

Webinar

Finishing More Projects on Time

How to mix Agile, Lean, and the Theory of Constraints



Paris, Thursday 4th of September 2025

Version 1.0

Agenda

- Introduction
- A few words about Agile and common difficulties
- The Theory of Constraints' point of view
- How to mix Agile and TOC: Case studies
- Conclusion

- Questions & Answers

- Appendix





Organization of the webinar

- Presentation: 30 minutes.
- Questions & Answers: 15 minutes.
- Use the "Q. and A." feature to ask questions
- Slides available at the end of the webinar at www.marris-consulting.com
- The webinar is presented by Etienne Lecerf, assisted by a moderator whose role is to ensure the smooth running of this webinar.

Etienne Lecerf, manager at Marris Consulting

- Consultant at Marris Consulting since 2015
- I have led transformation projects in both **project-driven** and **manufacturing environments**:
 - New product development
 - Engineer-to-order projects
 - Industrial CAPEX projects
 - Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul
 - IT projects
- My work spans a wide range of **industries** such as aerospace, oil & gas, medical devices, software development and IT integration, Defence, rail transport, mining, and more...
- In **France** and **internationally**: including Spain, U.S.A., Poland, Mexico, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Germany, and Burkina Faso, Saudi Arabia, ...
- Graduate in mechanical and industrial engineering from Arts et Métiers ParisTech





Marris Consulting, specialized in **operational excellence** and **project management**

- Founded in **2005** in Paris, by Philip Marris,
- Around half of our assignments are in **project management**.
- Over 40 conferences and training sessions each year on **industrial performance, Theory of Constraints, Critical Chain, Lean**, etc.
- Over **500 videos** of customer testimonials, educational presentations, expert interviews, etc.
- Discover our **Critical Chain** Project Management **online training**.



Philip Marris



We thank them for their trust



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Companies usually “implement” Agile like this to deliver faster and better


We usually find that the following measures have been implemented in **Software Teams**

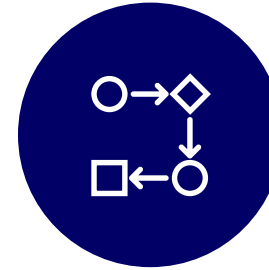
 Often

 Sometimes







People

-  Product Owner
-  Scrum masters
-  Small development teams
-  Training and certifications
-  Internal Agile communities








Process

-  Frameworks (Scrum, SAFe, LeSS)
-  Agile ceremonies: daily stand-ups, sprint planning, reviews, retrospectives
-  Introduce backlogs
-  Standardize metrics (velocity, ...)



Tools

-  Digital platforms (Jira, Azure Devops)
-  Provide digital whiteboards
-  Automate workflows
-  Configure dashboards for visibility
-  Integrate Agile tools with enterprise systems



Reminder: the idea of Agile is to apply a few principles

Area	The 12 Agile Principles
Customer Collaboration & Responding to Change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Satisfy Customers: Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software 2 Accept change: Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer's competitive advantage. 3 Small iterations: Deliver working software frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale. 4 Business collaboration: Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project
Individuals and interactions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Performers: Build projects around motivated individuals; give them the environment and support their need, and trust them to get the job done 6 Face-to-face: The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation. 7 Architecture: The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams 8 Learning: At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly
Working Software	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9 Work and test: Working software is the primary measure of progress 10 Simplicity: The art of maximizing the amount of work not done is essential 11 Sustainable: Agile processes promote sustainable development; sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely 12 Technical Excellence: Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility



And these principles are highly similar to Lean/TPS, where they originated

Area	The 12 Agile Principles	Lean
Customer Collaboration & Responding to Change	1 Satisfy Customers: Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software	Pull
	2 Accept change: Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer’s competitive advantage.	JIT
	3 Small batch: Deliver working software frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale.	One-piece flow
	4 Business collaboration: Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project	Genchi Genbutsu
Individuals and interactions	5 Performers: Build projects around motivated individuals; give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done	Respect for People
	6 Face-to-face: The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation.	Visual Management
	7 Architecture: The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams	Kaizen circles
	8 Learning: At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly	Hansei
Working Software	9 Work and test: Working software is the primary measure of progress	Quality & Jidoka
	10 Simplicity: The art of maximizing the amount of work not done—is essential	Eliminate waste (Muda)
	11 Sustainable: Agile processes promote sustainable development; sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely	Remove overburden (Muri)
	12 Technical Excellence: Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility	Quality at Source



But managers find it difficult to know where to start in complex organisations...

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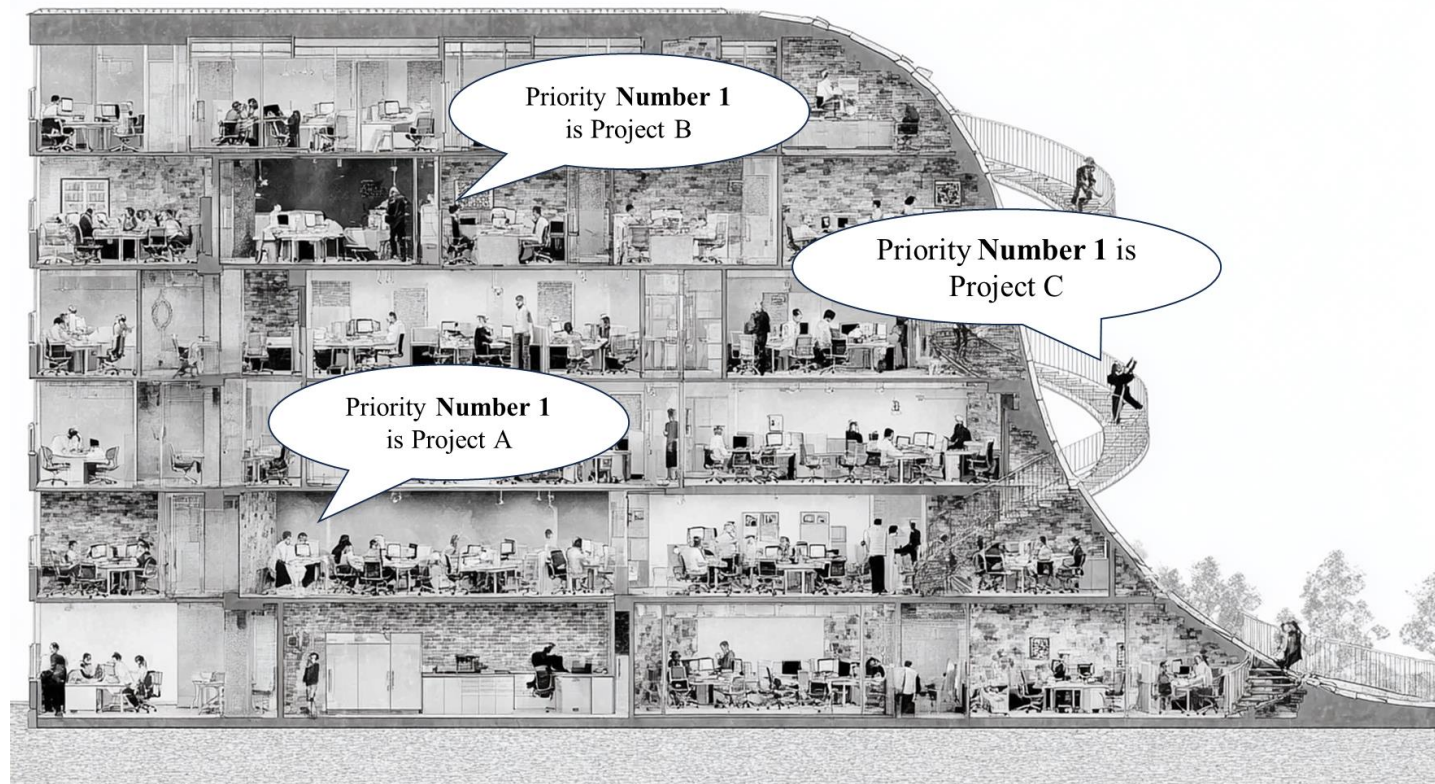
All good!

But where should we start?

The most common problems that plague project organisations

Problems and intertwined because of **dependencies**: they are symptoms of deeper causes.

