

The TameFlow Connection Newsletter

The latest news and ideas about the *TameFlow Approach*

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Hello Friends of Herbie

Here's another installment of the *TameFlow Connection Newsletter*. In the last couple of installments, I've been referring a lot to [Tom Gilb](#) and his ideas on quantification.

It all started after he was my guest in the [Campfire Talks with Herbie 27](#). We've since exchanged a number of emails. In one, Tom was joking about the meaning of a **MOVE** – the *Minimal Outcome-Value Effort*. He gave some funny interpretations, even finding existing acronyms. Like "*Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment*." I never thought that the US election would create interpretation problems with TameFlow!

Anyway, I countered that in Tom's world, the acronym "MOVE" should really stand for **Management of Value Engineering** -- I guess he liked it!

If we now continue developing his ideas of quantification within the *TameFlow Approach* we will end up with a squared acronym: **MOVE²** – **Management of Value Engineering of Minimal Outcome-Value Efforts** -- and that sounds powerful! Let's continue to explore, and see what comes.

(Anyone want to find the cube or the fourth power of the acronym? Let me know!)

Reading

Value Agile, Agile as it Should be

Tom is an extremely prolific writer. It seems there's not a day that passes without discovering some interesting work of his. The latest is this book: [Value Agile, Agile as it Should Be](#). It is an interesting book in

several ways. It starts by dissecting the 4 values and the 12 principles of the Agile Manifesto.

For instance, regarding the first value, Tom comments that "*the Manifesto is dangerously 'narrow-minded' concerning people and interactions.*" He makes similar poignant statements for the rest of the Manifesto. Of course, the expected criticism is that the values and principles are "poorly stated," which we can roughly interpret as not being quantified.

Tom then examines the *Principles of Project Failure* and provides a lot of wisdom. For instance he extends Agile's focus on "customers" and "users" to include "stakeholders" in a much broader sense. (Besides, this is a thought that is completely aligned with what we care about in the *TameFlow Approach*.)

Then Tom presents "*Agile As it should be.*" As expected, the driver will be a **multi-dimensional set of quantifiable variables**, which are completely depended on the stakeholders.

Tom insists that "**all value ideas are also quantifiable and measurable**".

This notion is of utmost interest because that is exactly what we want to do when we start working with our MOVEs (*Minimal Outcome-Value Efforts*) in the *TameFlow Approach*; and is the very reason why I find studying Tom's work so compelling.

The book then continues by describing how to realize value delivery, making deeper connections to Tom's own **Planguage** and other tools.

All in all, this is a worthwhile addition to the *TameFlow* references; and I am definitively look forward to tighten the connection with Tom's quantification techniques; and possibly introduce them in a more systematic way into the *TameFlow Approach*. Yes, then we will have squared all the MOVEs!

Post's from Community Members

Here are some of the recent contributions by our [TameFlow Community](#) members:

- [Srinivas Garapati](#), has published a wonderful little essay: [Silos Only Exists in The Mind, Not in Any Typical Organizational Structures](#). He really captures what is the core of the *TameFlow Approach*: most of the limitations we have in our businesses are due to the limitations of our **Mental Models**. And that's why *Mental Models*

are first-order concepts in the *TameFlow Approach*. I'm ecstatic to see that the idea is being picked up as Srinivas does!

- [David Hodes](#) has a treasure trove of articles on his site. One that is relevant when it comes to working with *Mental Models* is this one: [The horns of a dilemma](#). Why? Because it gives a quick introduction to the **Evaporating Cloud** (EC) technique of the *Logical Thinking Process*. When *my* mental models clash with *your* mental models, how can we make sure we get back on the same page? The EC is one of the most effective tools we can resort to, to resolve conflicts. And resolving conflicts is an important element when we are striving to build a **Unity of Purpose** and a **Community of Trust**. The nice thing with David's post is that he also explains how to expose the underlying assumptions that we often are not able or willing to express when we are in a situation of conflict loaded with dispute and animosity. This is a technique that all *TameFlow Practitioners* should get familiar with and learn to master and apply.

