

The TameFlow Connection Newsletter

The latest news and ideas about the *TameFlow Approach*

TameFlow Connection 18

Hello Friends of Herbie

Beware of anyone called Tom. I am thinking specifically of: [Tom Cagley](#) and [Tom Gilb](#)! They are best friends... but I feel like [Jerry dealing with two Toms](#).



It is all good, but even the simplest conversation can become a major endeavor! That's how two of my current themes of interest got started.

Conversations with Two Toms

Tom Cagley and Enlightened Self-Interest

Some time ago, presumably during one of Tom Cagley's podcasts where I was a guest, I mentioned that the *TameFlow Approach* relies

heavily on **Enlightened Self-Interest**. In the least newsletter I explained how that is to be understood in the context of *TameFlow*, as a **Pattern** and not as a concept of *ethical philosophy*.

Earlier last week I published and revised what I wrote in the newsletter, as this blog post: [Self-Interest: The Secret Sauce of the TameFlow Approach](#). It was all in reply to Tom's two earlier posts: [Enlightened Self-Interest](#) and [Enlightened Self-Interest and Rational Selfishness; A Guest Essay by Joe Schofield](#).

Well this week, Tom has published two more posts in what appears to be a series: [Enlightened Self-interest: Are Agile Leaders Enlightened?](#) and [Attributes Of An Enlightened-ish Leader](#).

In the first post Tom resorts to the wisdom of the philosopher Immanuel Kant, and expresses the thought that "*Enlightenment is the state in which a person can use their mind without another's guidance.*" That is a central concept that I recognize in people being exposed to the **Mental Models** that we have in *TameFlow*: they become able to understand and make decisions in autonomy.

Tom then reflects on how enlightened self-interest can drive change. He concludes:

Behavior change begins with structural changes to how people are organized and how they are paid/incentivized. Structural changes precede behavioral changes. Does the adoption of agile or lean concepts require enlightenment? While it wouldn't hurt I would rather start by making sure everyone has the right structure and are paid to do the right thing so their rational selfishness kicks in.

While I don't disagree with this conclusion, I would say, to quote the title of one of Dr. E. Goldratt's books, that it is necessary but not sufficient. In order for structural changes to take place, a decision needs to be made; and any decision, no matter what, is taken on the basis of our understanding of the world. That is, on the basis of our *Mental Models*. So we are back to the foundations of the *TameFlow Approach*: Decisions precede any sort of change; and *Mental Models* precede all decisions. There will be no behavioral change, nor structural change, unless someone makes decisions to that end. And the more powerful decisions are those fueled by a genuine sense of self-interest.

Another note about Tom's reflections is that it might seem that the "enlightenment" is something that should concern only the leaders. That is a romantic notion, that I don't share. In the *TameFlow Approach*, as mentioned in my post referenced above, **Enlightened**

Self-Interest is a **Pattern**. As such, it can affect *anybody* in an organization. In fact that is the whole premise of *TameFlow*: that new **Mental Models** will inform the decision making of *anybody* in the organization, taking force off their own self-interest.

Likewise the pattern of **Inspired Leadership** that is central to *TameFlow* is not an exclusive of the "leader" proper. Leadership in *TameFlow* is not a role but a behavioral pattern that emerges through competency in a knowledge domain; thus leadership can be exhibited by *anybody*. In *TameFlow*, leadership is decentralized and distributed. As I wrote in the [Essence of TameFlow](#) booklet, this is guided more by principles of *fellowship* and *covalence* rather than authority, rule and command.

In any case, in his second post Tom examines the notion of "enlightenment" from the specific point of view of leadership. Tom arrives at the interesting conclusion that what really matters is how such leaders behave. He identifies five attributes that distinguish such leaders:

1. Great vision.
2. High levels of emotional intelligence
3. Flexible and Creative
4. Make Effective Decisions
5. Foster Self-Organizing Teams

These five attributes are effectively reflected in many elements of the *TameFlow Approach*. For instance, **Great Vision** maps to the notion of *Purpose* that drives an *Inspired Leader*, as explained in the [Essence of TameFlow](#) booklet. Though **Inspired Leadership** is more powerful than a having a great vision. An *Inspired Leader* is driven by a *Higher Purpose* - which then becomes the *True North* of the **Unity of Purpose** pattern.

As *TameFlow* is adopted, **Emotional Intelligence** actually develop - and not only for those in charge, but for all folks in the organization. For example, the adoption of the **Core Protocols**, as explained by [Richard Kasperowski](#) in the [Campfire Talk 19](#), will make people *share feelings*; feel comfortable to *opt-in/out* of conversations with full *psychological safety*; become comfortable to express what is most important for them individually. It also becomes acceptable to *Ask for Help* (which is another protocol). This builds safety and trust; and builds both individual and collective emotional intelligence.

