

# Sociocracy 3.0 - Patterns for Agile Organizations

## All Patterns Explained

Bernhard Bockelbrink and James Priest

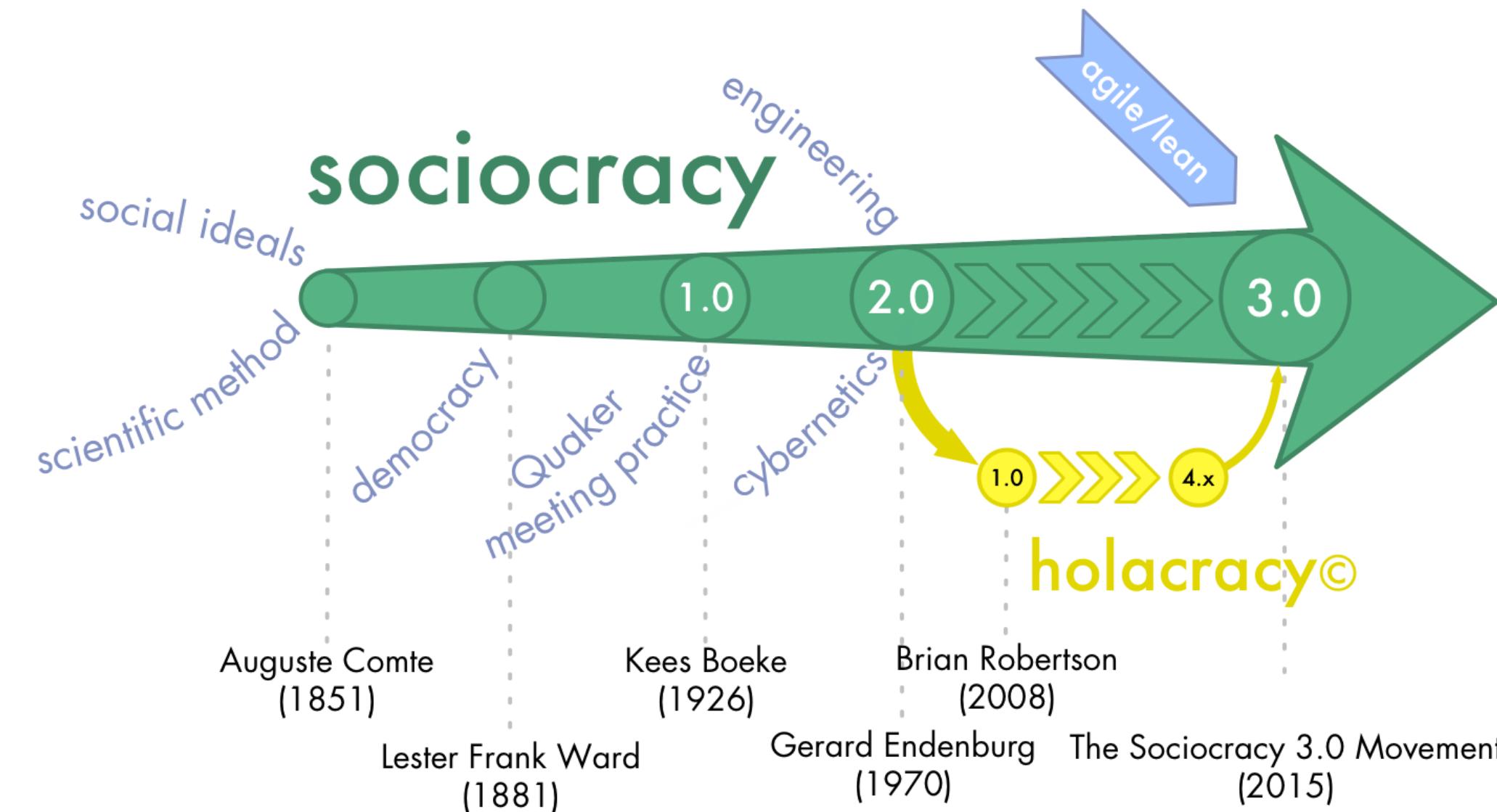
<http://evolvingcollaboration.com/sociocracy-30/>

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

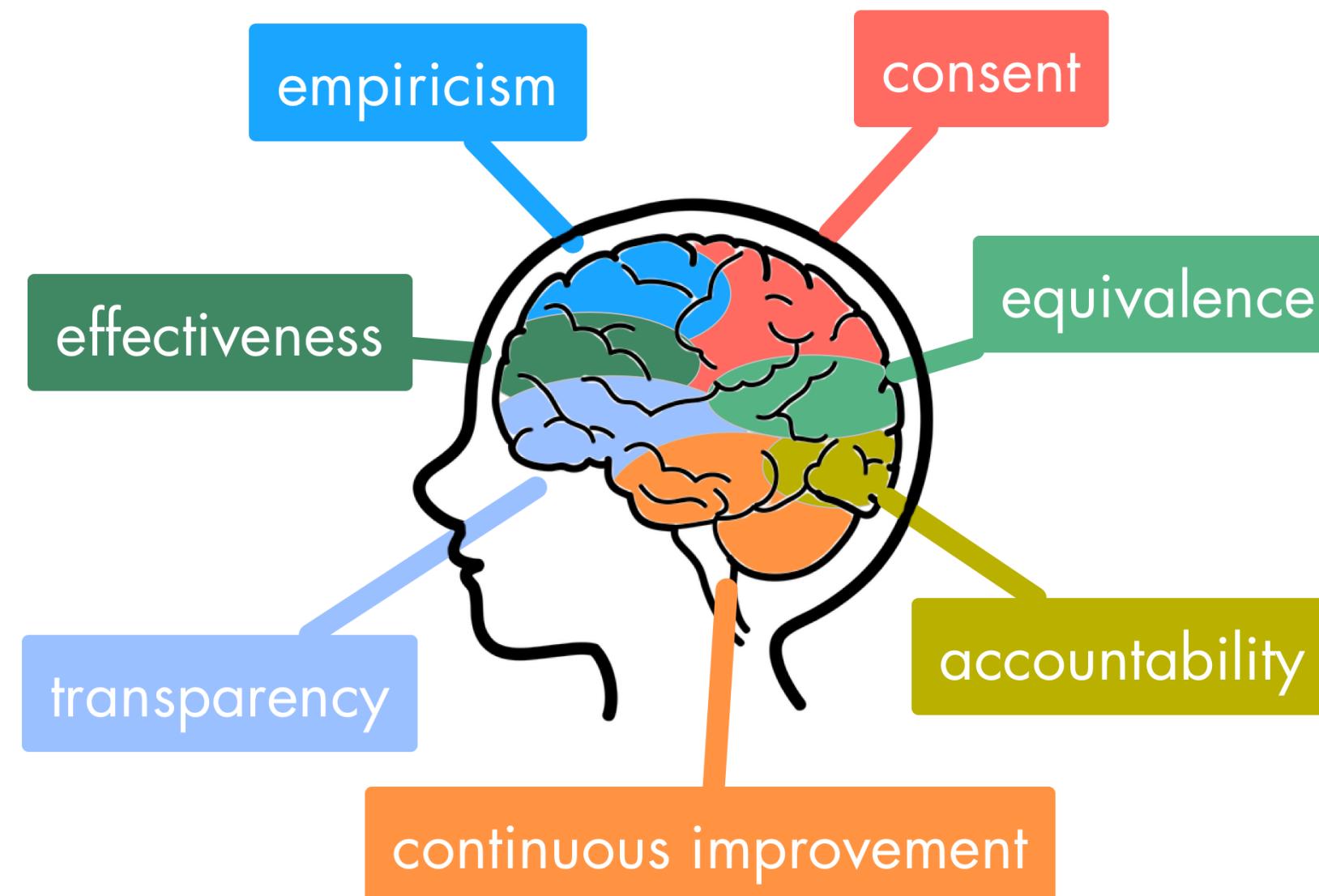
A **pattern** is a template for successfully navigating a specific context.

- 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



# The Seven Principles

**Effectiveness:** *Devote time only to what brings you closer towards achieving your objectives.*

**Consent:** *Do things only in the absence of reasons why doing so would stand in the way of (more) effectively meeting shared objectives.*

**Empiricism:** *Test all assumptions about an organization and its interactions through experiments, continuous revision and falsification.*

# The Seven Principles (cont.)

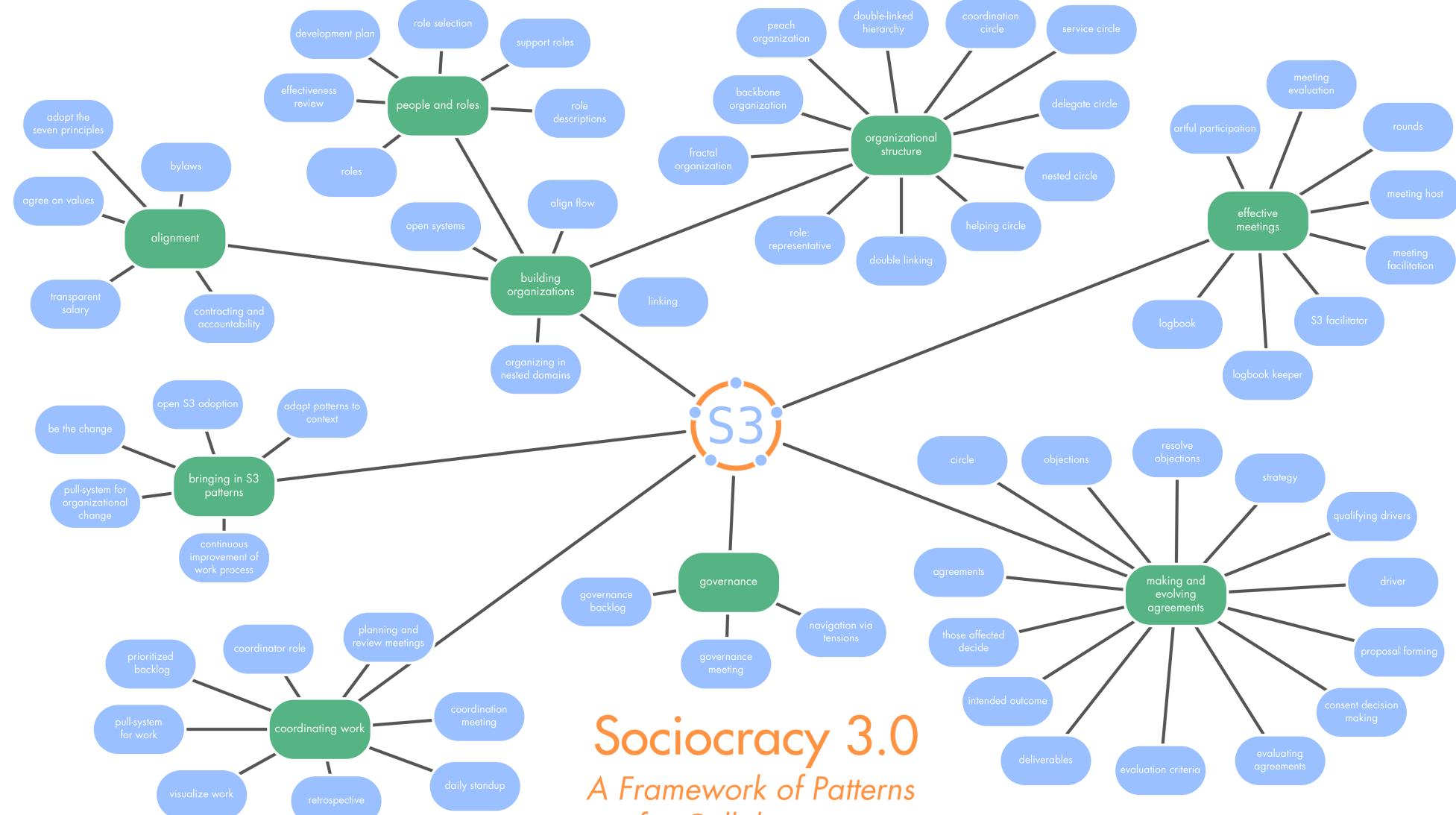
**Continuous Improvement:** *Respond to change in small increments, by building on and transforming what is already there, to reduce risk and resistance, and to accommodate steady empirical learning*

**Equivalence:** *People affected by decisions can influence and change them on the basis of reason to do so.*

**Transparency:** *Make all information accessible to anyone in an organization. Confidentiality requires consent.*

**Accountability:** *Respond when something is needed and be accountable for doing what you agreed to.*

# 65 Patterns

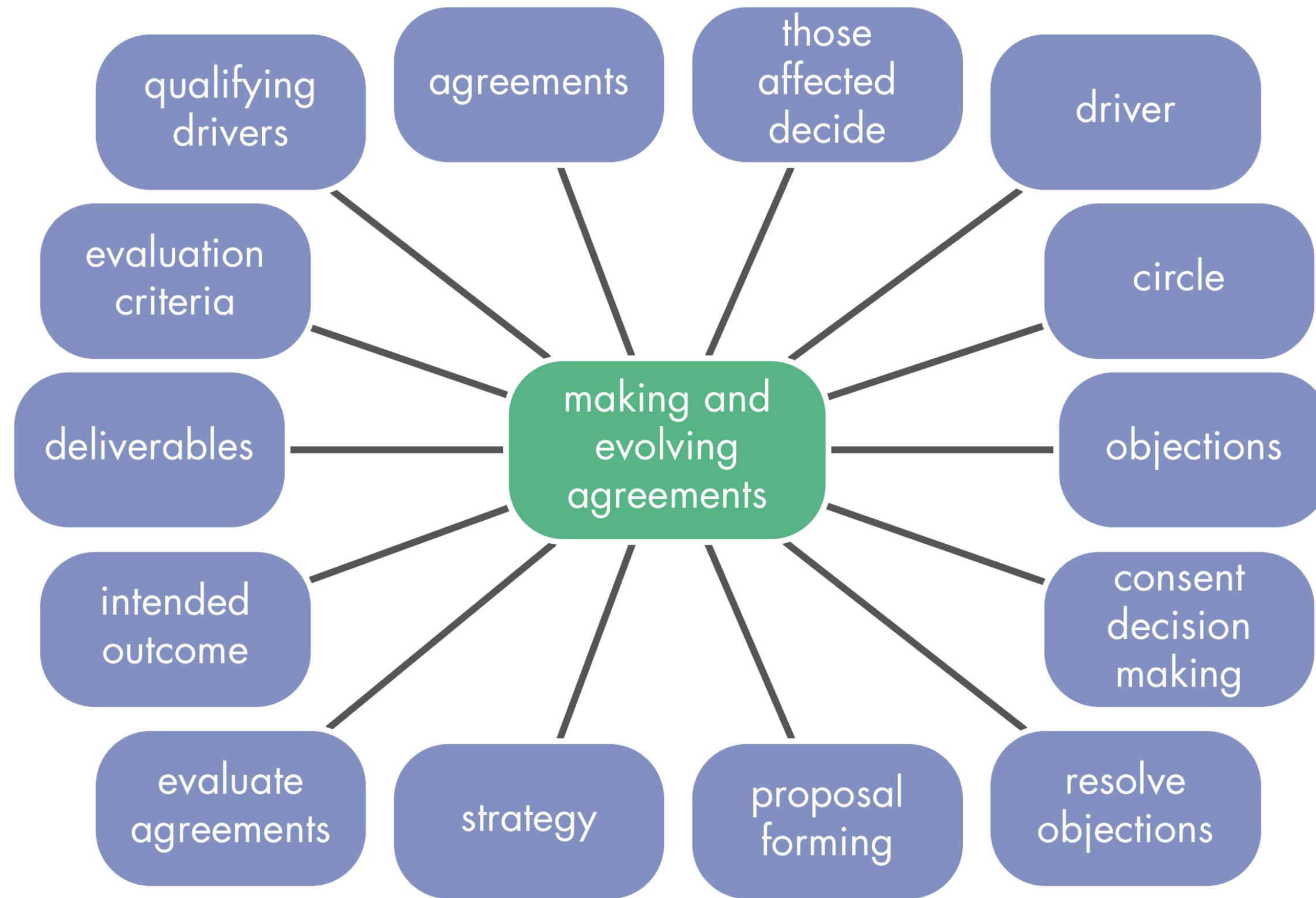


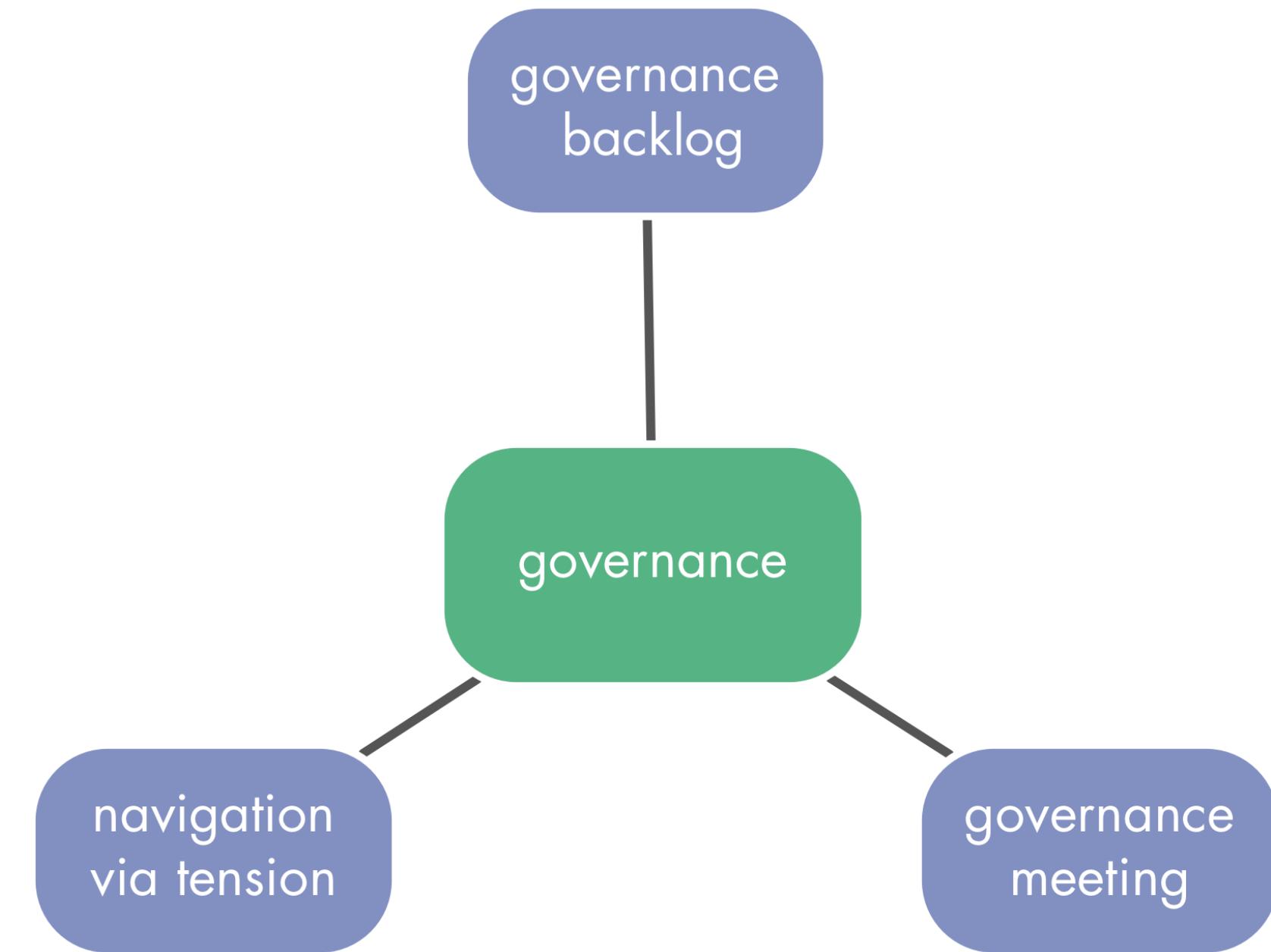
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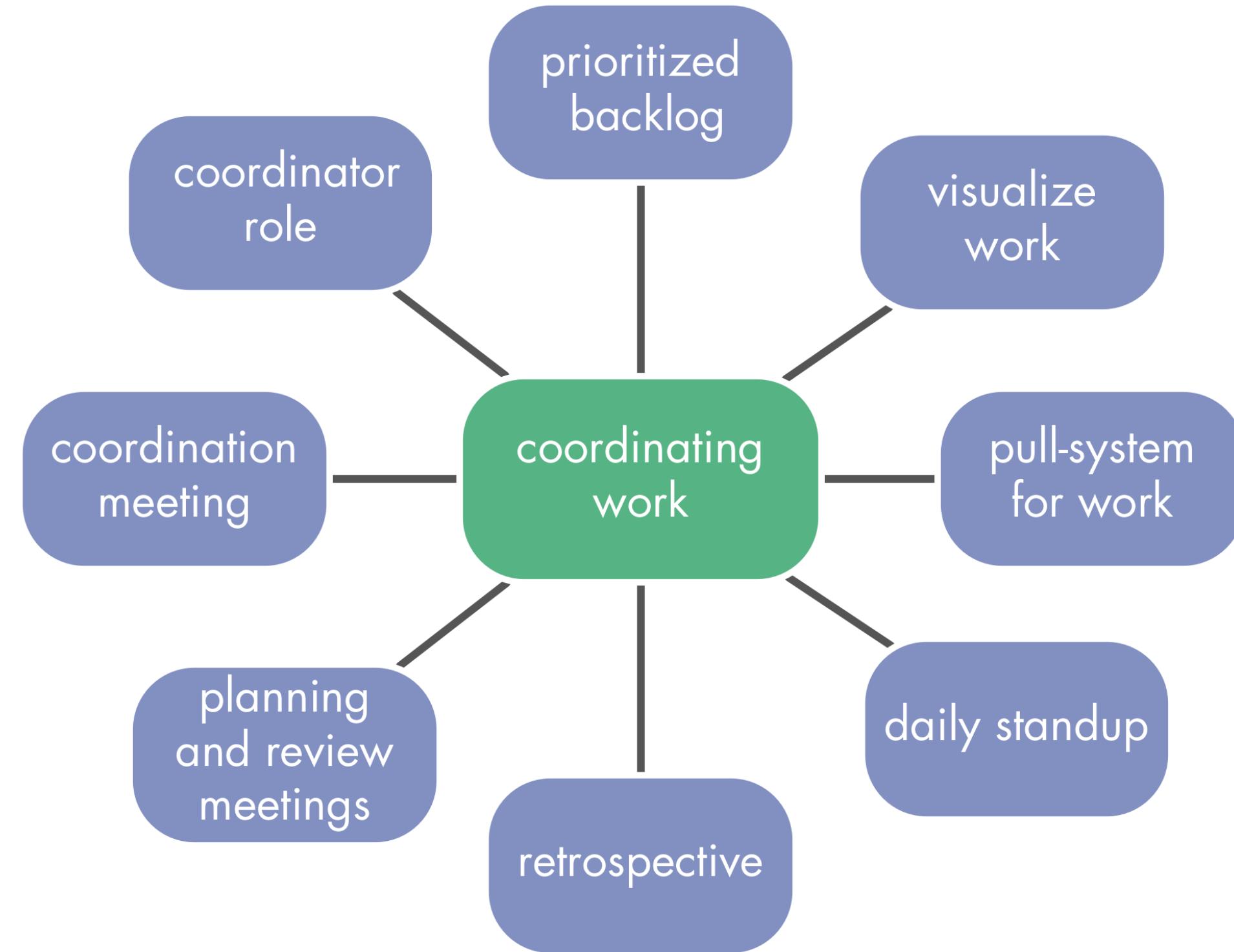
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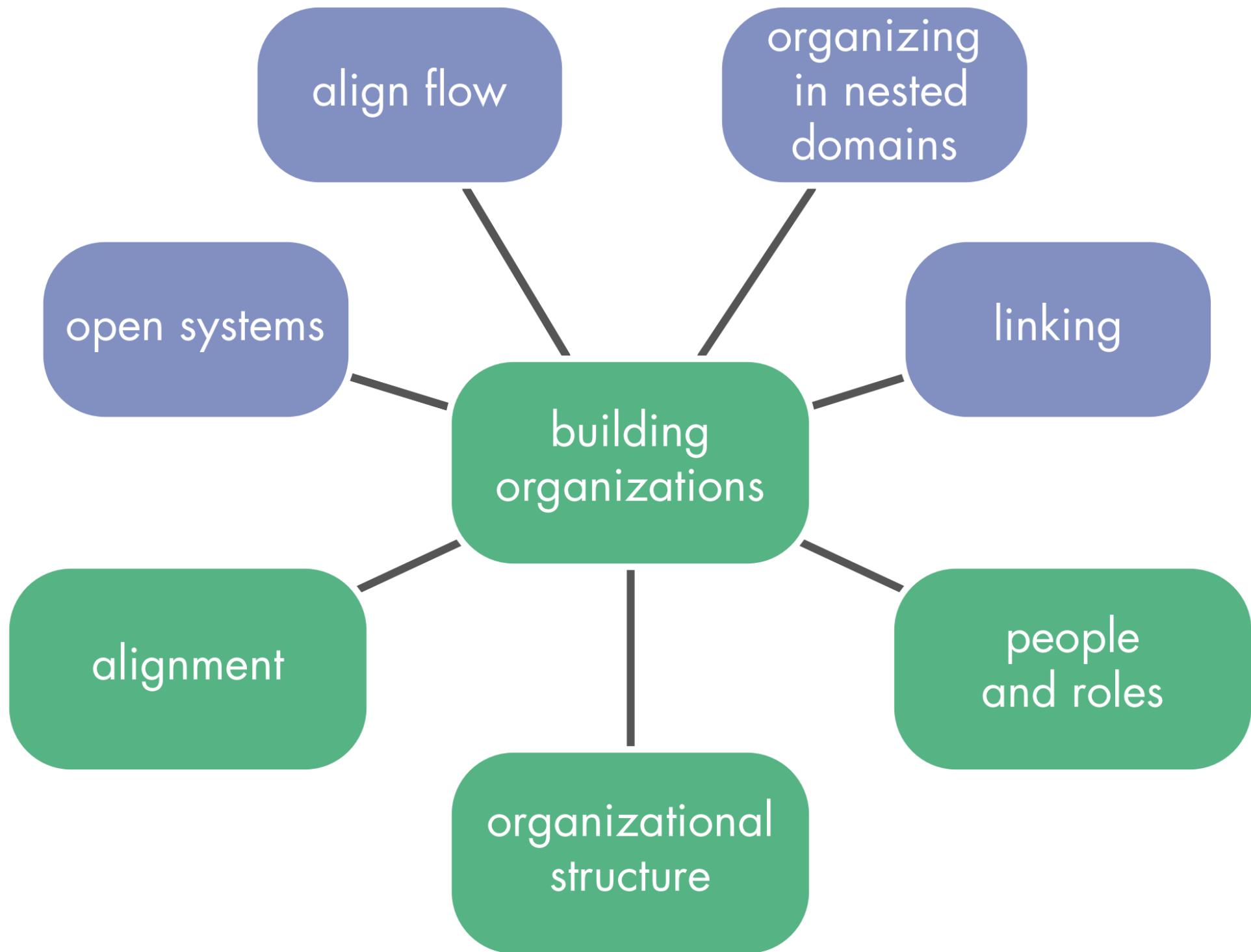


