Zoltan Buzady – Paul Marer – Zad Vecsey

Missing Link Discovered

ALEAS Simulations, Inc. and the faculty co-authors bring you this book.

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Missing Link Discovered

*Integrating **Csikszentmihalyi's Flow Theory***
*into **Management and Leadership Practice***
*by using **FLIGBY** ® – the Official Flow-Leadership Game*

With an essay contribution by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

QUICK FACTS ABOUT FLOW

» **Flow is a mental state in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment. Flow, creativity, and happiness are related.**

» Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, a distinguished social science scholar, found an inventive way to make happiness measurable. A group of teenagers were given beepers that went off during random times throughout the day. They were asked to record their thoughts and feelings at the time of the beeps. Most beeps indicated that the teens were unhappy. But when their energies were focused on a challenging task, they tended to be more upbeat. This early study and many later ones helped shape his Theory of Flow.

» Studies conducted around the world have shown that in whatever context people feel a deep sense of enjoyment – even if the task is simple – they report a remarkably similar mental state that many described by using the analogy of being carried away by an outside force, of moving effortlessly with a current of energy. Csikszentmihalyi gave the name "Flow" to this common experience.

» While most people enjoy working when it provides Flow, too few jobs are designed to make Flow possible. This is where management can make a real difference.

» **For a manager or leader who truly cares about the bottom line in the broadest sense of that term, the first priority is to eliminate obstacles to Flow at all levels of the organization and to substitute practices and policies that are designed to make work enjoyable**.

» A workplace conducive to Flow is ideal because it attracts the most able individuals, is likely to keep them longer, and obtains spontaneous effort from their work. It is best, too, from the viewpoint of employees because it helps them to a happier life, and it supports their skill development and personal growth.

» Flow is a dynamic rather than a static state. A good Flow activity is one that offers a very high ceiling of opportunities for improvement.

» Prof. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has co-produced FLIGBY, teaching how to generate FLOW at the workplace.

» Designated by experts as the globe's top leadership development game (Gold Medal Prize, International Serious Play Awards, Seattle, 2012).

» Employs real-life simulation, in an interactive, movie-like setting; teaching how Flow can be promoted at the workplace. Aspiring as well as experienced managers will identify with it and learn from it.

» FLIGBY is the "gamification" of the Flow-based leadership growth process. We show the reader how one can build an entire course around it or use it just to enrich and enliven existing courses.

» **Although FLIGBY is Flow-based, the leadership challenges and the options it presents are fully compatible with a wide range of leadership theories and approaches, enhancing them all.**

» At the Game's end, FLIGBY provides an individual report to each player on his/her skillset, with a range of benchmarking options available.

» **FLIGBY brings excitement and inspiration to the teaching of a wide span of leadership topics; most players experience personal Flow during the Game.**

» FLIGBY is available as a powerful management-training and con-sulting tool with which to approach any organization interested in improving the performance of its managers/leaders. Try it in a course and see where it can lead!

» FLIGBY's large data-set offers a unique research opportunity because the players' leadership skill measurements are based on non-intrusive observations, yielding unbiased outcomes.

» **Part II of this book walks the reader through the Game, not only for his or her own enjoyment, but also to provide a 21st century tool to enrich research, teaching and consulting practice.**

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theory, science, values, measurement and practice

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PURPOSES AND STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The seeds of this eclectic book originate in Budapest, Hungary, at the crossroads of East and West. This country – that many consider to be a "periphery nation"– has also been known, historically as well as today, for the innovative ideas of its people, creating products and services that have gained global acceptance.

Contemporary innovations, like Prezi, Ustream and LogMeIn, are just some of the examples of recent global startups originating in Hungary, that were conceived through fruitful cooperation between academia, people with technological savvy, and business entrepreneurs. This book is introducing just such an innovation that, we believe, has the potential of becoming an educational service product that will gain global acceptance.

The overarching purpose of this book is to describe, discuss, and analyze an entrepreneurial innovation: an attempt by a group of extraordinarily creative individuals to transplant Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's widely-known Theory of Flow into a teaching and research tool which will illuminate and enhance effective managerial and leadership practice.

The "missing link discovered", referred to in the title of the book, is the global-award-winning serious management game called FLIGBY. Referring to this innovative Game, Csikszentmihalyi, in his essay that follows, professes that FLIGBY "is a bridge between my lifetime of scientific work and aspiring and practicing managers and leaders who are interested in my ideas but are not sure how to apply them in everyday practice."

FLIGBY is an exciting Game in which each individual player assumes the role of the general manager of an imaginary Californian winery. Each player has to make 150+ decisions, applying the key ideas embodied in Csikszentmihalyi's Flow concept and Flow-related value system, as best as she or he can. During the Game, the player receives continuous, individually-tailored feedback, designed to guide her or him toward Flow-based managerial practices. The feedback continues after the Game ends: each player is sent a report about his or her relative strengths and weaknesses in terms of both the general leadership skills and those that are especially important if one wishes to live,

work, and lead according to Flow-based values and Flow-promoting practices. This makes the Game an innovative management/leadership development tool.

