People – The Universal Cycle of People: Recruitment, Integration, Development, and Release Across Contexts

Gustavo Paulino de Sa Pereira

Discoverer of the Black Belt OS™

Affiliated with the Black Belt Group

gustavogestorads@gmail.com | admin@blackbelttrafego.com.br

https://orcid.org/0009-0004-1385-4627

ABSTRACT

This article specifies People as the second process of the Black Belt OS, a candidate universal structural law of human organization. While Implementation installs order, People provides the living body of the collective, governing the continuous cycle of recruitment, integration, development, and release.

The People process consists of four steps and sixteen irreducible actions that ensure collectives renew, adapt, and sustain membership over time. People is distinct from Structured Admission: Admission formalizes entry, while People manages the internal life cycle after entry.

Three properties define the cycle. First, irreducibility: all four steps and sixteen actions are indispensable, and omission produces dysfunction (e.g., failure to integrate leads to attrition; failure to release leads to stagnation). Second, sequenced necessity: the cycle follows an inevitable order—recruitment precedes integration, integration precedes development, and development precedes release. Third, fractal manifestation: the same cycle recurs across scales, from families and teams to corporations, states, and digital organizations.

Theoretically, People clarifies the inevitability of membership cycles, integrating insights from human resource management, socialization, and group sociology. Practically, it provides a diagnostic tool: dysfunctions such as churn, disengagement, or stagnation trace to failures in specific steps. By specifying People in detail, this article demonstrates that every durable collective must continually enact this cycle to persist.

Keywords: *Black Belt OS, people cycle, recruitment and integration, organizational development, sociology of organizations, collective life.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Every durable collective depends on its people. Without members who join, learn, contribute, and eventually depart, no collective can persist. Yet the cycle of membership is often treated as contingent or cultural, embedded in the practices of human resource management, socialization rituals, or group dynamics. The Black Belt OS clarifies that this cycle is not optional or contextual, but **structural and inevitable**. It constitutes the second process of the organizational law: **People**.

Articles 1–4 established the **macrostructure** (Paulino, 2025a), the **microstructure** (Paulino, 2025b), the **supracontextual grammar** (Paulino, 2025c), and the portal process of **Implementation** (Paulino, 2025d). This article focuses on **Process 2: People**, specifying its four steps and sixteen irreducible actions.

People governs the **life cycle of membership**: recruitment, integration, development, and release. It ensures that collectives remain viable by renewing their internal body. Importantly, People is **distinct from Structured Admission**. Admission formalizes the entry of members into the collective; People manages what happens **after entry**, guiding how members become contributors, evolve, and eventually exit.

The People cycle is defined by three properties. First, **irreducibility**: none of its steps can be skipped without dysfunction. Failure to recruit leads to stagnation; failure to integrate leads to attrition; failure to develop leads to disengagement; failure to release leads to rigidity. Second, **sequenced necessity**: the four steps follow a structural order—members must be recruited before integrated, integrated before developed, and developed before released. Third, **fractal manifestation**: the cycle recurs at multiple scales, from families and teams to corporations, states, and digital autonomous organizations.

This article develops four sets of propositions: universality, irreducibility, sequenced necessity, and fractality. It then discusses implications for theory, research, and practice, positioning People as the **structural cycle of membership**.

The article proceeds as follows. Section 2 reviews theoretical foundations across HRM, socialization, and sociology. Section 3 specifies the cycle of People in detail, with four steps and

sixteen actions. Section 4 develops testable propositions. Section 5 discusses implications. Section 6 concludes by reaffirming People as the **living body of every durable collective**.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Human resource management (HRM)

The field of HRM has long emphasized recruitment, training, and retention as core managerial tasks (Wright & McMahan, 1992). Models of employee lifecycle often include hiring, onboarding, development, and exit. While these frameworks capture important practices, they are typically treated as **managerial choices** or **best practices**, not as **structural invariants**. The OS reframes them as inevitable: every durable collective must enact recruitment, integration, development, and release, regardless of managerial preference.