Another way to look at it



Anti-agile and anti-lean reality

1. Customers dissatisfied; value delivered late and infrequently.
2. Requirements changes resisted; scope locked.
3. Deliverables come only in large, infrequent batches.
4. Business and developers work in silos, rarely collaborating.
5. Teams micromanaged; low trust, low motivation.
6. Communication slow, bureaucratic, document-heavy.
7. Progress measured by documents, not working results.
8. Burnout from unsustainable pace and overtime.
9. Poor quality, technical debt accumulates, hard to adapt.
10. Over-engineering, wasteful features, unnecessary work.
11. Designs dictated top-down; little innovation from teams.
12. No reflection or learning during execution; lessons learned too late.

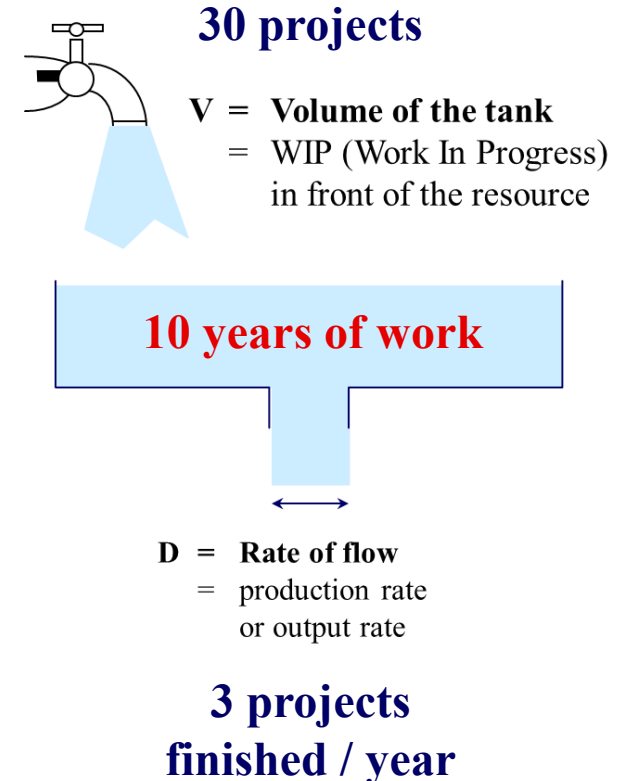
#1/2 Case Study

Reducing Time-To-Market by accelerating R&D projects (special machinery company)

- **Special Machinery:** R&D department
 - Innovative company
 - Large R&D portfolio
 - Custom machine design
- 2-day diagnostic of the R&D department
- **Agile context:** The electronics and software engineers had implemented Agile (Scrum).
- However, most R&D projects were falling behind schedule:
 - Too much project Work In Progress
 - **Little's law*** reveals a work in progress > 10 years.
 - Multitasking of R&D teams - R&D team experts called for customer projects.
 - No visibility: progress of projects and priorities remain unclear

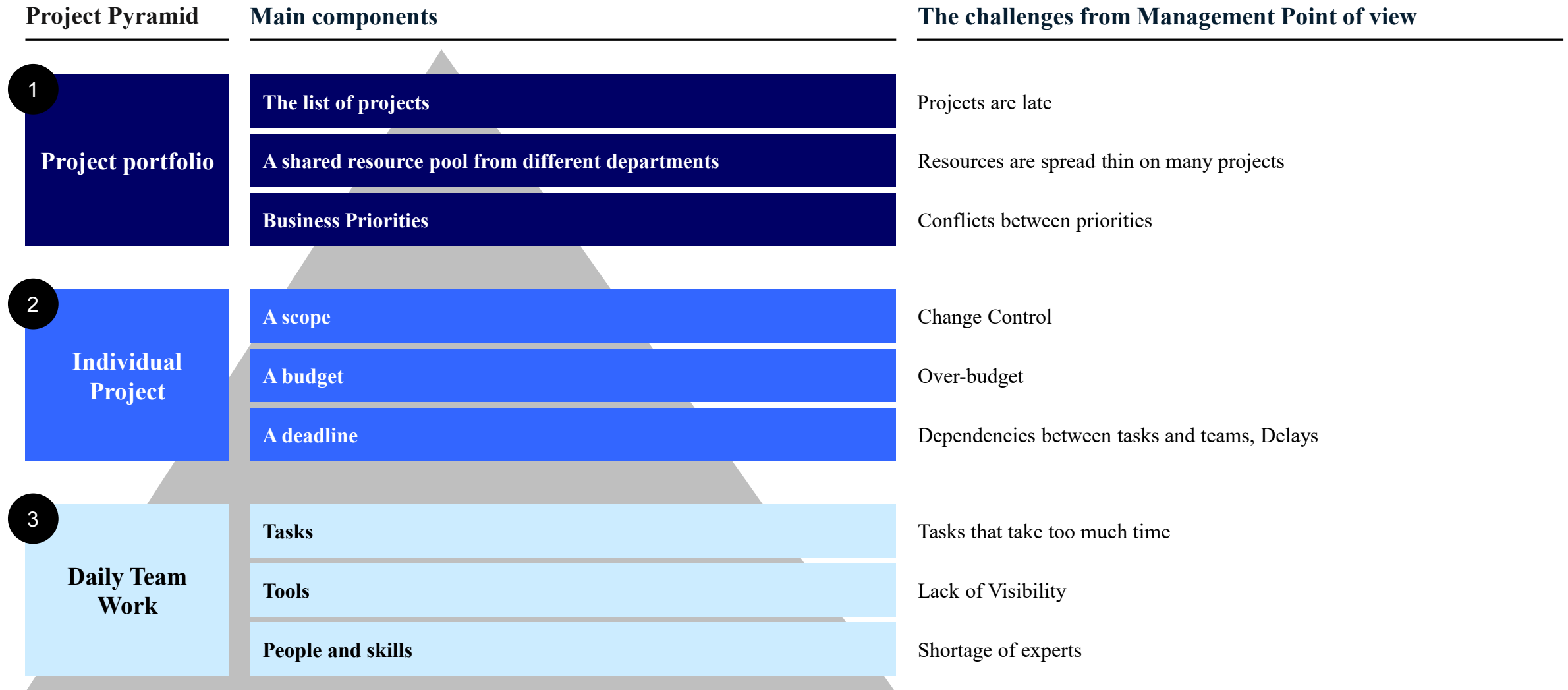
Nota: Little's Law: Average duration = number of projects in progress divided by the number of projects completed per year.

*Beware of excessive WIP
& "dead" WIP*





So, we need to take a step back and look at projects from different perspectives





In fact most of Agile and Lean efforts are focused on teams' efficiency and daily work

Scale	Main components	The challenges from Management Point of view
<p>1</p> <p>Project portfolio</p>	<p>The list of projects</p> <p>A resource pool</p> <p>Business Priorities</p>	<p>Projects are late</p> <p>Resources are spread thin on many projects</p> <p>Conflicts between priorities</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Individual Project</p>	<p>A scope</p> <p>A budget</p> <p>A deadline</p>	<p>Change Control</p> <p>Over-budget</p> <p>Delays</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Daily Team Work</p>	<p>Tasks</p> <p>Tools</p> <p>People and skills</p>	<p>Tasks that take too much time</p> <p>Lack of Visibility</p> <p>Shortage of experts</p>

Too much focus here on **local problems** at **Team level**



So in complex organizations you'd better look at the big picture first

Scale	Main components	Problems
<p>1</p> <p>Project portfolio</p>	<p>The list of active concurrent projects</p> <p>The resource pool</p> <p>Business Priorities</p>	<p>Projects are late</p> <p>Resources are spread thin on many projects. Bottlenecks.</p> <p>Conflicts between priorities</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Individual Project</p>	<p>A scope</p> <p>A budget</p> <p>A deadline</p>	<p>Change Control</p> <p>Over-budget</p> <p>Delays</p>
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So, we should start here