A basic purpose of this book is to discuss how to teach the application of Flow-based leadership skills via FLIGBY, first in academia, then also in business and in other types of organizations. University courses (especially in graduate programs) are targeted because most university graduates will have manage-rial/leadership responsibilities during their careers. The Game – whose lessons are likely to be remembered long after the play is over – is an effective general preparation for performing well in future managerial/leadership roles, irrespec-tive of the nature of the organization, position in a hierarchy, or the type of culture where the graduate will find himself or herself.

Given that **CEU Business School faculty as well as CORVINUS Busi-ness School faculty and students have contributed to FLIGBY's development** by providing detailed feedback on its early versions and participating in troubleshooting small problems, this book's faculty co-authors have acquired a good understanding of the Game's nuts and bolts and perceived its large potential as a modern teaching tool. In the process, they came up with alternative ways about how FLIGBY can be used effectively in the classroom.

Before this book was written, there existed only a general and as yet incom-plete set of digital instructions on using FLIGBY in university courses and busi-ness training programs. This book now also serves as a comprehensive user manual to FLIGBY. We hasten to add that much of the detailed technical and other "manual-type" documentation has been placed into two-dozen, so-called Digital Appendices (DAs), available to interested parties upon request.

Another fundamental purpose of this book is to discuss how new areas of leadership research can be supported by combining (1) the theory of Flow, (2) the concept contributions embedded in FLIGBY, and (3) the large and uniquely unbiased databank being generated by the growing number of players who had – and will have – fully completed the FLIGBY game. Below are brief statements on each of the three components.

① **The theory of Flow** has been highlighted already (p. IV). Chapter 1 discusses the concept of Flow in greater detail: how it was discovered, with what methods, what the theory is all about, and what practical applications it has in the lives of individuals and organizations, in business especially.

② Chapter 2 links the concept of Flow with leadership, with statements and examples showing what actions by managers and leaders help create a Flow-friendly organizational culture and environment. Embedded in the concept and practice of Flow-promoting management is a set of values and leadership responsibilities. A **key conceptual contribution of FLIGBY's design** to the academic and applied work on leadership is the identification of those leadership skills that are particularly important for helping to generate and maintain Flow at the workplace. While there is a substantial overlap between what might be called the mainstream sets of leadership skills and FLIGBY's "Flow-supporting" leadership skills, FLIGBY and this book make a contribution in this area by introducing, or putting greater emphasis on, certain types of leadership skills. An example is "feedback", a leadership skill more comprehensively defined in FLIGBY (in terms of specifying what content and delivery will make it effective), where feedback (or its absence) are given a greater weight in the FLIGBY skillset than is usually found elsewhere. (Chapter 3 provides details.)

③ **The large and uniquely unbiased leadership-skill databank generated by FLIGBY's players** is a tool for supporting new types of both academic and practice-oriented research on leadership. FLIGBY's contribution here is the unbiased nature of the skills-data-observations generated by its players. Both of the widely-used standard approaches to obtaining leadership-skill data – self-assessment and third-party evaluations – tend to be biased, for reasons explained and documented in a recent Harvard Business Review article, summarized in Chapter 10[1].

Let us give just one example here of a promising research project that would

1 hbr.org/2015/02/most-hr-data-is-bad-data.

combine the above three resources – one that can make a valuable contribution in a relatively new and rapidly expanding field, called **#predictive-people-analytics**.

For example, the data generated when a group of managers of an organization play FLIGBY could be used to predict the management group's future behavior under different strategic challenges that the organization may face. This kind of sophisticated strategic modeling is becoming an ever-more-important part of the strategic planning of organizations because it helps to identify leadership skills gaps, one of the frequent causes of the strategic failure of organizations.

The authors of this book are not yet in a position to present conclusive research findings.

Nonetheless, **one contribution of the book to scholarship is proposing potentially significant research projects**, such as predictive people analytics, which have the potential of making important academic as well as applied business contributions.

<p align="center">* * *</p>

Part I of the book discusses the **science and value propositions of Flow**, how leadership and Flow are linked, gives many examples of Flow-promoting leadership practices, and introduces a new method for systematically measuring the skill-levels of those who complete FLIGBY.

Part II is all **about FLIGBY**: its plot, the Game's objectives and features, the assumptions and methods employed in its construction, and its wide range of uses in teaching, training and research. Its concluding chapter tells the story, via an annotated set of photos, of how FLIGBY was produced.

Part III introduces the reader to the authors' planned global **Leadership and Flow research program**. The research initiative, which is just beginning, is an open invitation to academics from various disciplines and to managers and leaders of organizations, to join us in an endeavor to advance the science and practice of effective leadership. This initiative is being supported by the organizations with which the authors are affiliated. Professor Csikszentmihalyi – whose essay on his contribution to FLIGBY follows next – is a founder and participant in the Leadership and Flow Research Program.

SYMBOLS USED ON THE MARGINS OF THE TEXT

Throughout the book, the reader will see on the margins three types of icons:

Instructional innovation (INO) – whenever we recommend innovative approaches to teaching Flow, and the Game FLIGBY, that go beyond what might be considered traditional teaching approaches (i.e., lectures, slides, simple case studies, class discussion, and exams), those instances are signaled. The INO icon thus calls attention to innovative teaching applications that represent a set of contributions of this volume.