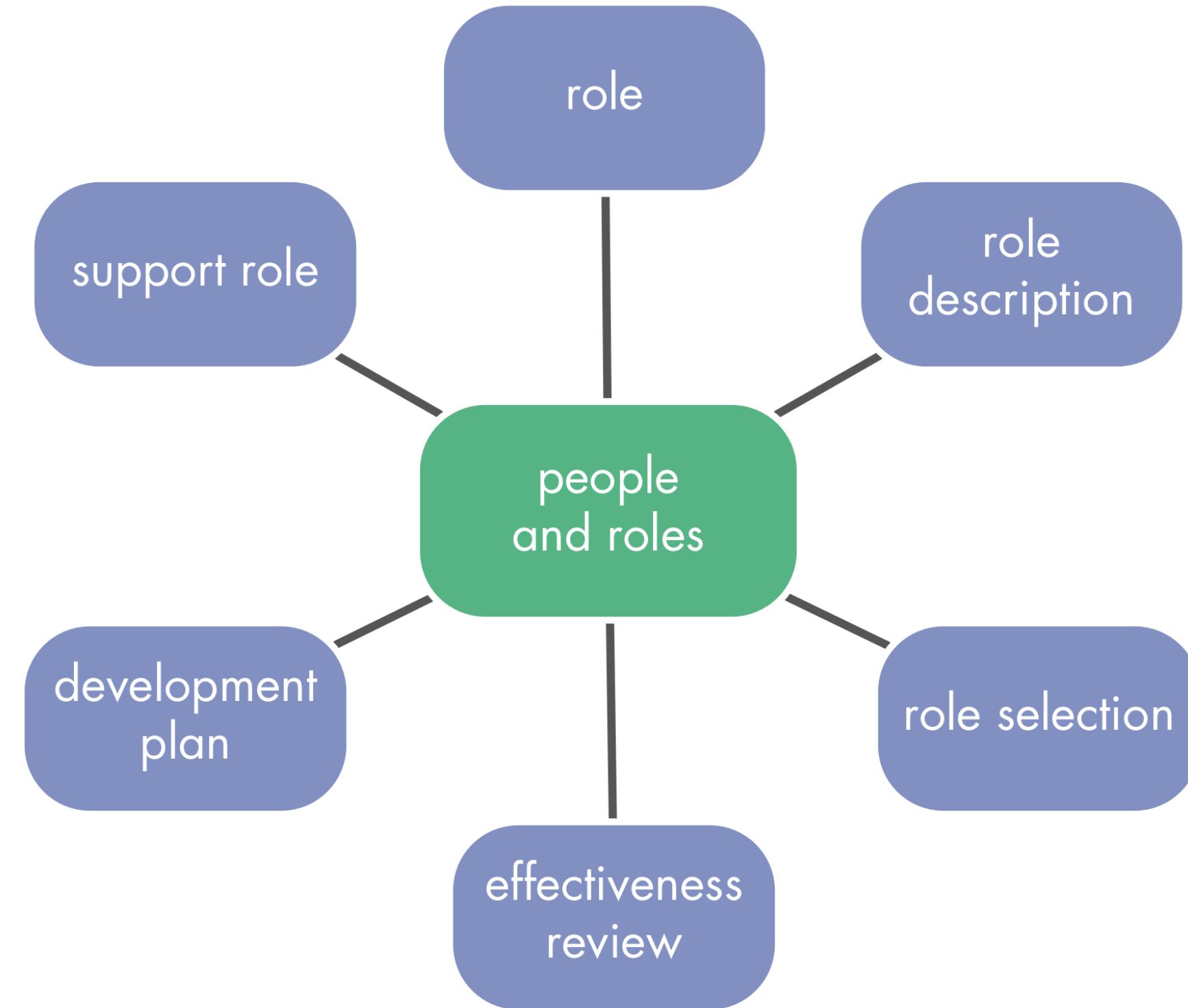




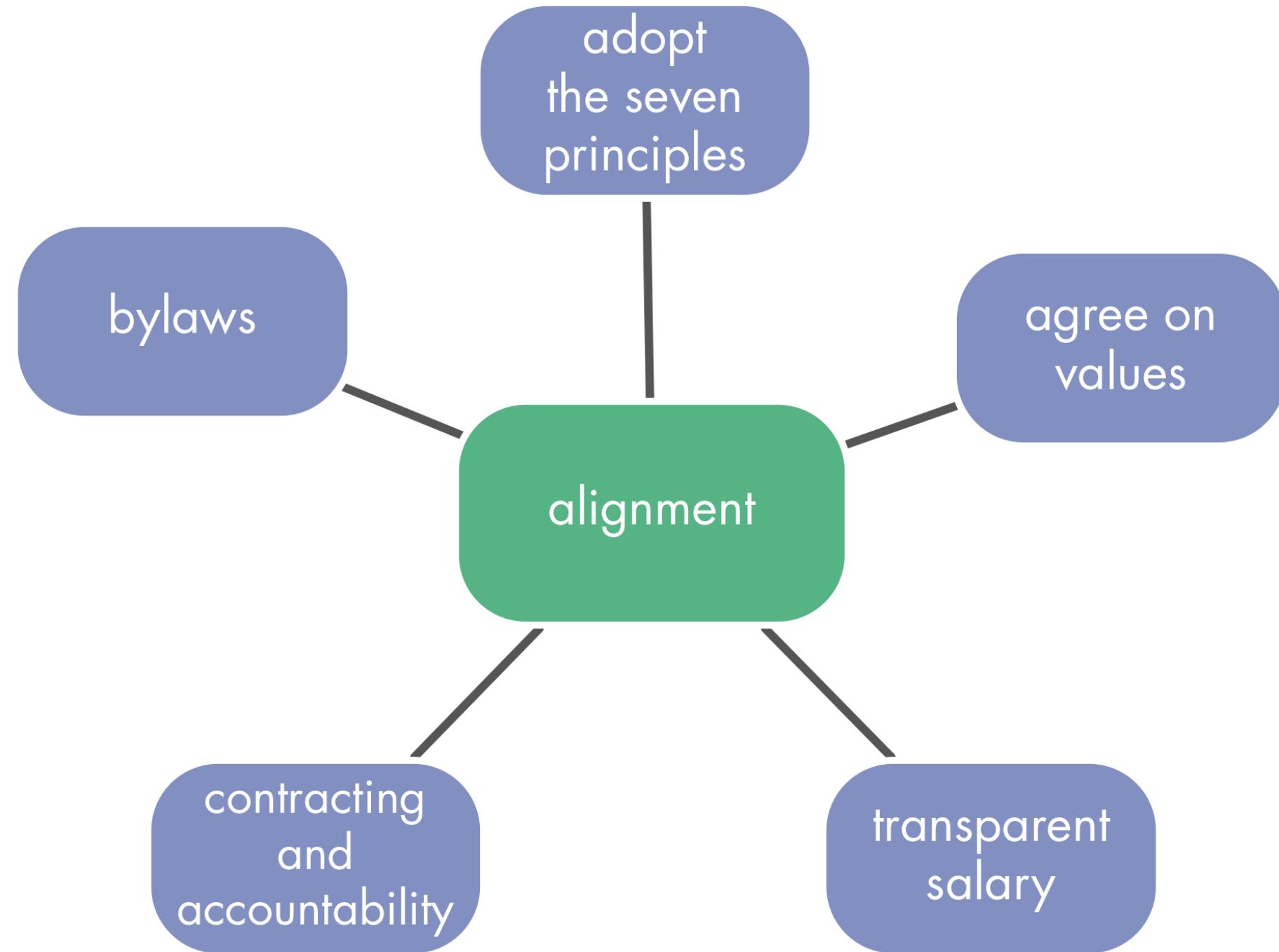


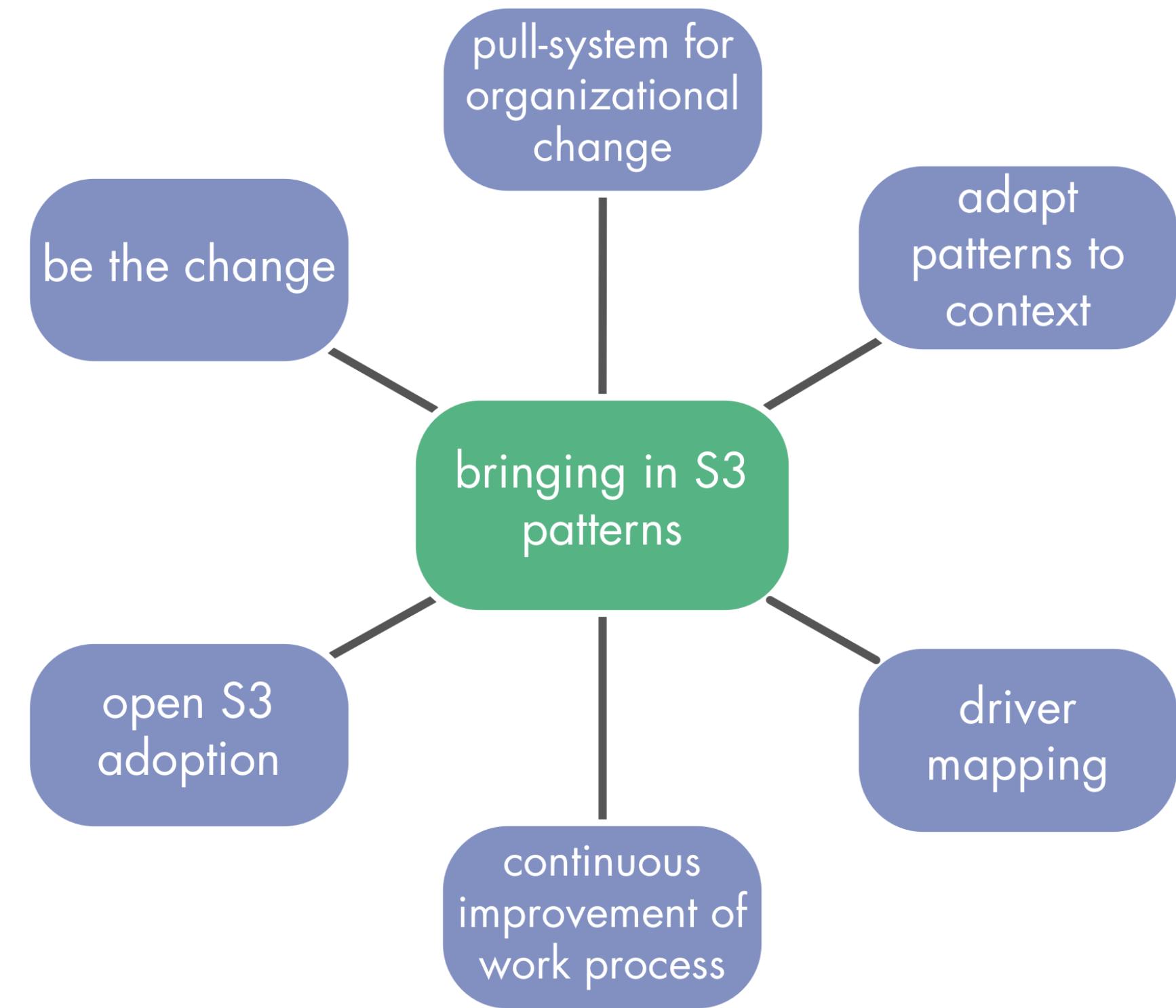












making and evolving agreements

governance

effective meetings

coordinating work

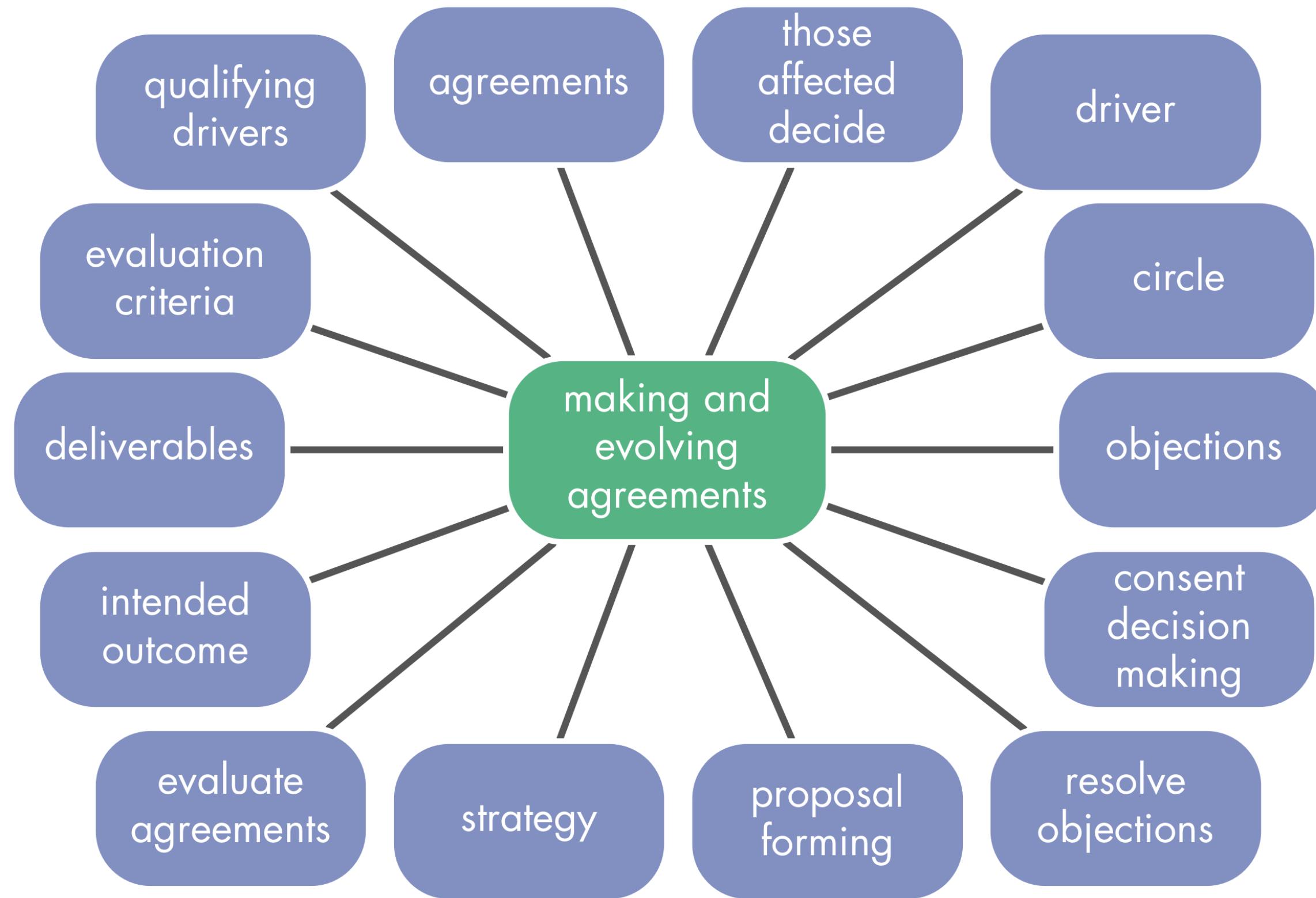
building organizations

people and roles

organizational structure

alignment

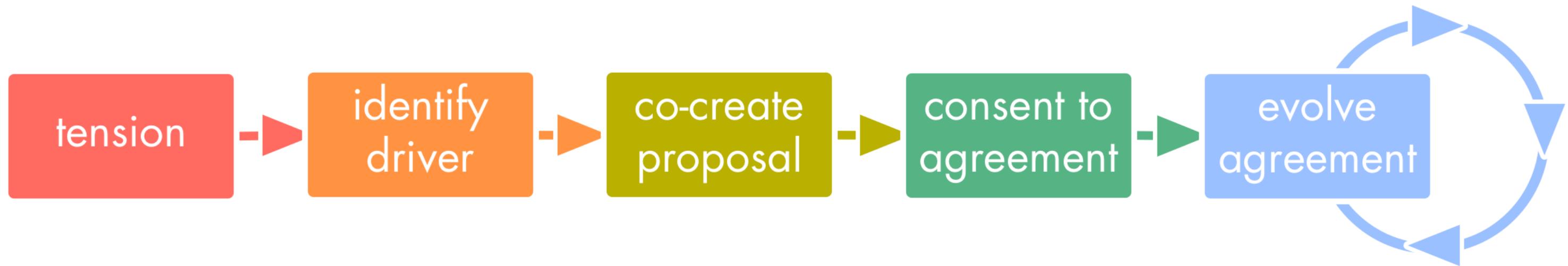
bringing in S3 patterns



# S3 promotes a hypothesis-driven approach to decision making



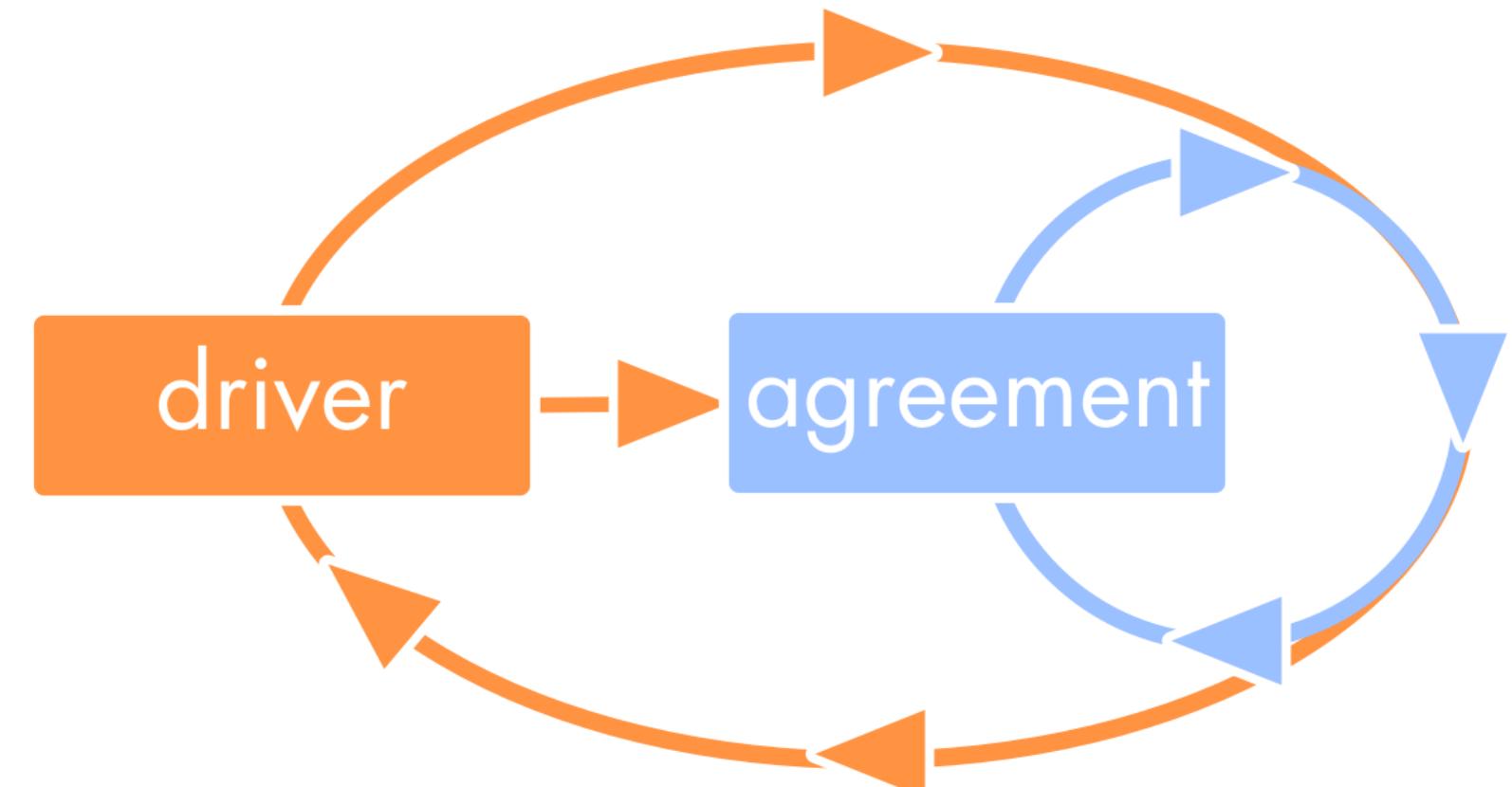
# Agreement Life-Cycle



## 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	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Description	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Evaluation Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ <hr/></li><li>■ <hr/></li><li>■ <hr/></li></ul>
(Concerns)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ <hr/></li><li>■ <hr/></li><li>■ <hr/></li></ul>
Appendix	
Picture Forming	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
Background Information	
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Previous Versions	
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References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ <hr/></li><li>■ <hr/></li><li>■ <hr/></li></ul>	

## P1.2: Those Affected Decide

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

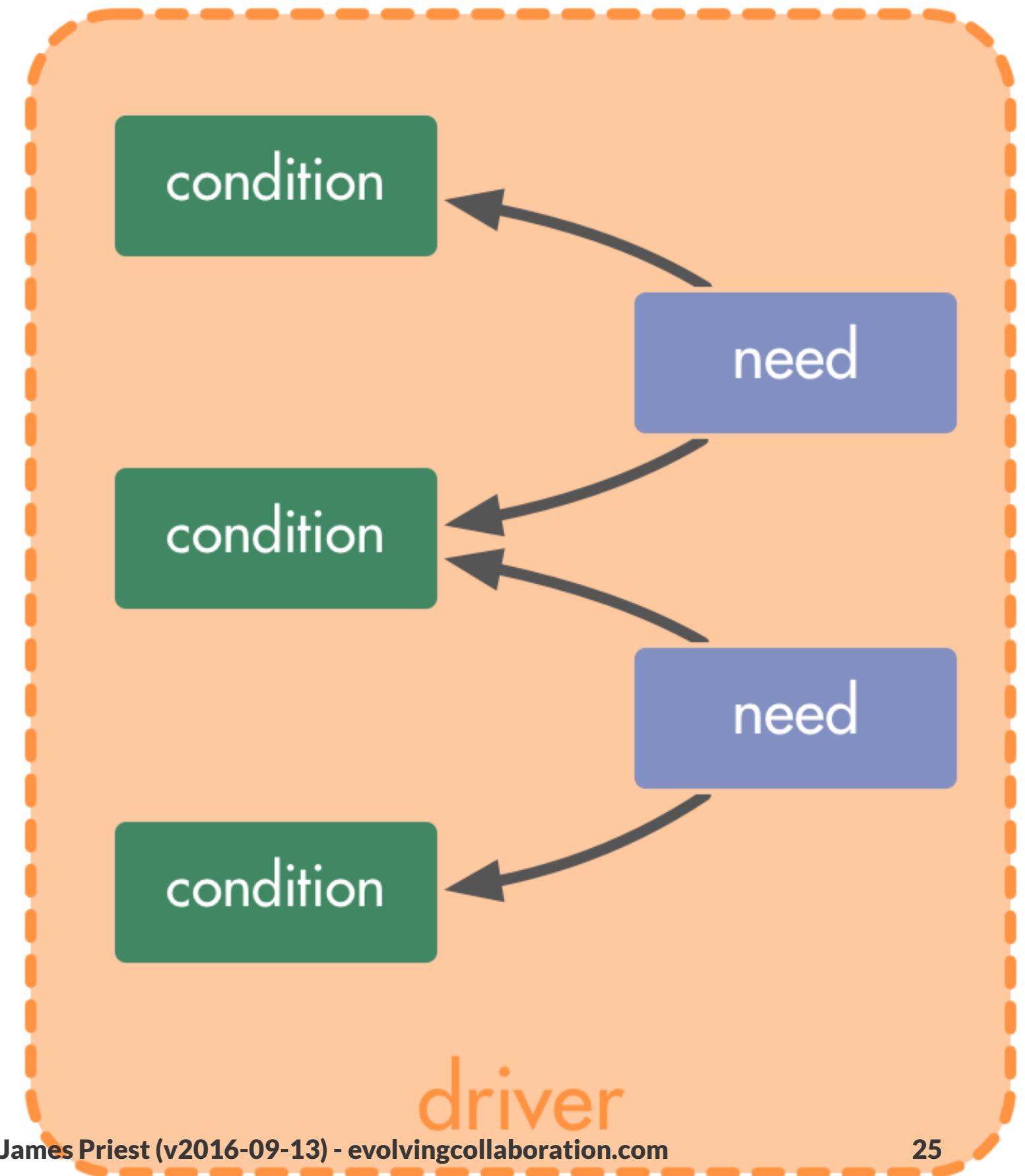
For large groups, facilitate a process in several stages and create smaller groups who select delegates.

This also applies to review and evolution of decisions.

