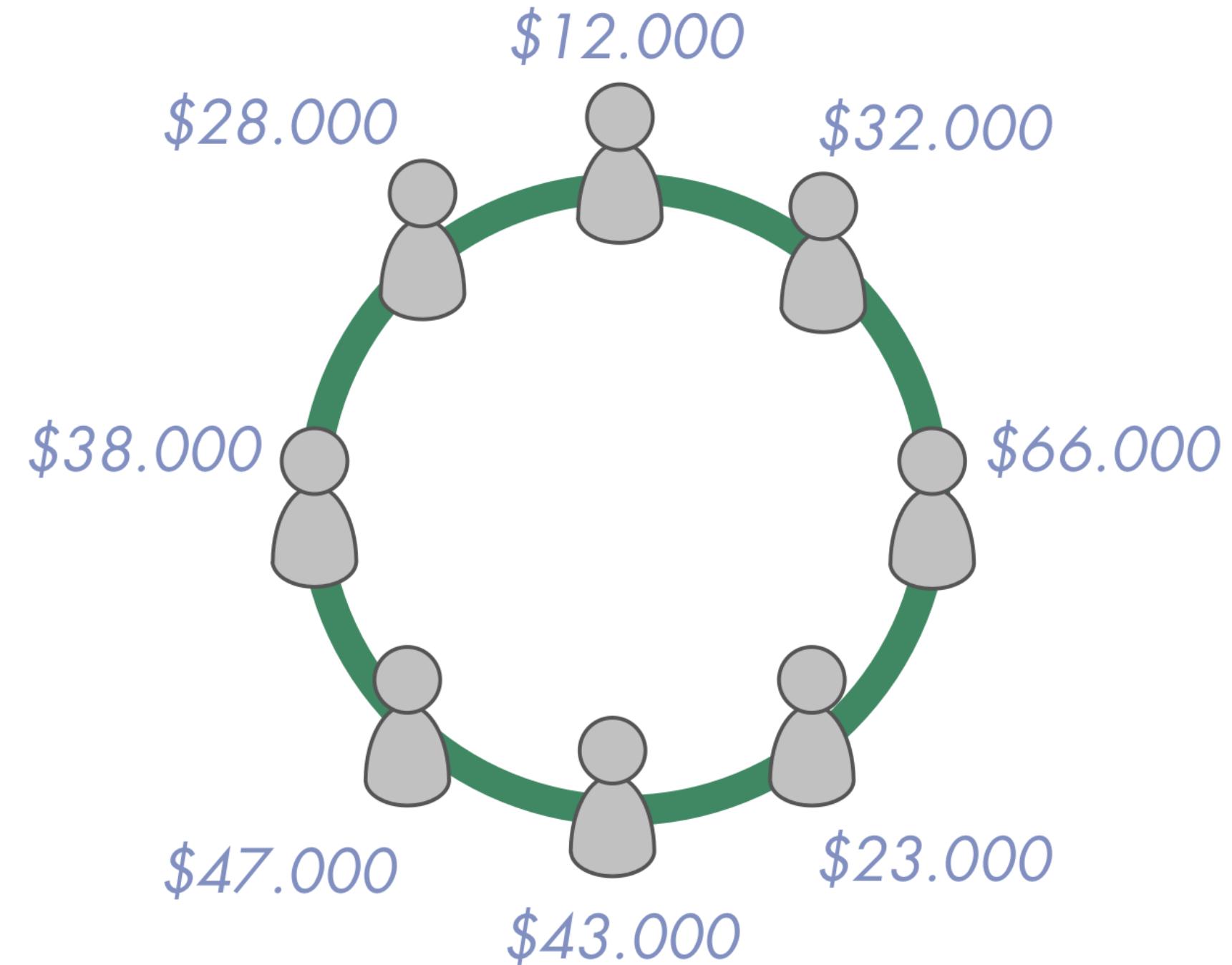
Connecting two circles

- two circles each select a delegate to the other circle
- delegates represent their parent circles in important decisions and take part in governance meetings