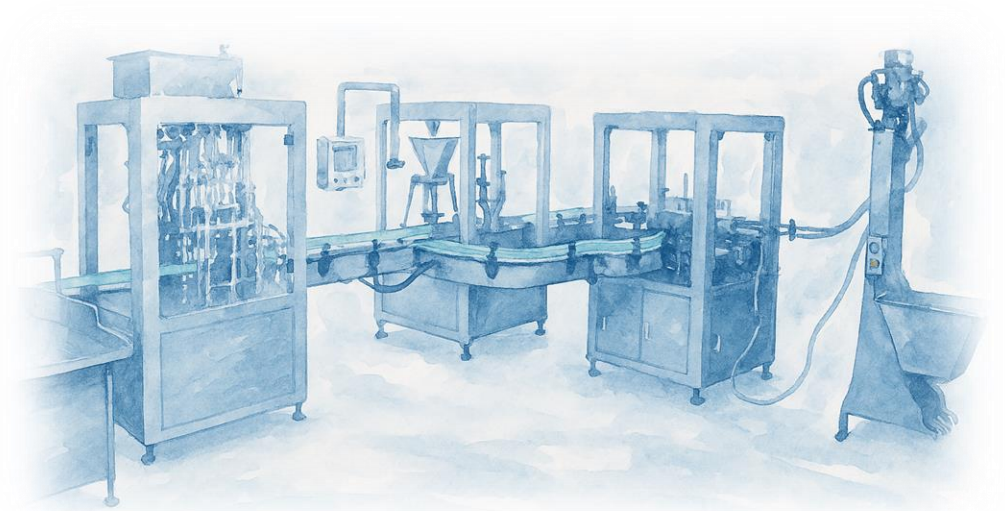
#2/2 Case Study

Reducing Time-To-Market by accelerating R&D projects (special machinery company)

Following the 2-day diagnostics, they decided to start implementing the action plan autonomously.

Recommendations implemented after the diagnosis:

- **Triage:** Clean up the R&D project portfolio: sort and prioritize projects
- **WIP Control:** Implementation of a workload/capacity tool to stagger projects based on resource availability.
- **Synchronize:** Plan projects the Critical Chain way
- **Dosage:** Accelerate the completion of priority projects by increasing the allocated resources (dosage + focus and finish)



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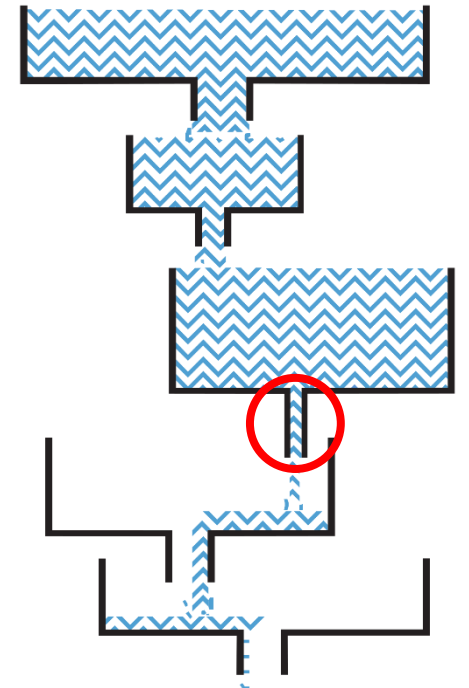
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Focus on improving the system constraints that determine the overall performance

*It is no longer possible to distribute work equitably:
organizations are necessarily unbalanced*

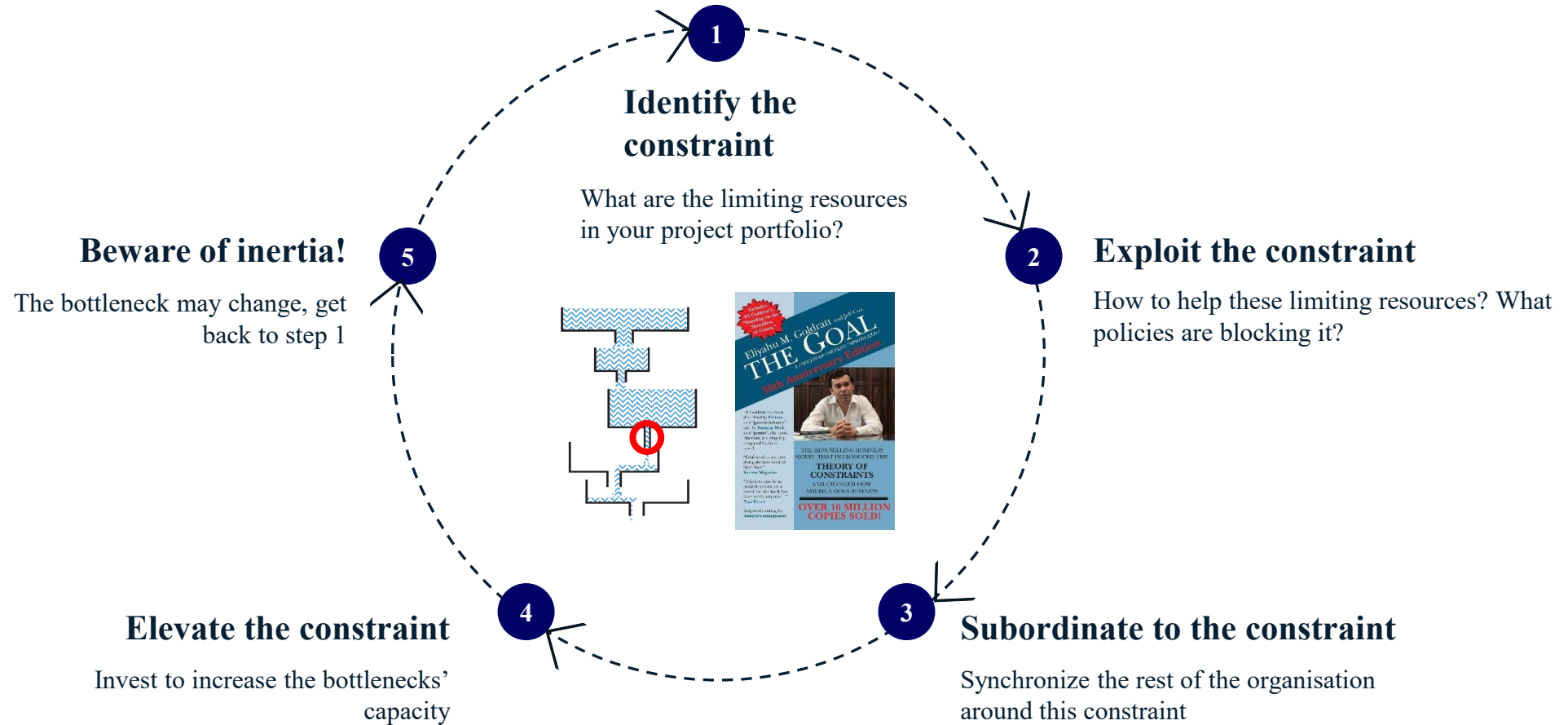
- Companies (factories, engineering departments ...) and other organizations (hospitals, ...) inevitably have unbalanced capacities.
- Annual budgets pretend to balance organizations, but they don't succeed.
- There is always a constraint, a bottleneck somewhere in the system.
- Someone somewhere has drawn the short straw.
- One hour lost on the bottleneck = one hour lost for the system = one hour of lost sales.
- One hour gained on a non-bottleneck is an illusion... so be careful with local objectives such as OEE. A non-constraint must only work according to the constraint's requirements.
- A dual view is mandatory: different rules for constraints and non-constraints.



The sum of local optimums is not equal to the global optimum – Eliyahu Goldratt

Focus on Flow and apply the TOC's 5 focusing steps to support Agile and Lean

A simple process to focus management's attention on the right topics and areas of the organisation



Consider dependencies and uncertainty in projects with TOC's Critical Chain

- Absorb uncertainty with buffers
- Take into account dependencies (logical and resources)

With traditional planning...



