

ENABLING
FLUID
ORGANISATIONS

Sonja Blignaut



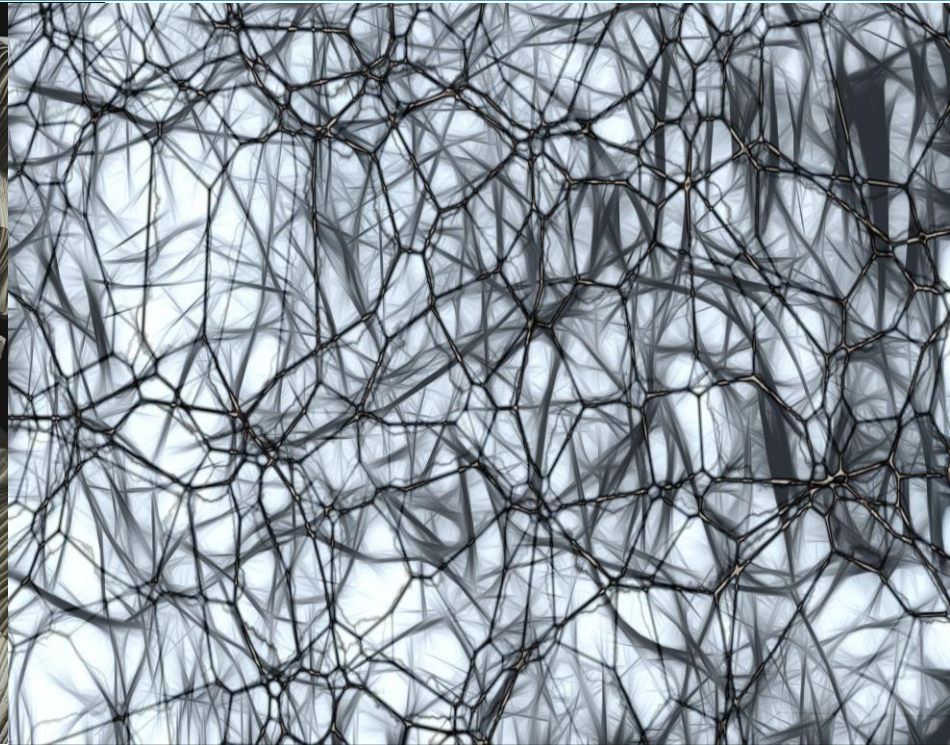
@sonjabl



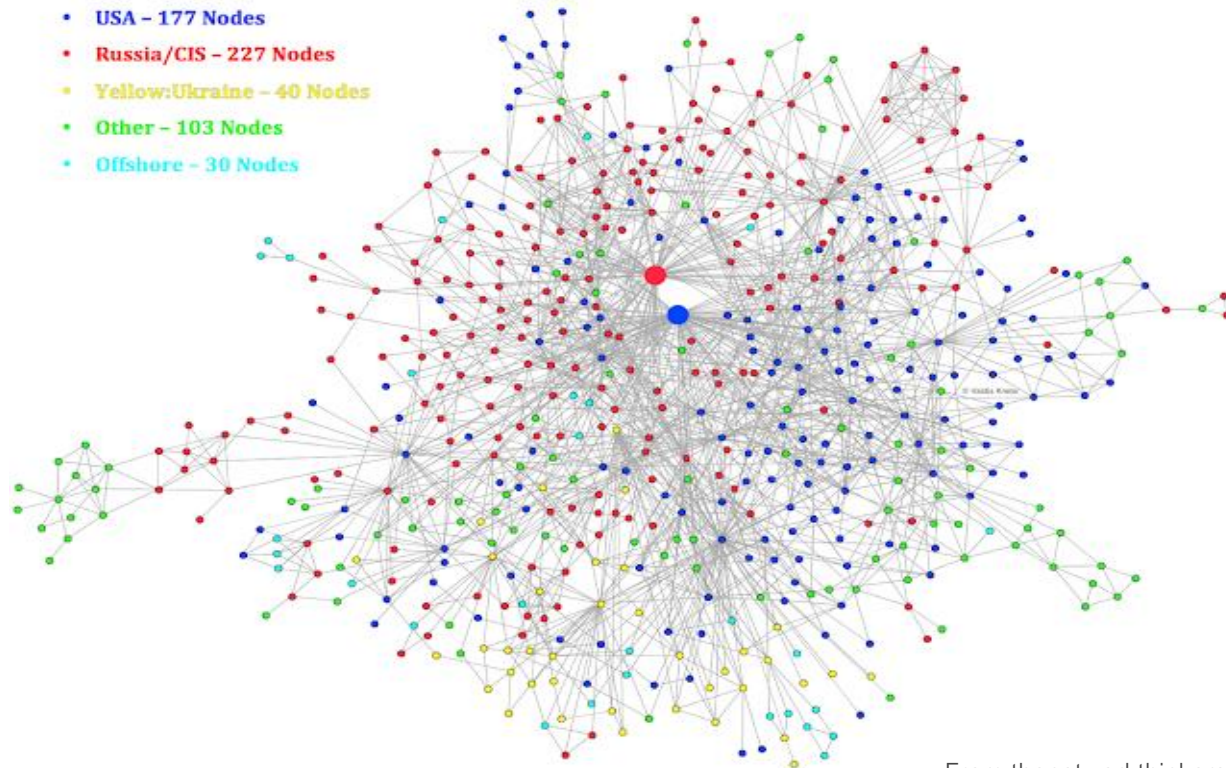
BUSINESSILLUSTRATOR.COM



comPLICated = enfolded
comPLEX = entangled



The more connected, the more COMPLEX



“We have outsourced our relationship with uncertainty to certainty merchants”