2.2 Socialization and organizational behavior

Research on organizational socialization highlights how newcomers adapt and become effective insiders. **Van Maanen and Schein (1979)** outlined tactics of socialization, while **Bauer et al. (2007)** synthesized predictors of adjustment and retention. These contributions emphasize **integration**, a critical step of the People cycle. Yet they frame socialization as contingent on culture or leadership style, rather than as a universal requirement. The OS specifies integration as an **irreducible step** without which persistence is impossible.

2.3 Development and learning

Literatures on learning and career development emphasize continuous growth. **Argyris and Schön (1978)** distinguished between single- and double-loop learning, while HRD research

stresses training, mentorship, and progression (Noe, 2017). These frameworks highlight the importance of **development**, yet they do not frame it as structurally necessary. The OS clarifies that every collective must develop its members to sustain adaptation and capability.

2.4 Release and exit

Sociological and anthropological perspectives emphasize the importance of role exit and rites of passage. **Ebaugh (1988)** examined role exit in identity transitions, while anthropologists highlight rituals of departure and succession. Organizational studies often underplay this dimension, framing exit as attrition or turnover. The OS recognizes **release** as a structural necessity: without mechanisms of departure, collectives stagnate, overload, or collapse under rigidity.

2.5 The unresolved gap

Taken together, these literatures converge on fragments of the cycle: HRM on recruitment, socialization on integration, learning on development, sociology on release. Yet none specifies the **complete, closed, and minimal cycle** that applies across contexts. They treat membership as a managerial choice, cultural ritual, or contingency. The Black Belt OS closes this gap by identifying **People** as the second process of the law: a universal cycle of recruitment, integration, development, and release, composed of sixteen irreducible actions that every durable collective must enact.

3. SPECIFICATION OF THE PEOPLE CYCLE

The People process ensures the **continuous renewal and adaptation** of the collective's membership. It consists of **four steps and sixteen irreducible actions**. Each step is indispensable, sequenced, and fractal; omission or inversion generates dysfunction.

3.1 Step 1 – Recruitment

Recruitment secures new members for the collective.

- **Action 1.1:** Identify needs for new members.

- **Action 1.2:** Define roles and expectations.

- **Action 1.3:** Reach potential candidates.

- **Action 1.4:** Select and invite candidates to join.

3.2 Step 2 – Integration

Integration transforms newcomers into functional insiders.

- **Action 2.1:** Provide orientation and role clarity.

- **Action 2.2:** Establish social bonds and trust.

- **Action 2.3:** Align individual goals with collective objectives.

- **Action 2.4:** Provide initial support and mentorship.

3.3 Step 3 – Development

Development ensures members grow in capability and contribution.

- **Action 3.1:** Assess performance and potential.

- **Action 3.2:** Provide training, feedback, and progression opportunities.

- **Action 3.3:** Assign stretch roles or responsibilities.

- **Action 3.4:** Recognize contributions and reinforce engagement.

3.4 Step 4 – Release

Release ensures healthy departure of members.

- **Action 4.1:** Identify when departure is necessary (voluntary or structural).

- **Action 4.2:** Conduct exit or transition rituals.

- **Action 4.3:** Capture and transfer knowledge.

- **Action 4.4:** Maintain respectful closure and potential future ties.

3.5 Properties of the People cycle

1. **Irreducibility** – All sixteen actions are indispensable. Omission produces dysfunction (e.g., failure to integrate leads to churn, failure to release leads to rigidity).

2. **Sequenced necessity** – Steps follow an inevitable order: recruitment precedes integration; integration precedes development; development precedes release.

3. **Fractality** – The cycle recurs across scales: families recruiting and raising children, teams hiring and mentoring, corporations managing careers, states inducting and retiring officials, DAOs onboarding and sunsetting contributors.