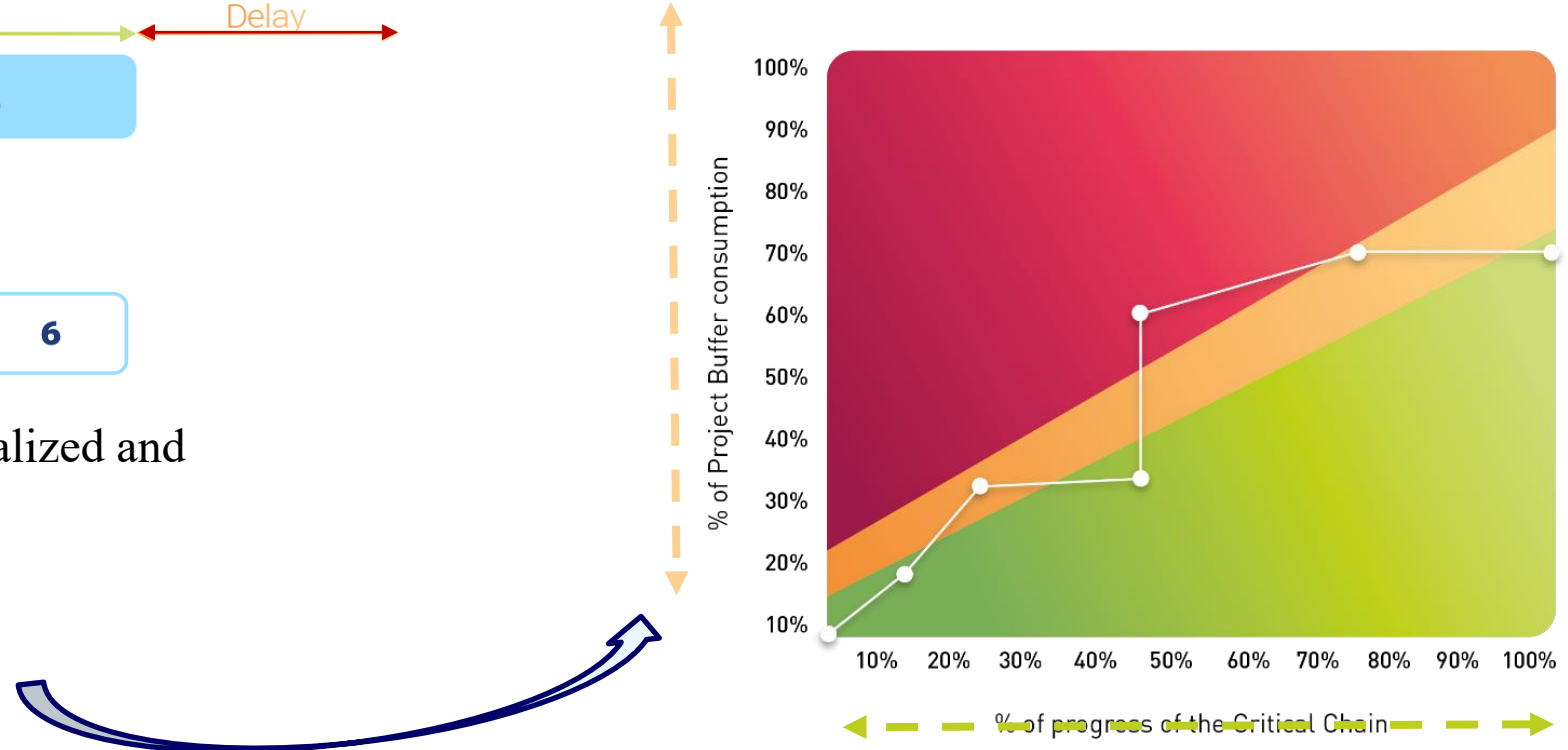
... each task has its own margin



With Critical Chain, margins are mutualized and cycle times are challenged



Fever Chart



What to change? The Theory of Constraints' Rules of Flow

Scale

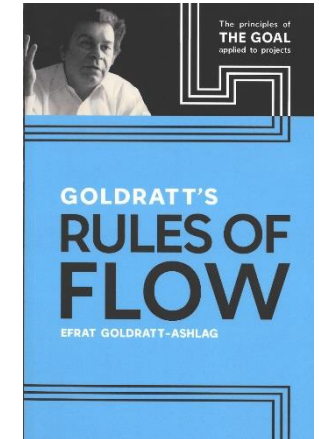
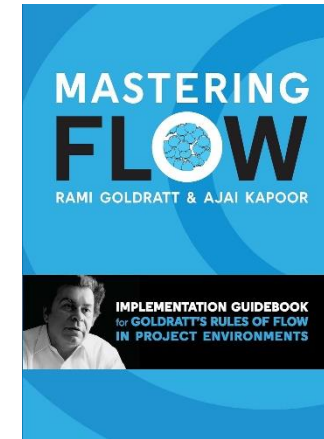
TOC's Rules of Flow and Critical Chain

Project portfolio

Individual Project

Daily Team Work

- 1 Triage the projects
- 2 Reduce WIP & Reduce bad multitasking
- 3 Pool resources
- 4 Ensure full kits
- 5 Increase work dosage
- 6 Synchronize resources and activities
- 7 Aggregate and manage time buffer
- 8 Standardize to scale
- 9 Segregate big and small tasks



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The TOC rules and tools to help you support Agile teams

Scale

Project portfolio

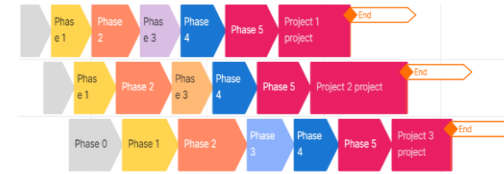
Individual Project

Daily Team Work

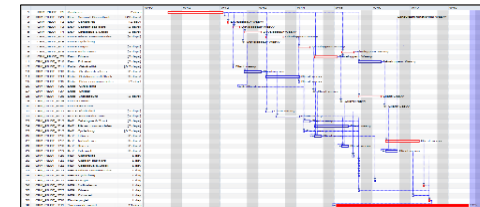
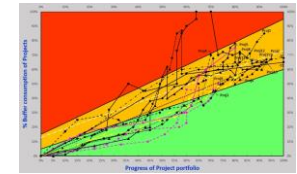
TOC's Rules of Flow and Critical Chain

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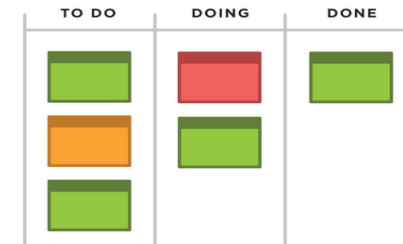
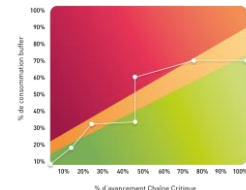
Tools and Visual Management



Portfolio staggering and portfolio fever chart



Critical Chain Project Management



Kanban boards

Case Study

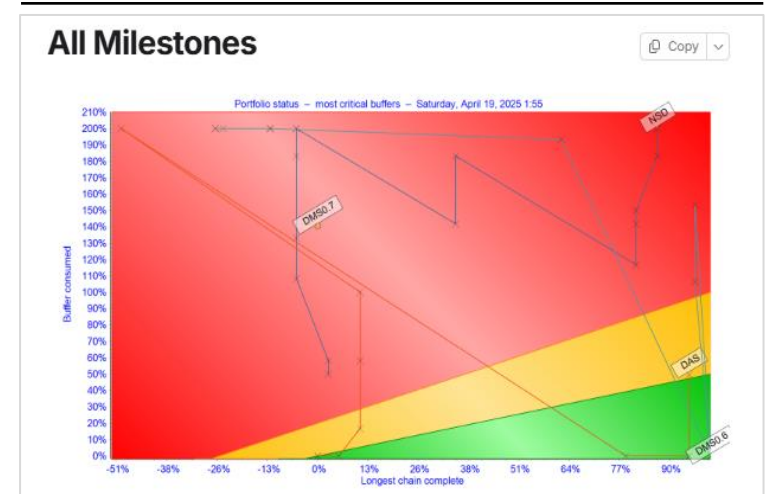
CCPM at NuNet: Development of a Decentralized Computing Platform for AI

We worked with NuNet to mix Agile with CCPM

The approach

- NuNet is developing a **decentralized Cloud Computing platform** that will allow users to make their computing power available for various applications. The project is Open-Source.
- Among the use cases: Machine Learning, LLM training, DeSci (Decentralized Science) projects, Crypto currencies, etc.
- Nunet's teams of developers and scientists rely on **Agile**.
- The approach: a mix of Critical Chain and Agile
 - Identify the relevant task groups or "issues".
 - Identify the Critical Chain and the work packages that make up the deadline.
 - Track the details in the **kanban boards**, manage priorities and remain flexible in the face of changes.
- **Results:**
 - Resource needs are controlled and managed
 - Priorities are clear to everyone.
 - Deliveries are accelerated.