~ Diego Espinosa

Malmo

Friday

17 January

15

8°

5

18-00

6°

0.1-1.0 mm

4

Hourly

Saturday

18 January

00-06

5°

0.6-1.2 mm

4

06-12

7°

5

12-18

7°

0.0-0.6 mm

7

18-00

6°

5

Hourly

Sunday

19 January

00-06

4°

4

06-12

3°

3

12-18

6°

4

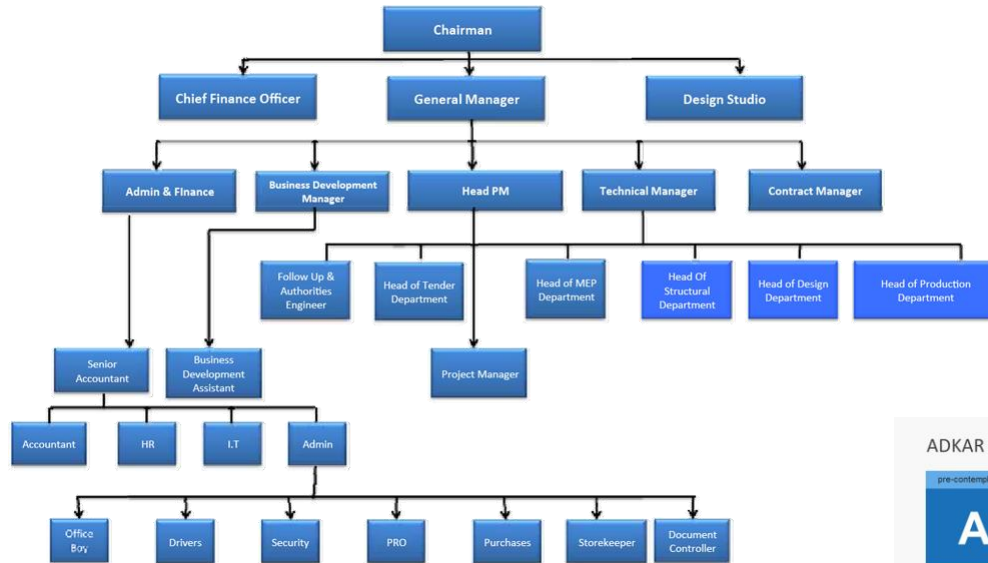
18-00

5°