## P1.3: 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:

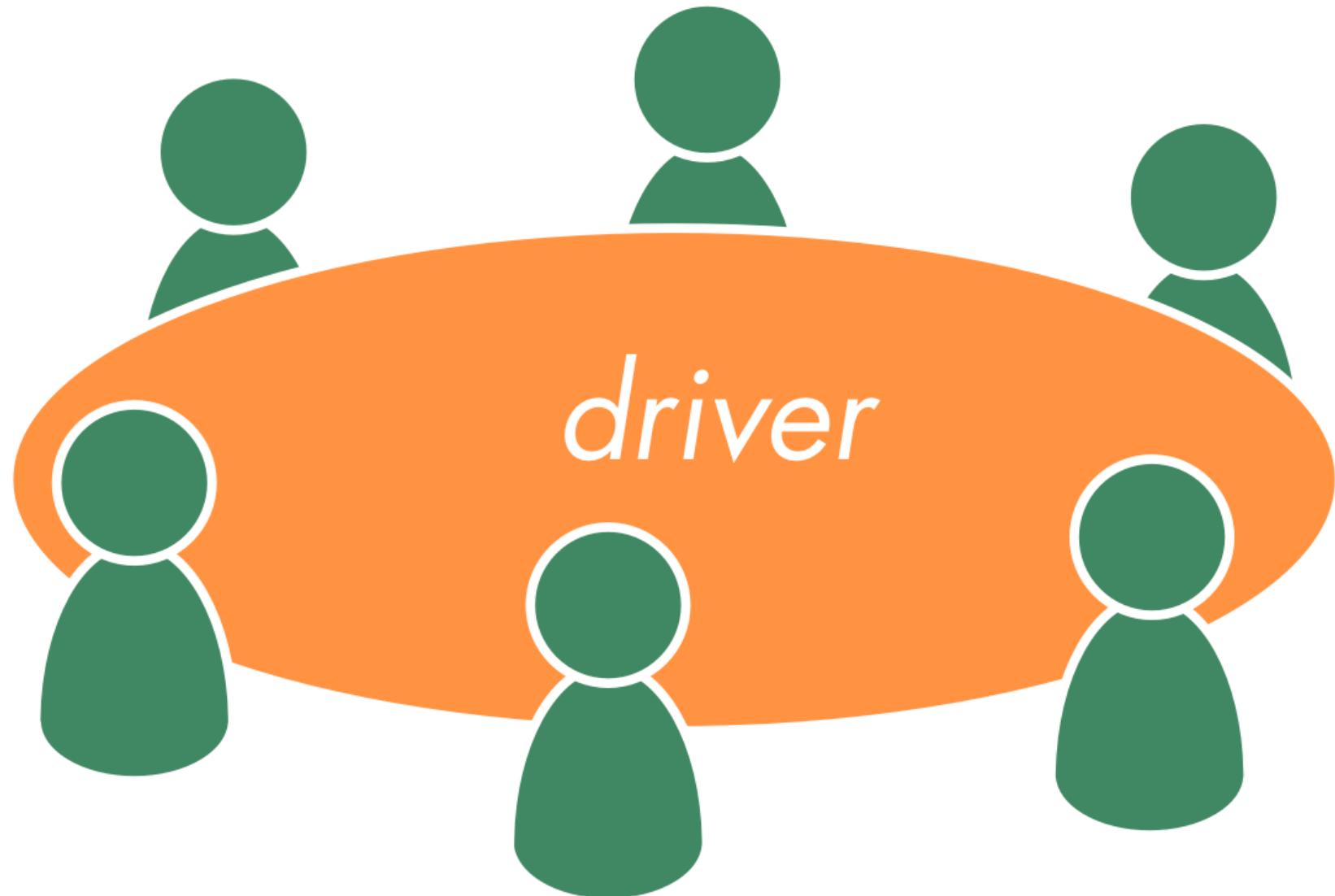
- value stream mapping
- various strategies for eliminating waste
- the Kanban Method

## P1.4: 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

## P1.5: 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

## P1.6: 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

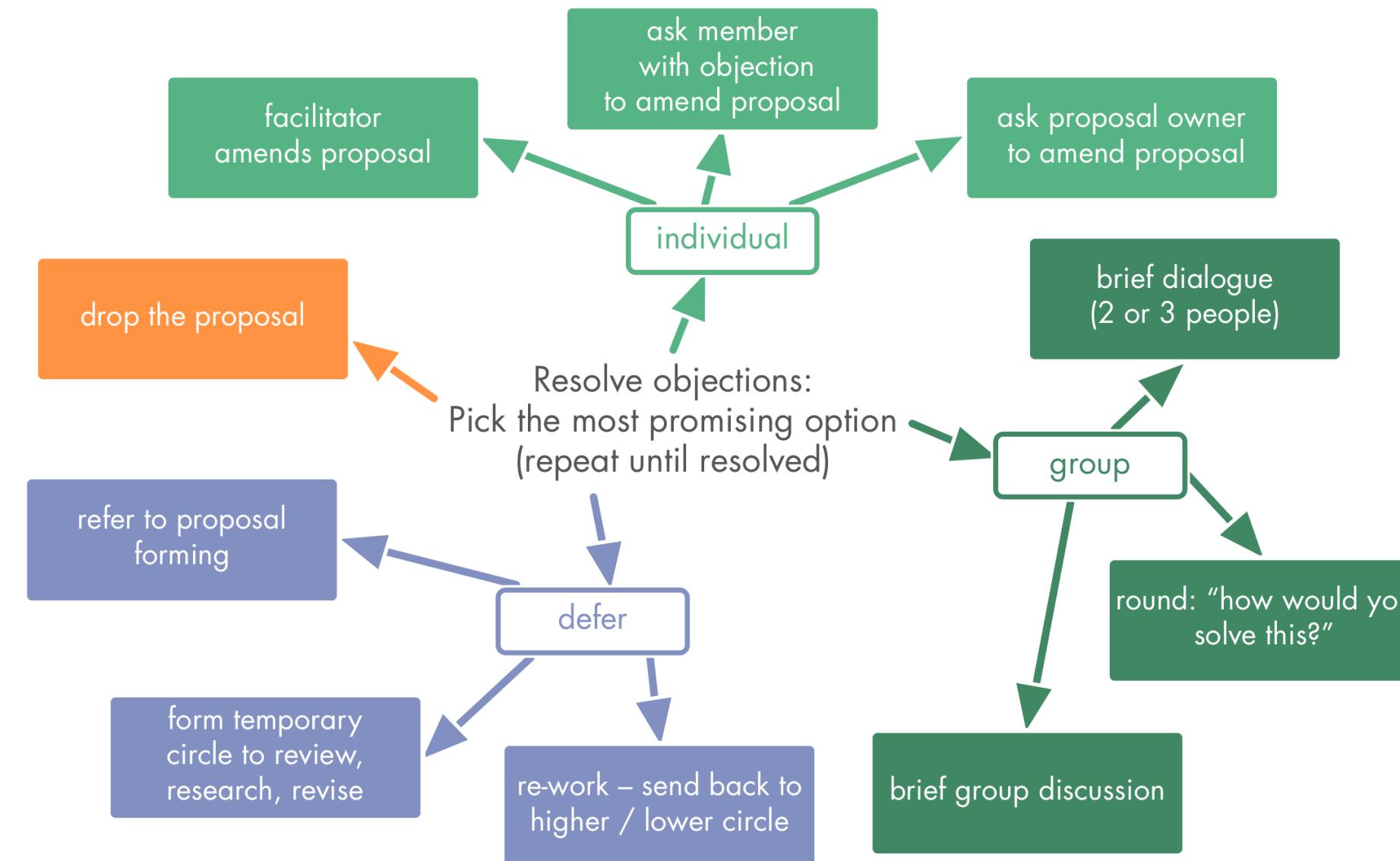


Integrate Wisdom

# Contract 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.

# P1.7: Resolve Objections



Consent to Driver

## P1.8: 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)

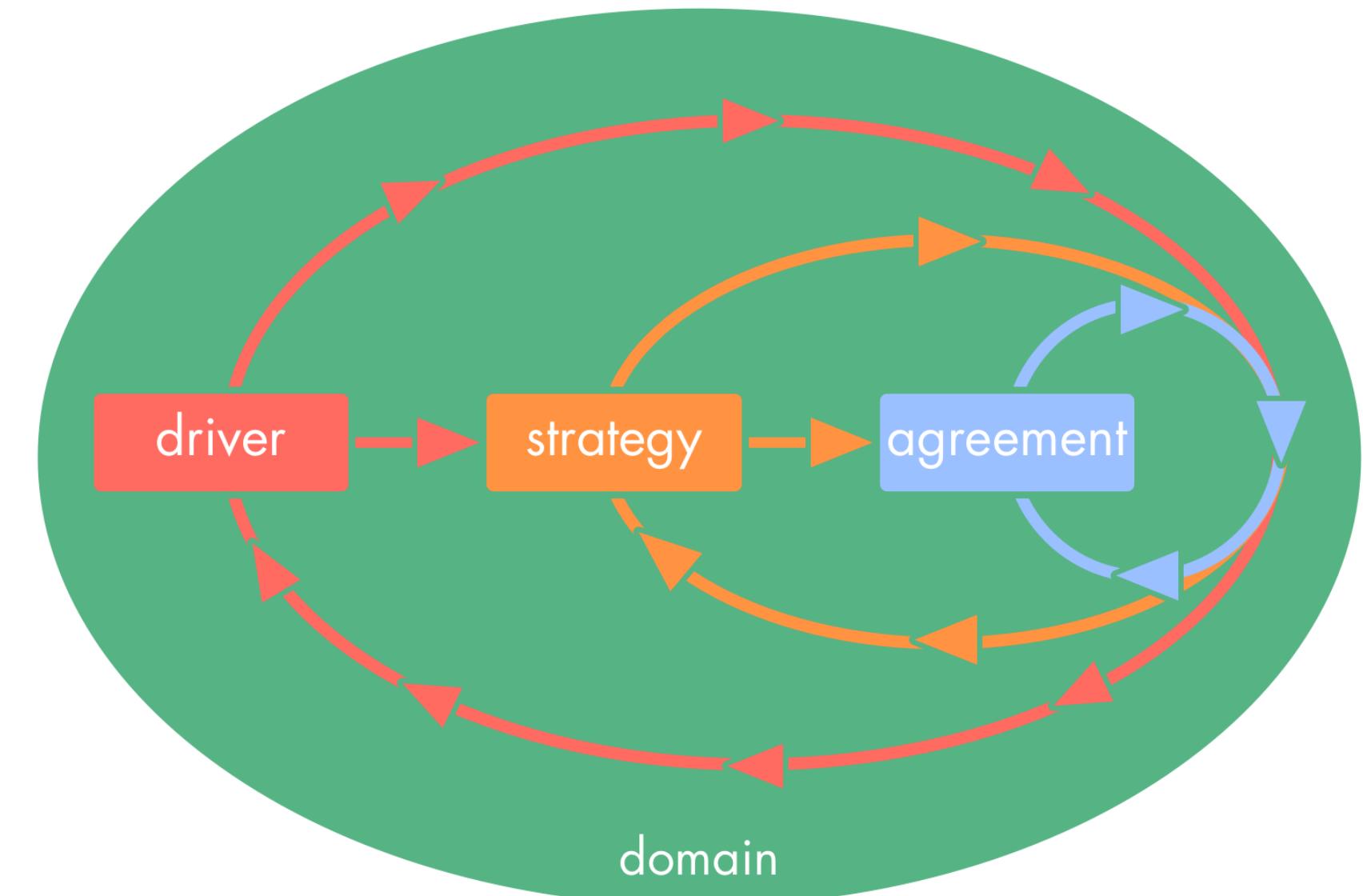
# Proposal Forming Process

- 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

## P1.9: Strategy

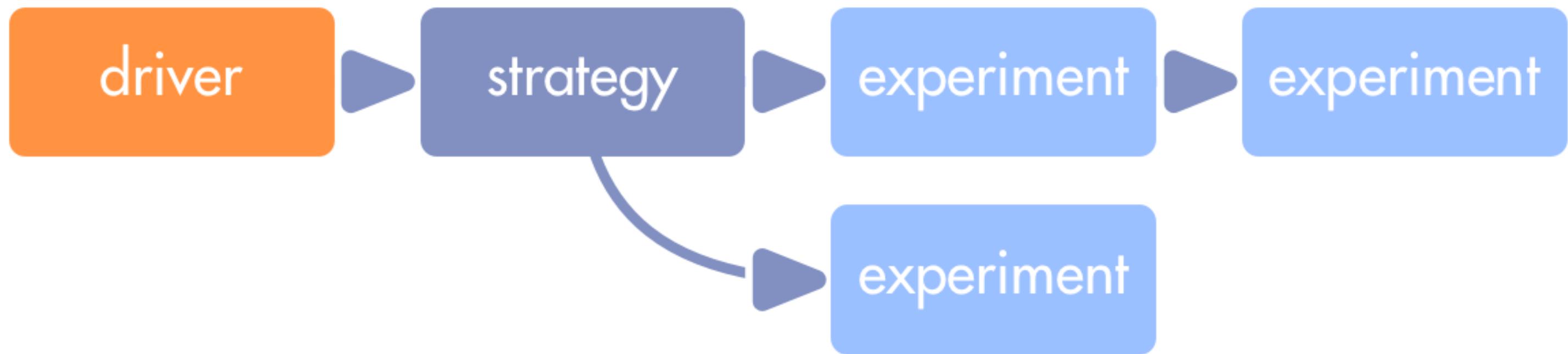
A **strategy** is the approach towards creating value within a domain.

- 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.



## P1.10: 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

## P1.11: 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



## P1.12: 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

## P1.13: 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

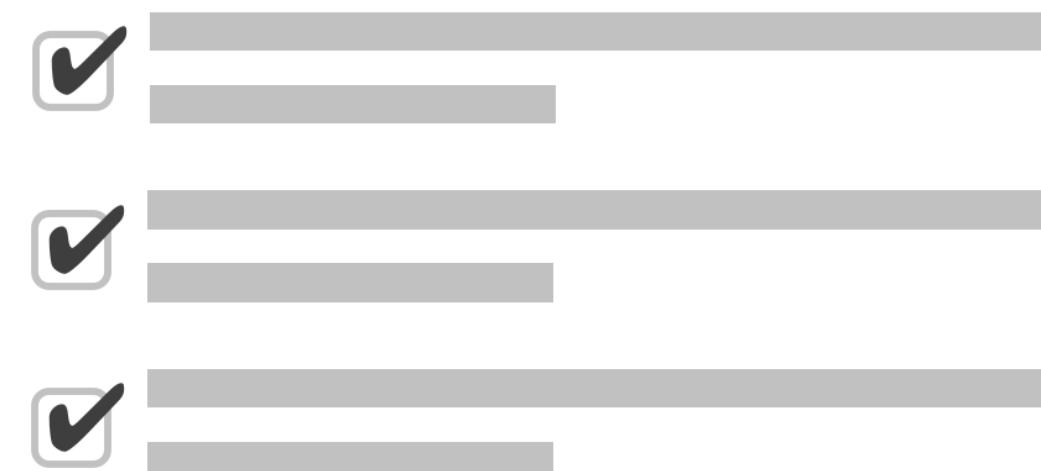
### Intended Outcome



### Metrics



### Evaluation Criteria

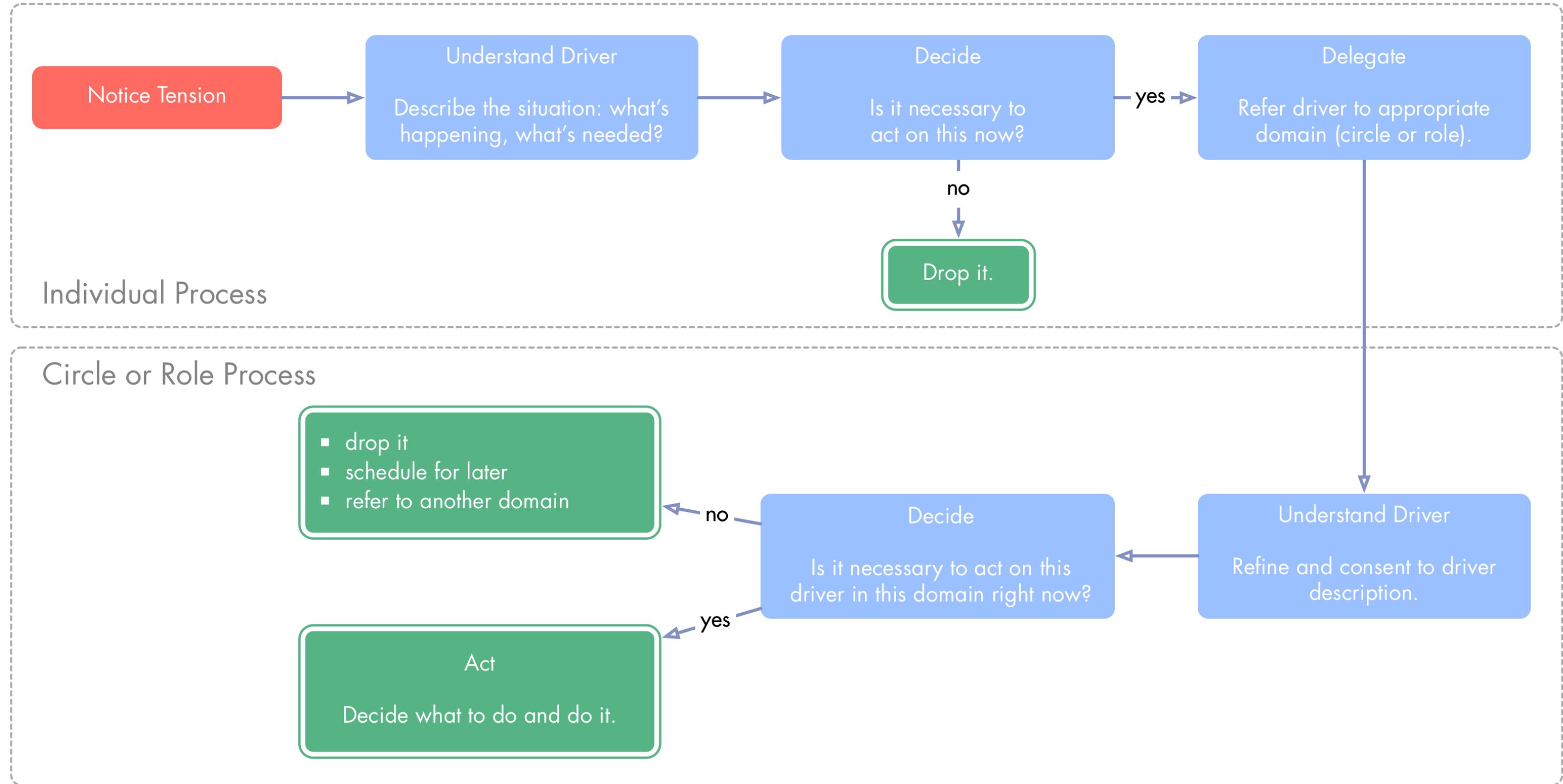


## P1.14: Qualifying Drivers

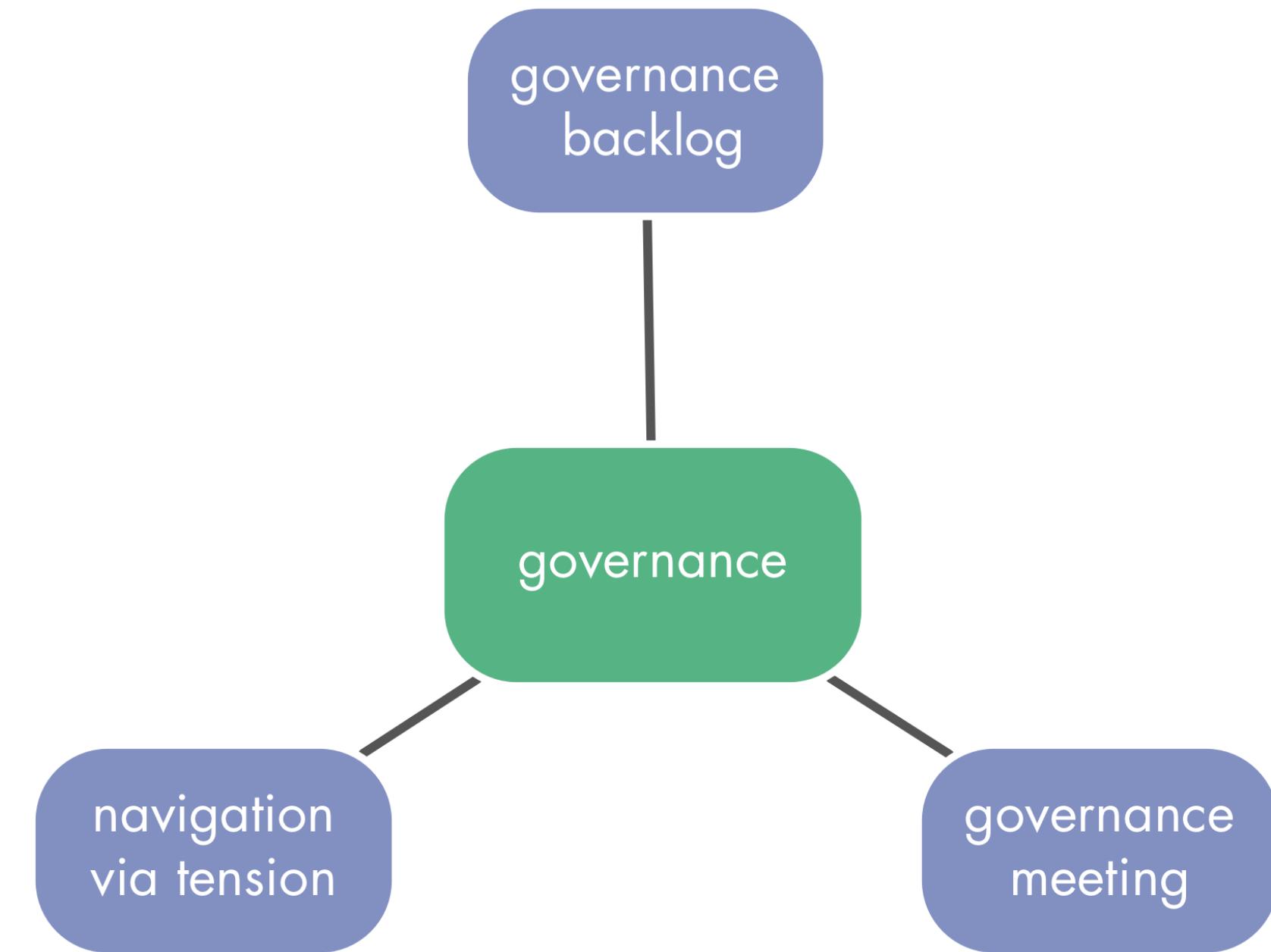
Consider why, how and when to respond to a stimulus, instead of defaulting to action.

*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







## 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

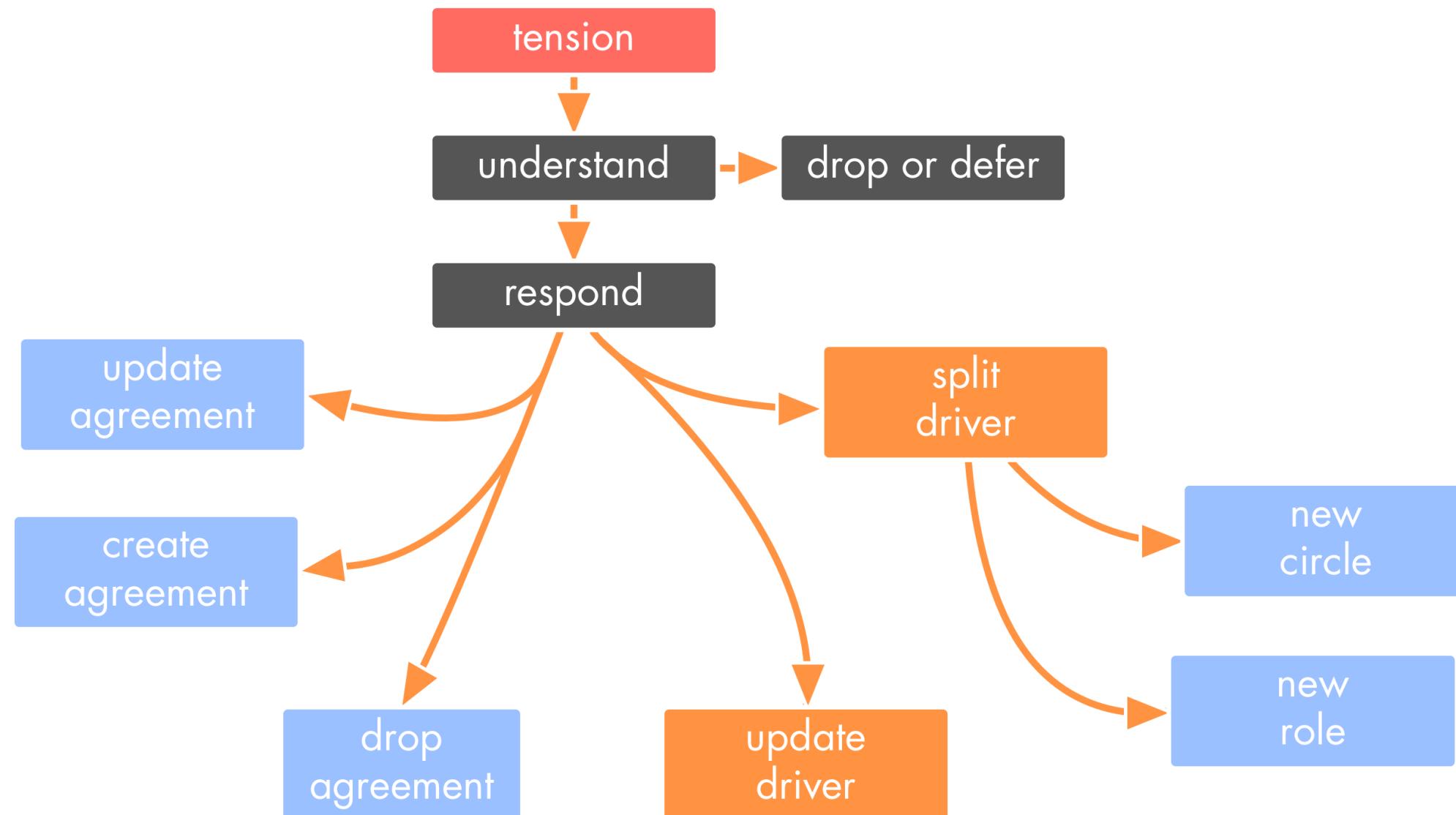
Understand Driver

Verify Relevance

Decide What To Do

Do It

# Navigating Via Tension (cont.)







## P3.1: Rounds

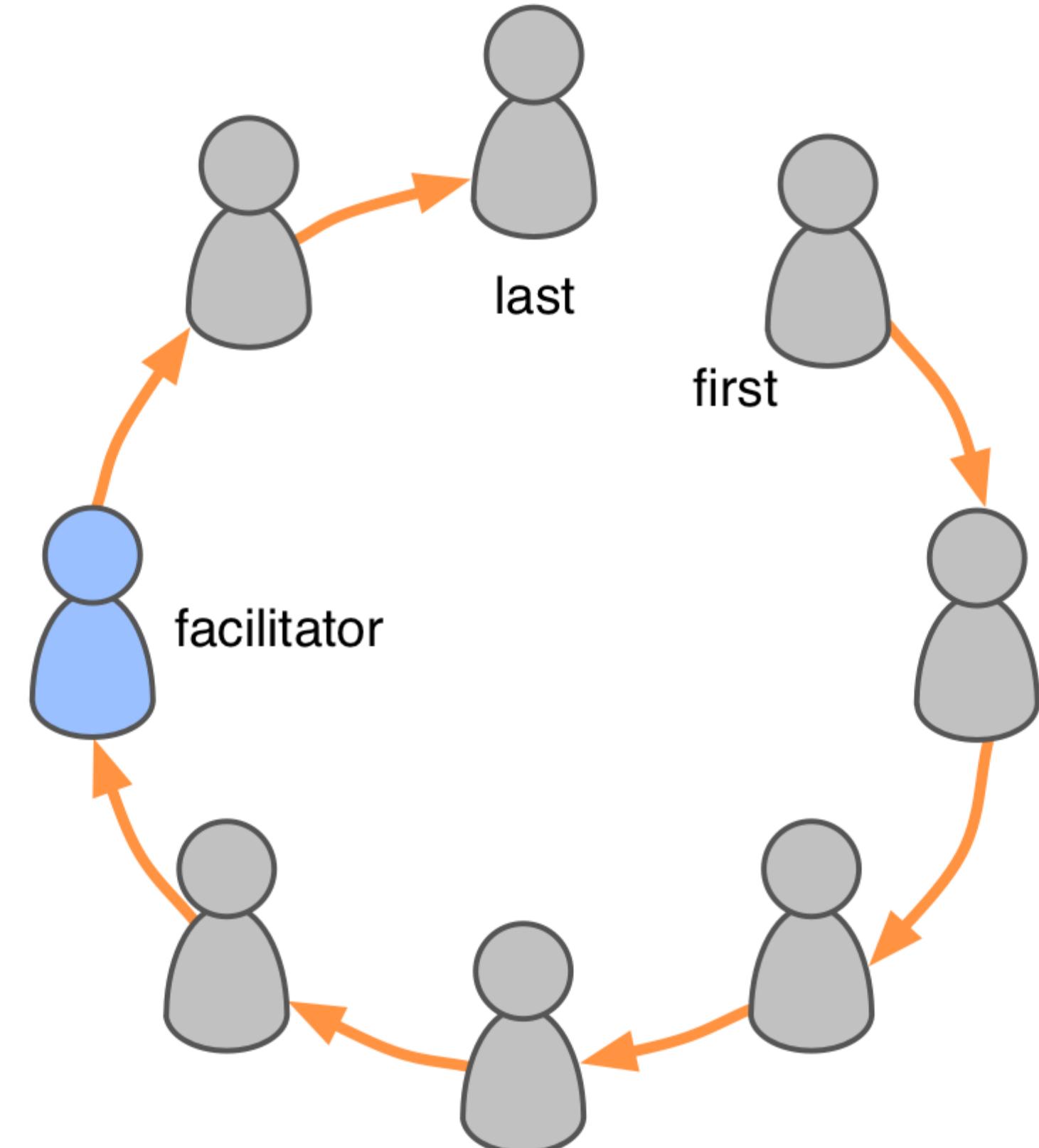
A group facilitation technique to maintain equivalence.