Open Source case study





Case Study

CCPM at NuNet: Development of a Decentralized Computing Platform for AI

Tools

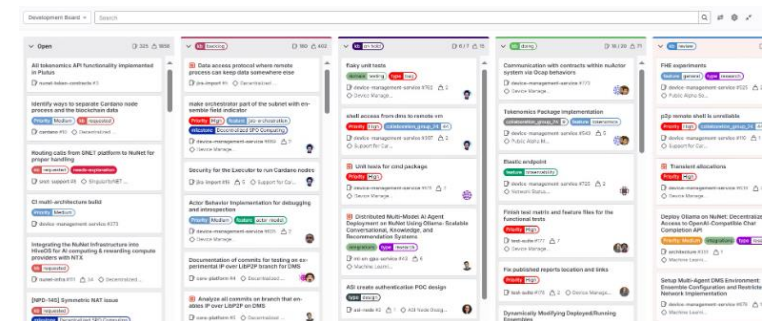
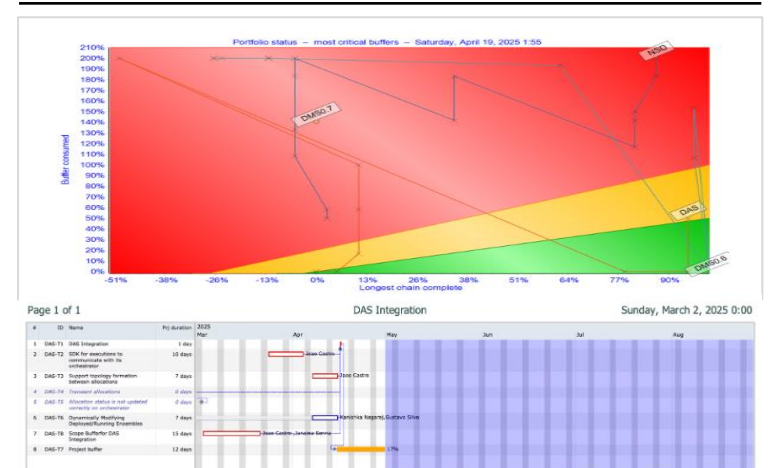
1 Critical Chain - Lynx

Focuses on resource constraints to avoid bottlenecks and delays. Employs buffer management to protect the project schedule from variability. Enables real-time project health monitoring with key metrics and alerts.

2 Agile & Kanban - Gitlab (Open-Source)

Visualize workflows to enhance transparency and team alignment. Limit Work in Progress (WIP) to improve focus and reduce multitasking. Encourages continuous iteration for incremental improvements and faster feedback loops.

Examples





#1/3 Case Study

IT Projects acceleration: Implementation of complex IT Systems (ERP, CRM, etc.)

Scale

TOC's Rules of Flow and Critical Chain

Case Study

Project portfolio

- 1 Triage the projects
- 2 Reduce WIP & bad multitasking
- 3 Pool resources

Individual Project

- 4 Ensure full kits
- 5 Increase work dosage
- 6 Synchronize resources and activities
- 7 Aggregate and manage time buffer

Daily Team Work

- 8 Standardize to scale
- 9 Segregate big and small tasks

The context:

- Digitalization is significantly increasing the demand for the integration of complex information systems.
- Anyone who has been faced with an ERP change knows how difficult it is.
- We supported a publisher-integrator in improving its project management to gain efficiency and peace of mind, while significantly reducing deployment times.

The approach:

- Apply the "Rules of Flow" (staggering, dosage, full-kit) and the Critical Chain.
- Involve the client (our client's client) from the initial preliminary project to enable the application of the Rules of Flow.
- Work on the 3 levels of the management pyramid (portfolio and load-capacity adequacy, project, visual management of daily life). The CCPM is mainly the intermediate level.



#2/3 Case Study

IT Projects acceleration: Implementation of complex IT Systems (ERP, CRM, etc.)

Scale	TOC's Rules of Flow and Critical Chain	Case Study – Actions implemented
Project portfolio	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Triage the projects 2 Reduce WIP & bad multitasking 3 Pool resources 	<p>Focus on complex projects + synergies with network</p> <p>Staggering + load vs capacity + Kanban board</p> <p>Rearrange the teams</p>
Individual Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Ensure full kits 5 Increase work dosage 6 Synchronize resources and activities 7 Aggregate and manage time buffer 	<p>Visualize full kits on kanban boards, DOR and DOD</p> <p>Prepare for focused analysis and consulting phase</p> <p>Define schedules (CCPM) + Azure DevOps tasks</p> <p>Plan with buffers (Critical Chain)</p>
Daily Team Work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8 Standardize to scale 9 Segregate big and small tasks 	<p>Expert coaching + documentation</p> <p>Dedicate specific days for support tickets</p>



#3/3 Case Study

IT Projects acceleration: Implementation of complex IT Systems (ERP, CRM, etc.)

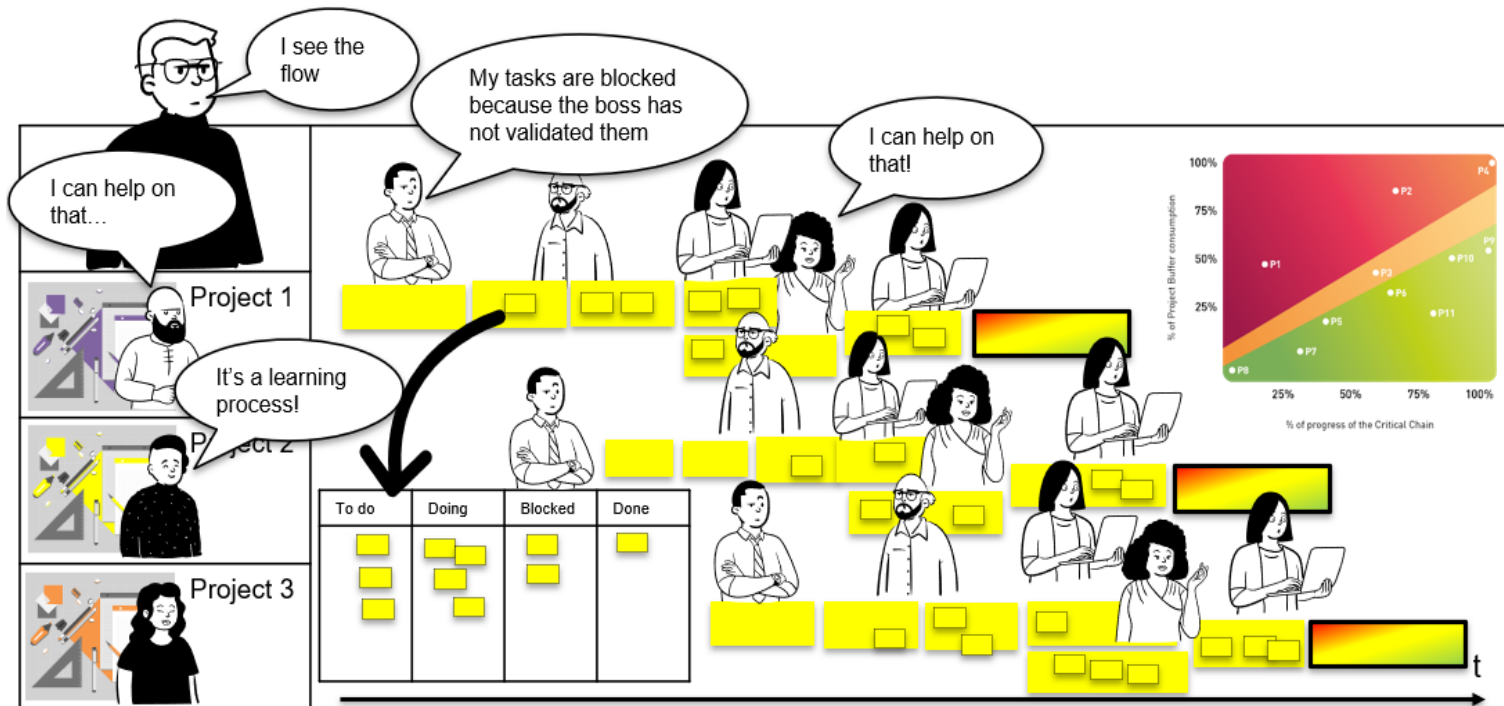
Scale	TOC's Rules of Flow and Critical Chain	Case Study – Results
Project portfolio	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Triage the projects 2 Reduce WIP & bad multitasking 3 Pool resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation lead times reduced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For big projects: target reduction of >20 % – For small projects: target reduction of >30% ▪ An approach that allows a better collaboration with customers. ▪ The new approach "sold" to customers and their integration partners as a competitive advantage
Individual Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Ensure full kits 5 Increase work dosage 6 Synchronize resources and activities 7 Aggregate and manage time buffer 	
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Overview of the portfolio with TOC's Critical Chain Project Management + Agile

