TameFlow Connection 26

Hello Friends of Herbie!

Here are my thoughts of this week.

Re-Read Saturday: the Chequered Flag is in Sight!

[Tom Cagley](), the host of the *Software Process and Measurement Cast*, in his weekly [Re-Read Saturday](), the chapter by chapter review of [Tame your Work Flow]() book, has finally arrived to the last Chapter 21, *Patterns to Get Started* and the final *Epilogue, It is Never "Done!"*.

Tom observes: '*One of the important aspects of the chapter is the insistence that for each pattern the affected results need to be "detected categorically." Never assume results magically happen. The patterns described are not "fire and forget"; the intent is that the reader uses one pattern at a time, confirms the results, and then moves on to another.*'

And shortly after: '*[...] if you can't prove that a step worked don't move forward and layer on more changes.*'

His observations highlight one of the most important aspects of what I presented in Chapter 21: that of **Validated Progress** - and that is something that comes out of combining **Patterns** with ideas from Goldratt's **Strategy & Tactics Trees**.

Next week, Tom promises to reflect on how the re-read has changed his thoughts on the *TameFlow Approach*. Can't wait to read that!

Cooks and Chefs

A couple of weeks' ago I was [Miljan Bajic]()'s guest on **Agile Maine**'s webinar **This is an Agile Heresy Manifesto**. If you missed it, you can see it on the [Youtube recording](). Miljan also published this post: [Cooks

. The distinction between "cooks" and "chefs" is a very relevant one.

One reason that, for a very long time, I refrained from setting up a training programme for the *TameFlow Approach* was exactly this: despite the fact that every other approach promotes cookie-cutter recipes, I was always convinced that it was not possible to formalize what I typically did on the ground.

As I wrote in that Chapter 21 that Tom commented about (see above): *'It is not possible to institutionalize a cookbook of recipes that will magically transform a sluggish organization into an outstanding one. Instead, by reasoning in terms of generative and non-prescriptive Patterns, we will have adequate direction and sufficient flexibility to make them applicable to our own particular context.'* **Patterns** are the key to this kind of thinking: they are contextual, non-prescriptive, and generative.

Yet, the market demands recipes.

Patterns can provide us with the language - a **Pattern Language** - to describe what we observe in an existing organization. *Patterns* can also be used to design and create new solutions, just like a Chef that combines new ingredients or old ingredients in novel ways creates new dishes. Effectively, *Patterns* can be used to describe the *ingredients*; but we would still need a "Chef" to combine them into something tasty.

I struggled to figure out how to make the approach accessible to the "cooks" of this world. The solution to this conundrum came by studying what Dr. Goldratt did when moving from **Current Reality Trees** (CRT) - and all other trees of the **Thinking Processes** (see the notes to the [Campfire No. 10](#) for more on the *Thinking Process*) - to the **Strategy & Tactics Trees** (S&T Trees). While the CRTs were custom built for the specific **Context** (notice that! a "Context" is what we look for when thinking in *Patterns*) that captured the situation of a specific business, the *S&T Trees* resulted from factoring out the *common problems* that all businesses *in a given industry sector* had.

In other words *S&T Trees* are representative of *common* problems in a given industry.

The *S&T Trees* also highlight the necessity of proceeding with *Validated Progress*, as each element in a *S&T Tree* clearly spells out what the **Expected Effects** are for implementing whatever was described by the node..

That's when it struck me that the same approach could be employed even when thinking in terms of *Patterns*.

The trick was simply to identify **Common Contexts** that all players within a given industry would share - precisely in virtue of the fact that they were in the same industry. Obviously the first industry I considered

was the one from which the *TameFlow Approach* originated: Software Engineering.

Thus, by developing the *TameFlow Pattern Language* around the common contexts of all businesses in an industry, and then adding the idea that any **Pattern Resolution** is expected to produce a new, well defined *Context* - in other words there is and *Expected Effect* to be anticipated as consequence of a positive *Pattern Resolution* - we come to what is outlined in that Chapter 21.

The magic here is that even though the thinking behind all of this is solidly grounded on *Patterns*, given that they are *Patterns* applicable to an entire industry sector, then to all the cooks in that industry it will seem as if we have given them the much desired recipes. In reality they are *Patterns* in an *industry specific Pattern language*; and the validation of the *Expected Effects* are simply the validation of the traversal through well defined statements ("sentences") in a transformational narrative expressed in terms of those *Patterns*.