### 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

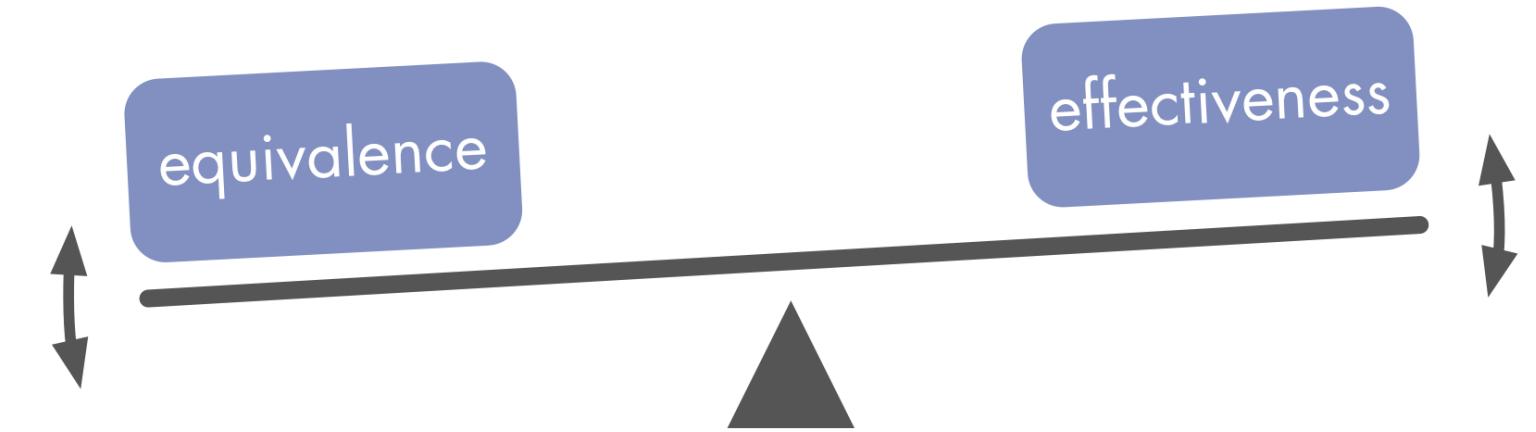
There's a number of ways that experienced groups can fast track certain rounds.



## 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: 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

## P3.4: 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:

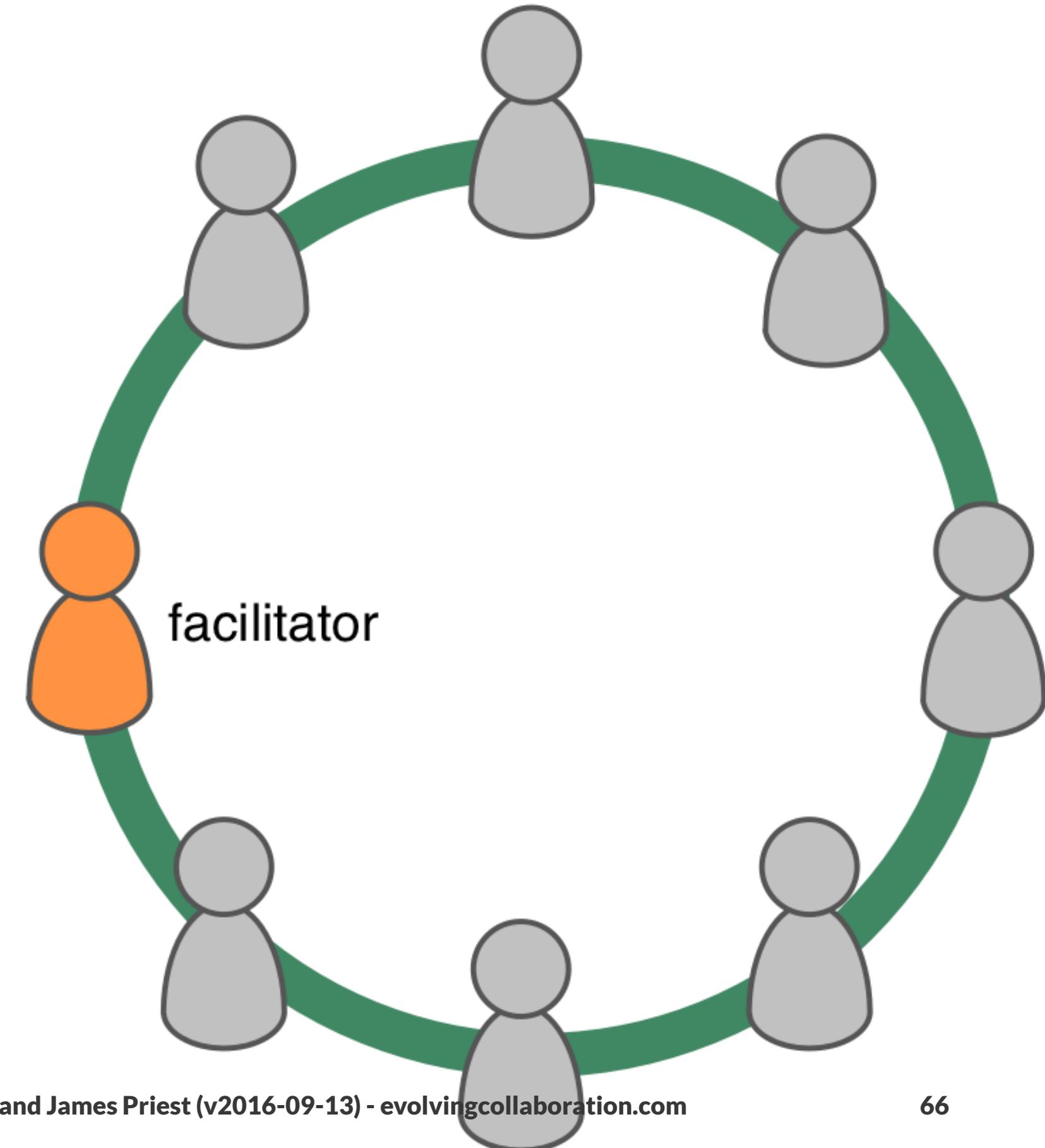
- effectiveness
- facilitation and format
- emotional tone
- I liked... (acknowledgments and achievements)
- I wish... (growing edges and improvements)
- What if... (wild ideas and radical suggestions)

## P3.5: 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

## P3.6: 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

## P3.7: 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

## P3.8: Meeting Host (Role)

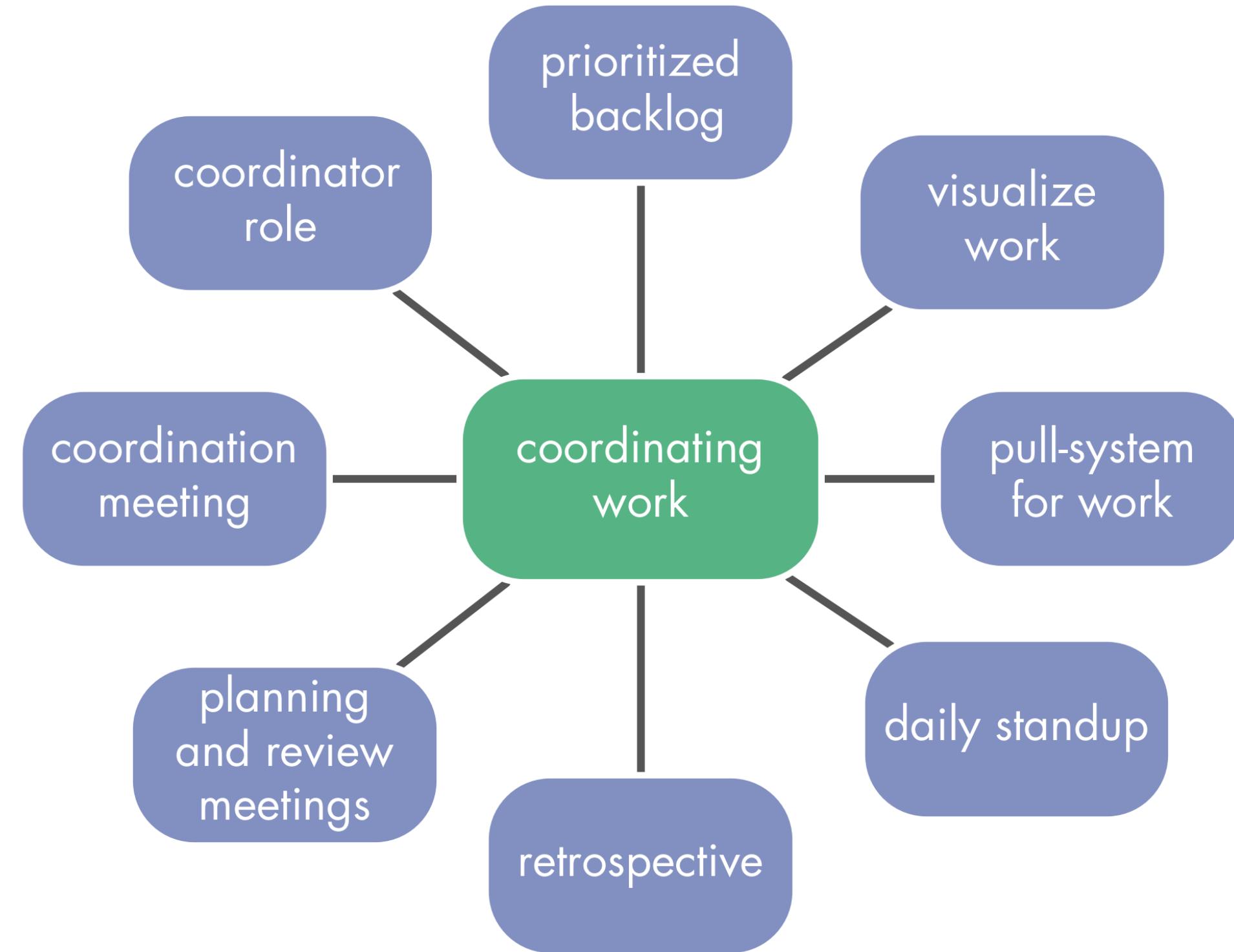
The meeting host is accountable for proper preparation and follow-up of meetings, workshops or other events.

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





## P4.1: 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.)

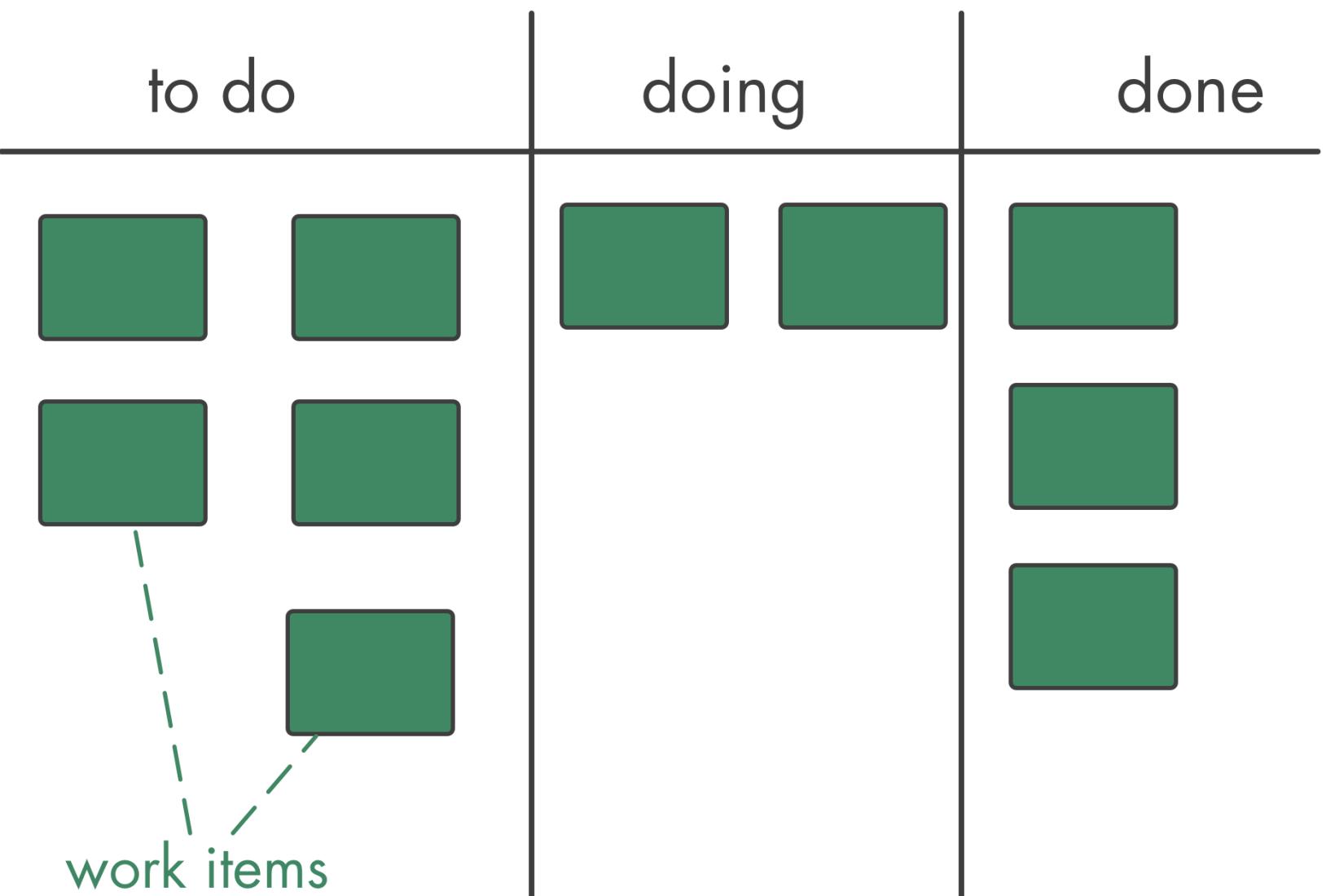
- **Benefits**
  - focus in most important items
  - keep track of everything
  - just-in-time specification, reduced cost of change
  - shared understanding of priorities enables more effective collaboration
- **Implementation**
  - **analog backlog:** sticky notes on a wall, or index cards, magnets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

# Elements of a prioritized backlog

- a **unique reference number** (or link) 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)

## P4.2: 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



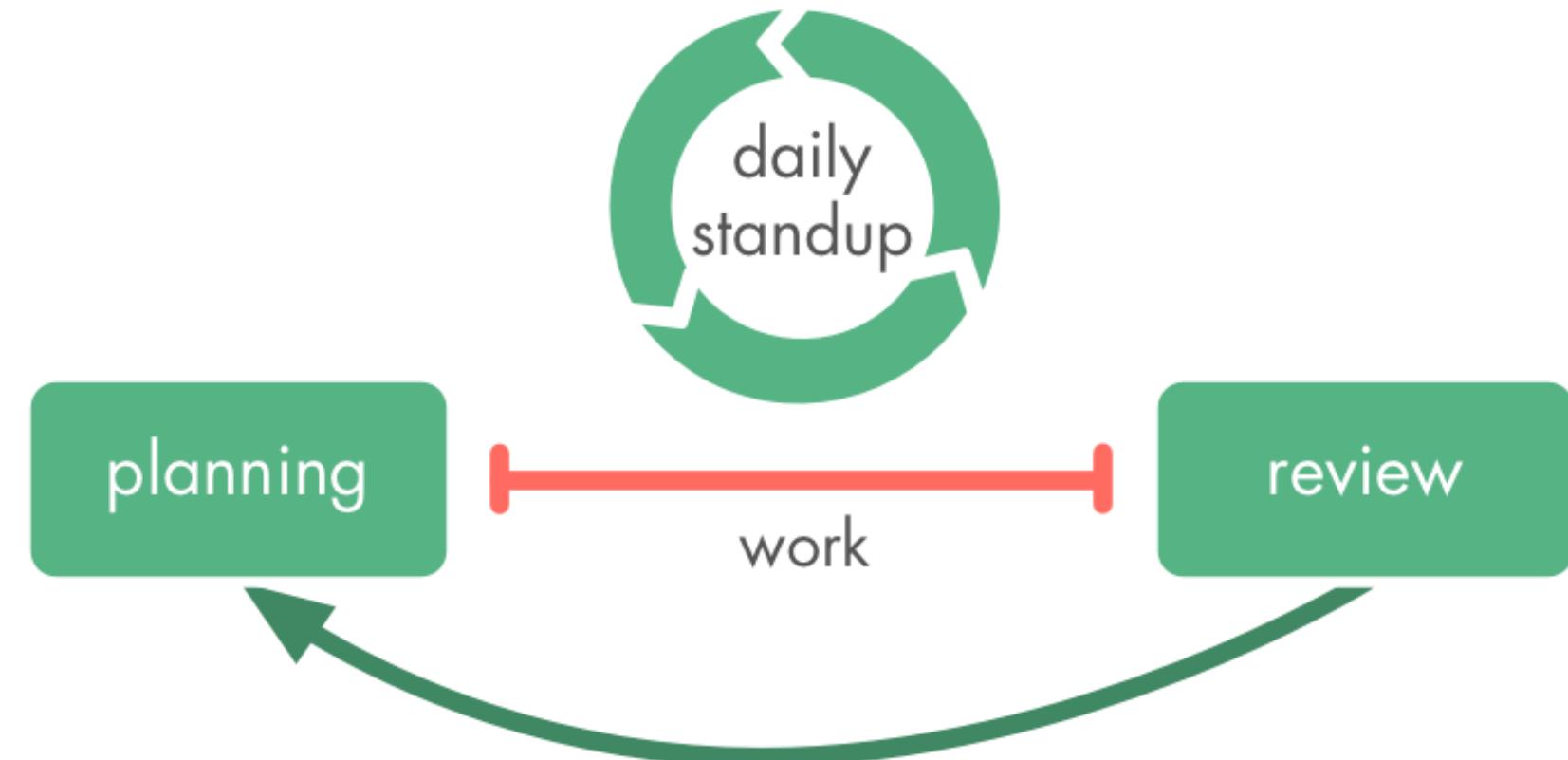
## P4.3: Pull-System For Work

- 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

## P4.4: 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

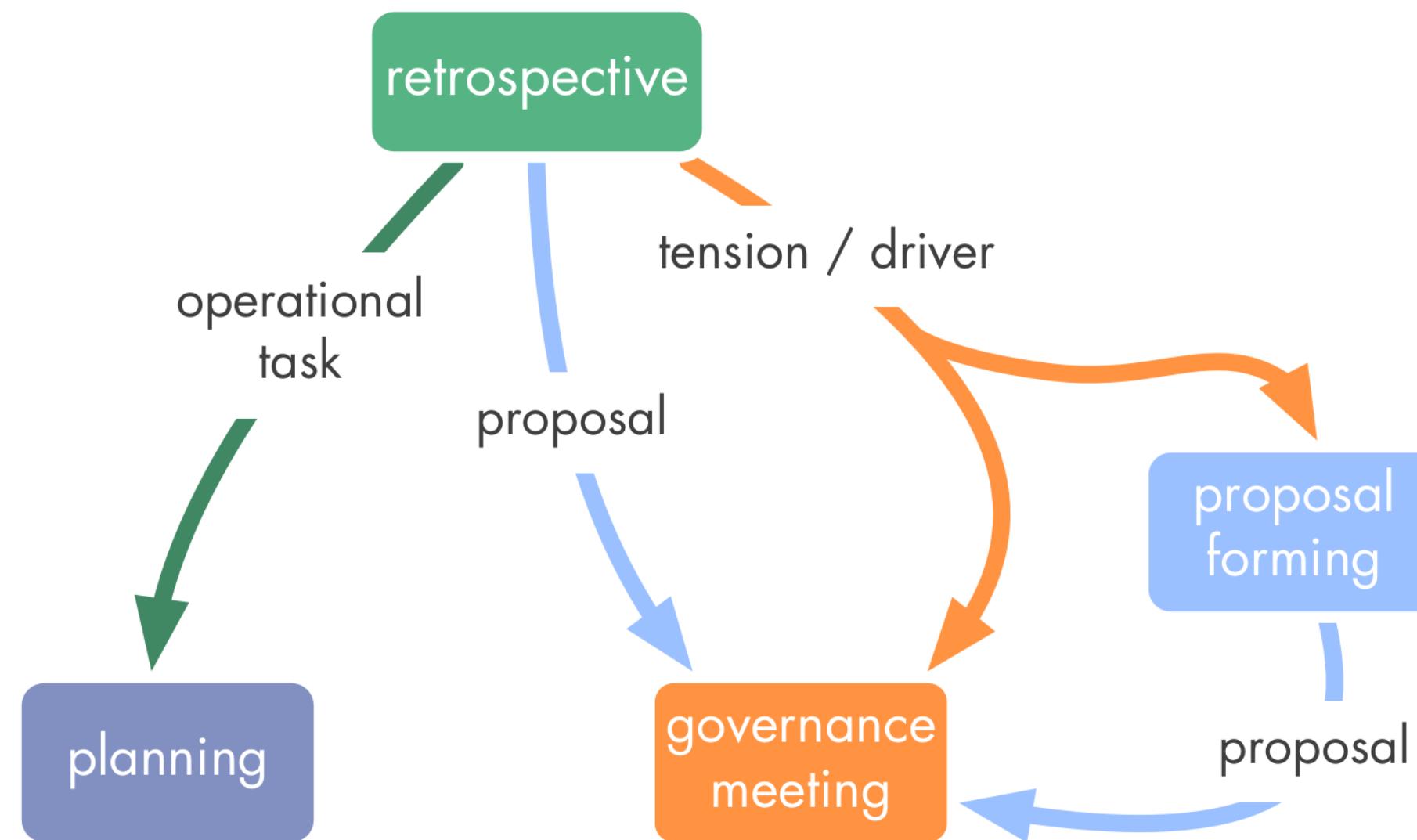


## P4.5: Retrospective

### **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



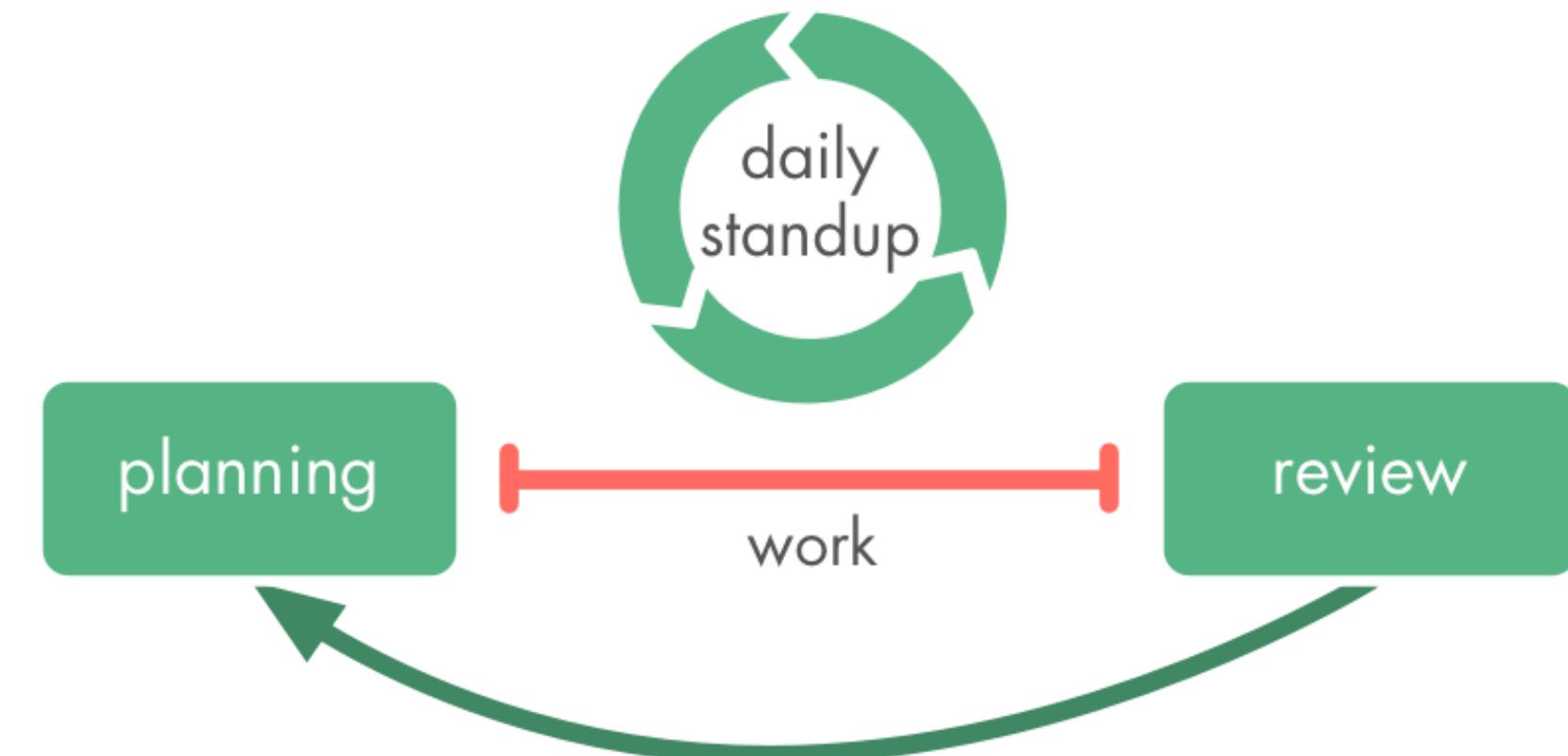
# Five Phases of a Retrospective Meeting

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](http://plans-for-retrospectives.com)