3



The problem: we are perfectly optimized for a context that is fast disappearing



ADKAR Change Management PowerPoint Templates

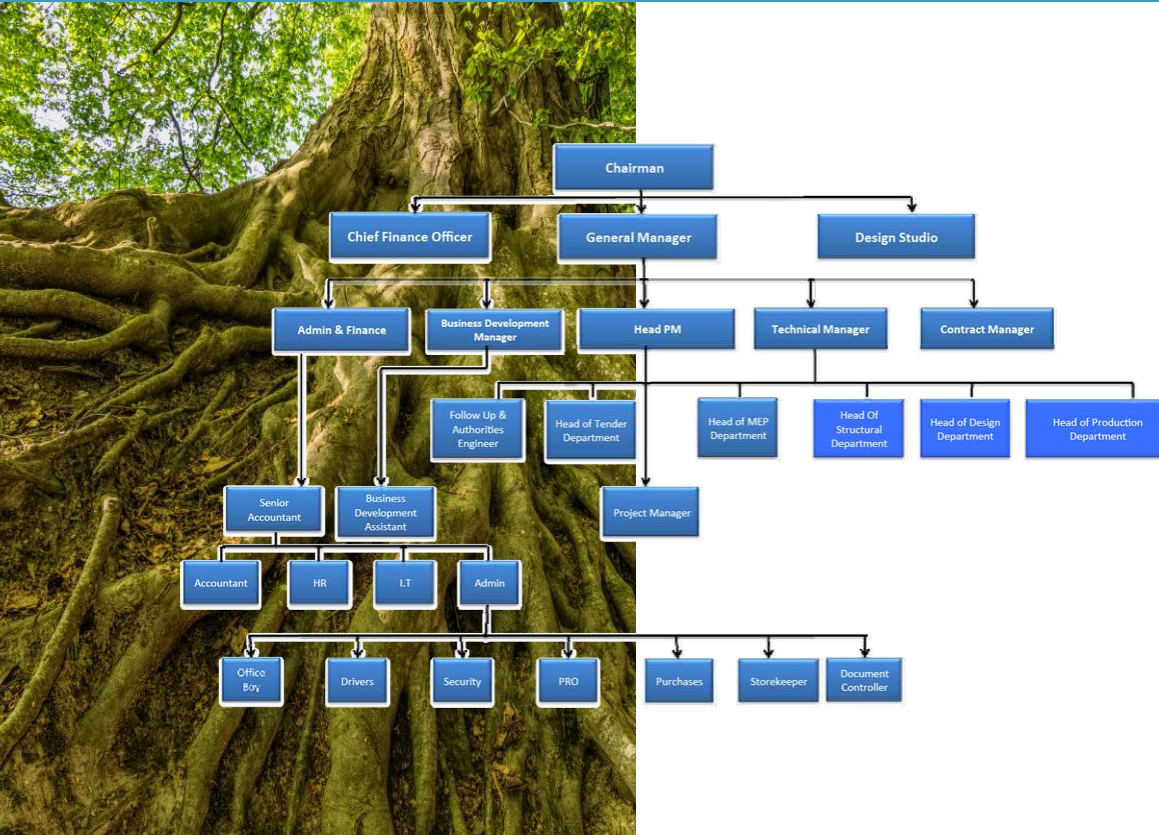


We need new lenses to help us see differently



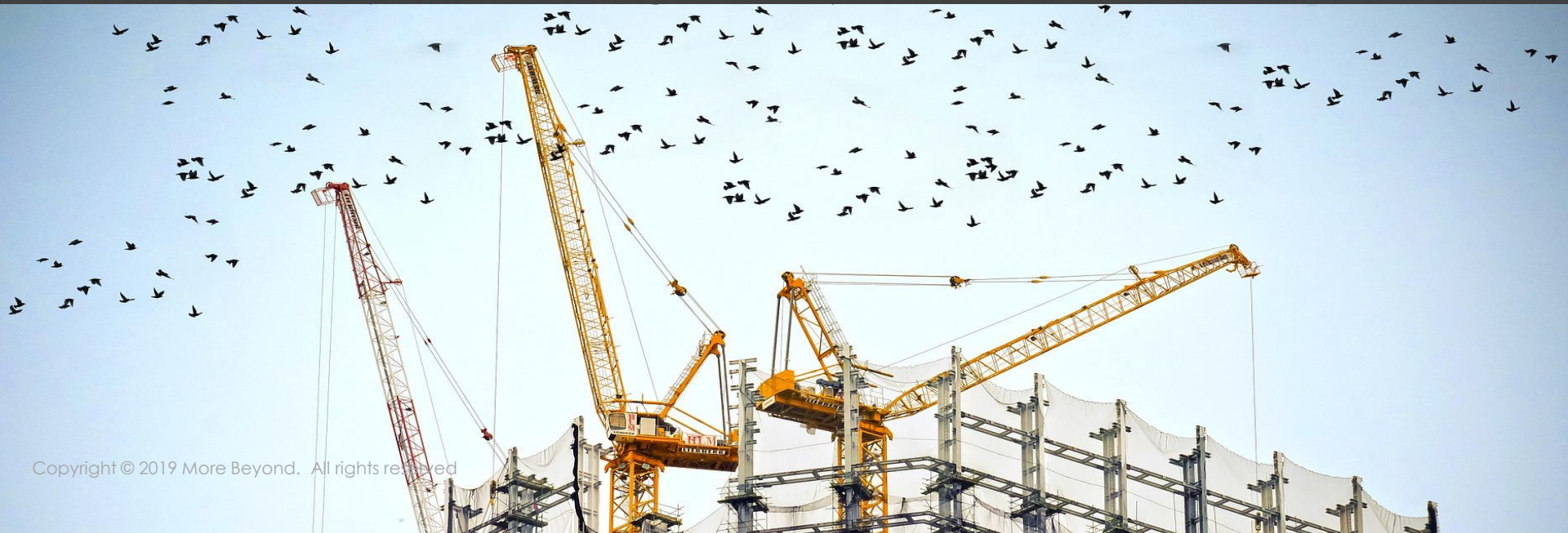


What if we see organisations as FLOW SYSTEMS?