INO

Information technology application (ITA) – the purpose here is to signal to those who are not yet intimately familiar with all the whizz-bang IT stuff (that are as natural to today's computer-literate generation as water is to fish) that there may be something "new" here for certain readers.

ITA

Flow-based value statement (FVS) – The authors wish to emphasize that this book, focusing on Flow and FLIGBY, is not just about reporting scientific findings and technical explanations and recommendations concerning the Game, but it also incorporates important value statements that are integral parts of Csikszentmihalyi's Flow theory as well as of FLIGBY. The FVS icon signals where such value statements are found.

FVS

Added insight in the text will be occasional **hashtags** (placing the symbol **#** in front of a word or an un-spaced phrase) calls the reader's attention to a specific theme or phrase related to the content of this book that some readers may want to explore on blogs, discussion forums, and other professional and social media platforms. Most of our hash-tagged items are concepts defined in the Glossary at the end of this volume.

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Digital Appendix (DA), where further details about the indicated topic can be found. The list of Digital Appendices, with their numbers and titles, can be found at the end of Chapter 9.

DA

MY CONTRIBUTIONS TO FLIGBY by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi [1]

Why this book, why this essay?

I am not a disinterested outsider who does a favor to his colleagues by writing the foreword to their book. I am a passionate, involved, and grateful insider who welcomes and celebrates this book because it translates and extends my research in ways I could not have accomplished myself.

The title of the book, *Missing Link Discovered,* is apt because it captures well its ambition and contribution: The book – together with the innovative FLIGBY game, which is the focus of the volume – has created a bridge between my lifetime of scientific work and aspiring and practicing managers and leaders who are interested in my ideas but are not sure how to apply them in everyday practice.

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[1] The photo shows Prof. Csikszentmihalyi holding his new passport, upon regaining the Hungarian citizenship he had before the Communist era (Los Angeles, November 2014).

My research agenda

My academic work has focused on creativity, Flow, individual happiness, and organizational effectiveness. These topics are tied together by a value system that suggests how individuals, organizations, and society at large can interact in more harmonious, effective and sustainable ways.

Good Business

Most directly relevant to this volume is my 2003 book, *Good Business: Leadership, Flow, and the Making of Meaning.* There I wrote: "Our jobs determine to a large extent what our lives are like."

Good Business was the first scientific exploration of the relationship between Flow, leadership and organizations. The research on which that book is based was conducted by the Quality of Life Research Center at Claremont, in cooperation with counterpart institutions and colleagues at Stanford and Harvard. The purpose of the research was to establish what personal values, attitudes, and skills are found among business leaders whose purposes go beyond short-term profit maximization and personal glory.

Interviews with scores of successful executives, like *Ted Turner* (CNN), *Michael Markkula* (Apple), *Sir John Templeton* (Templeton Funds), and *Anita Roddick* (Body Shop) revealed that they considered their professional activities as highly creative endeavors. Further commonalities included their sense of responsibility for the professional and (to a certain extent) the personal lives of their colleagues; their eagerness to share with others their joy of Flow experiences and to help others to experience it; and active attempts to improve the organization.

Questions raised by Good Business

Following the publication of the book, more and more readers, students, and friends asked this question:

It makes sense that being in Flow more often and more deeply enhances one's performance. The value framework that accompanies Flow theory is also persuasive. But how can we systematically implement those ideas into everyday

practice? Do you have a short set of practical suggestions for individuals,
especially for managers and leaders? Do you have a recipe?

These valid questions deserve thoughtful answers, I thought. However, the reply is rather complex, not the kind that can be compressed into one of those popular "five-minute-manager" fads that occasionally capture the public's attention for brief periods. At the same time, aspiring managers and practicing leaders are entitled to concrete, implementable suggestions, not just detailed scientific analyses. How to bridge the gap between my Flow-based leadership framework that science can support, and the need to convey its implementation in simple, practical terms, has been a dilemma I had periodically thought about.

Serious computer games

When I wrote *Good Business* in the early 2000s, I had no knowledge of "serious computer games". I was aware, however, that in designing video games, the industry had put to practical use my scientific description of the key elements of the Flow-generation process: Pose an attractive challenge. Make crystal clear the objective of the game and the rules to be followed. Hold out the prospect of winning something if you master the challenge. Start with simple challenges; enhance their difficulty gradually. And provide continuous feedback.

From Flow to serious game FLIGBY

How did my involvement with FLIGBY begin? Well, in the fall of 2006 I received an inquiry from Hungary (my country of birth), from a person unknown to me at the time. **Zad Vecsey** was asking for my cooperation in producing a Flow-based serious game simulation, targeted to active and prospective managers. I did not give his offer much thought at the time. But this young Hungarian entrepreneur was not deterred. Six months later he called to let me know that he is planning to visit me in California.