Quick Overview



Key elements of TOC + Agile

- Full kitting: clear **definition of ready** and **definition of done**.
- Visualize the portfolio of projects + Load versus Capacity on key resources.
- For each project, map the main tasks and dependencies (logical + resources) → high level **critical chain plans**
- Slack: Critical Chain Plans with visible and shared **buffers**
- Multi-team **Kanban boards** to see blockages, **bottlenecks**, and **kits readiness**

Our training offer

We organize training sessions on-site, and online. The next sessions are:

Next training sessions

 In **French:**

1. **Critical Chain Project Management** in **October 2025**, in **Toulouse**
2. **Theory Of Constraints in production** in **October 2025**, in **Toulouse**



In **English:**



1. CCPM **online** training courses
2. **On-site** all over the world whenever you want



Short 2-day diagnostic of your projects

We are currently helping several companies implementing the Theory of Constraints. Let's start with a short assignment of **only 2 days**.

The approach



What we do

How:

- 2 days, on-site
- Management interviews
- Gemba
- Data and tools analysis

Outcome:

- Feedback and alignment session
- Action Plan + report

Often combined with a training session

Next steps:

Then we can support you more intensively through **consulting**.

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Questions & Answers



Use the Q&A feature to ask questions

Agenda

- Introduction
- Overview of Critical Chain Project Management
- 9 examples from various industries
- Conclusion

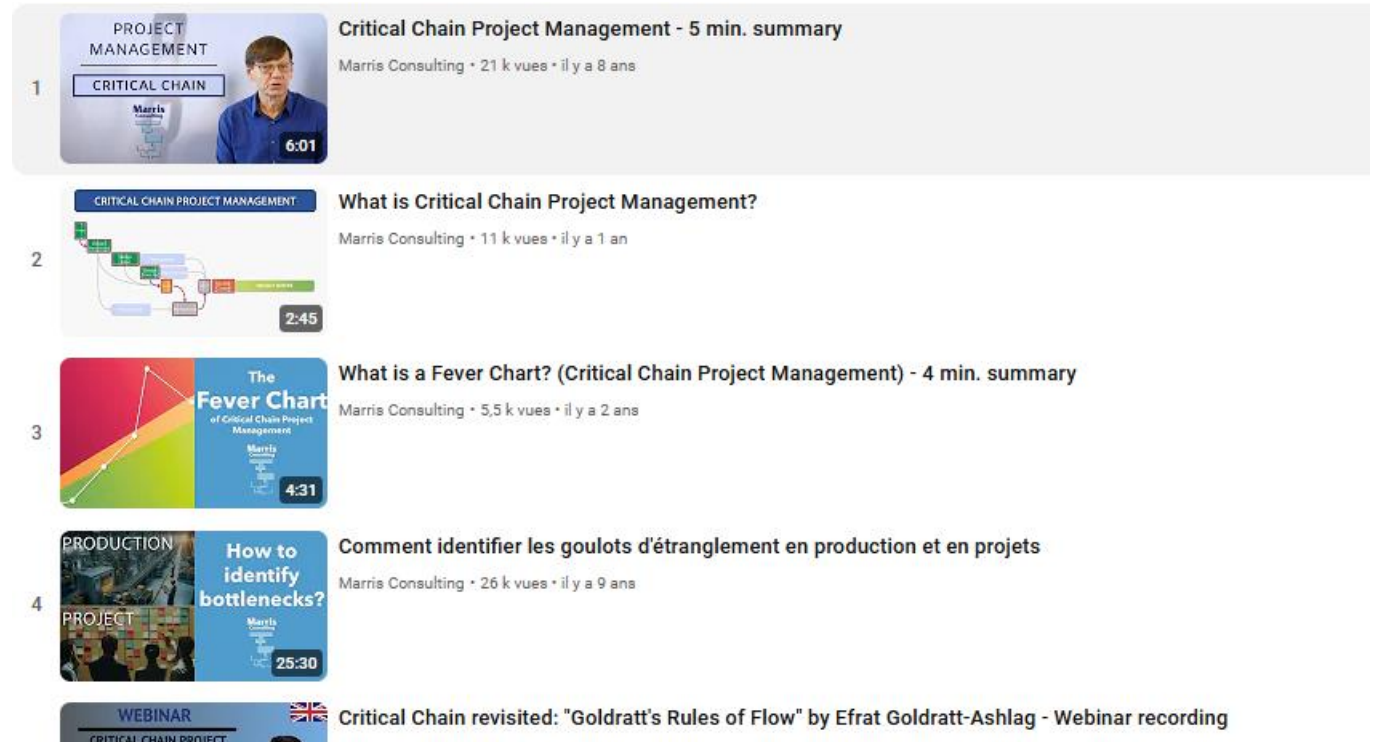
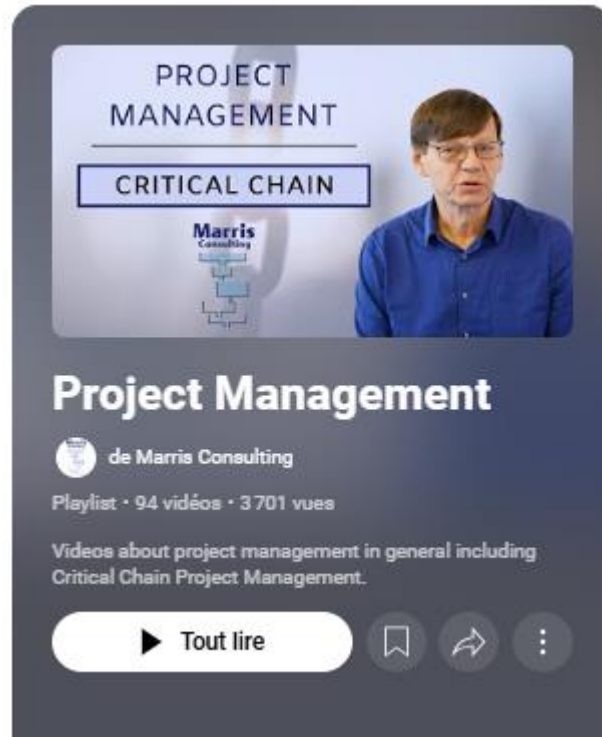
- Questions & Answers

- Appendices
 - Learn more about Critical Chain
 - Presentation of Marris Consulting





A playlist of >90 videos about Critical Chain Project Management



Marris Consulting YouTube channel – Playlist Project Management



To go further, a dedicated website: www.critical-chain-projects.com

Critical Chain
an innovative method for project management

[THE METHOD →](#)

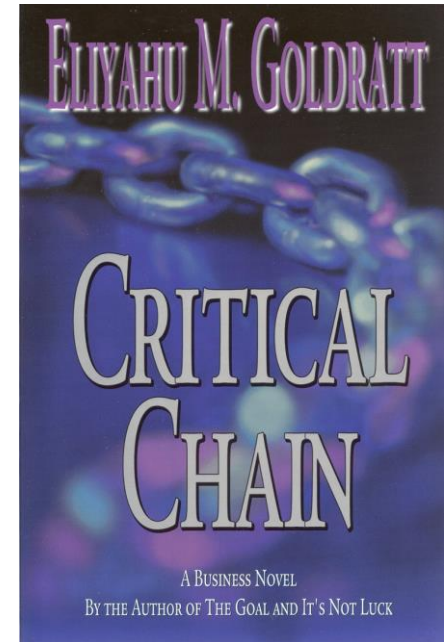
Dare to finish all your projects on time!

