

Okaloa Flowlab – 5 versions

Scaling up agile work is not easy. Collaborating teams often do this from different perspectives with correspondingly limited results.

But it can be done. Gamification helps people to get actively involved and achieve results quickly. The workshop stimulates the conversation, the simulation facilitates a more objective conversation. After the simulation participants are more willing to listen to each other and adapt their own way of working.

The set of Flowlab simulations cover the entire organization. From the humble but impactful Teamflow to the End-to-end flow. From optimizing teams, to aligning expectations and workload in entire chains. The simulations provide a flow-boost throughout the entire organization.



Each simulation consists of two rounds, which together form a learning cycle. Each round consists of a number of 'days' in which perform people. In the first round participants experience the bad weather scenario. Without exception, participants recognize the scenario from their own work context.

In the second round participants experiment with improvements. The experiments are based on the participant's own evaluation and agile principles.

The innovative strength of the Okaloa Flowlab simulations is that they can simulate specific challenges. In a simple but powerful way, participants experience their own process limitations and the power of agile principles in defining improvements. 30% improvements in lead times and delivery-sizes are no exception.

- **Okaloa Flowlab Teamflow simulation** (in-person and virtual version):

Through simulating a conventional work environment that reflects a mechanistic mindset characterized by a focus on resource efficiency, command and control and specialist workers, participants experience which roadblocks need to be overcome. As the team is taking its first baby steps into agile, they will experiment (in 2 or 3 rounds) with policies and practices (e.g. pull of work, cadences, limiting WIP) that enable collaboration, get the team into flow, and allow an agile mindset to emerge. Weaved into the simulations they will discover the fundamental difference between resource efficiency and flow efficiency.

- **Okaloa Flowlab Workflow simulation** (in-person and virtual version):

In most organizations work is handed over from one specialist role to another, following a certain sequence, also known as a workflow. Workflow cannot be ignored as it is an important part of how work is organized in most organizations, even including agile organizations. Participants will experience workflow (loopbacks) and dependencies. With this simulation we are simulating a typical workflow as defined in e.g. Jira or any other tracking system, whereby work goes from one person to another, and back in case of loopbacks. The Workflow simulation shows what Kanban really is about – differentiating between proto-Kanban and Kanban as well as teaching how to deal with back-flow.

- **Okaloa Flowlab Competence simulation** (in-person and virtual version):

What happens when you have specialist workers involved when delivering value to the customer? When you rely on specialist workers, you automatically create dependencies, i.e. key man dependencies, and dependencies between work items. The purpose of this simulation is to experience bottlenecks as a result of assigning work to the specialist. This simulation is relevant when you want to introduce the concept of staff liquidity. It can be used in environments where methods like e.g. Kanban and Scrum are applied.

- **Okaloa Flowlab Multi-team simulation** (in-person and virtual version):

This simulation allows an experience of flow and collaboration across multiple teams that need to work together to deliver value. Individual teams can be competence, component or technology teams each with their own area of specialization. They could even be feature teams (full-stack teams) to the extent that each feature team focusses on its own feature set (e.g. check-out, ...). The simulation demonstrates multi-tiered flow and collaboration across 2 different levels: 1) the request level and 2) work item level. One of the elements of this simulation is to experience bottlenecks in a multi-team context and the effects of this on delivering value. This simulation is relevant in combination with methods that address scaling.

- **Okaloa Flowlab Scaling across the Value Stream / end-to-end workflow** (virtual only)

Many organisations struggle with the phenomena: performance versus cost versus quality and time pressure. Trying to validate all assumptions upfront will in the end lead to bad quality because at a certain point you will be faced with pressure to deliver and then suddenly the item is rushed through the system. Not agreeing on requirements might lead to high risk of failure further in the value stream. But how to find turning point, moment that you know you are over assessing. The urge to get everything cleared out makes that in the end we feel time pressure and we deliver bad

quality. In this simulation participants experience the end-to-end flow along a value creation process, from customer request to delivery to the customer. It addresses dealing with assumptions of the upstream, hand-offs and loopbacks.

Results:

Teamflow: Teams that want to get more out of Agile.

- shorter turnaround times
- higher throughput
- teams understand Agile principles
- understand why, where, which agile practices work score better in flow, collaboration and learning higher employee satisfaction

Workflow: Flow and coordination between cooperating teams in a chain.

- better cooperating teams
- more and better performance, fewer bottlenecks (bottlenecks)
- less rework
- less frustration between teams more flexibility in commitments frequent integration
- improved cooperation.

Competency Flow: Staff liquidity and knowledge building.

- greater flexibility employability of people (staff liquidity) reduced dependencies on key people
- less knowledge bottlenecks
- shorter turnaround times
- higher throughput
- less re-work
- less frustration between teams better performing teams institutionalized knowledge building.

Multi-team Flow: Flow and coordination between teams working in parallel.

- aligned teams that deliver combined products or services in a regular cadence
- balanced workload in the chain
- more flexibility in commitments
- frequent integration improved cooperation.

End-to-end flow: Align upstream and downstream

- balanced workload between upstream and downstream teams continuous delivery of products and services
- business agility
- more flexibility in commitments
- frequent integration improved cooperation.