Re-Read Saturday with Tom Cagley

Thomas "Tom" Cagley Jr. - yes, the other Tom! and the host of the *Software Process and Measurement Cast* - posted a new episode of his [Re-Read Saturday](#), covering Chapter 16, *Introduction to Execution Management Signals*, of my [Tame your Work Flow](#).

One thoughtful interpretation of what I explain in that chapter, is represented by Tom in these words: *"..when managers (of all levels) feel cut-off or dis-empowered they tend to respond with micromanagement and command and control techniques until they feel safe again"*. Tom is actually highlighting how the very habits of Agile often cause those management behaviors that Agile intends to fight. In other words, we are facing a *vicious circle*. Unfortunately most Agile practitioners and proponents are not very much aware of their being concomitant causes of the "Command and Control" behaviors they so much abhor.

Another relevant observation by Tom is this: *" Focusing on the execution of the work requires an appropriate mechanism that can signal trouble coming that is information-based rather than gut-based*. This captures on salient aspect of the *TameFlow Approach*: we strive to be data-driven as much as possible. And this also highlights another irrational contradiction of Agile proponents. Not only do they prefer "gut feeling" over scientific means; but they often have an *anti-metric* stance, often justified by the fear that metrics will be used by

managers to "abuse" of the engineering teams. Again, the anti-management sentiments creep in. Though one has to wonder how they can claim to be based on empiricism, inspection and adaptation, when they exhibit this sort of hypersensitivity against the use of metrics! Is there anything that is closer to the Scientific Method than the use of numbers?

Events

Upcoming Events

While I have been running the *Campfire Talks with Herbie* on a regular weekly schedule for the last few months, other commitments require me to reduce this frequency. I will still host the *Campfires Talks with Herbie* and participate in other events. Here's a tentative schedule of the upcoming event. The exact dates and times will be reconfirmed once we get closer to the actual dates. If you want to make sure you don't miss any *Campfire Talks with Herbie*, subscribe to its [notification list](#). And if you missed some of the past episodes, you can catch up with the [full playlist](#) of all recorded episodes.

October 20th, 2020 at 20:00 CEST *Campfire Talks with Herbie 28*.

The guests will be Patrick Steyaert and Arlette Verkammen of Okaloo Flowlabs; and we will talk about *Flow Simulations* and *Experiential Learning*.

November 4th, 2020 at 23:00 CET I will be the guest on Agile Maine's webinar on "*How to create a high-performance culture*" hosted by [Miljan Bajic](#).

November 10th, 2020 at 20:00 CET, at 13:00 CET *Campfire Talks with Herbie 28*. The guest Peter Merel. Of course we will talk about his *XSCALE* and see how it compares to the *TameFlow Approach*.

November 23rd-24th, 2020 I will have a talk at the **Critical Chain Project Management Virtual Conference 2020** organized by the TOCICO. I still have to prepare the presentation, but it will be targeted at *traditional* project managers that might only have a summary understanding of CCPM and are trying to "uncover better ways" to do their job. Of course, that will be via the *TameFlow Approach*.

Recent Events

September 23rd, 2020 I was on a panel discussing: *What next for pandemic hit organizations utilizing Lean, Agile, Scrum?* The discussion was moderated by [Nigel Thurlow](#), former Chief of Agile of

Toyota and the co-creator of The Flow System. Other panelists were: [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. A recording of the event should be made available soon; and I will announce it here as soon as that happens.

Blockchain

As you probably know, in addition to being obsessed by helping organizations to improve their performance, I am also equally busy with blockchain technologies. Usually I won't bring over blockchain related news to this newsletter, if not rarely. However, this time, just for fun... I noticed there is a new blockchain project that is launching. It is called the **Flow Blockchain**. (If you're curious, you can check the [news post](#) or their [onflow.org](#) site.) I still don't have a clue of whether or not it is worthy of attention, but that name alone just made me smile. (I guess that now I will have no choice but to make my own **TameFlow Blockchain!** :)

That's it for this time. And let's square all the MOVES!

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](#).



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