I welcomed him but remained skeptical about his grandiose plans. I agreed to take a look at his earlier game simulation: a mountain-climbing team being challenged to reach the top of the Himalayas. Being a mountaineer myself, I viewed the game, liked it, and so agreed to work with him.

How Project FLIGBY has evolved

FLIGBY ("**FL**ow **I**s **G**ood **B**usiness for **Y**ou") did not start out as a scientific project. For me, it was an interesting side venture. I suggested that the location of FLIGBY should be a Californian winery, with the fantasy name of "Turul", and that the protagonist should be Turul's newly-appointed general manager (GM). Several considerations prompted me to recommend a winery as the venue:

The importance of putting at the center of the story an organization that is professional and mid-size, yet well within the comprehension of ordinary folks in any walk of life.

In real life, the Association of California Wine-Growers was among the first in the USA to introduce a program of environmentally friendly and sustainable wine production; a business approach aligned with my own value system.

Wine-production in California was pioneered in the mid-19th century by my Hungarian-born compatriot, **Agoston Haraszthy**: he introduced more than three hundred varieties of European grapes in NAPA Valley. In San Diego he is remembered as the first town marshal and the first county sheriff. Haraszthy was an amazing, colorful entrepreneur, whose life story can continue to be an inspiration to each new generation of business professionals.

At a more personal level, I had the feeling that anyone who has ever enjoyed a tasty glass of wine (presumably, most of those who will be playing FLIGBY) would be an open-minded person, sensitive to the psychological and other complexities of a business, who would listen and take to heart Mr. Fligby's admonitions (along with occasional praise) at the end of each FLIGBY scene.

Growing commitment to FLIGBY

As noted, I suggested that a Californian winery should be the Game's venue. My involvement continued with consultations on the screenplay.

Then I helped screen the actors who would play the characters of Turul Winery's management team; blackballing candidates if their personalities were not aligned with those of the characters they were to play, so as to make this

aspect of the Game credible, too. I advised that a story is good if the reader/
listener/player can strongly identify with (or is unsympathetic to) some of the
main characters. FLIGBY has its share of characters some will like; others will
greatly dislike.

Next came a science-based contribution: identifying and defining the set
of skills that a Flow-theory-aligned manager or leader would likely possess.
My background as a psychologist and as the principal researcher for the *Good
Business* book was helpful for this task.

All throughout production we wrestled with difficult issues. For example, mea-
suring the extent to which a FLIGBY player possesses the skills identified above
was not an easy task. I was involved in it as consultant to teams of independent
experts who made recommendations concerning the skill associated with each
of the 90 or so "measurable" decisions that the GM makes during the Game.

One challenge I considered particularly important was to **not** make the 150+
decisions the GM has to make seem to be subject to formulaic – either too
obvious or too mechanical – answers. We wanted to avoid the impression that
anyone who thinks he or she can figure out the "Flow theory decision formula"
(there is no such formula) can effectively lead a management team and "win"
the Game. We met this challenge in several ways.

One, by making the appropriateness of the GM's many decision-choices partly
a function of his or her understanding of the character, the motivation, and the
life circumstances of each member of the management team.

Two, the GM's "performance" at Game's end is judged on the basis of his or her
successfully balancing three things: ability to generate Flow in the team mem-
bers and to create a Flow-friendly corporate atmosphere at the Winery; profit
potential; and actions taken to protect the environment (sustainability). There
is no precise formula for achieving this balance (what FLIGBY's architects call
"the Triple Scorecard", discussed in Chapter 2); various combinations of deci-
sions can lead to different results.

Leadership and science

As a scientist, I am well aware that good leadership is not perfectly definable and precisely measurable. This is why all attempts to quantify observations and skills in FLIGBY had to be considered carefully and systematically, checked and rechecked by independent experts, and plausibility tested. Such an approach required circumspection, time and patience. Even so, the skillset profiles of the individual players that emerge at Game's end indicate attitudes and tendencies, not precise measurements. Nevertheless, it is my judgment that the architects of FLIGBY had taken no shortcuts, and that they are unbiased and cautious about interpreting the leadership skill profiles that the Game establishes for each player. A partial evidence of their cautious, no-shortcuts approach is that it took six years (2007 – 2012) to complete the project. I am pleased to note also that every aspect of how FLIGBY had been built is transparently documented in this book and in the Digital Appendices that accompany it.

Was the investment worth it?

The production of FLIGBY has required a lot of investment of time, expertise, and money, by many contributors. I certainly think that the investment I made in this innovative project has been well worth it. One external confirmation of this has been by independent experts who granted FLIGBY the international Serious Play Gold Medal Award in Seattle in 2012, designating it as the "best of the best" on the globe that year.

As important as the satisfaction we – as well as the thousands of individuals who had already played the Game – feel about a job well done is that FLIGBY has started to yield long-term research benefits that none of us envisioned at the start of the project (discussed in Chapter 10).

"Flow and Leadership" research

So far, this essay has been all about the past. **I am equally excited about the future: about the new frontiers that FLIGBY's unmatched and continuously expanding database has opened up for leadership research, especially as linked to the theory and practice of the Flow framework.** In just a few years

FLIGBY has been played by many business people, MBA candidates and other college students, as well as by individuals in all walks of life, generating millions of observations. This rich databank, whose key characteristics is the unbiased nature of the responses that are recorded, are available for testing existing and new research hypotheses about leadership and its changing requirements, as the world of technology, the role of knowledge workers, and the meaning of organizations are rapidly evolving in our dynamic age.