## P4.6: 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



## P4.7: 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



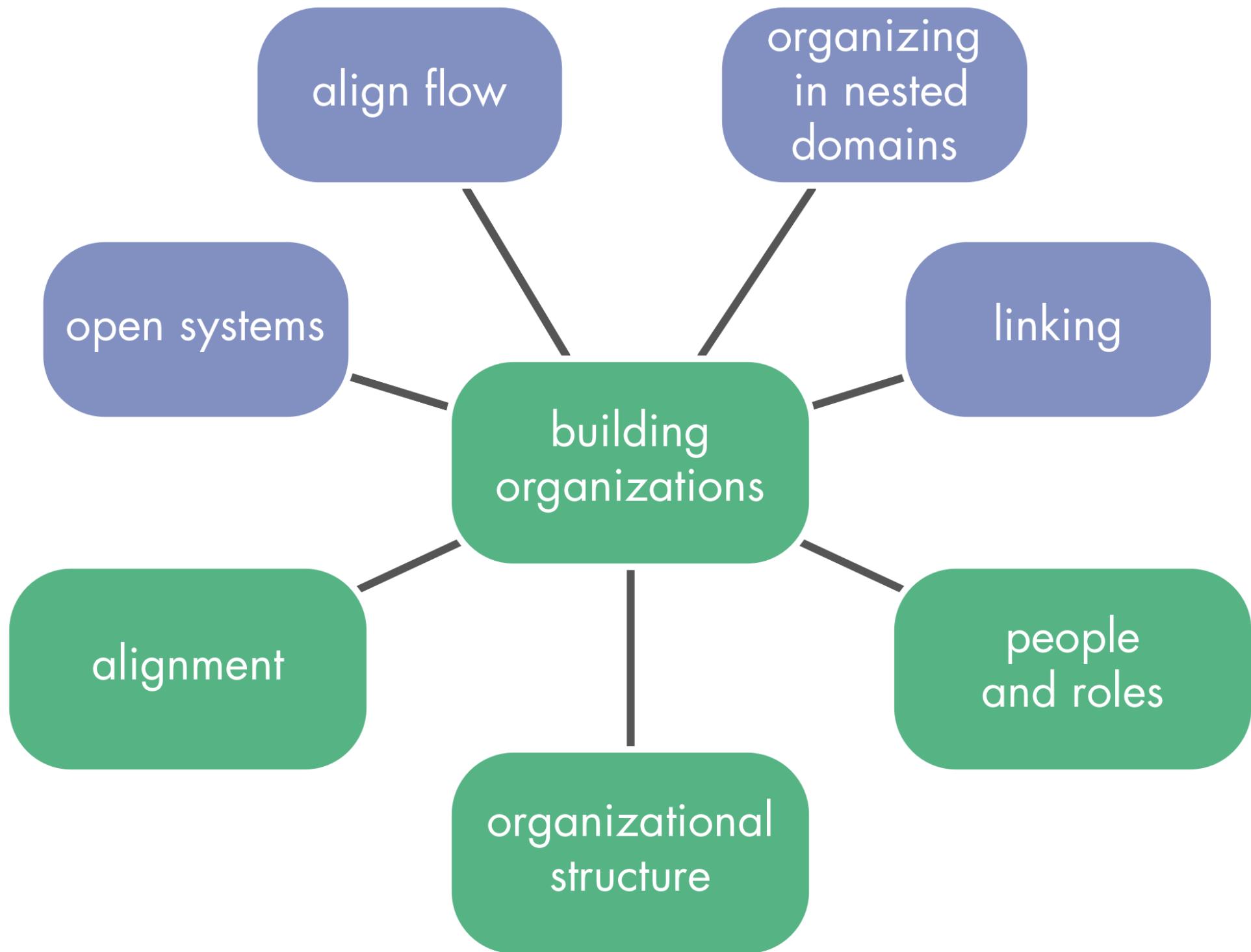
## P4.8: Coordinator (Role)

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





# Building Organizations

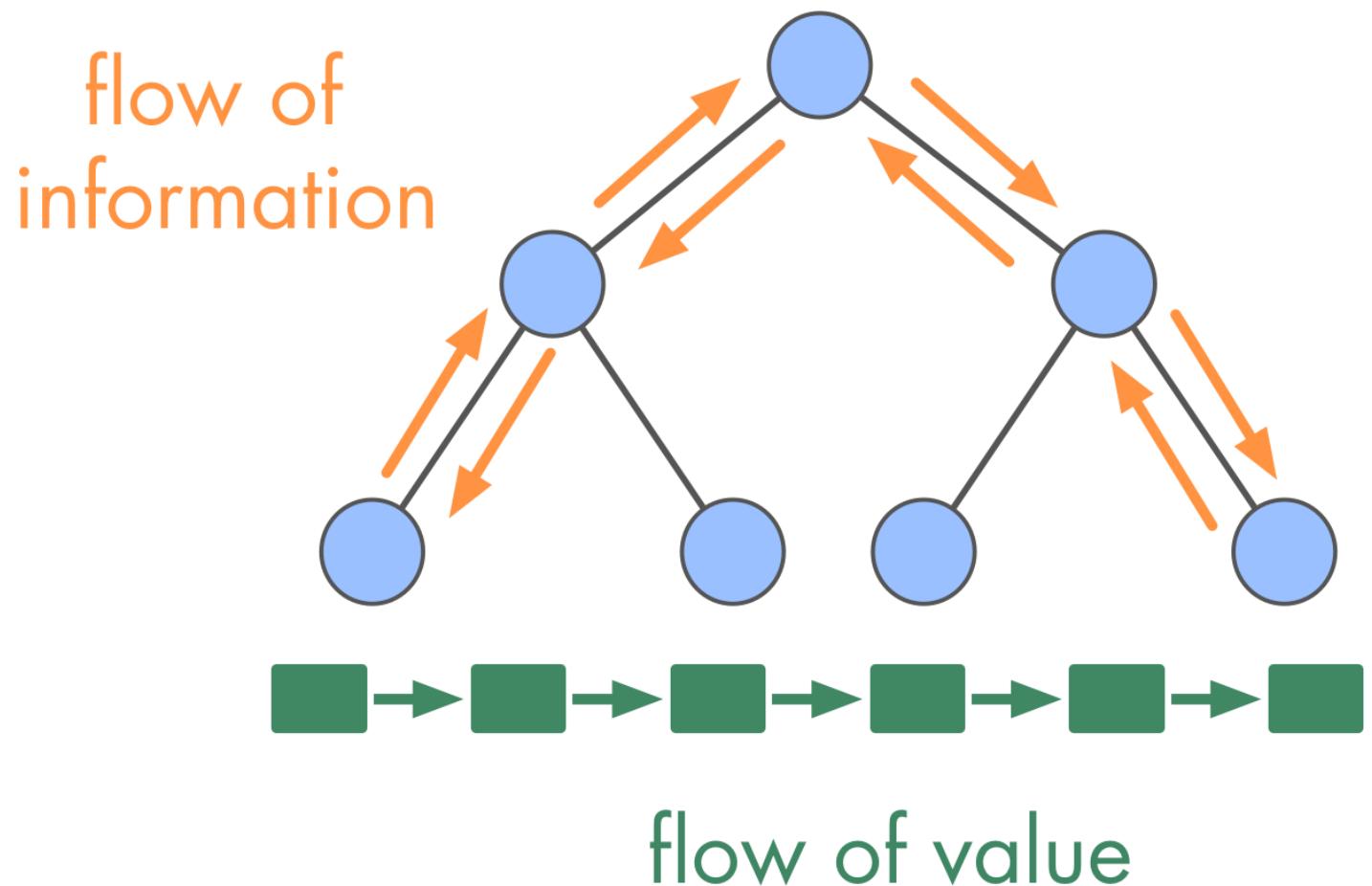
Patterns for growing an organization along the principles behind S3.

In the addition to the patterns in this sections there's also two subsections:

- People and Roles
- Organizational Structure.

## 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



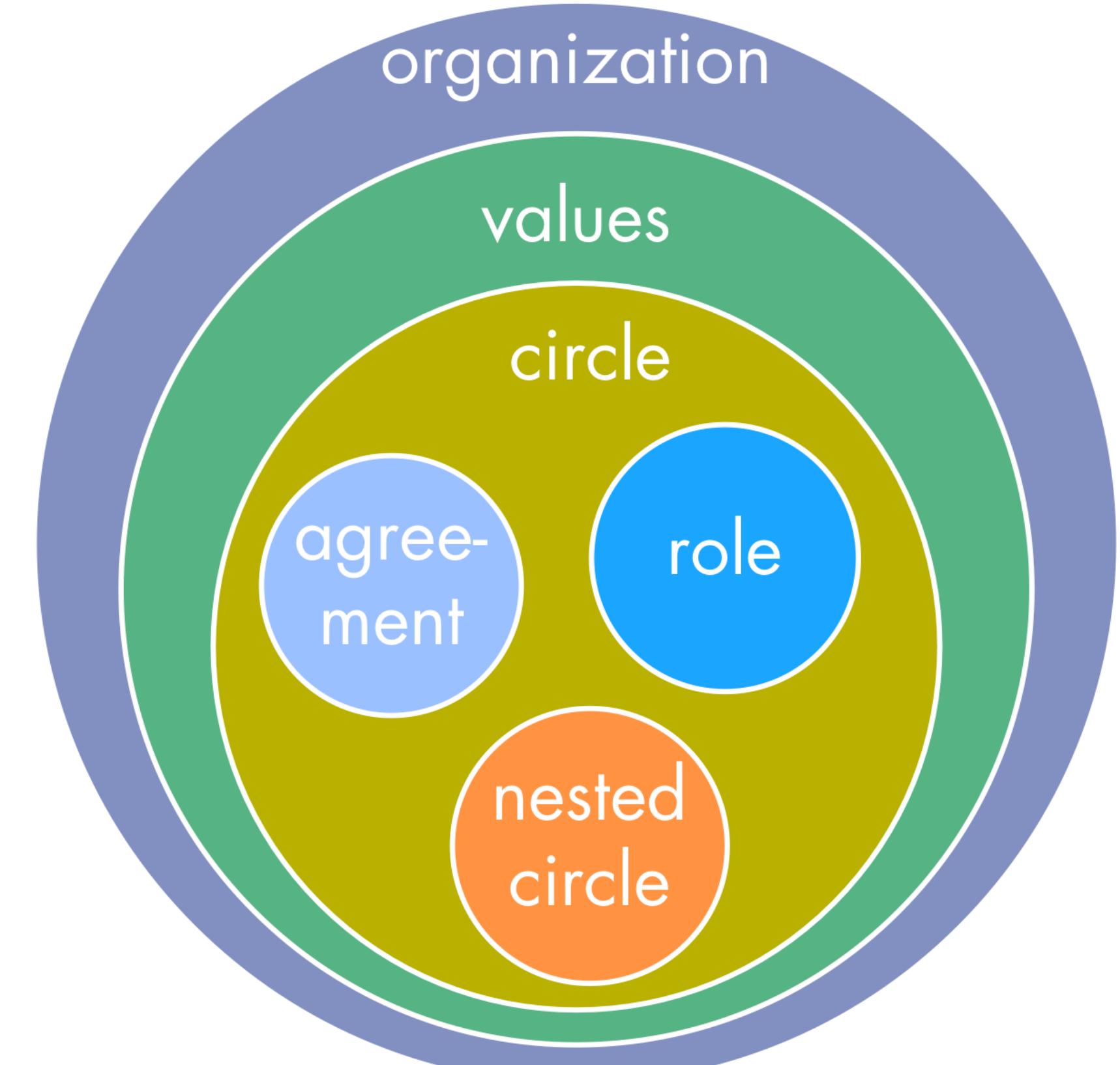
## Flow of Value

- 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: Organize In Nested Domains

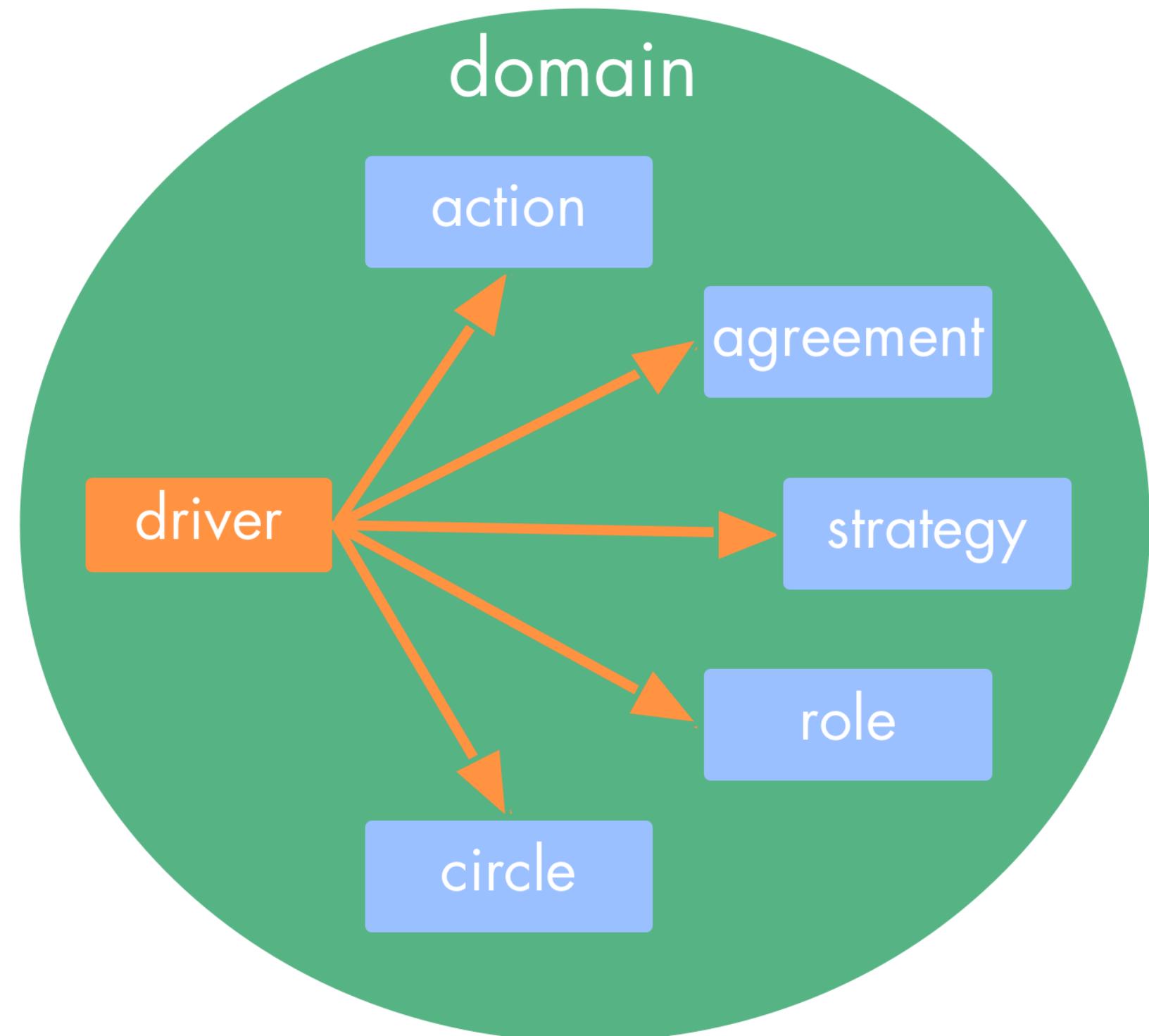
A **domain** is an area of influence, autonomy and accountability.

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

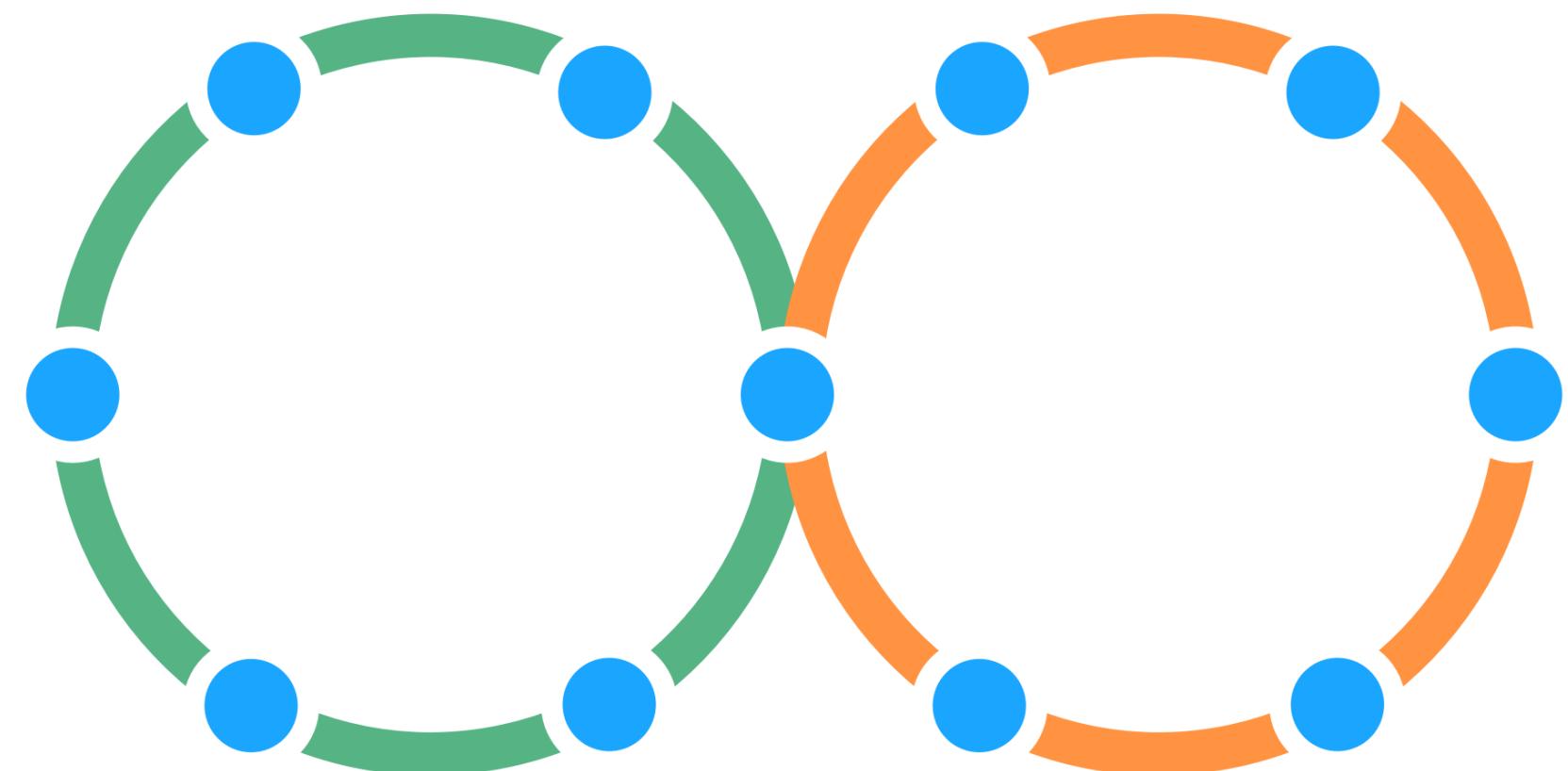
- accountability applies to all agreements, including the organization itself, circles, and roles
- everyone's primary accountability is for effective collaboration in response to drivers
- circles are accountable their work, their body of agreements and for their own development
- everyone in an organization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



## P5.3: 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



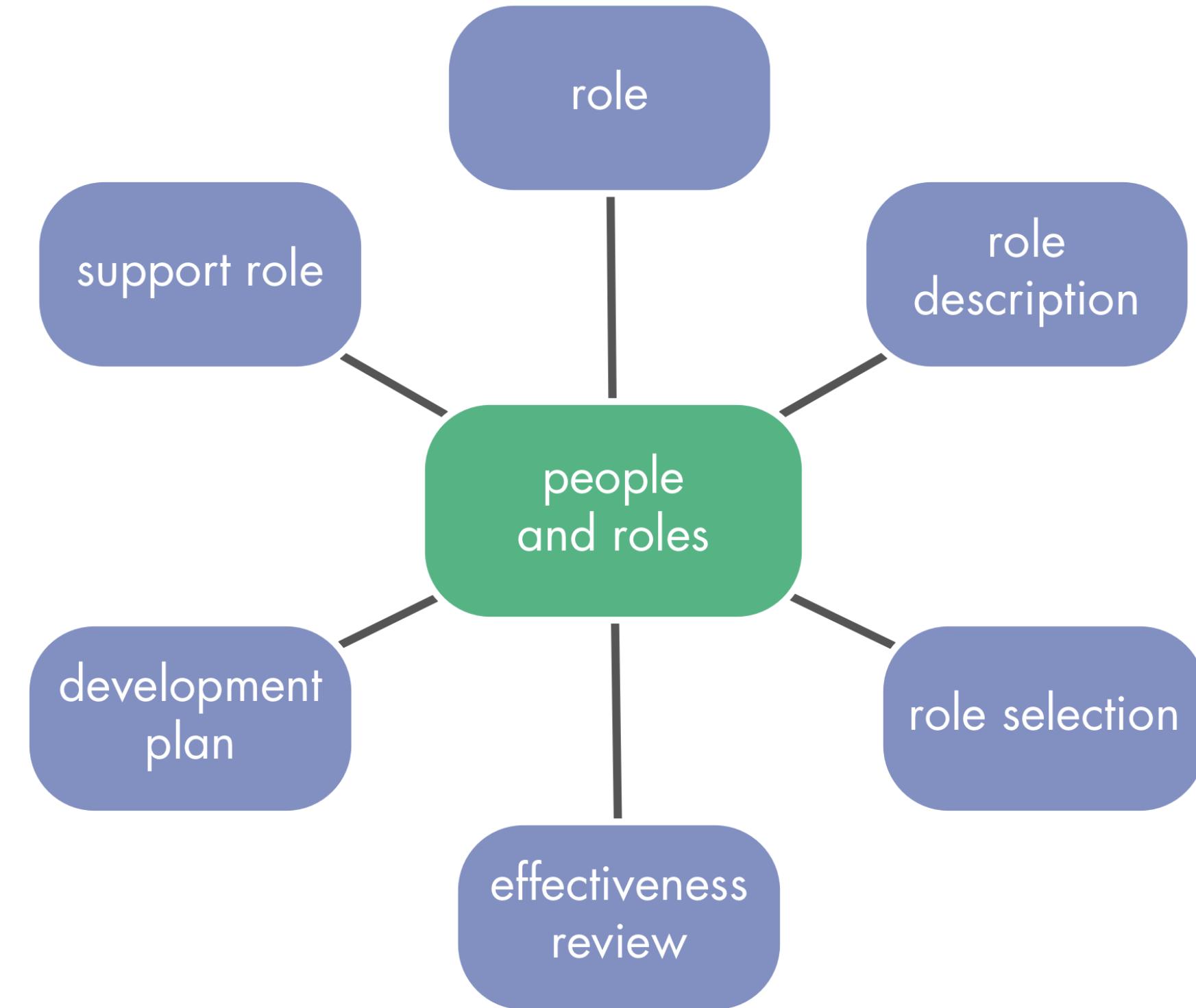
## P5.4: Open Systems

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

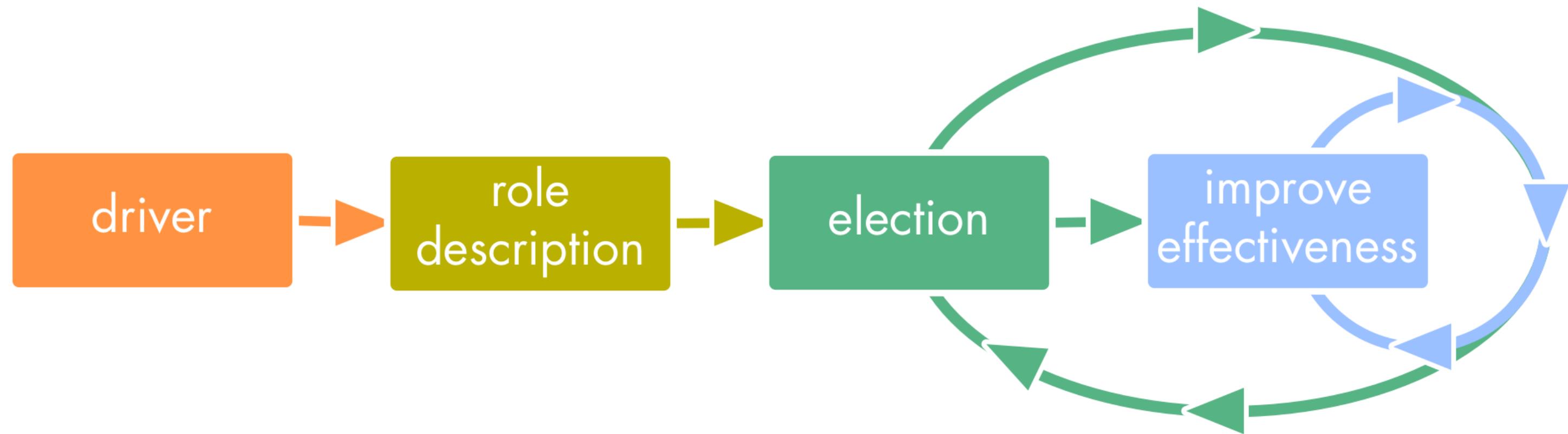
Keep the system open by adding connections as temporary or permanent members in decision making and experiments:

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



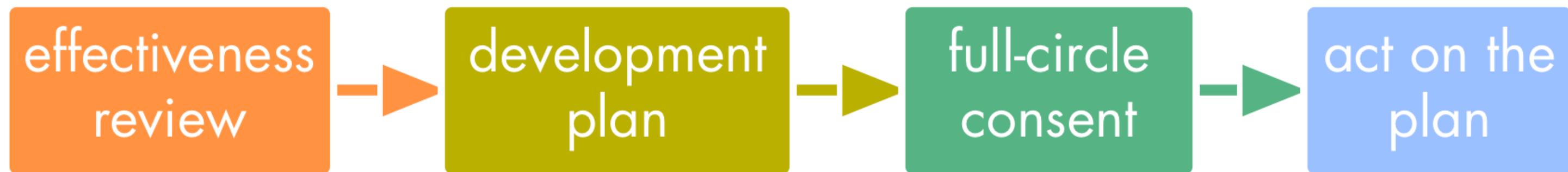


# Roles implement functions



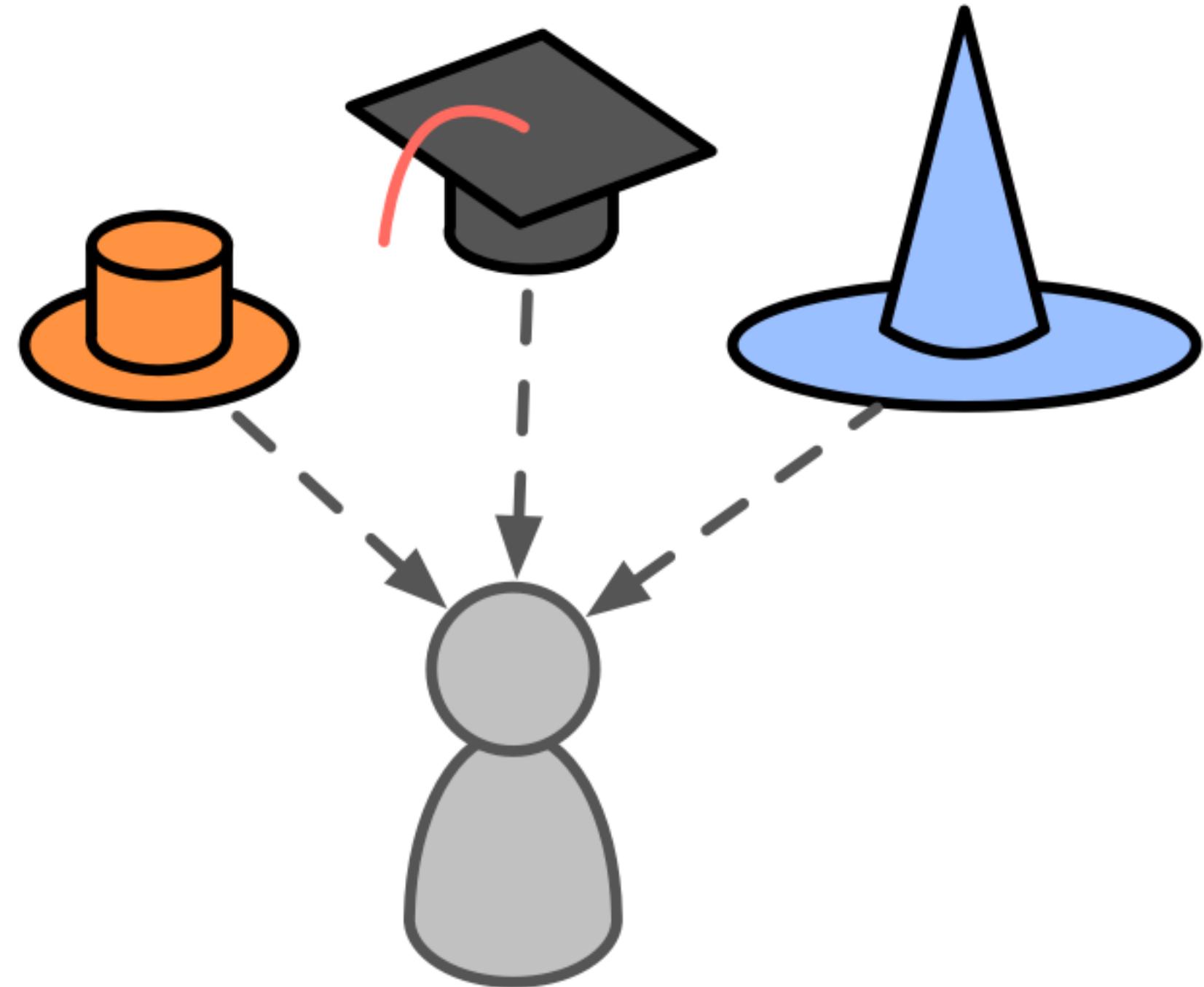
# Development Process

Continuous improvement of the effectiveness of people in roles



## P6.1: 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



## P6.2: Role Description

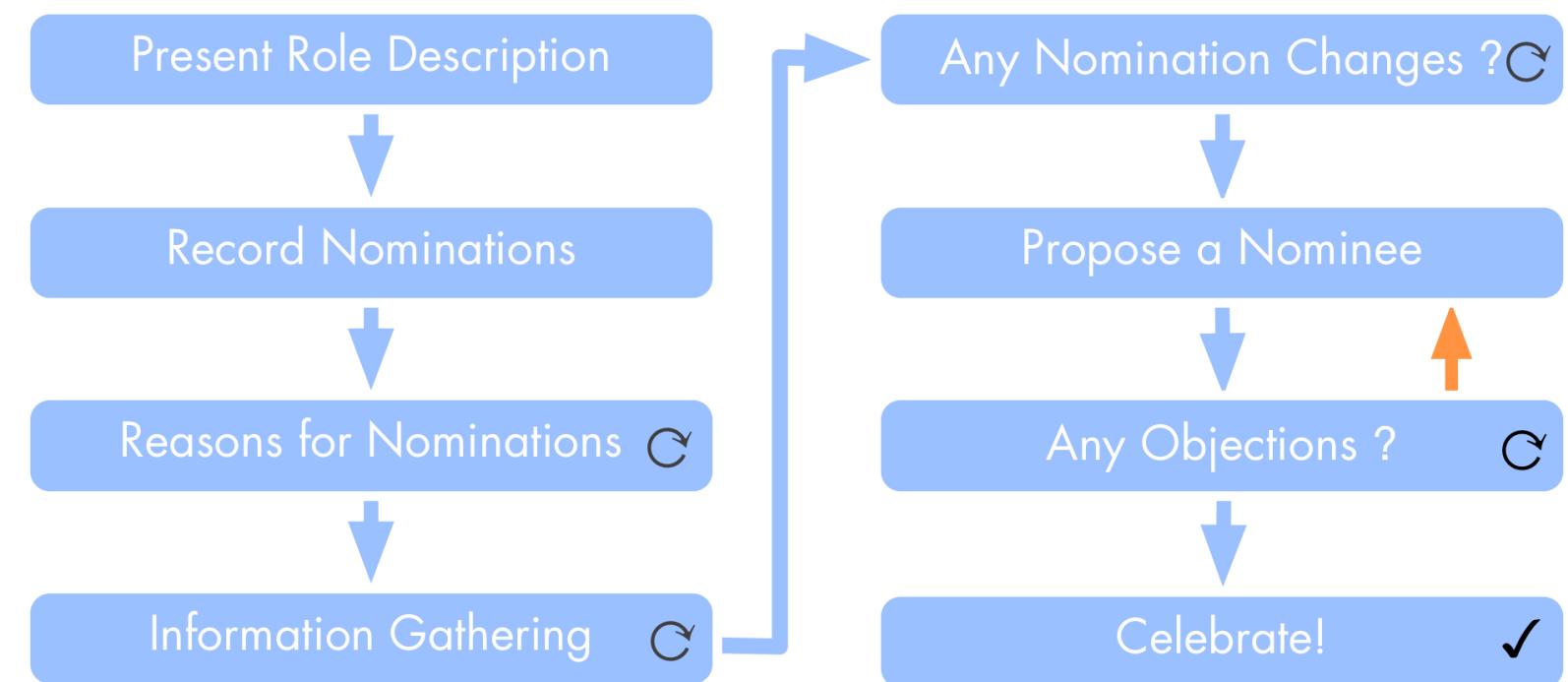
- manage expectations for roles
- role descriptions can be created using proposal forming
- a minimal role description contains:
  - driver
  - term
  - key responsibilities
  - time requirements
  - resources, budget, privileges
  - preferable skills, experience and qualities
  - cadence of effectiveness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

## P6.3: 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

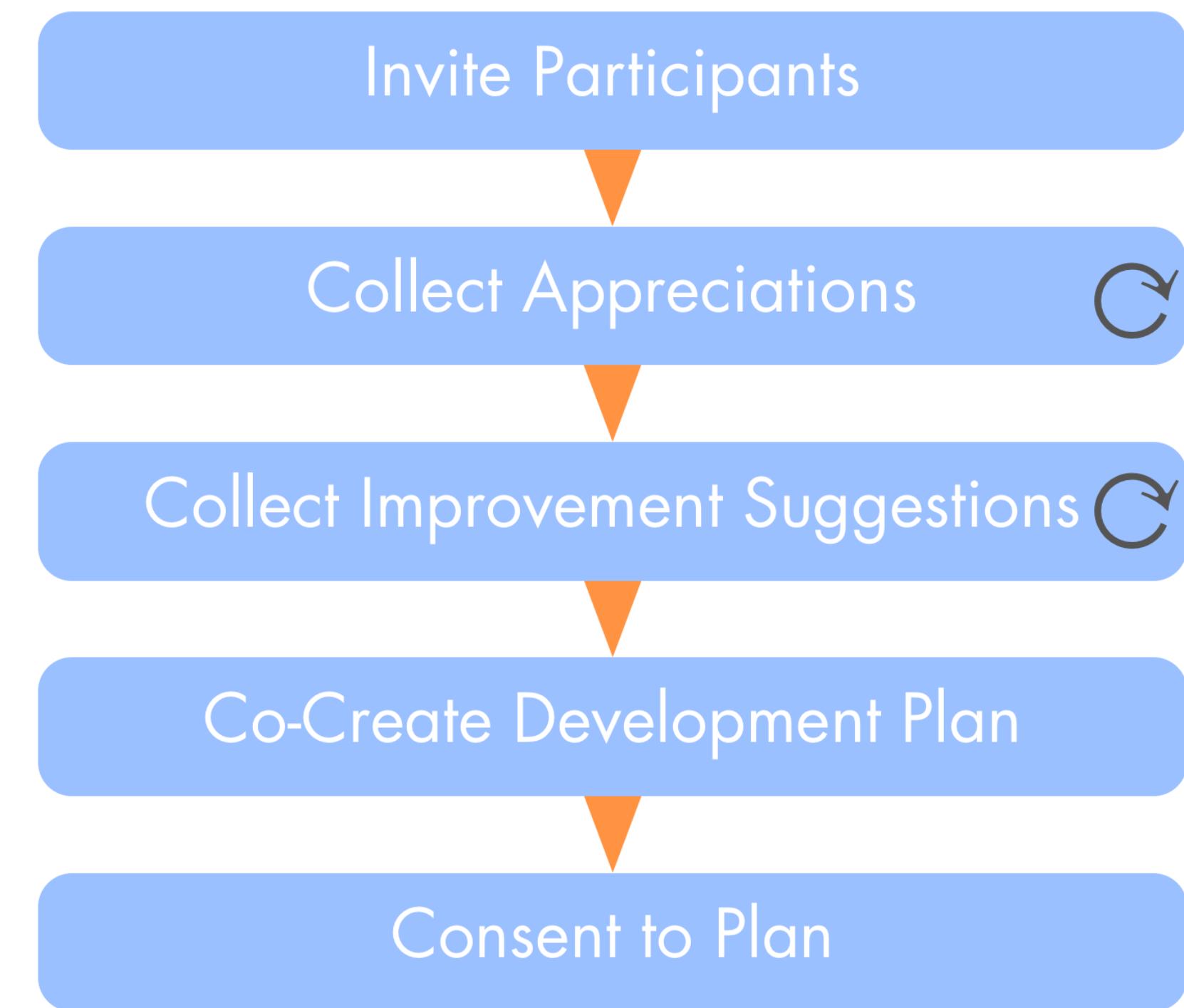


## P6.4: Effectiveness Review

- 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

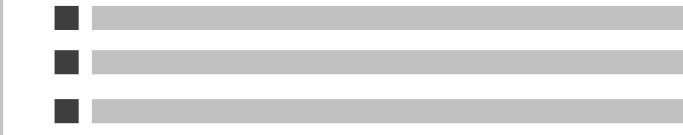
1. Invite people with complementing perspectives to contribute to the review, and a facilitator
2. Collect appreciations
3. Identify areas for improvement
  - personal development
  - updates to role description, function or driver
4. Co-create and consent to a development plan



## P6.5: 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

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

## 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.





# 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

## P7.1: Representative

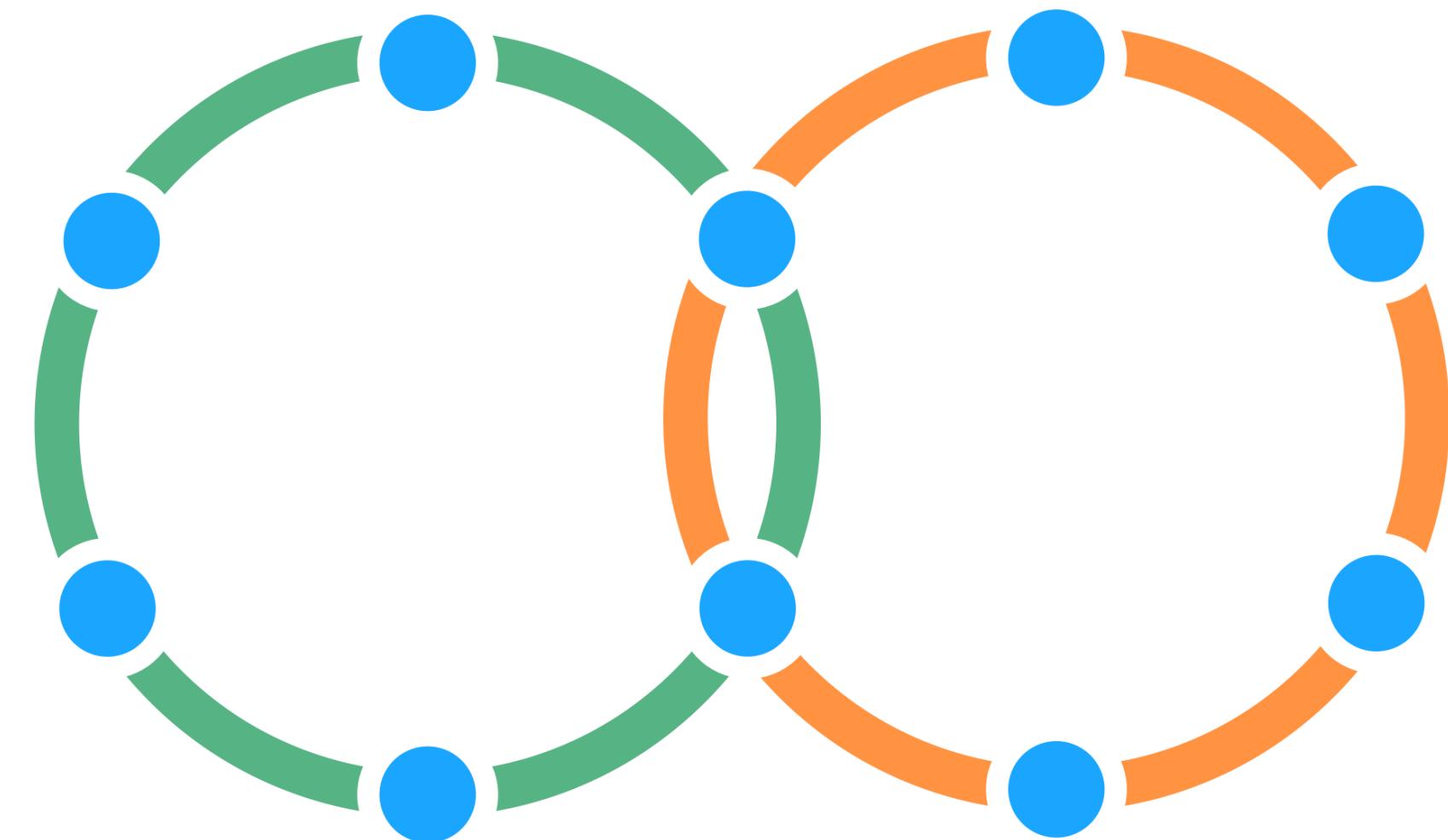
Representatives (a.k.a Links)....:

- ...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

## P7.2: Double Linking

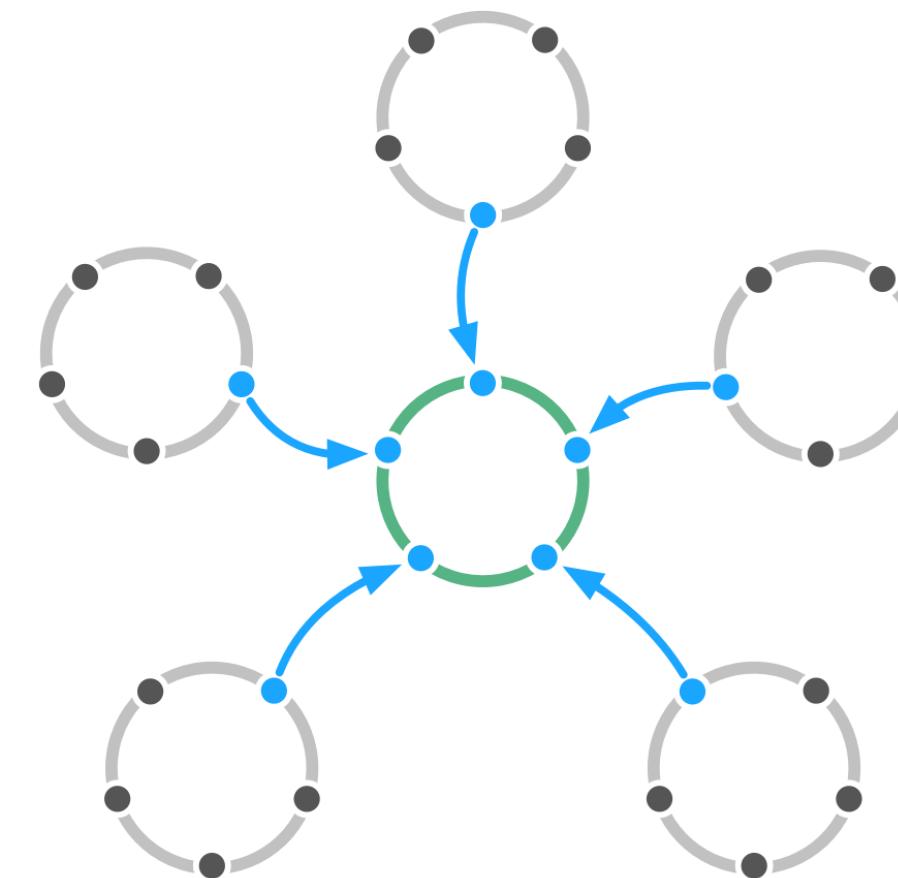
Facilitate two-way flow of information and influence

- 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



# P7.3: Delegate Circle

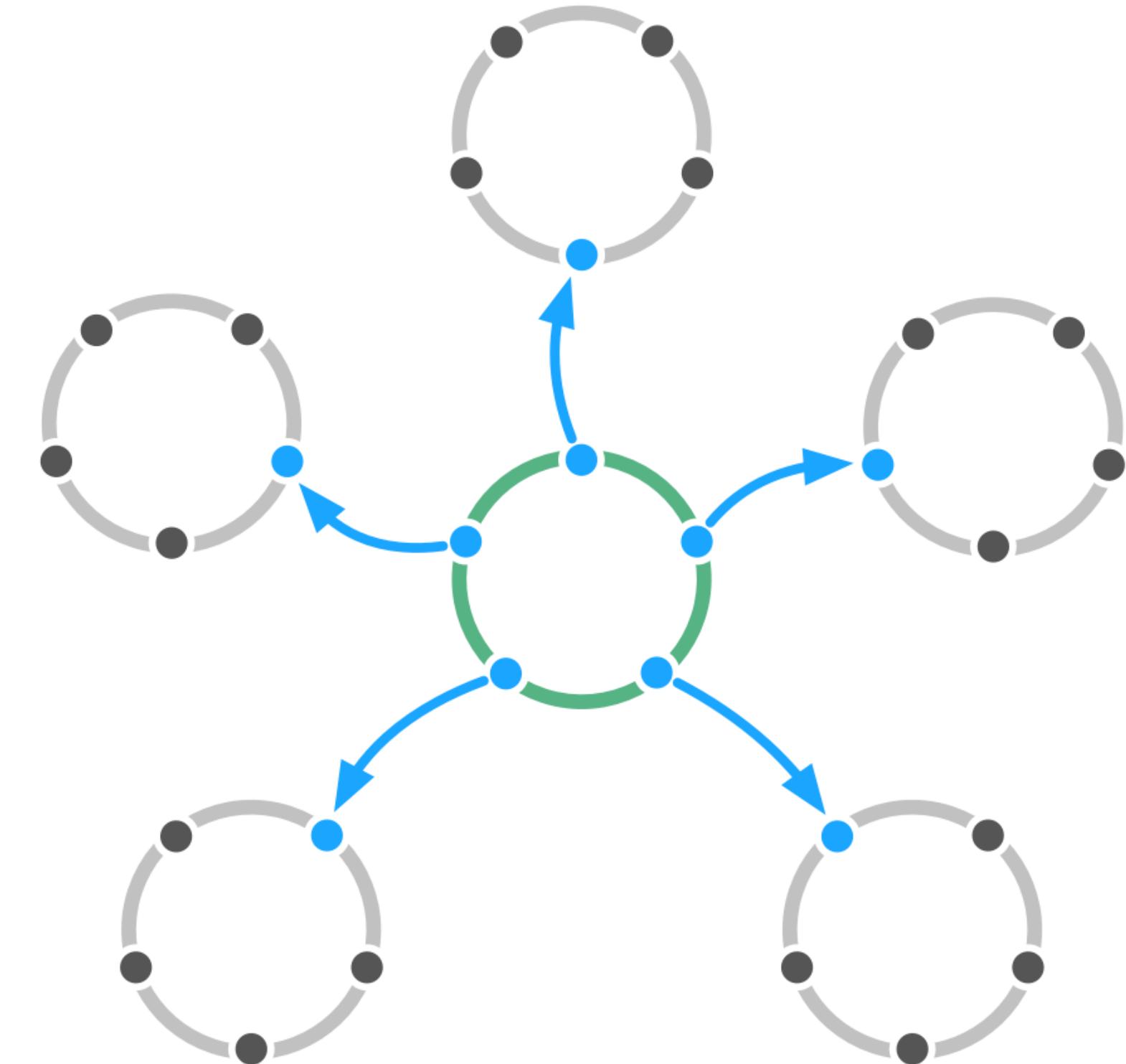
A pattern for coordination



## P7.4: Coordination Circle

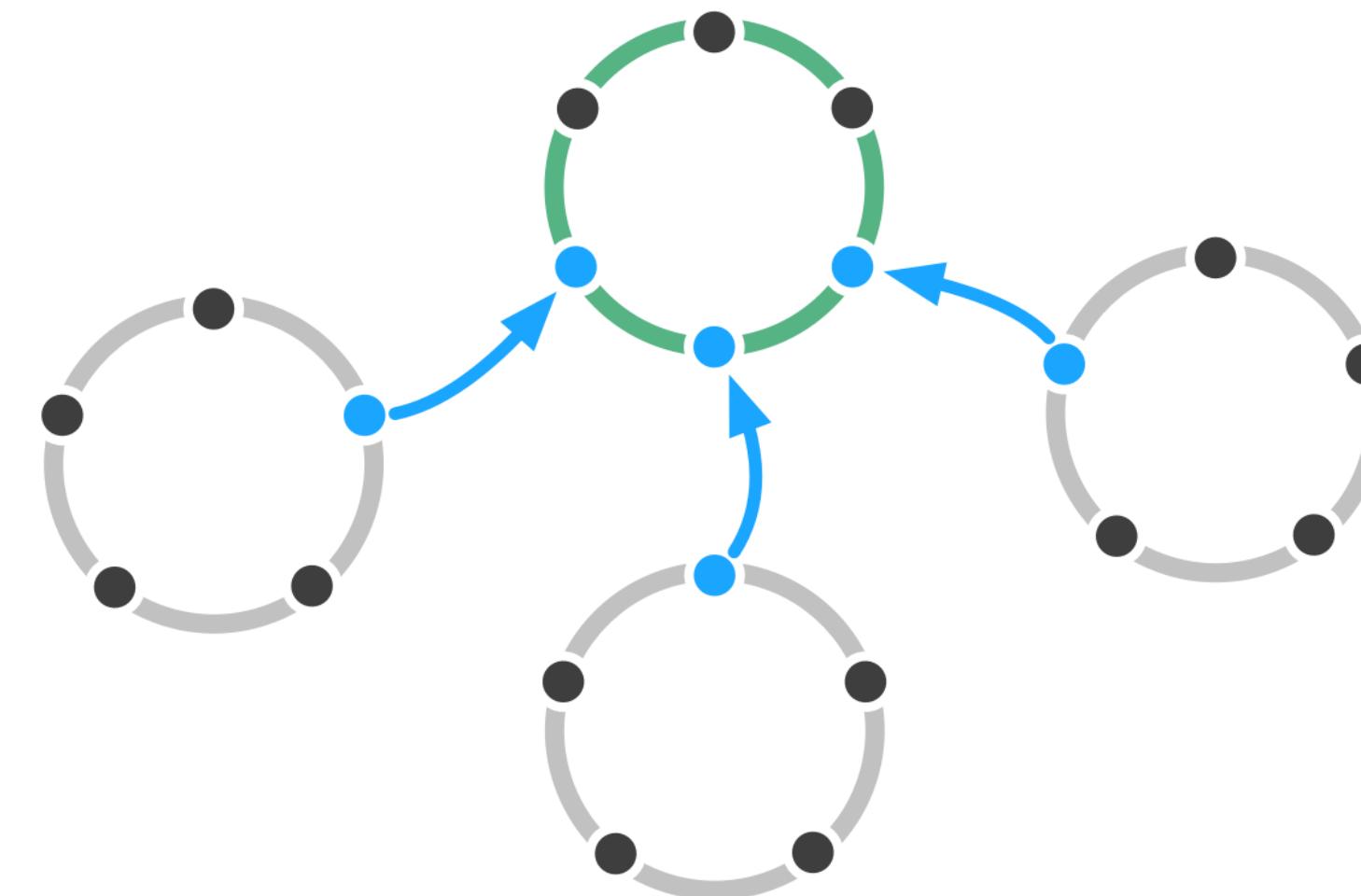
A coordination circle coordinates decision making and collaboration of several circles.

