Constitution Release Notes (v3.0)

Holacracy One

Exquisite Organization™

Purpose of Document

These notes are designed to assist organizations actively running with earlier versions of Holacracy™ to upgrade to version 3.0 of the Holacracy™ Operating System (as embodied in v3.0 of the Holacracy™ Constitution). To better understand v3.0 of the Holacracy™ Constitution, we suggest you also watch the Constitution Walkthrough video posted on www.holacracy.org.

Overview of New Version

Version 3.0 of the Constitution was nearly a complete rewrite from the prior version, and represents the most significant upgrade to date. Despite the magnitude of the change however, much of the revision was to capture clarity that was already taught and conveyed in Holacracy™ trainings and implementations, but hadn't yet been concretely detailed in the Constitution; thus, the actual upgrade path should be relatively straightforward. Further, many of the new additions represent added functionality rather than changes to existing rules, further simplifying an upgrade. The list below highlights changes worthy of attention when making an upgrade; see also the Constitution Walkthrough video for a more thorough overview of the new Constitution.

Summary of Key Changes (v2.x to v3.0)

- **Operational Rules Integrated:** The operational side of Holacracy™ has now been fully integrated into the Constitution, including:

    o Rules covering the responsibilities and authorities of anyone filling a Role, including processing tensions, tracking next-actions, etc. (see Article 1)

    o Rules covering what Circle Members can expect of fellow Circle Members, including the duties of transparency, consideration, etc. (see Article 4)

    o Rules covering Tactical Meetings (see Section 4.6)

- **Facilitator Facilitates Tactical Meetings:** The elected Facilitator now facilitates Tactical Meetings, rather than the Lead Link. This is enabled by the new clarity around operational rules and expectations, which removes the prior need for some heroic leadership by the Lead Link to get through a Tactical Meeting successfully.

- **Individual Action Clarified:** The rules of what constitutes Individual Action and when it is allowed are now more clear and explicitly exclude certain acts from counting as authorized Individual Action (see Section 11.1).

- **Meaning of Scope Clarified:** The meaning of granting a Role or Circle a Scope has been significantly clarified, especially as it relates to limiting the authority of other roles. See Sections 1.8 and 1.10 for details, and the Walkthrough video for an explanation.

- **Circle Member No Longer a Role:** While there is still a term called "Circle Member" defined in the Constitution, it is no longer a "Role". Rather, it is now a special status granted to a human to convey certain rights & responsibilities (thoroughly detailed in Articles 1 and 4), rather than just another Role of the Organization with a handful of Accountabilities. This is more a definitional change than one with a direct impact.

- **Additions to Lead Link Disallowed:** Additions to the Lead Link role are now disallowed by this version of the Constitution, as they push against the differentiation process and core intent of the Holacracy™ practice. See Section 2.3.3 for details.

- **Surrogates for Elected Roles:** There are now rules covering what happens when an Elected Role is unfilled (either because the elected person doesn't show up at a meeting, or because the role itself is vacant) – see Section 2.7.4 for details on who can temporarily fill an unfilled elected role.

- **More Options for Adding/Removing Sub-Circles:** There are now more methods a Circle can use to form or remove Sub-Circles; see Section 2.8 for details.

- **Cross-Links Added:** There is now a new type of link called a "Cross-Link" which can be authorized across parallel circles which are not in a holarchic relationship; see Section 2.9 documenting how this mechanism is authorized and enacted, and the authority such links gain (and don't gain) in the Circle so linked to.

- **Exception to Requiring a Rep Link:** There is now one specific case where a Circle is expressly not allowed to elect a Rep Link: when the Circle is composed entirely of Circle Members appointed via serving as a Lead Link or Cross-Link (a relatively rare special-case, but useful when you need it)

- **Objection Criteria:** The criteria for assessing valid Objections has been slightly clarified and better organized for readability (see Section 3.2.1), and the Facilitator is now required to test for validity upon request from another Circle Member (per Section 3.3.5c). Further, Lead Links and Cross Links are allowed to raise Objections in the target Circle of such link about harm caused in the link's source Circle (per Section 3.2.3).

- **Governance Allowed Outside Meetings:** The overall Governance Process (Article 3) has been reorganized and clarified to allow governance to happen outside of meetings as well (per the terms of Section 3.4).

- **Secretary Interpretation Function Added:** The Secretary now has a major new accountability and authority related to ruling on interpretations of governance output (see Section 3.5); in fact, everyone now has the authority to interpret governance as best they can, but in the event of a conflict, the Secretary's interpretation shall rule (previously, such a conflict would often result in devolving to consensus, or the lead link stepping in heroically with an interpretation; now, there is a clear process for this).

- **Process Breakdown Clarified:** The rules for a Process Breakdown have been cleaned up and clarified slightly (see Section 3.6).

- **Core Roles Updated:** The definitions of the Core Roles have been updated slightly for added clarity (see Appendix A).

- **Election Process Changed:** The the options a Facilitator has for a selecting a nominee to propose during the election process has been limited but clarified; they now must propose the nominee with the most nominations, and have several defined options to choose from in the event of a tie (see Appendix C).

Recommended Upgrade Process:

1. Adopt the new Constitution via whatever mechanism was used to adopt the prior version; send the updated Constitution and summary of key changes to all Partners.

2. Request a Project titled "*Governance & operations of the Circle and its Sub-Circles aligned with new Constitution*" from the Facilitator of each Anchor Circle (i.e. the broadest circle(s) empowered by the Ratifiers to use the Holacracy™ operating system; typically the General Company Circle and, in some organizations, a Partnership Circle). This fits with the Facilitator's Purpose and Accountabilities, and each Facilitator can request the same Project on each Sub-Circle's Facilitator, recursively.

   a. Note: If there is no elected Facilitator for a Circle, the Facilitator's function now defaults to the Secretary, so give this Project to the Secretary instead.

3. Each Facilitator should then review the changes noted above as well as the Circle's current governance, to assess what updates may need to be proposed in light of the new rules, or what other roll-out steps may be required. Pay particular attention to:

   a. Lead Link Additions: If the Circle has added any Accountabilities (or Scopes) to its Lead Link Role, they need to be removed; propose creating a new Role to hold them instead (which may be assigned to the same person, but still must be a separate Role).

   b. Scopes: If the Circle's Roles have any Scopes assigned, be sure the Circle has used Scopes correctly and the broad authority granted by them was intended.

   c. Cross-Links: If the Circle has policies authorizing links across Sub-Circles, you can now replace those detailed policies with a simple authorization to allow a "Cross Link", and use the Constitution's rules instead.

4. Each Facilitator should take over the facilitation of the Circle's Tactical Meetings. To prepare for doing so, the Facilitator is advised to carefully read Articles 1 and 4 of the Constitution, to understand what each Circle Member can expect of others.

5. Each Secretary should review Section 3.5 of the Constitution, covering their new function for interpreting governance on-request.

6. That's it – you're up and running with Holacracy v3.0. Happy tension processing!