It is with FLIGBY's research potential in mind that the **Leadership & Flow Global Research Network** has been initiated by the producers of FLIGBY and by two of my colleagues at the Business Schools of the Central European University as well as CORVINUS University (both in Budapest, Hungary), Professors **Paul Marer** and **Zoltan Buzady,** co-authors of this book. I am involved in that project, too. It is to publicize this research opportunity and to recruit those seriously interested in the theory and practice of leadership, of Flow, or both, that we have initiated an occasional, open-access video session, "Leadership and Flow" live broadcasts and recordings. Together with my faculty co-hosts, we are inviting guest form around the world to take part, live, in discussions of various topics related to Flow and leadership.

In lieu of conclusions

Missing Link Discovered **is a milestone book on our long journey from "Creativity", to "Happiness", to "Flow", to "Leadership", to "FLIGBY", and to a "Leadership and Flow" Research Program.**

<div align="right">
Claremont, California

February 2019
</div>

PART I.
FLOW AND LEADERSHIP: theory, science, values, measure-ment and practice

"

*Nothing is more practical
than a good theory.*

Kurt Lewin

1

THE SCIENCE BEHIND FLOW AND FLIGBY
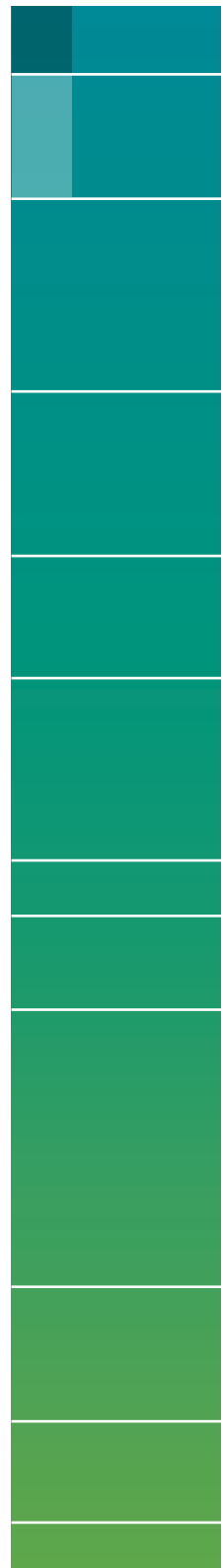
1.1 **At the intersection of positive psychology and leadership**

In his quest to understand the source of individual happiness, Prof. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's decades of research has led him to the simple idea that life can be good – really worth living in just about any environment – if the individual continues to accomplish things that are worthwhile for self and are also positive for the groups, the organizations, and the society he or she is associated with during a lifetime. (Society can be one's immediate or larger workplace, neighborhood, a country, or mankind.) This simple idea became a founding tenet of the rapidly expanding field of positive psychology, co-founded by Csikszentmihalyi. In this chapter we elaborate on those aspects of this new branch of psychology that are relevant (directly or indirectly) to a thorough understanding of FLIGBY's mission, design, and gameplay.

Illustration 1.1 – Professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, who coined the term "Flow" and devoted a lifetime to study how Flow can be generated and how it enhances the quality of life, the effectiveness of organizations, and the better working of society.

#Positive-psychology is the branch of the discipline that uses scientific understanding and effective intervention to aid in the achievement of a good and socially productive life, rather than treating mental illness. The focus of positive psychology is not mental disorder but personal growth, leadership, organizational effectiveness, and societal well-being.

A central concept of positive psychology is **Flow: a mental state in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement and enjoyment.**

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Positive psychology has particular relevance for organizations, especially in business management practices. To put it briefly for now: emotionally healthy and satisfied workers enjoy multiple advantages over their less happy peers and are likely to improve the performance of the organizations where they work.

1.2 "My [Csikszentmihalyi's] Way to Flow"

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, a Hungarian by birth who grew up in Italy, traveled in war-torn Europe as a teenager and by chance heard Carl Jung (the Swiss psychiatrist and founder of analytical psychology) speak, who made a strong impression on the young man. He buried himself in books by Carl Jung, Sigmund Freud, and others, never finishing high school.

Wanting to study psychology at the university level – a field that in Europe in the 1950s was taught only in medical schools – Mihaly immigrated to the USA at age 22. He enrolled at the prestigious University of Chicago (how he managed to get accepted with no high-school degree, no money, and only a smattering of English, his fourth language, is a mystery still). Following his BA, in 1965 Chicago awarded Mihaly a Ph.D. in psychology. A few years later he joined the faculty of his *alma mater,* where he had a chance to pursue large-scale, multi-year research, with the "experience sampling method" he pioneered, to develop and test his hypotheses.