P8.6: Transparent Salary

- transparent salaries need to be fair
- fairness has several orthogonal dimensions
- perception of fairness is specific to organization
- consider members and relevant stakeholders (e.g. investors)
- fixed: subsistence guarantee
- variable: fair distribution of gains and losses
- consider remuneration for changing roles
- create strategy for transitioning towards new contracts and compensation agreements



9. Bringing In S3 Patterns



Bringing In S3 Patterns

Pattern Index:

- P9.1: Adapt Patterns To Context
- P9.2: Be The Change
- P9.3: Continuous Improvement Of Work Process
- P9.4: Open S3 Adoption
- P9.5: Pull-System For Organizational Change

Understand Context

P9.1: Adapt Patterns To Context

- adapting and evolving S3 patterns is a hypothesis-driven process
- **shared understanding and buy-in is essential:** make sure everyone affected by adaptation is present or represented when creating and evolving the adaptation
- make sure you understand *why* you need to adapt the pattern
- use S3 principles as guide for adaptation
- make sure experiment with adaptation runs long enough to provide enough experience
- consider feeding back successful adaptations to the S3 community

Understand Pattern

Proposal for Adaptation

Consent to Adaptation

Test Adaptation

Evaluate and Evolve

P9.2: Be The Change

- be the change you want to create
- tell the story how you discovered S3
- invite others for experiments
- learn and grow (together)

P9.3: Continuous Improvement Of Work Process

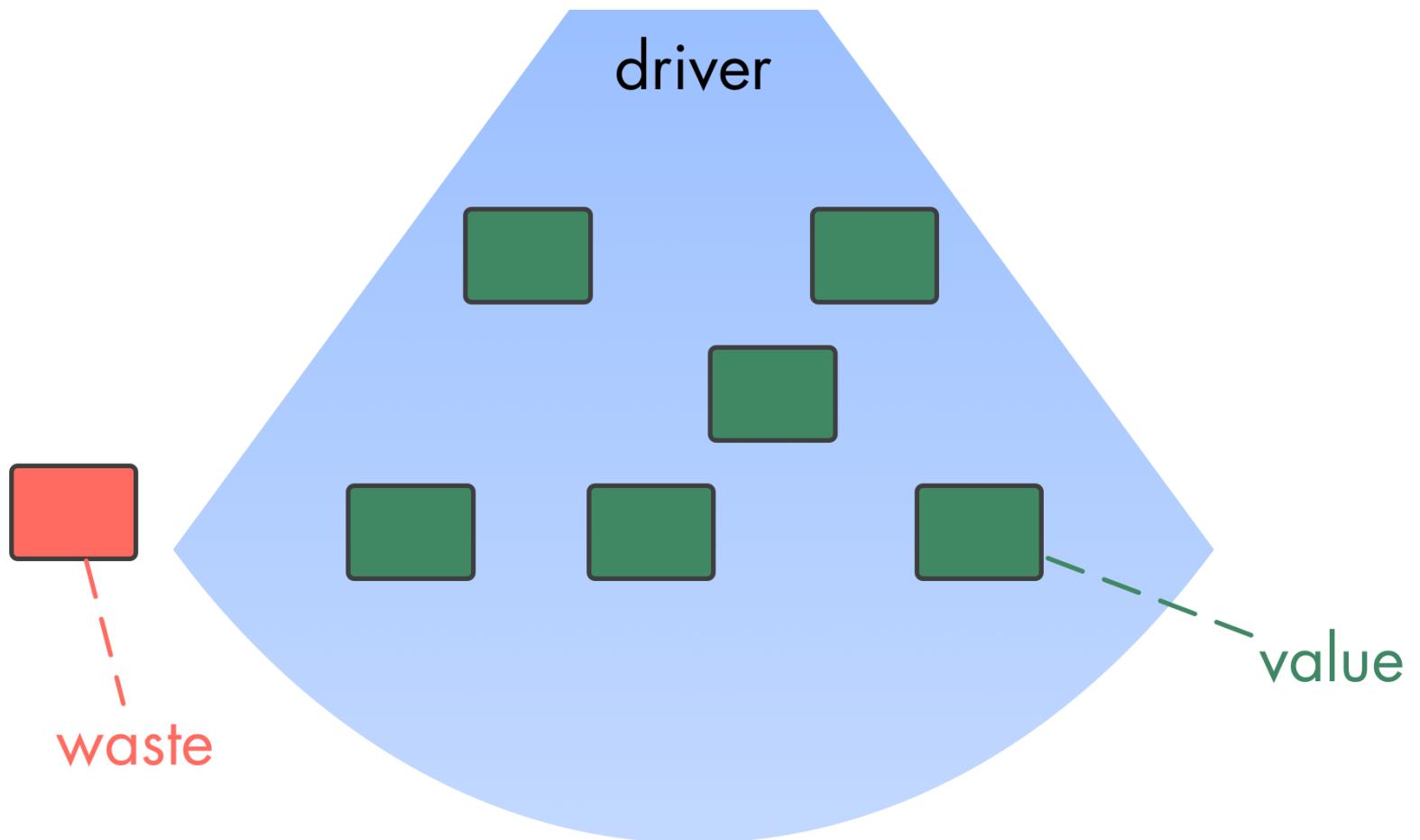
To reveal tensions and establish a metrics-based pull-system for organizational change.