This approach based on the Theory of Constraints (TOC) answers 2 recurring questions:

Project Management the TOC way: Critical Chain

- This is the original book written by Eli Goldratt who "invented" CCPM
- Eliyahu Goldratt
- Exists in several languages
- Scenario
 - An MBA professor gives a project management course in which they "discover" the Critical Chain way. He uses the "Socratic" technique. By addressing a class comprised of many different project environments (building, New Product Development, Software, ...) it conveys how generic the solution is.
 - It is not Eli Goldratt's best book. For instance, part of the book covers the problems of MBAs and higher education.
- It is mandatory reading for anyone seriously envisaging or involved in CCPM.

Warning: this book is incomplete since it only covers single project management.
It does not deal with project portfolios.



To go further: Efrat Goldratt-Ashlag's 8 rules of flow #1/2

- *Goldratt's Rules of Flow* by Efrat Goldratt-Ashlag from North River Press [2023]
- Business novel written by Eliyahu Goldratt's daughter, 26 years after the publication of *Critical Chain*
- Available in English, other languages to follow
- Scenario (sequel to the novel *Critical Chain* with Professor Richard Silver)
 - I.T. Wilson Advanced Solutions is experiencing difficulties in meeting project delivery deadlines. It has just lost a major customer. Marc Wilson, director of the engineering department, wants to find a solution and enrolls in the "Rules of Flow" course of an executive MBA program.
 - The course, taught by Professor Richard Silver, will enable him to discover simple project management rules and learn how to put them into practice to save his company.
 - This is the new reference book for implementing Critical Chain. The approach and context are very like the novel *The Goal* but applied to a project environment. 8 rules of flow are proposed for better project management.
- Highly recommended reading for those embarking on the implementation of Critical Chain.
- Drawing on 26 years of applying the Critical Chain method to the world of projects, this novel takes the basic principles presented in *Critical Chain* but in a more applied way, with concrete recommendations for implementation.
- Webinar replay : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IDB1zQ-LSQ>



To go further: Efrat Goldratt-Ashlag's 8 rules of flow #2/2

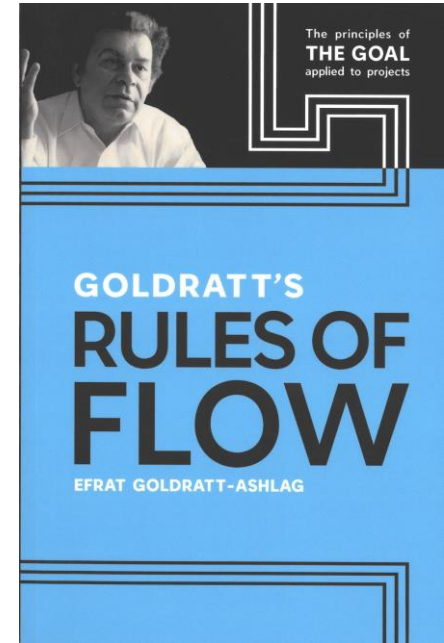
Projects pass through all the departments of a company, like a flow. To complete projects as quickly as

possible, we need to reduce or even eliminate obstacles to this flow.

Efrat Goldratt-Ashlag suggests following 8 rules:

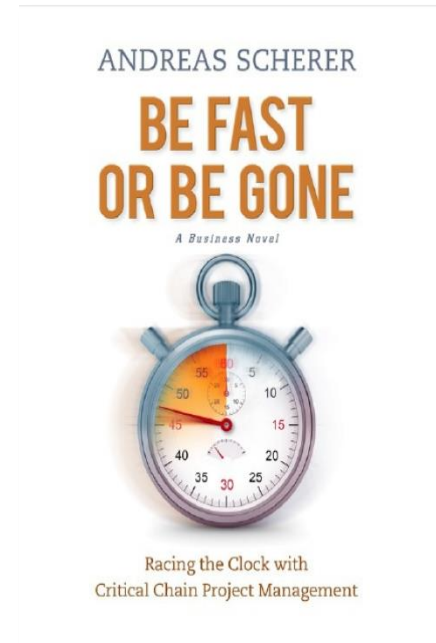
- **Rule 1:** Avoid bad multitasking, control your WIP
- **Rule 2:** If you don't want to get stuck, verify full-kit before you get going
- **Rule 3:** Triage to ensure you are working on the right priorities
- **Rule 4:** Ensure synchronization between your tasks/people/resources
- **Rule 5:** If you keep going back to the same projects and you don't get the desired results, look into the option to increase the dosage
- **Rule 6:** Avoid unnecessary rework by finding what causes it
- **Rule 7:** Standardization is recommended when improvising is costly
- **Rule 8:** Abolish local optimum, global optimum is what matters

Note: There is no order of priority in the application of these rules. They can be used alone, or in combination. Their use must be adapted to the needs of the organization concerned.

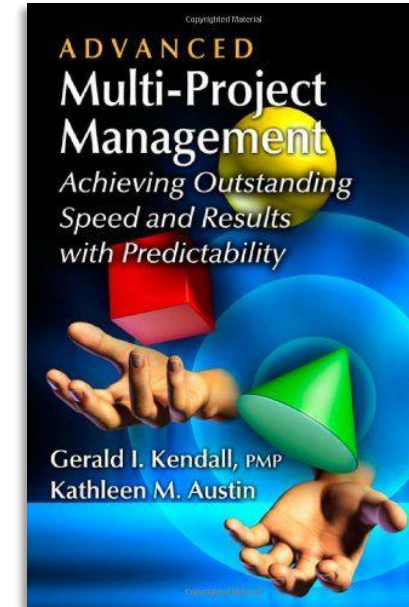
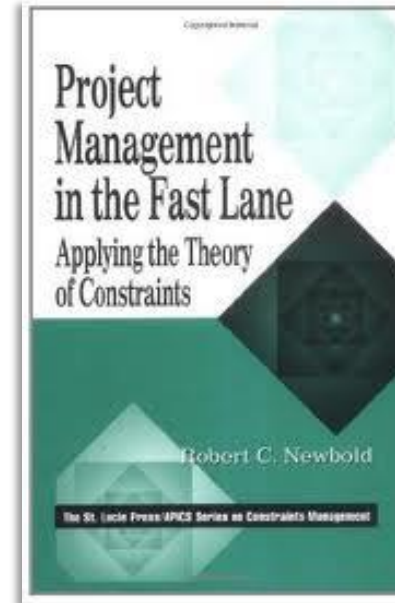
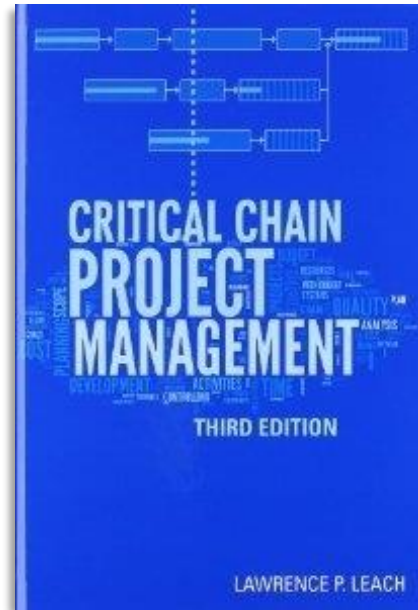
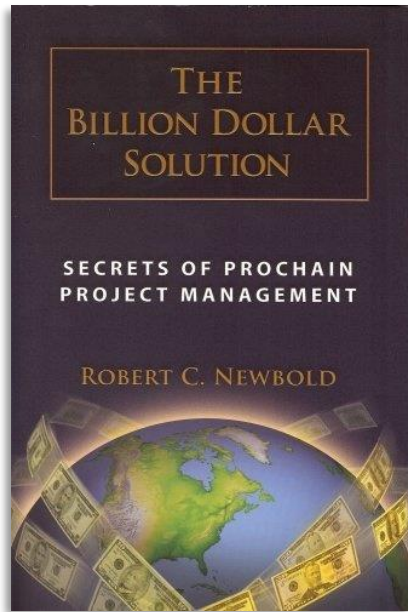


To go further: another novel

- Be Fast Or Be Gone
- A good recent CCPM business thriller in a New Product Development environment in the pharmaceutical industry
- By Dr. Andreas Scherer
- 2010 ProChain Press USA
- Scenario:
 - When he learns that his son suffers from a rare form of brain cancer, Mike Knight leaves his job in a semi-conductor company to work for Altus Lab, pharmaceutical company developing drugs against cancer
 - If he wants to save his son's life, Mike must divide by two the drug Time To Market
- Strongly recommended especially for those in the pharmaceuticals industry of course.