One of the most powerful *protocols* is **Personal Alignment**. Not only do individuals open up and dare to express what their deeper needs

are, but others learn to listen and become aware of such needs of others.

Listening to each other's needs is the root of the blog post I mentioned above ([Self-Interest: The Secret Sauce of the TameFlow Approach](#)). It explains the paradox of how giving the psychological safety for people to be selfish can actually benefit the whole.

In Chapter 8 "Creating a Shared Vision at the Team Level" of the ["Hyper" book](#), I wrote:

What is recognized here is the "What is in it for me?" factor that is always present in most people's minds – with very, very few exceptions. Recognizing that individual interests are key drivers which override any company interest is the critical insight: by aligning all those individual interests, one creates an alignment culture. [...] every single individual's feelings and goals must be taken into account and aligned to the company objectives.

In replying to a [question](#) by [Minton Brooks](#) on how this combination of *Self-Interest* and *Mental Models* could actually look like in practice, I gave the [example](#) of how understanding the technicalities of **DBR Scheduling** can fulfill an individual's selfish need to have more free time. So the decision to adopt *that* scheduling method is sustained by a selfish-drive, rather than a corporate priority; yet pursuing that scheduling method will benefit the organization as a whole.

The way we create these synergies is via *TameFlow's* **Mental Models** – and those are nothing but the foundations to **Make Effective Decisions**, the fourth attribute listed by Tom Cagley.

As to being **Flexible and Creative**, the mere fact that *TameFlow* is founded on **Patterns** and **Pattern Theory** affords unlimited compositional power to all possible contexts that might evolve; and through the generative nature of patterns, new forms of performance innovation can be created by the *Inspired Leader*.

The last point, to be able to **Foster Self-Organization** is consequential of focusing on the Constraint. The story of Alex Rogo in *The Goal* is almost a documentary about how people self-organize around applying the **Five Focusing Steps** for dealing with the Constraint. The adoption of **Management by Exception** means that teams are granted permission to work on their own accord, while at the same time there's the expectation that issues outside of their *Span of Control* will quickly be escalated.

As you can see from the above, the attributes of "Enlightened-is Leadership" described by Tom Cagley are pursued in a more systematic and collective way with the *TameFlow Approach*. It is the entire system that discovers and enjoys benefits the enlightenment! After all, *TameFlow* is all about hyper-performing *organizations*, not *leaders*.

Tom Gilb and Quantification in TameFlow

As you will read in the *Events and Media* summary below, Tom Gilb was my guest on the [Campfire Talks with Herbie 27](#). Tom is a world class expert on quantification, and also the "grand daddy" of Agile approaches. His "Evolutionary" (EVO) method was around decades before the Agile Manifesto was even conceived of. I was always intrigued by Tom's work, but never took the time to delve into deeper.

The *TameFlow Approach* is based on **Patterns**. I've developed my own ways to use **Pattern Languages** and **Pattern Networks** that have served me in creating the *TameFlow Approach*.

When assisting organizations to undertake their transformations, a Patterns based approach can be very powerful. The technique has been formed not only by **Pattern Theory** but also by Goldratt's *Logical Thinking Process* and *Strategy & Tactics Trees*; and, to a lesser extent, even by the *Objectives & Key Results* method. To have an idea of how these relate, see my webinar with [John Coleman](#) on [OKRs the TameFlow Way](#).

In particular from the *Strategy & Tactics Tree* I valued the notion of clearly articulating what the **Expected Effect** of any activity should be. It is worthwhile to notice the terminology here: we are talking about an "Effect" because by applying the *Logical Thinking Processes* we reason in terms of **Cause and Effect**. So if we decide to do something, we are doing it because we are expecting some consequence; we are expecting to cause an "effect." By being clear about what we are expecting, we are undeniably formulating an hypothesis; and therefore this allows us to progress with **Scientific Method**.

Now, in Chapter 21, **Patterns to Get Started** of [Tame your Work Flow](#) I offer 22 *Patterns* (or more precisely "proto-Patterns", but this distinction is not really relevant here) to help the reader bootstrapping the adoption of the *TameFlow Approach*. For every such "baby step", I give an *Assignment* and express an *Expected Effect*.

In particular I state:

Many of the Patterns will have Expected Effects that are not only observable, but also measurable. In these instances, the Metrics will reveal how much the Pattern resolution is effectively contributing to the overall initiative and improvement objectives.

The whole approach [...] has a very strong focus on such Metrics, and in particular on actionable Metrics that can be used to make decisions - rather than just reporting on a past status.

So there we have it: the connection between **Patterns** and **Metrics**!

And naturally the more the *Expected Effect* can be expressed in terms of quantitative measurable terms, rather than just qualitative observable terms, the more confidence we will have in the effectiveness of the *Pattern*.

(Note: "Confidence" here is a technical term in *Pattern Theory* that expresses how "good" and "reliable" a Pattern is. See the *TameFlow Patterns* draft book for details.)