In Mihaly's own words:[1]

> *My original research, which I still do, is creativity. Flow was an off-shoot of creativity. Two things struck me in studying thousands of creative artists, surgeons, top executives, others with impressive accomplishments, and even ordinary people working efficiently and seemingly happily in what to others would seem to be simple jobs.*
>
> *First, that it wasn't the reward that seemed mainly to motivate them. That was part of it, but, more importantly, they did what they did enthusiastically because doing it was rewarding to them, in and of itself. So I started looking at not how you do something, but how you feel when you're doing it.*

[1] **DA-1.1** "Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi Talks about His Life and Work"

Second, that irrespective of the field or type of work, many described their feelings in similar ways: metaphors or analogies that involved sports or the arts. They would say, 'It's like skiing', or 'It is like sailing', or 'There is a little bit of wrestling involved'. So finally I said, 'Since they all seem to describe the same thing, let's give it a name.' Looking over my many interviews, the most frequent analogy was something which flowed effortlessly, like being carried away by a river. So I decided to call it a 'Flow' experience.

Csikszentmihalyi explains further:

People are happy when they are in a state of Flow, a type of intrinsic motivation that involves being fully focused and being 'fully present' in a situation or task. Being in a Flow state means complete involvement in an activity, for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost.[2]

The managerial implications of Csikszentmihalyi's Flow and related ideas so captured the imagination of Claremont University Professor Peter Drucker (1909–2005), one of the most influential thinkers and writers on the subject of management theory and practice, that in 2000 he persuaded Csikszentmihalyi to move to Claremont Graduate University, where he is Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Management.

1.3 More about Flow and its context

The definition of Flow above is clear. Let's say a little more about how it was discovered, and place it in a broader context.

First, based on thousands of carefully structured interviews and the measurement of what might be called the "state of mind" of many volunteer individuals over long periods – as they engage in various types of activities (each involving different challenges and skills) – Csikszentmihalyi identified and labeled the frequently changing moods of a modern human being, as shown in Illustration 1.2.

[2]   *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York: Harper Modern Classics, 2008), p. 21.

Illustration 1.2 shows the eight-fold classification of a typical person's chang-ing "moods" during a typical day, while awake and engaged in various types of activities, each activity involving different combinations of challenges and skills. (Note the labels of the axes.) Not every person will find himself or herself in all the mood states in a given day. Also, the relative importance of various mood states will differ from person to person; some may seldom or practically never enter a given mood state. (A side remark: it has been found that just about everybody other than a very young child – irrespective of culture, educa-tion, and occupation – had experienced Flow repeatedly, at various times during their lives, without giving those experiences the "Flow" label.) [3]
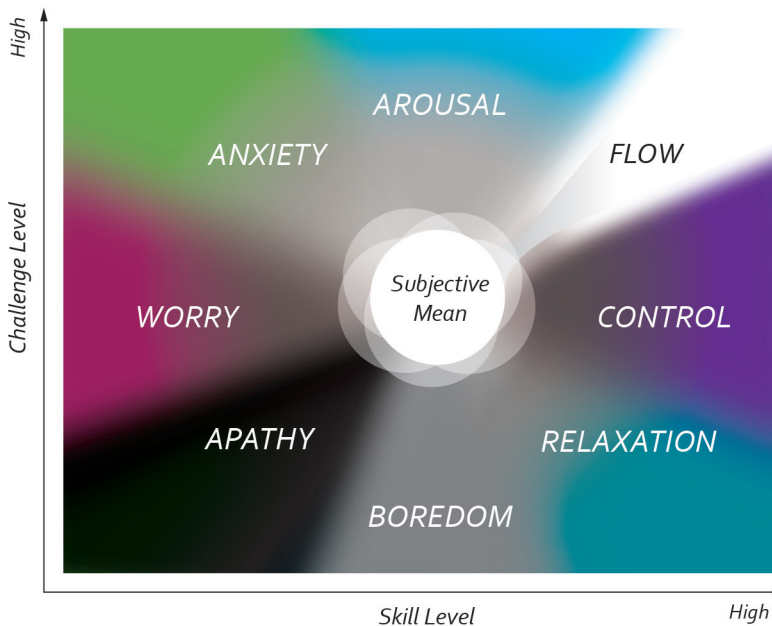
Illustration 1.2 – "States of Mind" during an individual's everyday experiences

The arrangement of the eight states of mind in Illustration 1.2 is arbitrary; moods can jump from any state to any other state without having to go through what may be intermediate stations.

The two axes of the chart are the level of skills an individual possesses and the level of challenges that the same person faces at any given time. One of the preconditions for Flow states to occur is that there should be a **good match between** the kinds of **challenges** a person faces and the **skillsets** he or she has; and for Flow to reoccur, to be willing and able to move, over time, to higher combinations of challenges and skills.

Flow is generally considered to be a "peak experience", "being in a Zone", that has limited duration, ranging from a few minutes to several hours; never more than a working day.