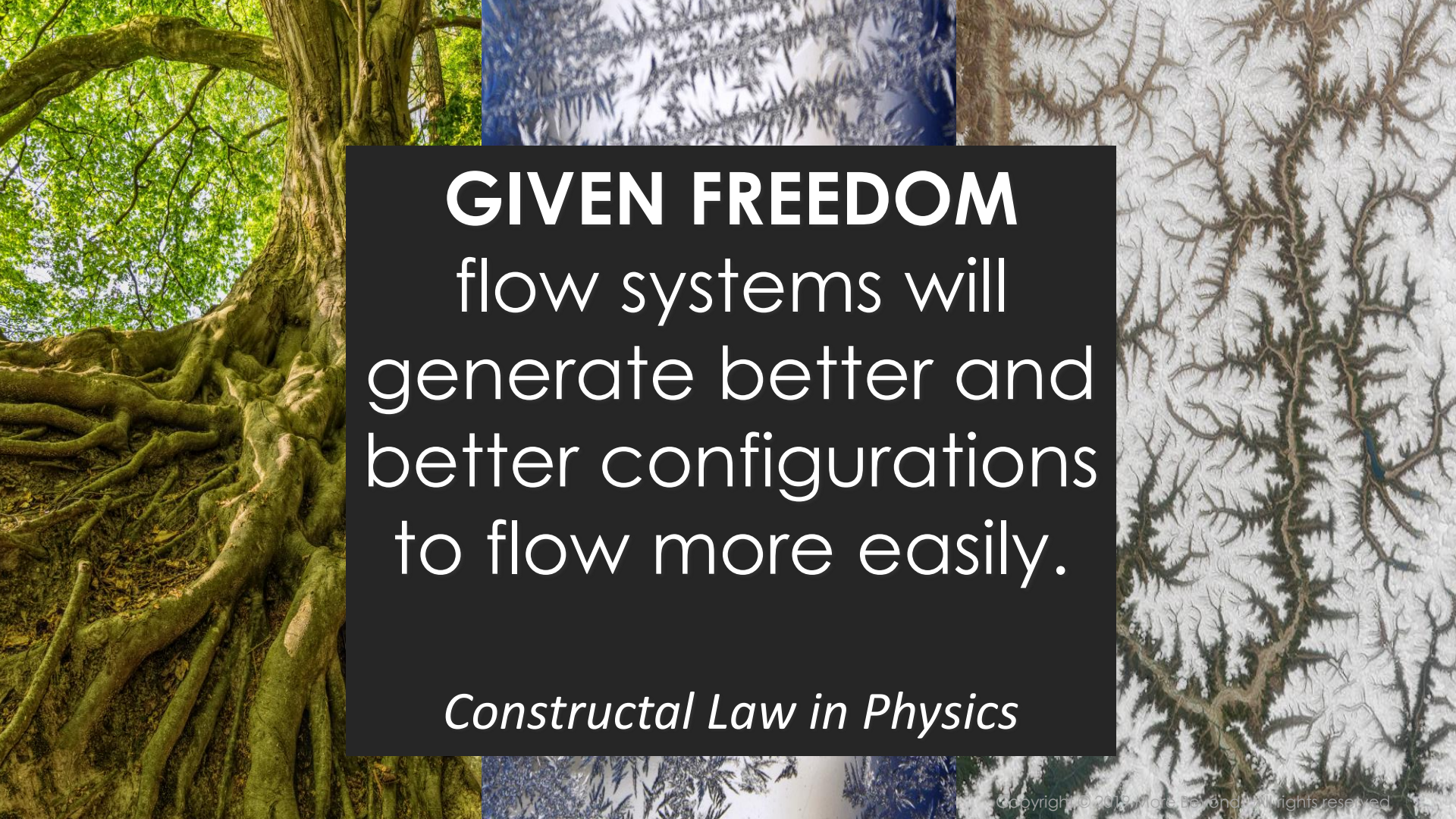
... from
complicated
machines to
dynamically
flowing
streams.

A machine has specific linear inflows & outflows.
In an organization (like an organism or ecosystem)
EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IS A FLOW ...





The
CONSTRAINTS
we put in place
determine what
can flow and
how.



GIVEN FREEDOM
flow systems will
generate better and
better configurations
to flow more easily.