In the [Campfire Talks with Herbie 27](#) I suggested that Tom Gilb's **Impact Estimation Tables** and **Planguage** could possibly be a good fit for my *Patterns*. To get the discussion started, I proposed to use a **Goal Tree**, and that Tom's quantification techniques could be used to quantify the *Expected Effects* of the tree's **Critical Success Factors** (CSF) or **Necessary Conditions** (NC). In reality, what I was thinking of, was to use them to quantify the *Expected Effects* in my *Patterns* - but didn't want to distract the conversation toward more theoretical elements.

Anyway, that ignited the conversation beyond the actual *Campfire Talk*. Now I am entertaining a fascinating email exchange with Tom to explore these ideas further! If it will lead to fruits, you will know first in future installments of this newsletter. Maybe we will end up describing the end result in terms of *Patterns of Quantification*. Who knows?!

In the meantime, if you want to learn more about Tom's techniques, you can read his book: [Competitive Engineering: A Handbook For Systems Engineering, Requirements Engineering, and Software Engineering Using Planguage](#). That's part of the homework I got - Thank you Tom! :)

Reading

Re-Read Saturday with Tom Cagly

Talking about Tom Cagley again (see what I mean about feeling like [Jerry dealing with two Toms](#)), he posted this weeks' [Re-Read Saturday](#), covering Chapter 15 about **Outcomes, Values and Efforts in PEST Environments** of [Tame your Work Flow](#).

Tom gives a brief overview of what a **MOVE** is, and reflects on its implications for bridging the diverse perspectives that different corporate actors have (stakeholder value, financial throughput, cost and reporting, work package), and states:

The framework improves on most of the portfolio approaches through the recognition of the tension between trying to maximize outcomes and values and while minimizing cost and use of resources (every organization has some limitation of funds so can't do everything).

Tom further correctly highlights the difference between a *target-scope* piece of work (like the MOVE) and *fixed scope*. The target-scope of a MOVE can... well... move! (See the significance of the name there?). While the fixed-scope of waterfallish remembrance is fixed by definition.

Posts from Community Members

The [TameFlow Community](#) members have been posting some interesting articles lately. (And, No! there are no Toms among them! Phew! :-)

- [Act by Priority](#), by [David Hodes](#), is a mini treatise reminding us to know what is most important to act on. David also highlights the importance of knowing how to *measure success* - hence, in my mind, I made a connection with Tom Gilb's work. (Oh, those Toms!)
- [An expert always doubts his/her approach](#), by [Srinivas Garapati](#), who always reminds us of the value of humility and seeking deeper meaning in our endeavors.
- [Agile Risk Management](#), by [Michael Küsters](#), is an interesting overview of how to think about *risk* in an Agile setting. (This is a serious article... I get concerned whenever Michael's posts are not funny... Are you OK Michael? :-)

Events and Media

Upcoming Events

September 23rd, 2020, at 17:00 CEST: *What next for pandemic hit organizations utilizing Lean, Agile, Scrum?* A panel discussion moderated by [Nigel Thurlow](#), former Chief of Agile of Toyota and the co-creator of The Flow System. Panelists will be: [Sonja Blignaut](#), the complexity and Cynefin expert who leads global operations for Dave Snowden's Cognitive Edge; [Jabe Bloom](#) who leads the Global Transformation office at Red Hat; [Andrew Blain](#) creator of the Remote Agility Framework; [Dirk Van Goubergen](#) Europe's leading expert in Lean and Value Stream Design; and last but not least yours very truly. You can register [here](#).

Recent Events

September 15th, 2020, at 20:0 CEST: [Campfire Talks with Herbie 27](#) welcomed quantification expert and agile pioneer [Tom Gilb](#) already mentioned above. (Did I say I feel like [Jerry dealing with two Toms](#)?). Tom gave his views on how to **Quantify Value**. I proposed the idea to use Tom's techniques in support of **Full Kitting**.

That's it for this time. Though I am sure its not the last time I will feel like [Jerry dealing with two Toms](#)! As I said in the opening: beware of anyone called Tom!

Have a great week!

Steve

P.S.

Do you enjoy this newsletter? Spread the word and tell your friends and colleagues to subscribe to this [TameFlow Connection Newsletter](#) - or just forward them a copy of this issue. And invite everyone to watch the [Campfire Talks with Herbie](#) live streams. Or invite them to join the [TameFlow Community](#).



SHARE ON FACEBOOK



SHARE ON TWITTER



FORWARD EMAIL

TameFlow Consulting Limited

Villa Malitah 15, Triq il-Mediterran, San Giljan, Malta

© 2020 TameFlow Consulting Limited.

The "TameFlow" brand and logo are ® Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm Off.

You received this email because you signed up on our website or made a purchase from us.

[Unsubscribe](#)