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



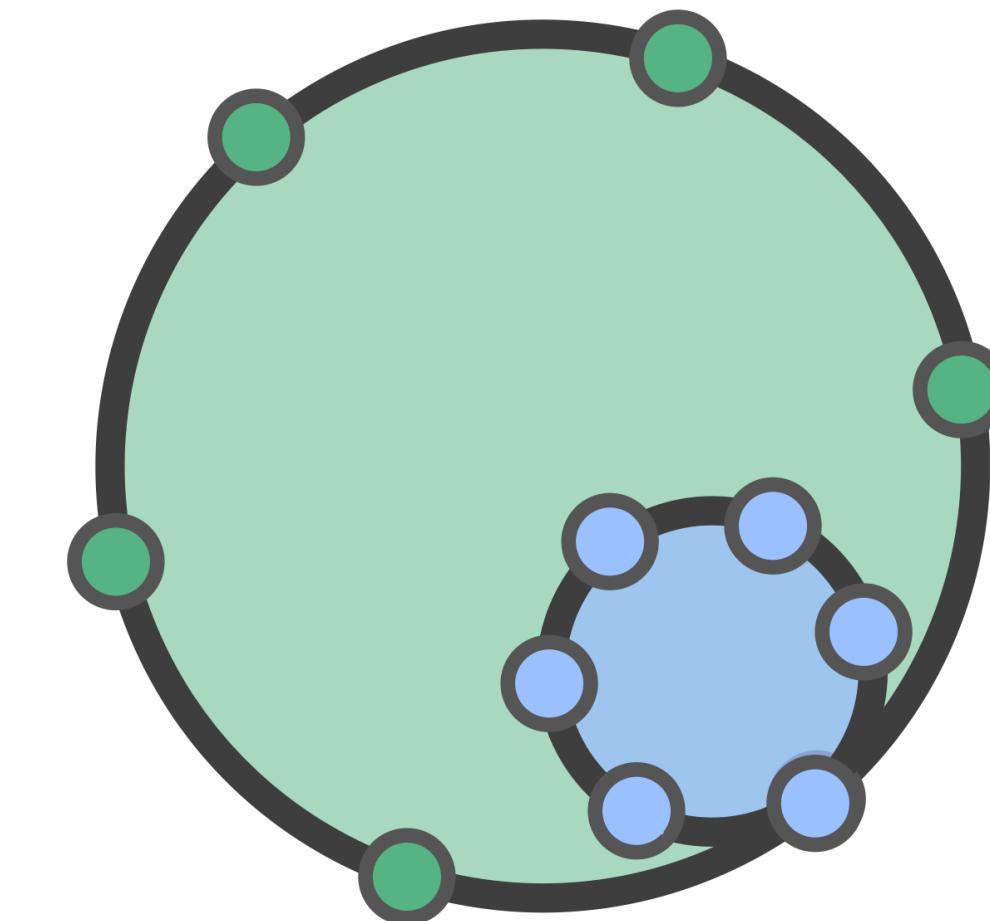
## P7.5: Service Circle

A pattern for outsourcing shared services



## P7.6: Nested Circle

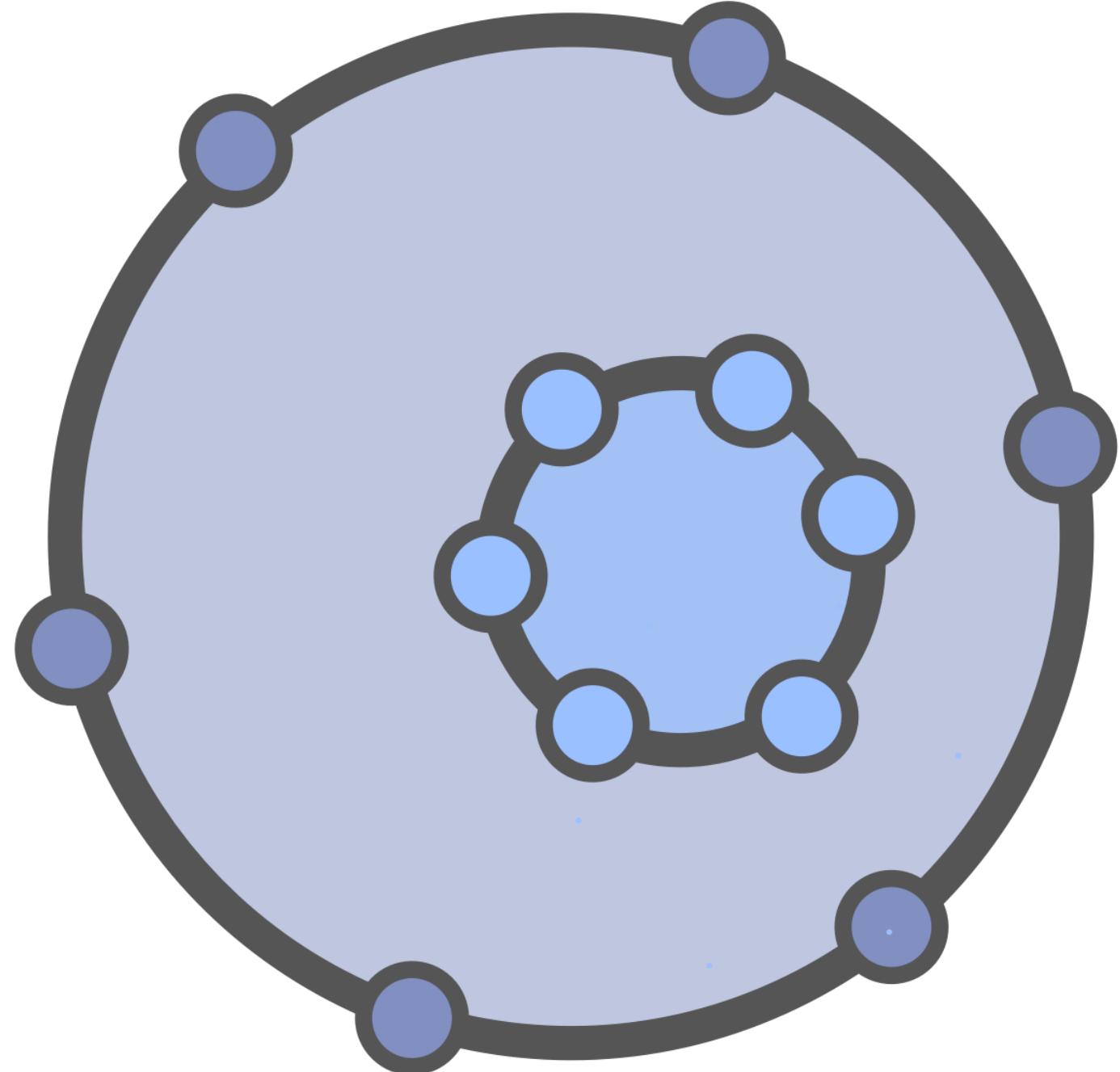
A pattern for expanding functions



## P7.7: Helping Circle

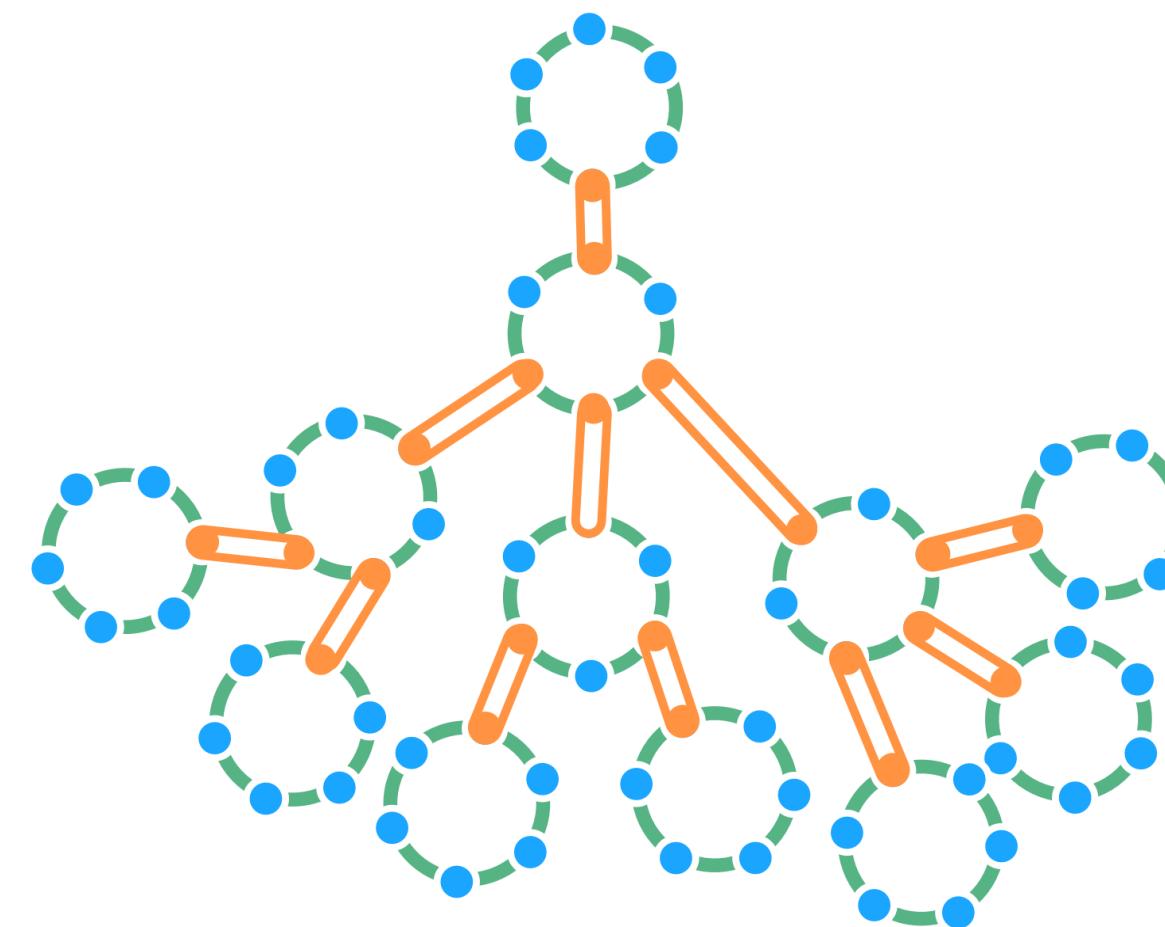
A group of people with the mandate to execute on rules and guidelines set by its parent circle.

- 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.



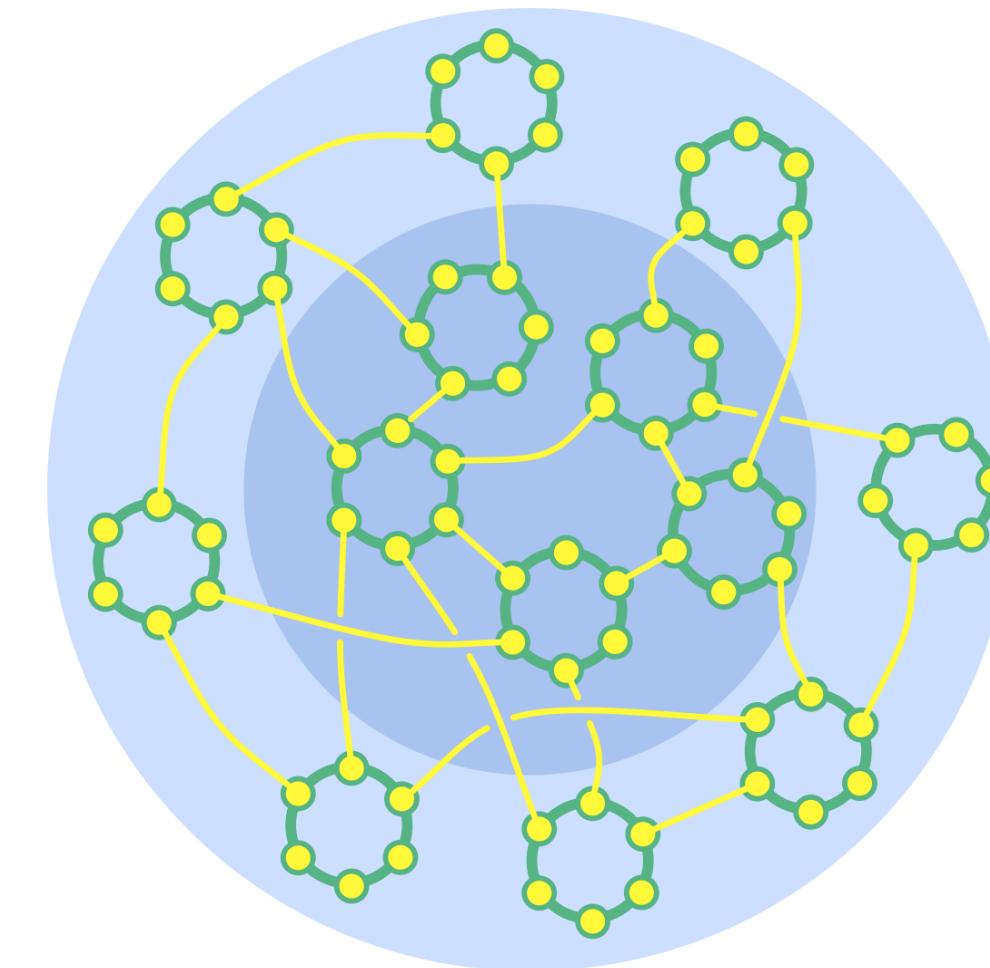
# P7.8: Double-Linked Hierarchy

A pattern for the early phase of a transformation



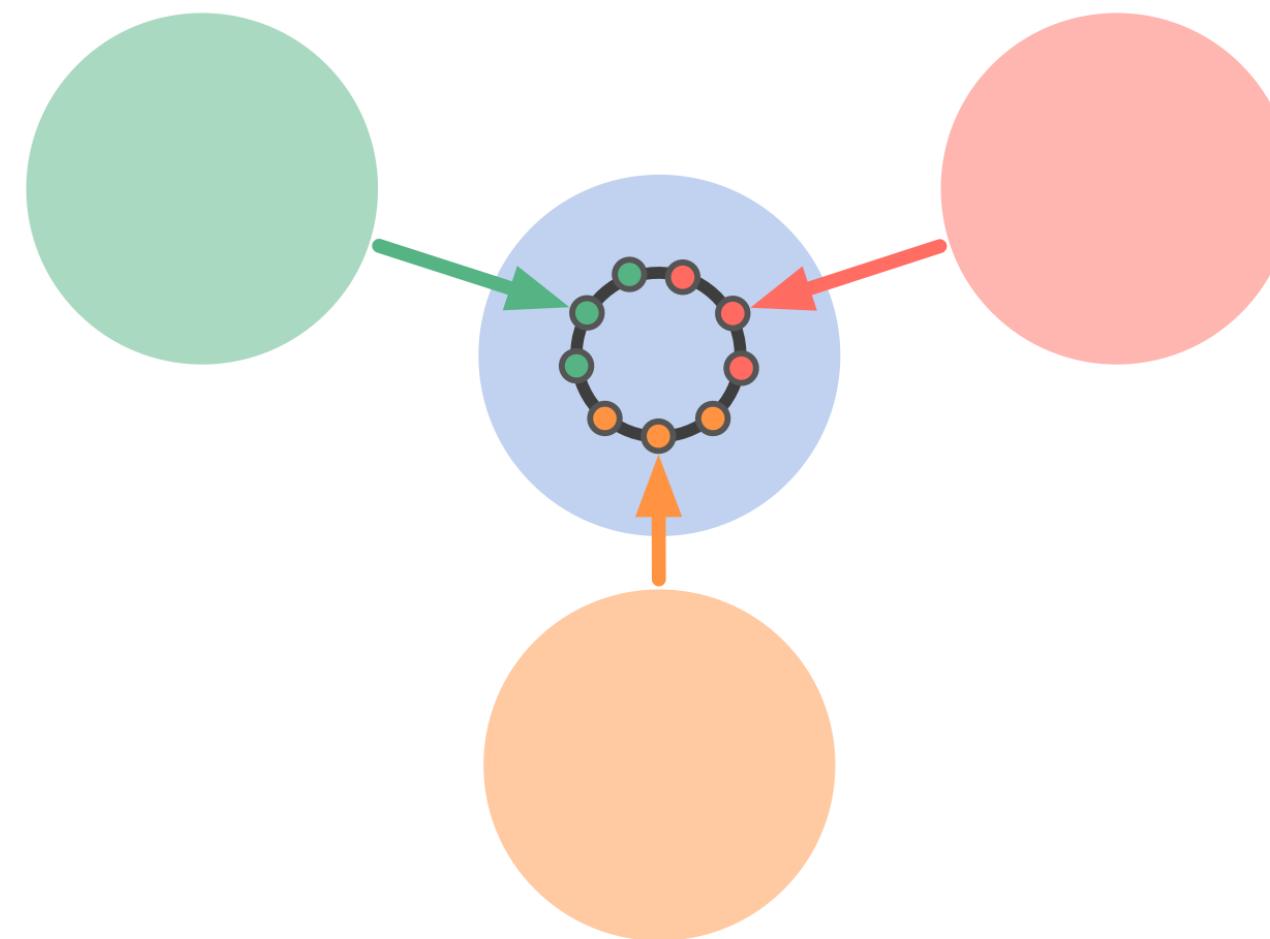
## P7.9: Peach Organization

Periphery drives the organization, the center provides services.



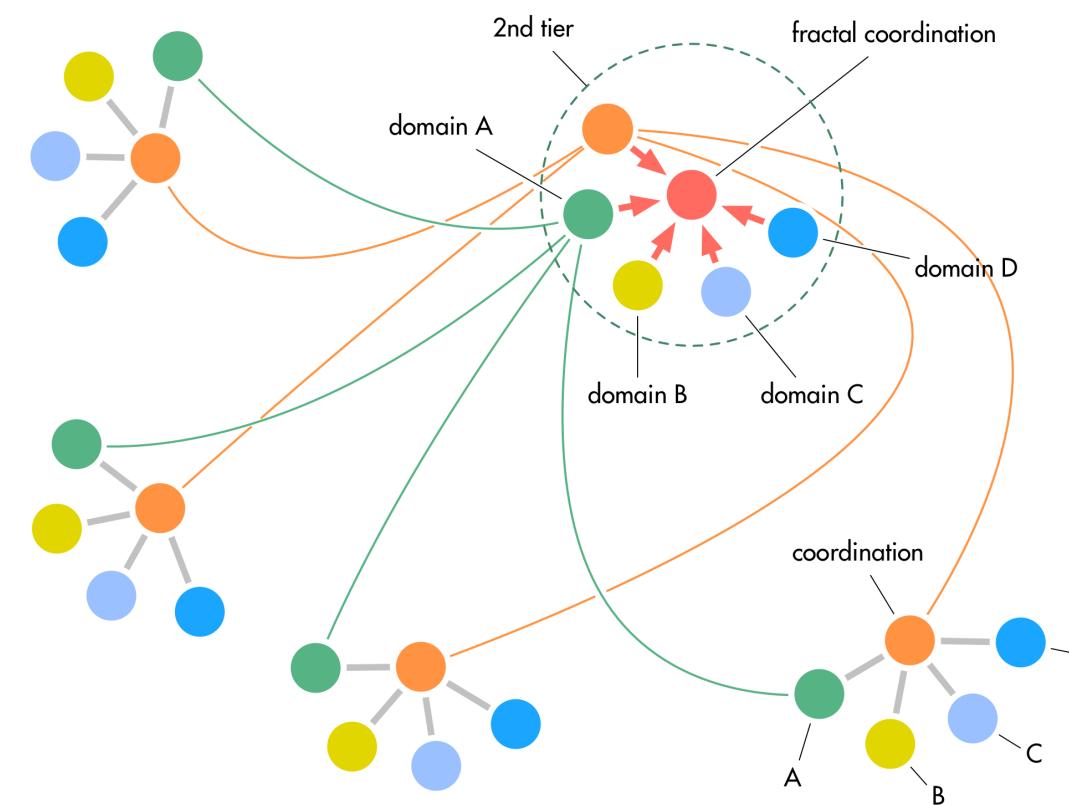
## P7.10: Backbone Organization

A pattern for multi-stakeholder projects or services.

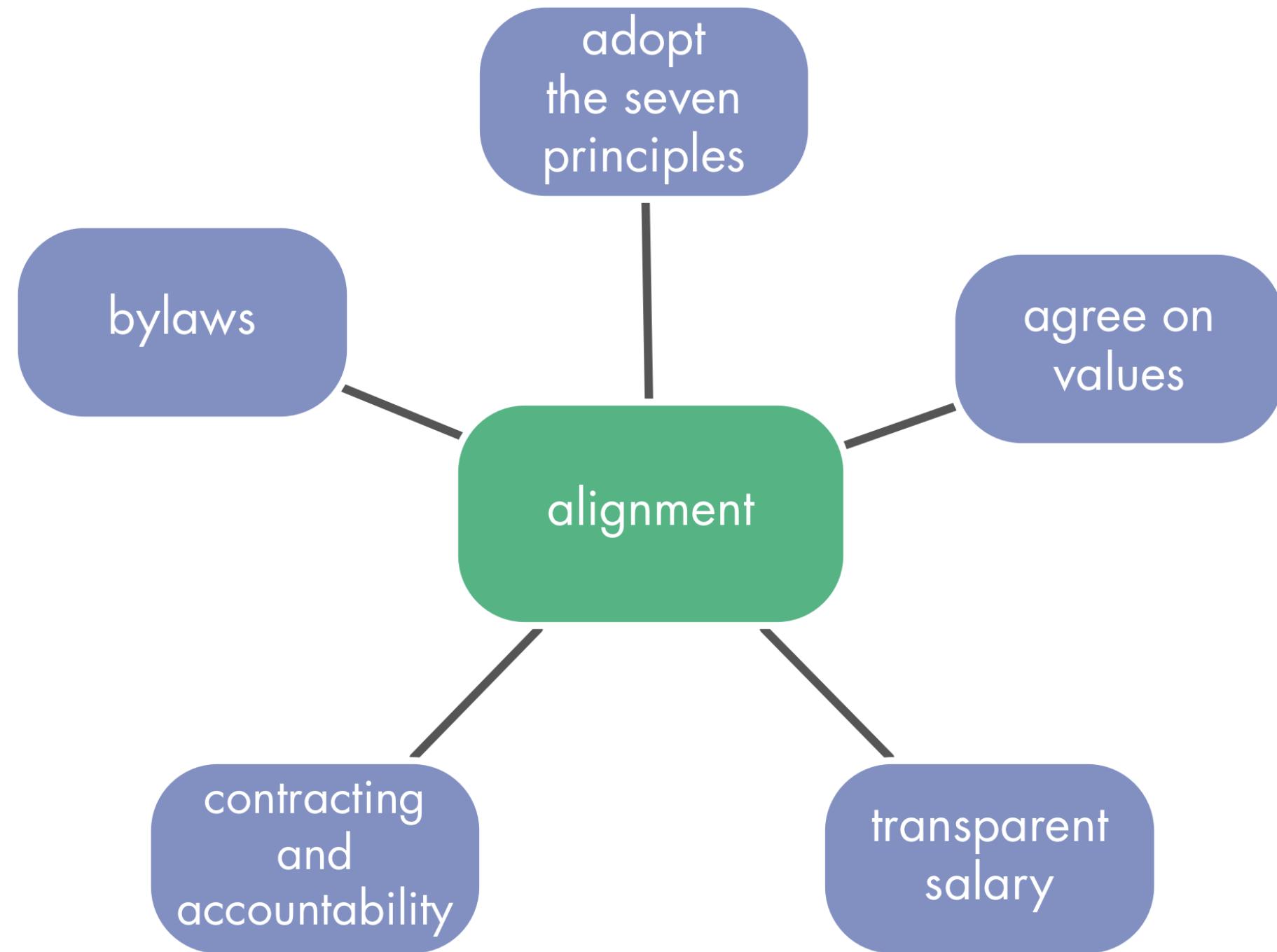


# P7.11: Fractal Organization

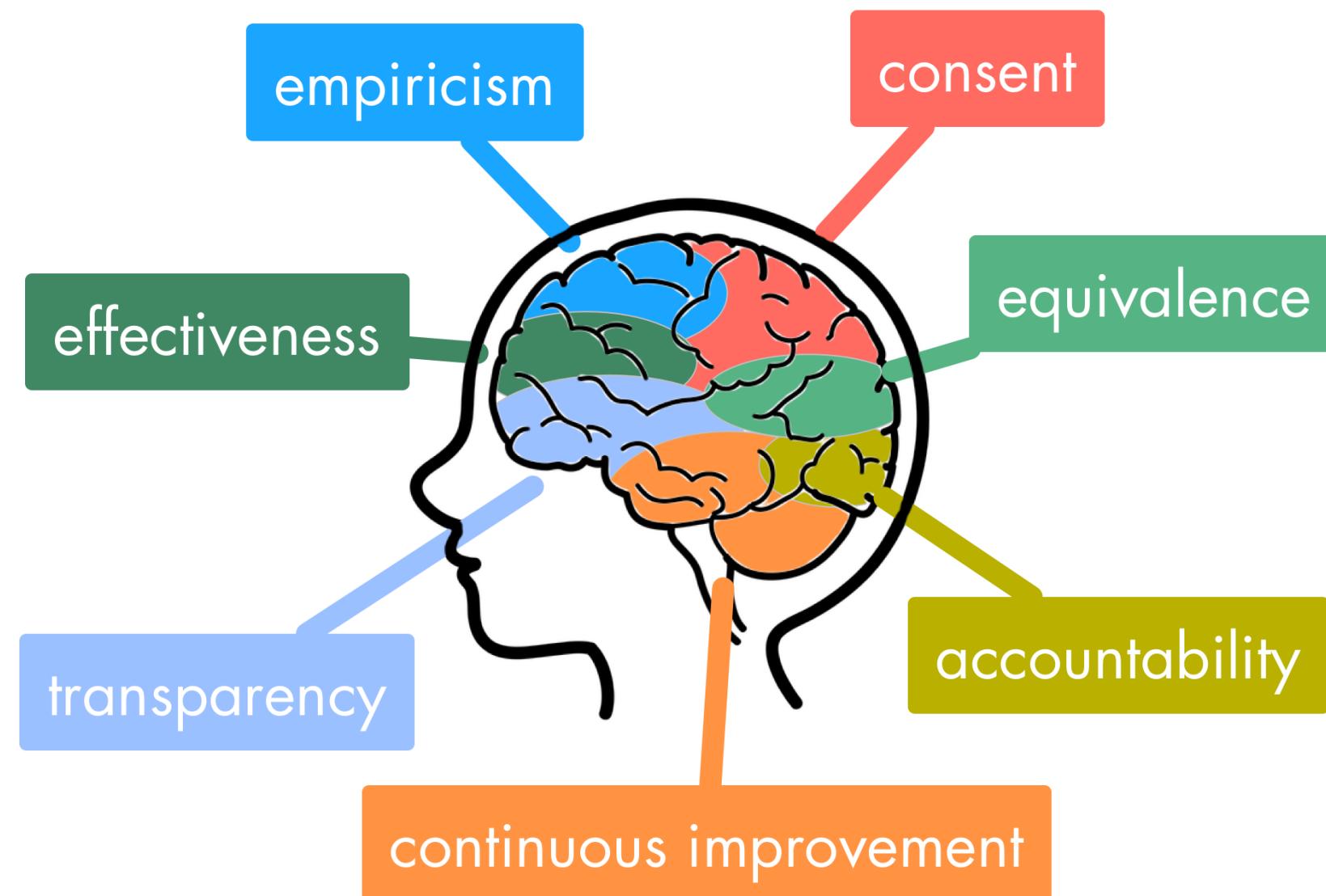
A Pattern for learning, coordination and alignment across organizational boundaries.