4. PROPOSITIONS

The specification of People as the second process of the Black Belt OS generates **testable propositions** about the universality, irreducibility, sequenced necessity, fractality, and falsifiability of the membership cycle.

4.1 Universality

The People cycle appears in every durable collective.

- **Proposition 1a:** All durable collectives will exhibit evidence of recruitment, integration, development, and release.

- **Proposition 1b:** Collectives that omit the People cycle will stagnate, erode, or collapse over time.

4.2 Irreducibility

The four steps and sixteen actions cannot be removed without dysfunction.

- **Proposition 2a:** Omission of recruitment leads to stagnation; omission of integration leads to attrition; omission of development leads to disengagement; omission of release leads to rigidity.

- **Proposition 2b:** Each action within the cycle is indispensable; redundancy tests (removal without dysfunction) will fail.

4.3 Sequenced necessity

The cycle follows inevitable order: recruitment → integration → development → release.

- **Proposition 3a:** Inversions of steps (e.g., attempting development before integration) will generate predictable dysfunctions.

- **Proposition 3b:** While some actions may overlap in time, the structural sequence cannot be reversed without collapse.

4.4 Fractality

The cycle recurs across scales and contexts.

- **Proposition 4a:** Recruitment, integration, development, and release will be observable in families, teams, firms, states, and digital autonomous organizations.

- **Proposition 4b:** Absence or inversion at any scale will generate dysfunction at that level, regardless of culture or technology.

4.5 Falsifiability

The OS specifies criteria by which People could be refuted.

- **Proposition 5a:** If a durable collective is shown to persist without one of the sixteen actions, the law would be disproven.

- **Proposition 5b:** If independent coders fail to converge at $\kappa \geq 0.80$ in identifying the cycle, the catalogue would be invalid.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Theoretical implications

The specification of People reframes theories of membership, HRM, and socialization. Instead of being managerial practices or cultural rituals, recruitment, integration, development, and release are **structural inevitabilities**. This advances organizational theory by establishing a **closed ontology** of the membership cycle.

Fragmented literatures find integration within the OS:

- HRM's focus on hiring and retention maps to **Recruitment and Release**.

- Socialization theory maps to **Integration**.

- Learning and career development map to **Development**.

- Sociological analyses of exit map to **Release**.

Thus, the OS consolidates these insights into a single grammar: the four steps and sixteen actions of People.

5.2 Practical implications

For practitioners, the People cycle offers a **diagnostic lens**.

- Dysfunction in **Recruitment** produces talent gaps.

- Dysfunction in **Integration** leads to high churn.

- Dysfunction in **Development** causes disengagement and plateau.

- Dysfunction in **Release** leads to rigidity, overload, or conflict.

Leaders can therefore diagnose problems by identifying which step of People is absent, inverted, or fragile. This prevents symptom-based solutions (e.g., bonuses for disengaged staff) and directs attention to **structural repairs**.

5.3 Interdisciplinary implications

The People cycle extends beyond organizations.

- **Families** recruit (birth/adoption), integrate (socialization), develop (education), and release (adulthood, independence).
- **States** recruit (citizens, officials), integrate (bureaucratic induction), develop (training, promotion), and release (retirement, succession).
- **Digital organizations** recruit (onboarding contributors), integrate (protocol alignment), develop (reputation systems), and release (sunsetting contributors).

Across contexts, the four steps remain visible, confirming their **supracontextual inevitability**.

5.4 Anticipated critiques and responses

Potential critiques include:

- **Tautology:** countered by explicit criteria of falsifiability.
- **Redundancy:** countered by boundary distinctions (Admission ≠ People; Implementation training ≠ Development).
- **Cultural bias:** countered by functional equivalence (rites of passage differ in form but enact Integration/Release).
- **Over-simplification:** countered by analogy to DNA—four bases explain life's diversity; four steps explain membership cycles.