To go further: some CCPM reference books



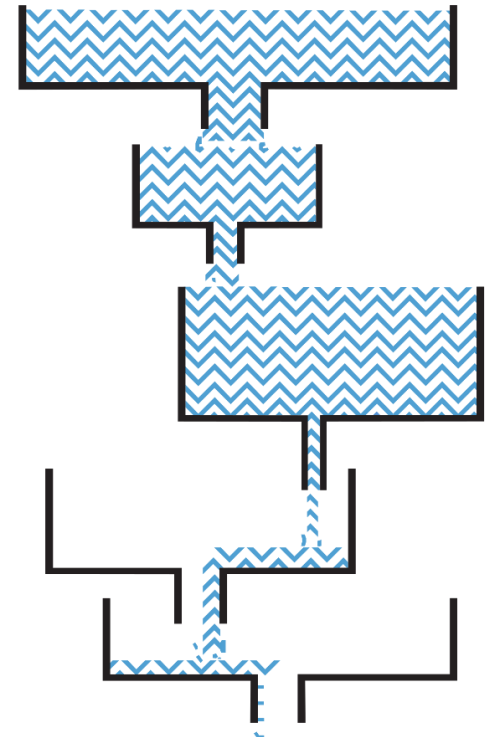
Agenda

- Introduction
- Overview of Critical Chain Project Management
- 9 examples from various industries
- Conclusion

- Questions & Answers

- Appendices
 - Learn more about Critical Chain
 - Presentation of Marris Consulting

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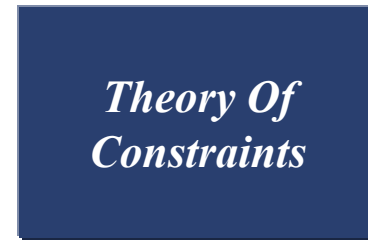
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Critical Chain

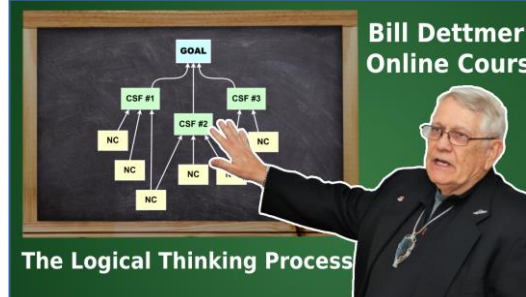
WILL YOU DARE TO FINISH ALL YOUR PROJECTS ON TIME?



ONLINE COURSE

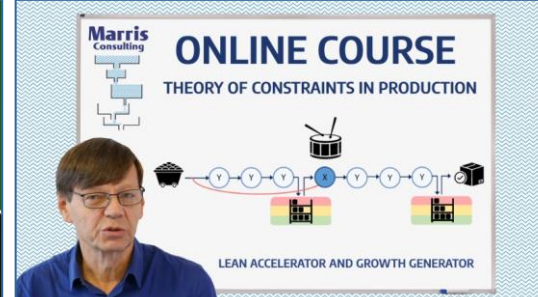
Bad Lean

Good



Bill Dettmer's Online Course

The Logical Thinking Process



ONLINE COURSE

THEORY OF CONSTRAINTS IN PRODUCTION

LEAN ACCELERATOR AND GROWTH GENERATOR

Good Lean Bad Lean

Training about understanding what is true Lean, the "Toyota Way", and how to implement it and reach their level of performance, thanks to the expertise of the ex-Vice President of Manufacturing of Toyota Motor Manufacturing France.

Theory Of Constraints

Training to understand the key principles of this approach and get some practical advice to implement it. The Theory Of Constraints was developed by Eliyahu Goldratt and popularised thanks to the global best-seller The Goal, the first business novel.

Critical Chain

Training for anyone who wants to finish their projects on time, faster, on scope and on budget. Learn how to schedule and manage projects and portfolio of projects the Critical Chain way and benefit from our experience and lessons learnt from hundreds of projects.

LTP Online training
<https://logicalthinkingprocess.podia.com/>

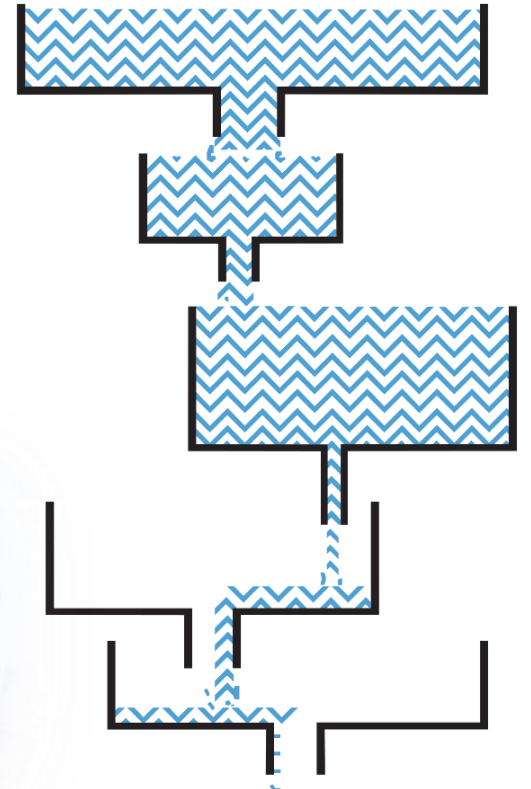
TOC, CCPM & Lean Online trainings:
<https://e-learning.marris-consulting.com/>



What we do

- Marris Consulting has a reputation for its capacity to be pertinent in nearly all kinds of industry. We have worked in over 300 companies helping in designing, making, selling and distributing:
 - cars, hamburgers, aeroplanes, perfume, trains, rockets, industrial equipment, pharmaceuticals, home delivery services, computer chips, chips (food), maintenance / repair / overhaul (MRO) of planes and trains, luxury handbags, corrugated cardboard production, the defence industry, Swiss watches, steel manufacturing, plastics, bank notes, satellites, gold mines ...
- We are committed, viscerally, to producing results. Results that are well beyond our clients' expectations. And results that last. Better still we incessantly seek to strengthen the process of on-going improvement; we want to see our ex-clients getting better and better many years after we intervened.

Marris Consulting



How we do it

- We understand that the hardest part of what we do is to change "people". Apart from the pertinent ideas that we must have we must directly and indirectly change individual and collective behaviour.
- We work simultaneously at all levels of the company from the front line to the board room.
- We are recognized experts in many different fields: "Lean" (manufacturing/engineering/management/..., the Theory Of Constraints, Six Sigma, Industry 4.0, DDMRP ...
- One of our key strengths is that we analyse each of our new client's business & culture and then we mix up the right cocktail of solutions. We never impose a so-called industry best practise.
- We like simple solutions. Simple is beautiful.

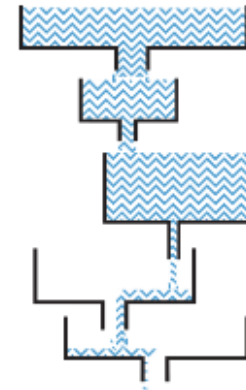




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