Flow is somewhat similar to the concept of **engagement.** The difference between them is that while engagement is usually a prolonged state, Flow is a temporary one. One can periodically re-enter a Flow state – in ideal situations, at increasingly higher combinations of challenges and skills. [4]

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3   Here is an amusing case in point from *Good Business:* "A few years ago, when the TV show, *Good Morning America* was planning a segment on Flow, the producer called from New York asking if I could give her the names of some research subjects who would be good to inter-view about what it means to be in Flow. I responded that I would prefer not to do so, be-cause it might well be seen as an invasion of privacy by the people who had participated in our research. 'So what should we do?' asked the producer dejectedly. 'Just take the elevator, go down to the sidewalk, and stop a few pedestrians passing by,' I suggested. 'In a few min-utes you should have some good stories.' The producer remained doubtful, but the following morning she called with a great deal of excitement. 'We have some wonderful people, some great stories' she said. The first interview was with an elderly man whose job was to make lox sandwiches in a Manhattan deli."(p. 102). Then follows a wonderful story of how this man gets regularly into Flow on his job. We suggest that the reader go to *Good Business* to find out. Quoting it here would make this footnote too long.

4   If an individual were to be asked to fill out a questionnaire about his or her Flow state ("are you or were you just in it?") at two different times during a day; the answers are likely to be quite different. However, if one were to ask about one's level of "engagement" at work at different times – even days or weeks apart – the result are likely to be quite similar.

Illustration 1.2 shows a space at the center labeled "subjective mean". That area represents an average level of challenges and skills of an ordinary person through an average week. The overall average of moods tends be in the middle, a given individual's personal center.

In the area of someone's "personal center", that individual's perception is that he or she is neither in a positive nor in a negative mental state. Conversely, the greater the distance a person moves away from his or her personal center point, the stronger the indicated state of mind becomes.

Csikszentmihalyi described the common features of a given mood state. He identified the Flow state (upper right corner), often referred to as **the Zone**, as the mental state of a person who is fully involved in a task, enjoying the activity, and feeling lots of energy. In his interpretation, being in a Flow state represents perhaps the ultimate experience in harnessing positive emotions, in line with the task at hand, exhibiting spontaneity, joy and creativity.[5]

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5 Csikszentmihalyi cites in *Good Business* Leo Tolstoy's description of a character's feelings in *Anna Karenina* as a perfect illustration of what it means to be in a Flow state. It is when the wealthy landowner, Levin, learns to mow hay with a scythe, following in the footsteps of his serf, Titus. Of course, being in a Flow state does not necessarily mean that the energy so captured will be for the good of the person, of the organization, or of society. An interesting research question is how to distinguish, *a priori* or *ex post*, a Flow state that yields positive outcomes from a Flow state that does not, and may even be counterproductive. For example, one can focus so much on his or her own personal Flow target that, at the same time, his or her actions cause harm to others. For example, what if an individual pursuing "personal" Flow ignores the justified expectations of colleagues about the requirements of teamwork, or the importance of observing the business unit's time and budget constraints?

6 Based largely on Csikszentmihalyi's, *Good Business (op cit.),* pp. 42-56. Each of the eight features need not be present for an individual to experience Flow. The relative importance of each feature will differ from person-to-person and from activity-to-activity.

7   Csikszentmihalyi labels this as "autotelic", the term he created from the Greek words "auto" (self) and "telic" (goal).

Flow states can be described in terms of the following basic preconditions and characteristics: [6]

> » **Balance between challenges and skills**
>
> » Goals are clear
>
> » Immediate and clear feedback (need not be positive but must be constructive)
>
> » Intense concentration
>
> » Effortless action; loss of ego
>
> » Sense of control
>
> » Distortion of temporal experience (unaware of time, space, noise, hunger)
>
> » Doing an activity because it "feels good" in and of itself, not in expectation of any external reward.[7]

The first core dimension is in bold to call attention to the facts that it is (a) arguably the most important dimension at the workplace; (b) a leadership challenge and skill to facilitate this matching whenever a manager/leader makes people-related decisions; and (c) an emerging research area at CORVINUS Business School by this book's co-authors (Chapter 10).

Illustration 1.2 simply labeled eight different "states of mind" of a person. It is just a classification matrix. Csikszentmihalyi and others have discussed in considerable detail each of the other states; here we focus only on those that are, in various ways, on the opposite sides of Flow. The three such "opposite" states of mind are Anxiety, Apathy, and Boredom. We can gain insight into the "Flow channel" by juxtaposing the Flow state against its opposite mental states (Illustration 1.3).