5.5 Summary of contributions

The People cycle contributes by:

1. Establishing a **structural ontology** of membership.

2. Providing a **diagnostic tool** for organizations.

3. Integrating fragmented literatures into a unified grammar.

4. Offering a **fractal framework** applicable across contexts and disciplines.

6. CONCLUSION

This article specified **People** as the second process of the Black Belt OS, the candidate **universal structural law of human organization**. Building on the macro (Article 1), micro (Article 2), supracontextual grammar (Article 3), and Implementation as the portal process (Article 4), we demonstrated that People governs the **life cycle of membership**.

The cycle consists of **four steps and sixteen irreducible actions**: recruitment, integration, development, and release. These steps are **irreducible** (each indispensable), **sequenced** (ordered inevitably), and **fractal** (recurring across scales, from families to corporations to states and DAOs).

The contributions are threefold. Theoretically, People establishes a **structural ontology of membership**, integrating literatures from HRM, socialization, development, and sociology of exit. Practically, it provides a **diagnostic tool**: dysfunctions such as churn, disengagement, stagnation, or rigidity can be traced to failures in specific steps. Interdisciplinarily, the People cycle applies across diverse collectives, revealing functional equivalence beneath cultural variation.

The OS remains **falseable**: it can be disproven by evidence of a durable collective persisting without one of the sixteen actions, by reliable inversion of sequence without collapse, or by

coder convergence falling below κ = 0.80. Until such disproof occurs, the People cycle stands as a **structural inevitability**.

Future research must empirically test the four steps and sixteen actions across contexts and scales, employing case studies, longitudinal designs, and computational modeling. Practitioners must employ the cycle diagnostically, aligning contextual practices to the structural law. Together, these efforts will determine whether the OS remains a conjecture or becomes an accepted law.

The unavoidable conclusion is that **every durable collective must recruit, integrate, develop, and release its members**. People is the living body of the collective—the cycle that ensures persistence across time, culture, and technology.

Subsequent articles in the *Black Belt OS™ Collectanea* specify the remaining processes in detail, beginning with Attraction as the law of visibility and legitimacy (Paulino, 2025e).

REFERENCES

Argyris, C., & Schön, D. A. (1978). *Organizational learning: A theory of action perspective*. Addison-Wesley.

Bauer, T. N., Bodner, T., Erdogan, B., Truxillo, D. M., & Tucker, J. S. (2007). Newcomer adjustment during organizational socialization: A meta-analytic review of antecedents, outcomes, and methods. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*(3), 707–721. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.3.707

Ebaugh, H. R. F. (1988). *Becoming an ex: The process of role exit*. University of Chicago Press.

Noe, R. A. (2017). *Employee training and development* (7th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

Paulino, G. (2025a). The Black Belt OS: Toward a Universal Structural Law of Human Organization. Black Belt OS™ Collectanea, Article 1. Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17153458

Paulino, G. (2025b). The Microstructure of Organizational Law: Irreducible Steps and Actions within the Nine Processes. Black Belt OS™ Collectanea, Article 2. Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17153590

Paulino, G. (2025c). Mapping the Grammar of Organization: A Supracontextual Specification of the Nine Processes. Black Belt OS™ Collectanea, Article 3. Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17153615

Paulino, G. (2025d). Implementation – Installing Order: The Supracontextual Logic of Implementation in Collective Life. Black Belt OS™ Collectanea, Article 4. Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17153631

Paulino, G. (2025e). Attraction – The Law of Attraction: How Collectives Define Identity, Build Networks, and Capture Attention. Black Belt OS™ Collectanea, Article 6. Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17153281

Van Maanen, J., & Schein, E. H. (1979). Toward a theory of organizational socialization. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 1*, 209–264.

Wright, P. M., & McMahan, G. C. (1992). Theoretical perspectives for strategic human resource management. *Journal of Management,* *18*(2), 295–320. https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639201800205