Constructal Law in Physics

The main role of management is to manage constraints, not BE constraints



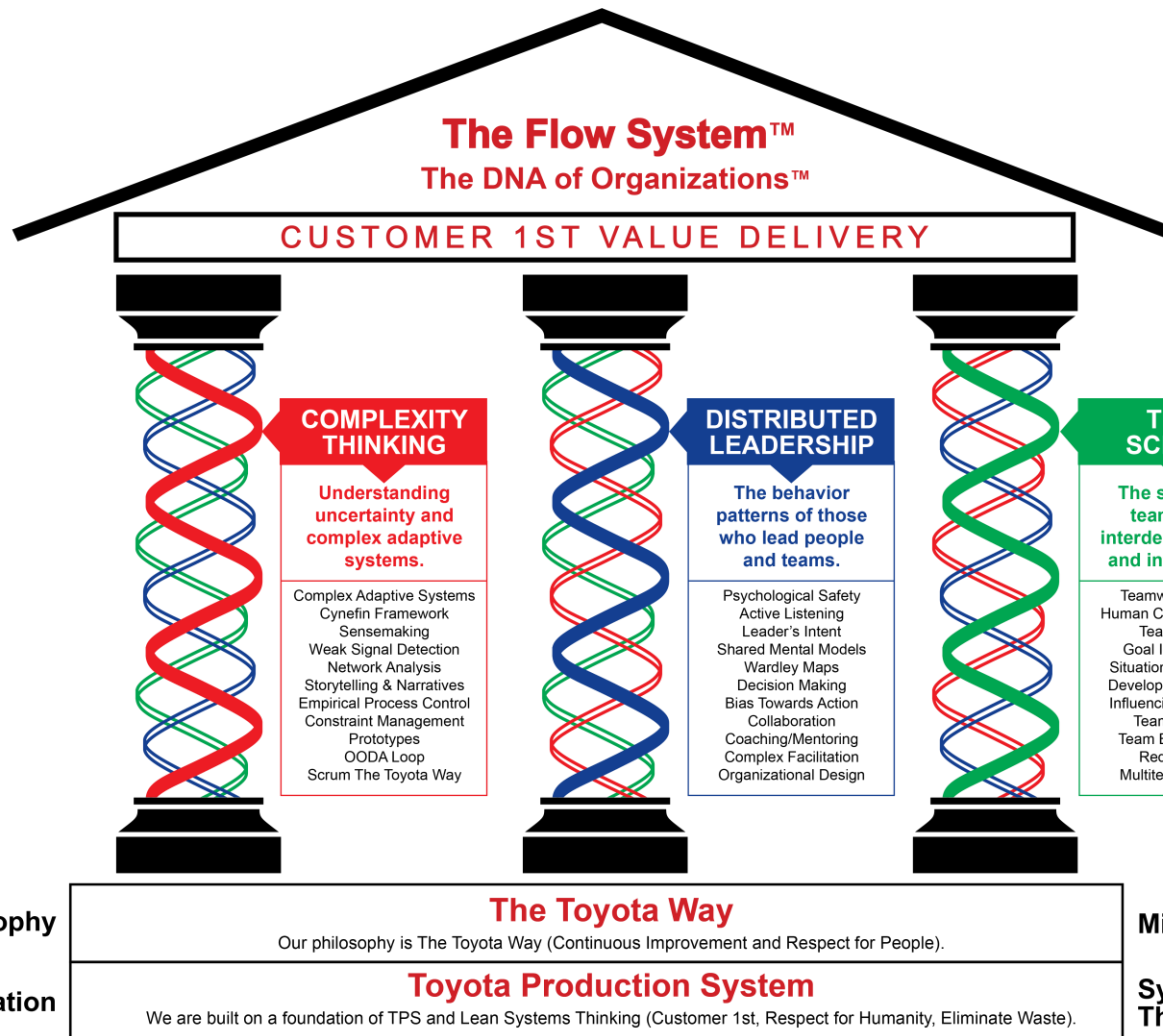


Nigel Thurlow
Founder, The Flow Consortium



“Achieving a state of flow occurs when organizations produce outcomes in which their constraints (e.g., structure, processes, environmental effects) are shaped in a way that enable employees to concentrate on their own interactions among one another and the customer.

FLOW ULTIMATELY RESULTS IN
EMPLOYEES CONCENTRATING ON
THE ACT OF DOING RATHER THAN
COMBATTING OR SUCCUMBING
TO ORGANIZATIONAL FRICTION.”



So I leave you with **QUESTIONS**, not answers



- Beyond obvious flows, do you know **what needs to flow and how?**
- **Do we think about flow broadly enough** or does a narrow focus on linear tangible flows undermine key intangible ones? Have we even considered the intangible (and non-linear) flows that permeate modern organisations?
- Do we allow enough **difference and tension** to enable flow/change (or do we focus on alignment and eliminating tension)?
- Do rigid **constraints** block or disable flow instead of enabling it (even non-linear ones)? Or does a lack of constraint cause key flows to dissipate?
- Do the constraints you have in place create enough containment and cohesion to create a **safety?**



THANK YOU

**FANCY A THINKING PARTNER TO HELP MAKE SENSE OF
YOUR COMPLEX FLOW LANDSCAPE? CONTACT ME FOR
ONE FREE EXPLORATORY SESSION.**

sonja@morebeyond.co.za

follow me on Twitter: @sonjabl