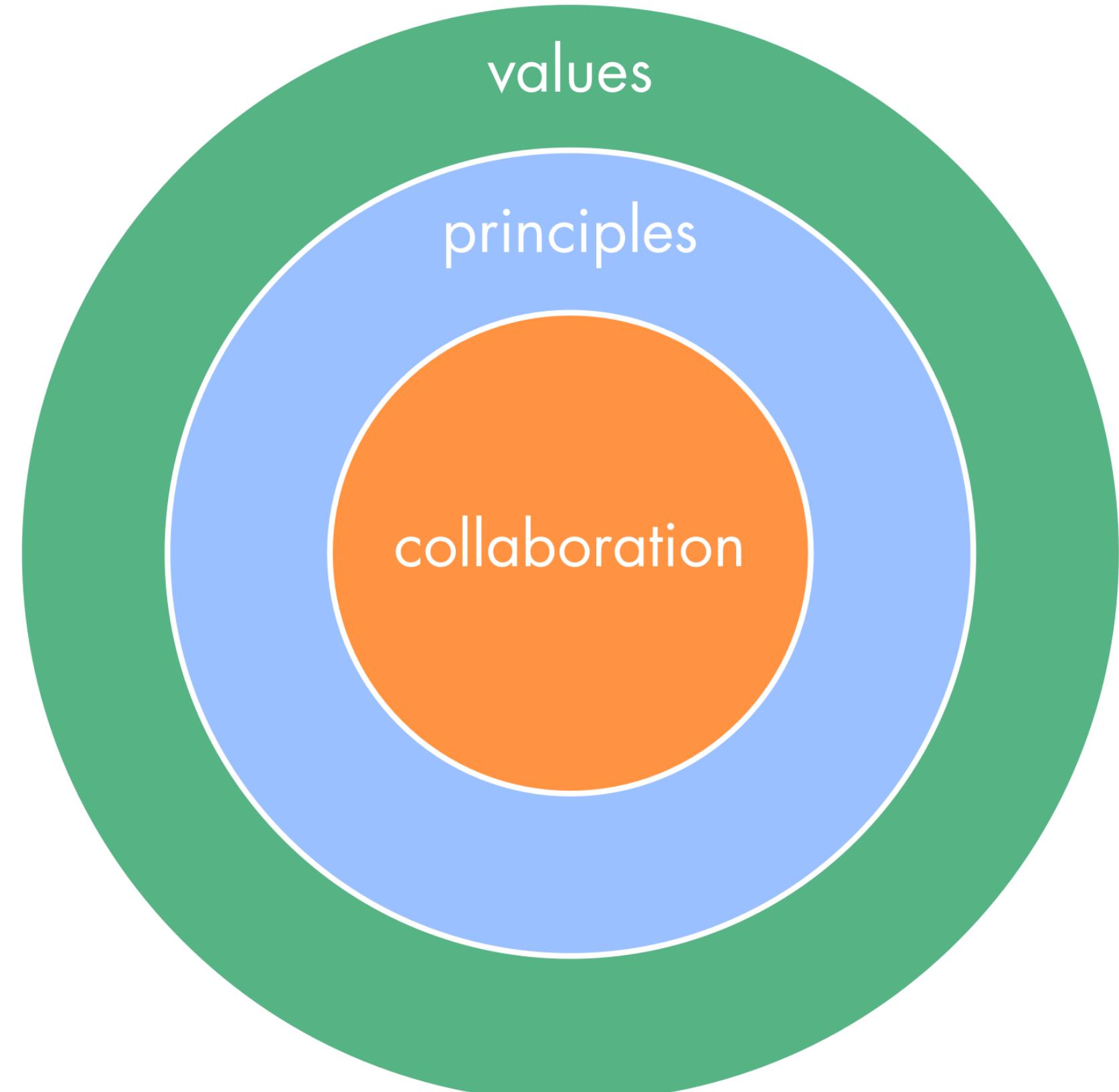


# P8.1: Adopt The Seven Principles



## Adopt The Seven Principles (cont.)

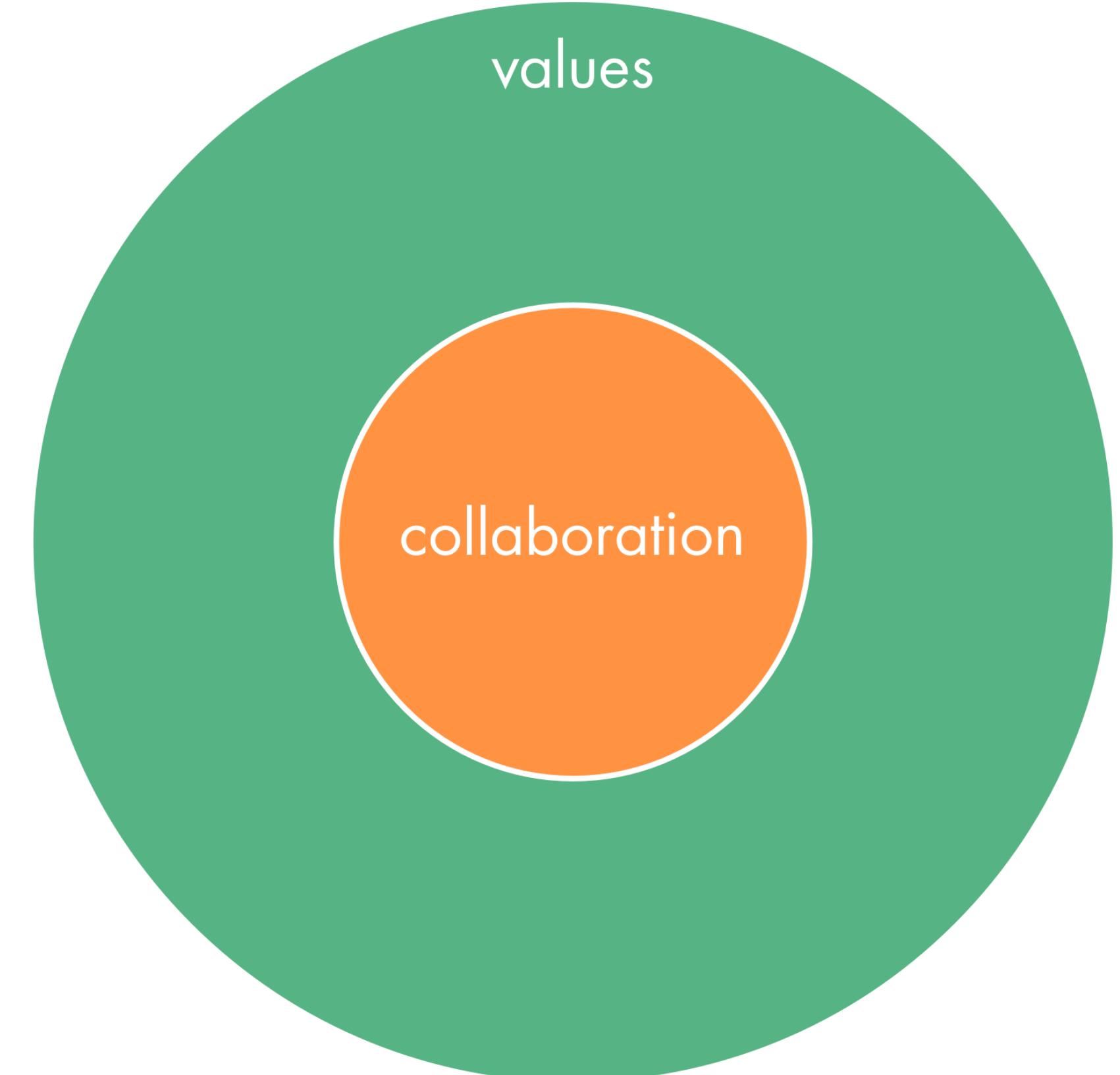
- values embrace Sociocracy 3.0 principles
- collaboration follows principles and values
- adopt the seven principles to reduce the number of agreements necessary, and to guide adaptation of patterns



## 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

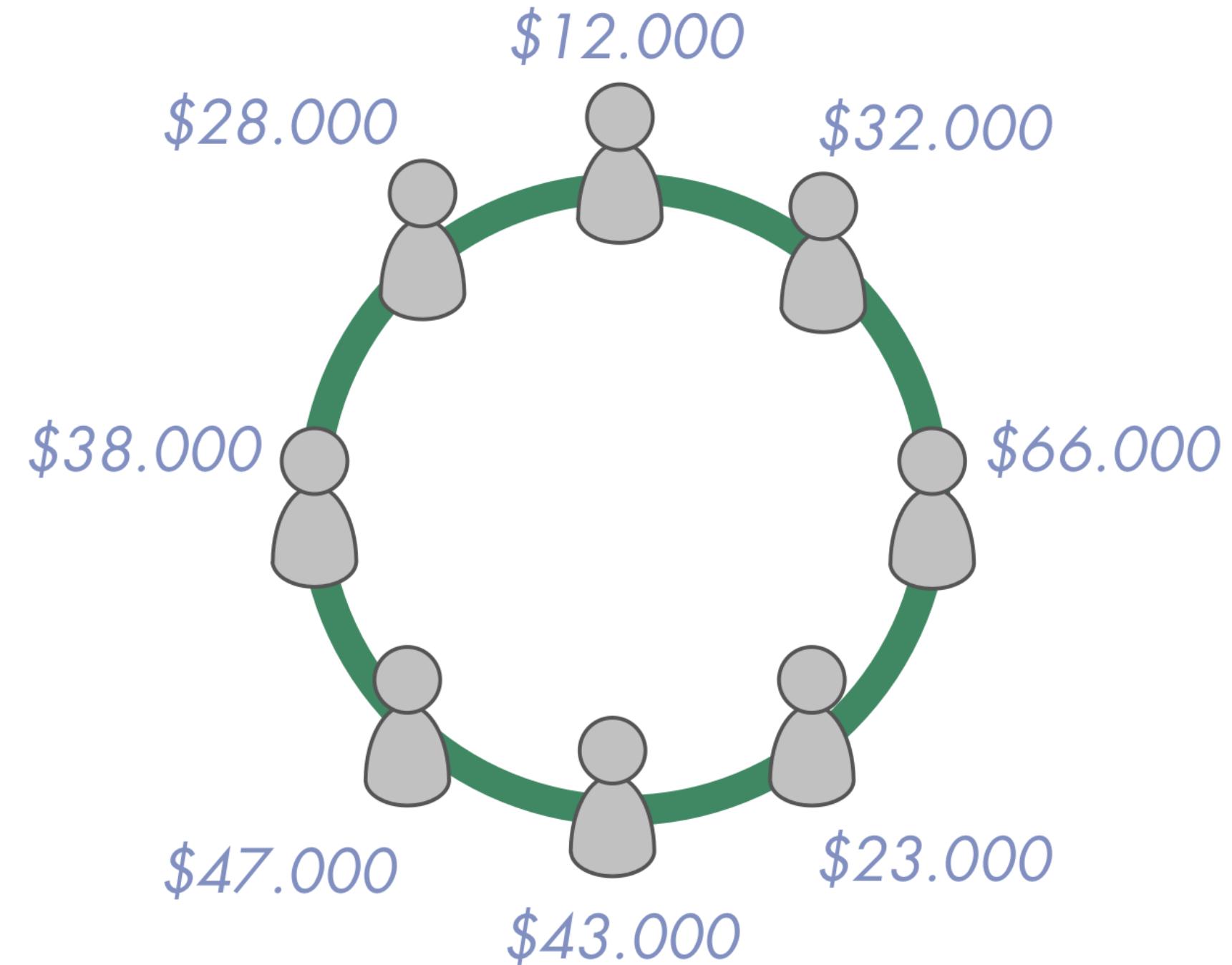


# Agree On Values (cont.)

- 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: Transparent Salary

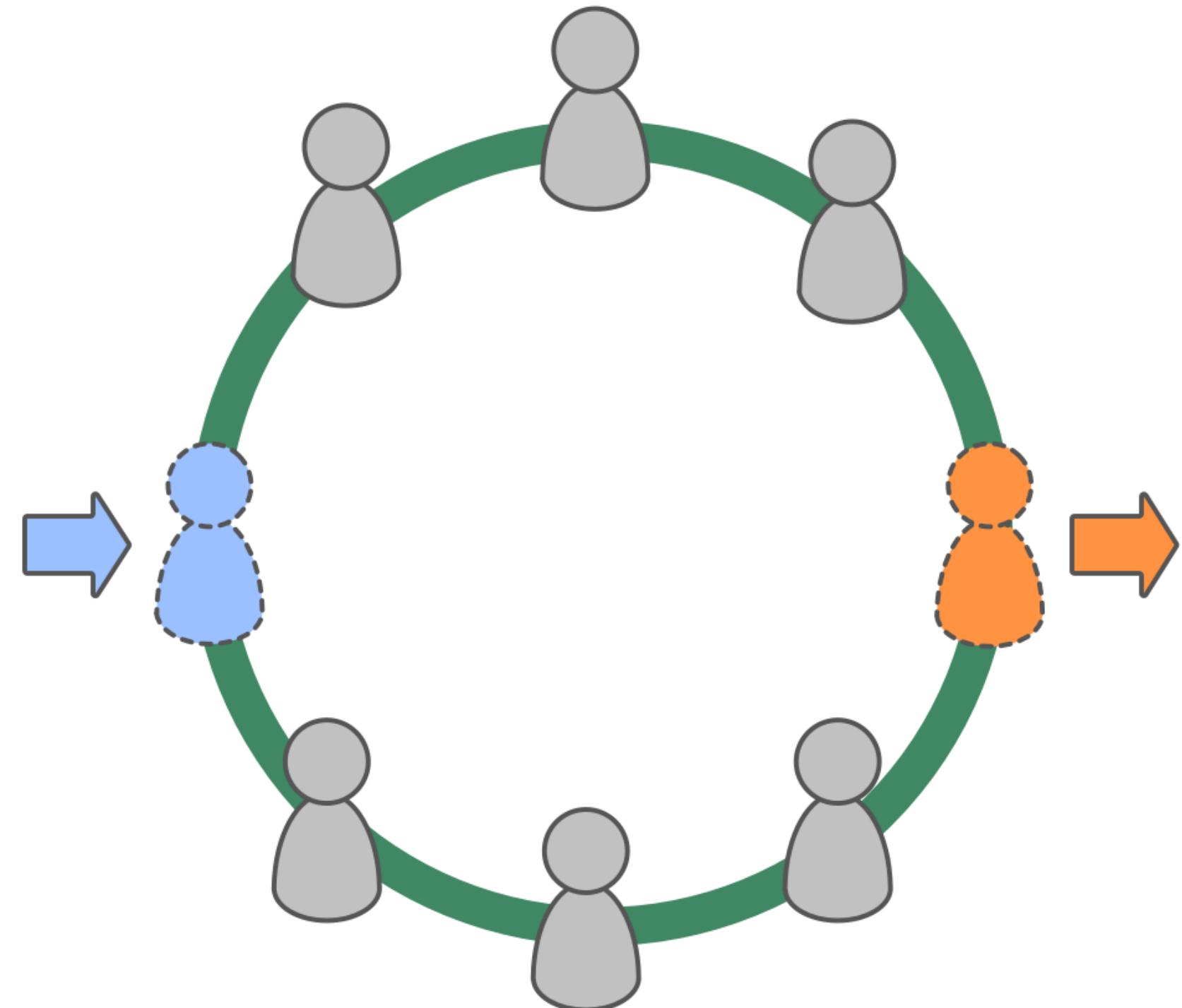
- transparent salaries need to be fair
- fairness has several orthogonal dimensions
- perception of fairness is specific to organization
- consider members and relevant stakeholders (e.g. investors)
- fixed: subsistence guarantee
- variable: fair distribution of gains and losses
- consider remuneration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



## 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

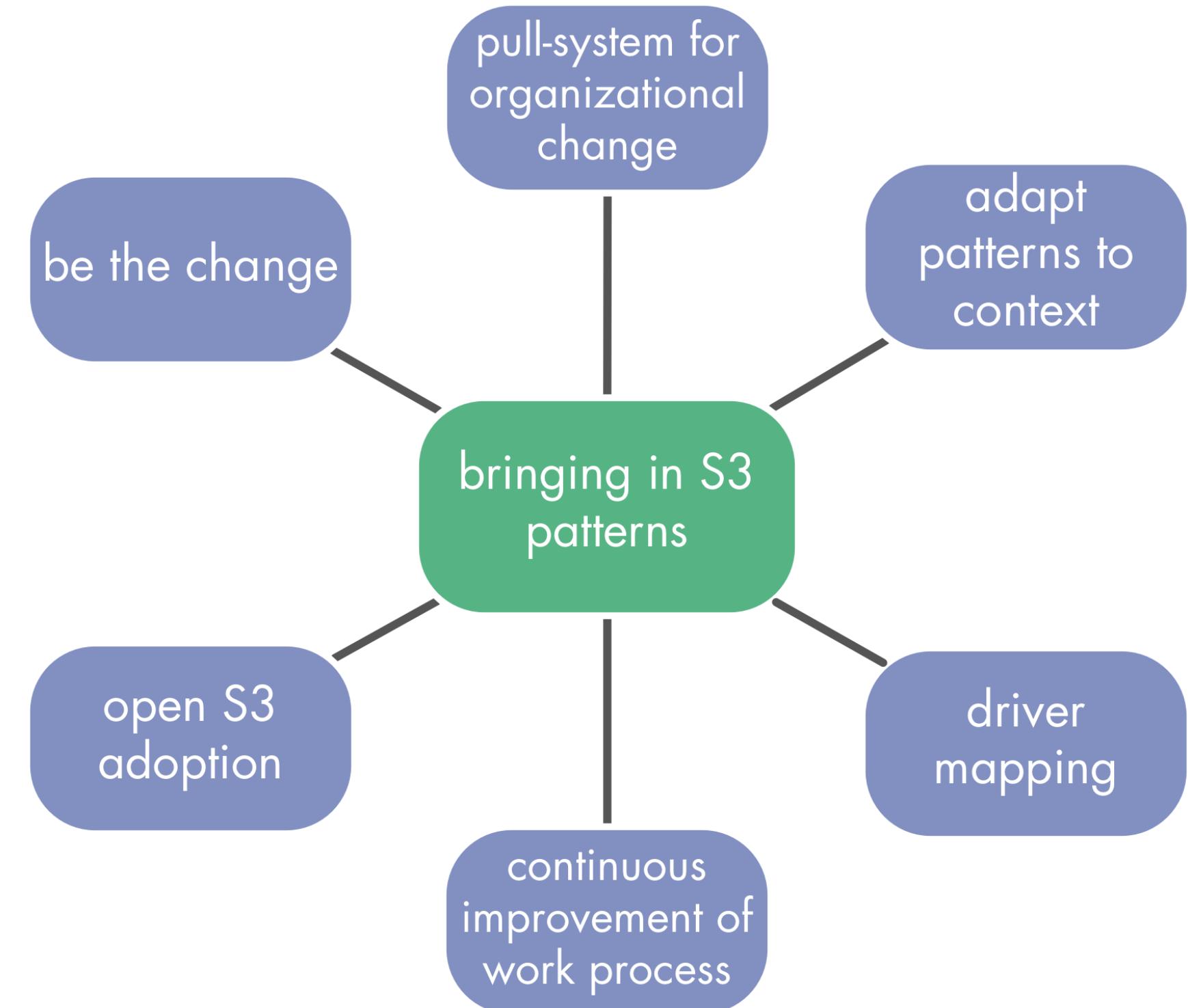


## P8.5: Bylaws

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





# P9.1: 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

Understand Context

## P9.2: 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

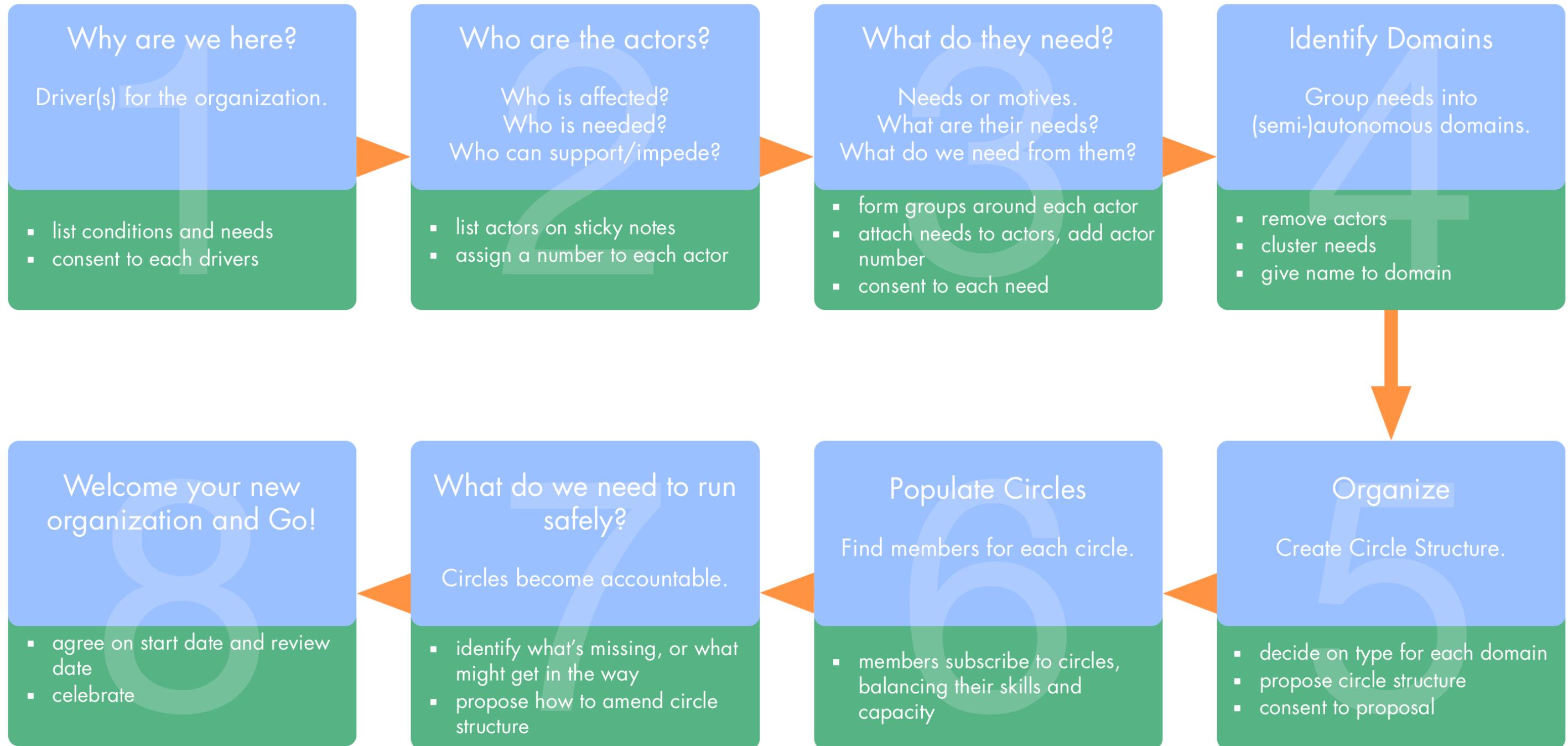
Consent to Adaptation

Test Adaptation

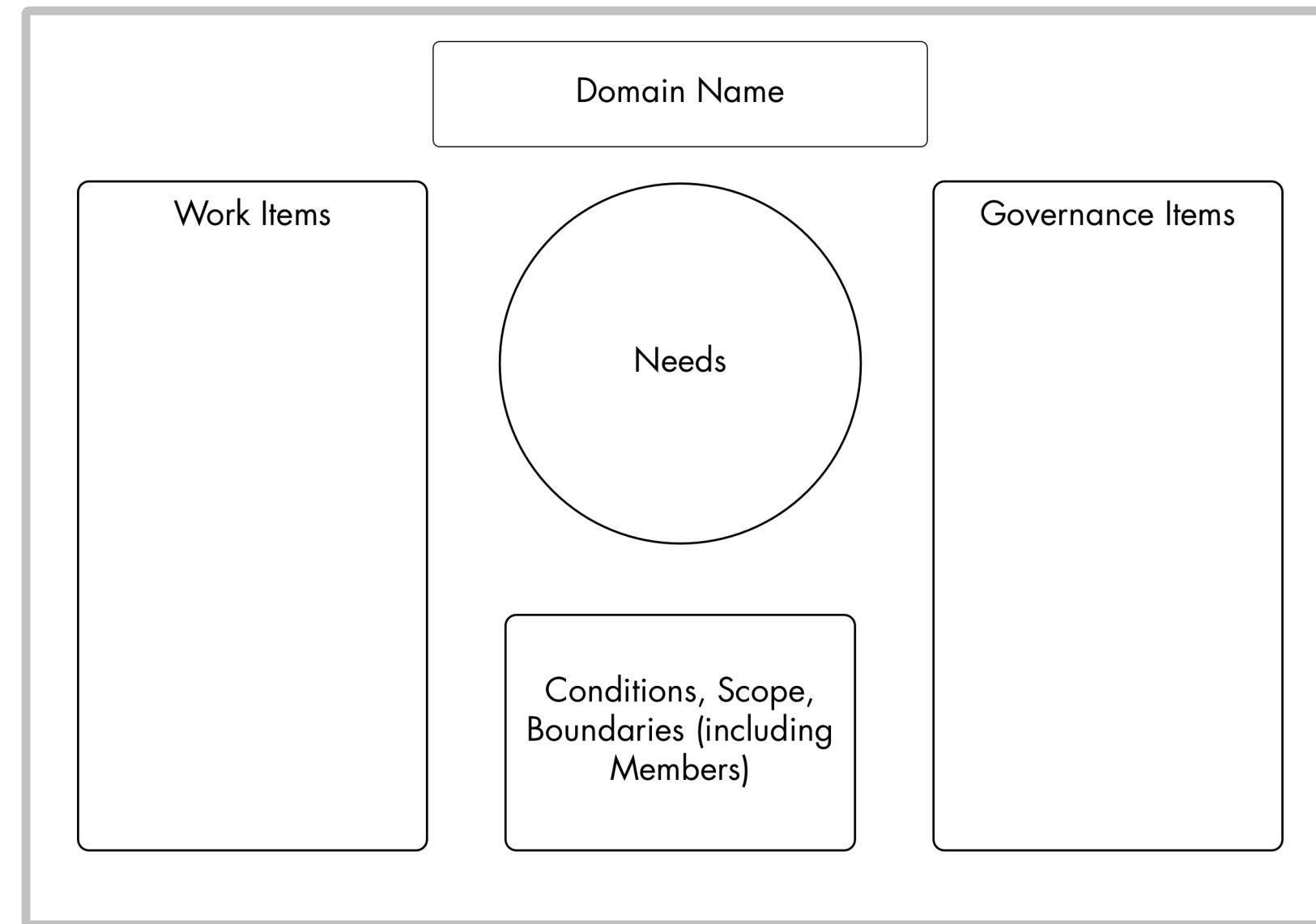
Evaluate and Evolve

## P9.3: Driver Mapping

- a workshop format for identifying organizational structure (domain or entire organization)
- based on *Impact Mapping* by Gojko Adzic, but focussed on flow of value and information, instead of actual deliverables
- alignment of organization to the pull of (external and internal) actors, e.g. customers, partners, members



# Driver Mapping: Template for Domains



## P9.4: Continuous Improvement Of Work Process

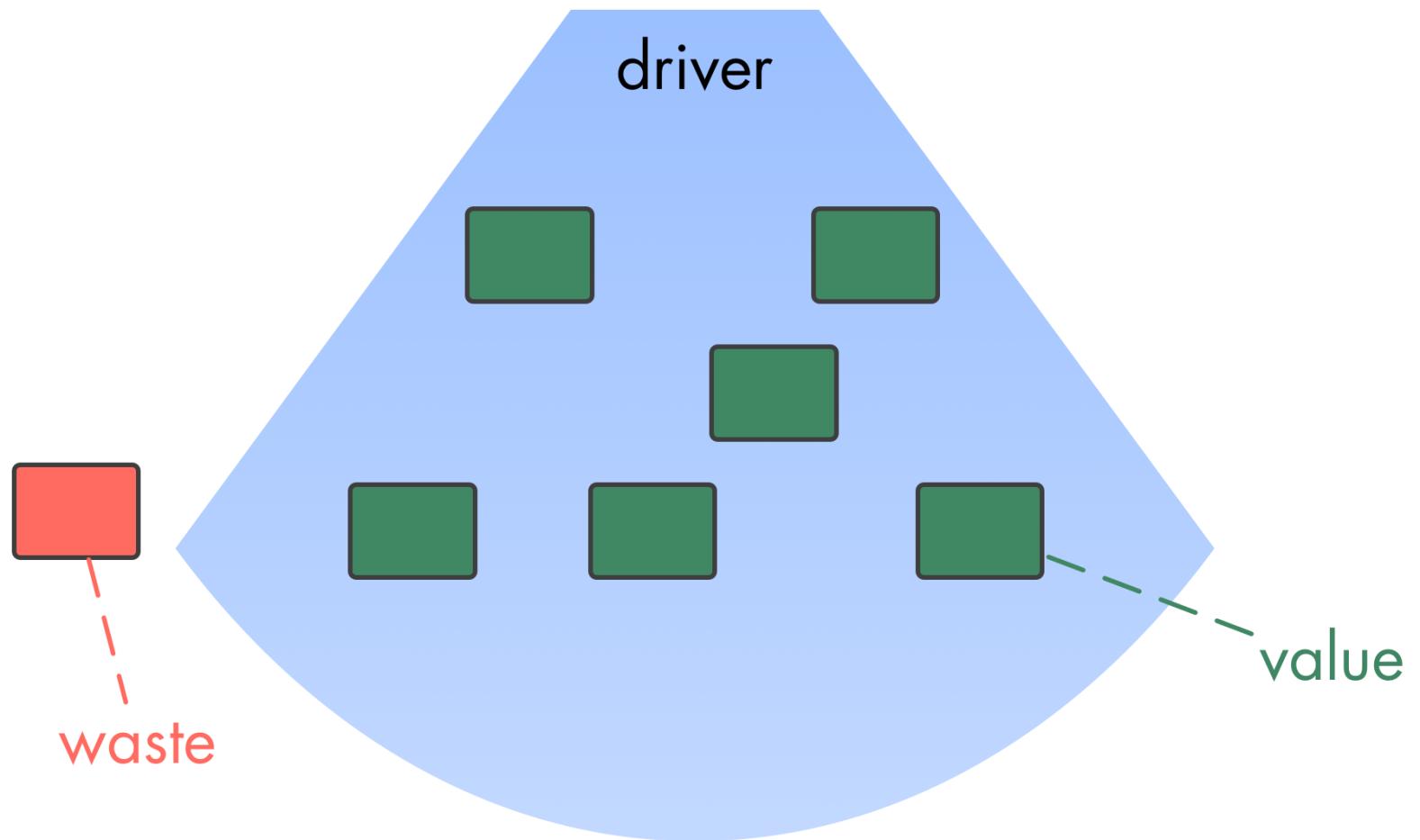
To reveal tensions and establish a metrics-based pull-system for organizational change.

- 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



## P9.5: 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

## P9.6: 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)

# 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](http://evolvingcollaboration.com/s3)

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

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

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**James Priest** is an interdependent consultant, facilitator and trainer specializing in holistic organizational development, distributed leadership implementation and complex systems optimization.

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