Now you know one of the best kept secrets of the *TameFlow Approach*!

Clarke "The Bottleneck Guy" Ching presents BoB

[Clake "The Bottleneck Guy" Ching](#) gave the first of a series of webcasts about **Corkscrew Thinking**. His way to introduce Goldratt's **Evaporating Cloud**, by rotating the diagram by 90 degrees and introducing us to **BoB** is just brilliant. Who is BoB? And why is it written "BoB" (with a second capital B) and not "Bob"?... well look at this [recording](#) to find out. I think you will concur that Clarke is an outstanding story teller and teacher.

Past Events

On November 10th, my guest on the [Campfire Talks with Herbie 29](#), was [Peter Merel](#). We talked about his *XSCALE* method and how it compares to the *TameFlow Approach*. The conclusion was that the two approaches are compatible and synergistic; and Peter will invite me back to some future *XSCALE* event that he will organize. I am looking forward to that.

Besides, if you are curious about *XSCALE*, you might want to take a look at this: [XSCALE: The Fractal Organization](#). As you will see, there are shared elements with the *Theory of Constraints* and the *TameFlow Approach*.

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for the following upcoming events.

November 17th-21st, 2020
[Daniel Doiron](#) and [Anna Sikorska](#) will present some leading edge TameFlow content at this year's virtual edition of the **Agile Tour Montréal**. One of the world's largest Agile Tour events, it is a bilingual event with French and English content. You can book tickets [here](#) and check the full programme [here](#). Daniel and Anna will be speaking at these times:

- **November 17th, 2020** at **13:00 EST**: Daniel Doiron on **Flow Efficiency Kanban Boards** (English).
- **November 20th, 2020** at **10:30 EST**: Daniel Doiron on **Little's Law and Throughput Accounting** (French).
- **November 21st, 2020** at **15:00 EST** Daniel Doiron and Anna Sikorksa on **Timeboxing and Science - Not compatible** (French).

November 18th, 2020 at 11:00 CET

Our very [Mark Jørgensen Chaudhry](#) will be on a discussion panel on [The Future of Organisational Transformation](#) webcast. I suspect Mark will say something about the *TameFlow Approach* there... so let's all join there and support Mark!

November 23rd-24th, 2020
I will have a talk at the **Critical Chain Project Management Virtual Conference 2020** organized by the TOCICO. The conference 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. Naturally, one such better way will be via the *TameFlow Approach*. For more information, see the new conference website: [Critical Chain 2020](#).

November 24th, 2020 at **15:00 CET**: my talk on **Breakthroughs in managing knowledge-work**. I will touch on the history of the *TameFlow Approach*, how to use *Flow Time Distributions*, *Ageing Charts*, *MOVEs*, *Little's Law*, *Fever Charts* and *Bubble Fever Charts*. All in just 30 minutes, which will then be followed by an interactive Q&A session. The presentation is geared particularly to "conventional" project managers to whom I will introduce the more "agile" (Haha!) ways afforded by the *TameFlow Approach*.

December 3rd, 2020 at 20:00 CET
We will have the first ever **Campfire Panel Discussion** event on the *Campfire Talks with Herbie 30*. The panel will be moderated by our very own [Mark Jørgensen Chaudhry](#) a.k.a "Question Mark" because

when he is around, no question will be left unasked! The topic will be: **Ready now for building the future-proof organization**. We will explore the future of organizations, touching on themes like: resilience, sustainability, diversity, social responsibility, power structures, hierarchies, networks, complexity, etc. and who knows how many other lines of thought will be developed. In addition to myself, the panel will include these great professionals:

- [Niels Pflaeging](#), a leadership philosopher, management exorcist, speaker, author, advisor. Founder at BetaCodex Network. Thanks to Niels: the idea of this panel was developed with his input!
- [Pamela Dukes OLY](#), an enterprise agile coach & trainer, and a Hall of Fame Olympic athlete who is focused on helping teams through servant leadership and self-reliance strategies;
- [Ritu Ward, FACHE](#), a Healthcare executive with success delivering quality, growth, and strategy while leading high performing teams;
- and last, but not least, [Nigel Thurlow](#), former Chief of Agile of Toyota and the co-creator of The Flow System.

To make sure you don't miss this or any forthcoming *Campfire Talks with Herbie* events, subscribe to the [Campfire Events Notification List](#), and you will receive the broadcast links ahead of the event.

That's it for this time.

Have a great week!

Steve

P.S.

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