- start with consent in one circle, elect a facilitator, define values, and go
- trigger continuous improvement (e.g through Kanban)
- let them pull in patterns
- then expand the scope of the experiment

Waste and Continuous Improvement

Waste is anything not necessary for - or standing in the way of - effective response to a driver.

- waste exists in many different forms and on different levels of abstraction (tasks, processes, organizational structure, mental models...)
- establishing a process for ongoing elimination of waste enables natural evolution of an organization towards greater effectiveness
- adaptation to changing environment is built into the process



P9.4: Open S3 Adoption

- install a regular cadence of Open Spaces
 - invite all members to create and run experiments
 - set boundaries for experiments: S3 principles
 - review experiments in the next Open Space
 - repeat

P9.5: Pull-System For Organizational Change

- all change is voluntary
- create an environment that empowers and invites members of the organization to drive change
- bring in patterns that solve current and important problems
 - don't break what's already working
 - meet everyone where they are ...
 - ...and let them choose their own pace

Closing

Breaking the Rules

- is sometimes **necessary**...
- ...but may come at a **cost** to the community
- we are accountable:
 - **clean up** disturbances
 - **follow up** ASAP with those affected or accountable
 - **initiate changes** instead of breaking the rules repeatedly



Links

More resources on my website: evolvingcollaboration.com/s3

S3 website: <http://sociocracy30.org>

Follow us on **twitter:** [@sociocracy30](https://twitter.com/sociocracy30)

License

This work by Bernhard Bockelbrink is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>.

Parts of this work are copied or adapted from "A brief Introduction to Sociocracy 3.0" and "The Sociocracy 3.0 Handbook" by Bernhard Bockelbrink and James Priest.



Bernhard Bockelbrink is co-founder of The Sociocracy 3.0 Movement. As an agile coach, consultant and trainer he is supporting organizations in agile transformations and helps them on their way towards an evolved culture of leadership and close collaboration that allows them to sustainably grow great products and services with happy people.

He has 18 years of experience in as a coach, CTO, scrum master, product owner, project manager, technology consultant and developer in Startups, small-/medium-sized businesses and enterprises, and a passion for agile and lean software development that goes back to the late 1990s.

evolvingcollaboration.com -- bernhard.bockelbrink@gmail.com