When we find ourselves in a situation that is progressively beyond our control to manage, that brings about a state of **Anxiety** within us, along with stress. Such situations often arise at the workplace because the challenges we are supposed
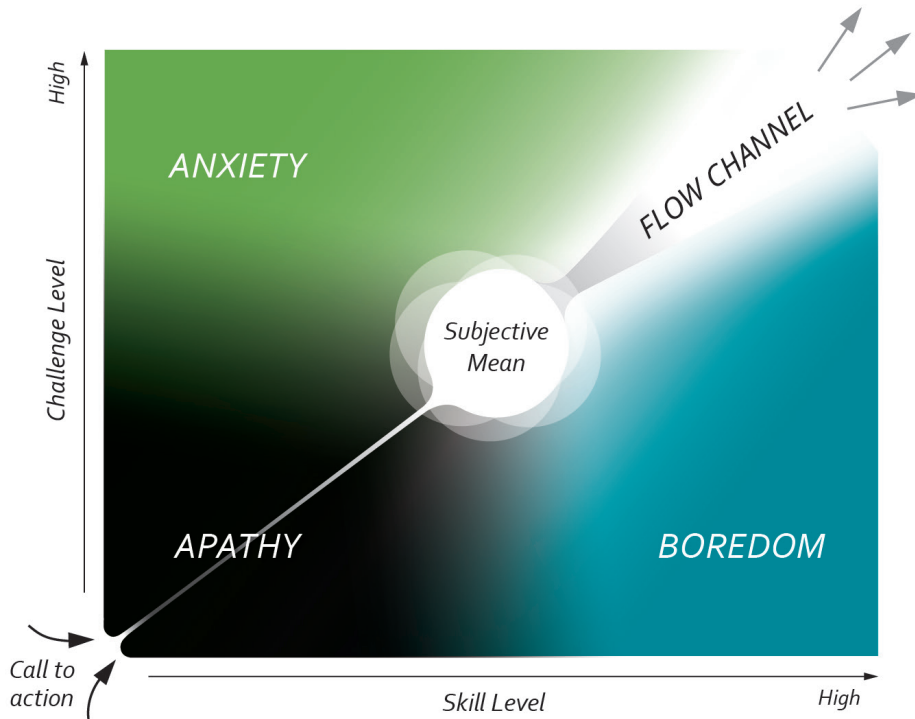
Illustration 1.3 – The Flow Channel

to meet are beyond our skill or authority level.[8] Another reason is the fear of being laid off if "downsizing" is in the air. If the situation seems to be insurmountable, it can lead to despair. In some cases despair can lead to giving up responsibilities or, in extreme cases, denying reality or seeking solace in alcohol and other drugs.

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[8] If the source of the problem is the authority above blocking us, or the authority we need to meet the challenge is not given to us (a type of block from above), the impact on us can be similar to that of the challenge and skill levels being greatly out of synch. In this context, it is useful to distinguish between ordinary stress, which can even be a good thing in prompting us to find remedies, from "distress", which typically occurs when we encounter a severe external block. For example, we want to take an initiative to solve a problem, but the boss "vetoes" it for selfish rather than for rational reasons. The biological differences between stress and distress were discovered and named by a Hungarian-born endocrinologist, Janos Selye, elaborated in his book, *Stress without Distress* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1974). Selye was nominated several times for the Nobel Prize; a university is named after him in his birthplace, Komarom (today, Komarno, Slovakia).

Another state of mind opposite to Flow is **Boredom**. It occurs when using our skills is yielding little satisfaction, and no new opportunities seem to be on the horizon to exercise our skills in a better context, or to learn new skills.[9]

Another rather dysfunctional state to be in is **Apathy**. Csikszentmihalyi says that this is perceived by many as the worst state to be in and people do anything to get out of it. Apathy is so intolerable that people resort to the most ready means of escape, often sinking into very passive types of activity, like watching TV without a clear purpose.

Csikszentmihalyi's research has shown that the concrete level at which an individual can get into a Flow state depends very much on finding a good balance between his or her skill level and challenge(s) to be met.

There are the two ways in which an individual already in a Flow state can enhance his or her Flow experience, that is, reach a higher level of Flow. One is the case where a person becomes so efficient in performing a task (be it at work, in sports, in a hobby, or in any life situation) that he or she becomes bored after a while. In this case, Flow can be regained by being given (or oneself aiming for) a more challenging activity. The alternative process is when a person in a Flow state suddenly faces a new kind of challenge, perceived as too difficult. In such cases the Flow state can be regained by developing one's skills to the level needed.

9

An interesting observation by Csikszentmihalyi on the "importance" of boredom (in his email to one of the authors): "The creative individuals I interviewed for my book on creativity kept saying: 'that I am worried about', many of them said, 'is that the current generation is never bored.' At first I was surprised – why would it be worrisome that young people are no longer bored? – but then they explained that much of the reason for their own involvement with painting, music, science, etc. originated from long periods of time in which they were very bored – because the family moved to the countryside, or because they became ill and had to spend a long period in bed or indoors – in other words, their interest became a form of self-therapy, developed as an antidote to boredom. Several of these individuals had earned Nobel Prizes, and they attributed it to having been bored as children. Perhaps one of the achievements of modern society has been the abolishment of boredom, but you wonder if this is at the expense of creativity as well as of Flow."

To many researchers, for example in the fields of human psychology and leadership, the key question is precisely this: how to achieve such higher levels of human productivity and personal happiness.

Getting into Flow is a complicated and dynamic process: if the level of challenges is too high, the person may find himself in Anxiety, Worry or Arousal, but not in Flow. If the individual's skill level surpasses the challenges being faced, the person may enter Boredom, Relaxation, or even Control, but definitely not Flow.[10] Thus, getting into Flow requires each person finding, at any given time, his or her own equilibrium between challenges and skills. The dynamic process of getting into and moving within the Flow channel is depicted in Illustration 1.4.
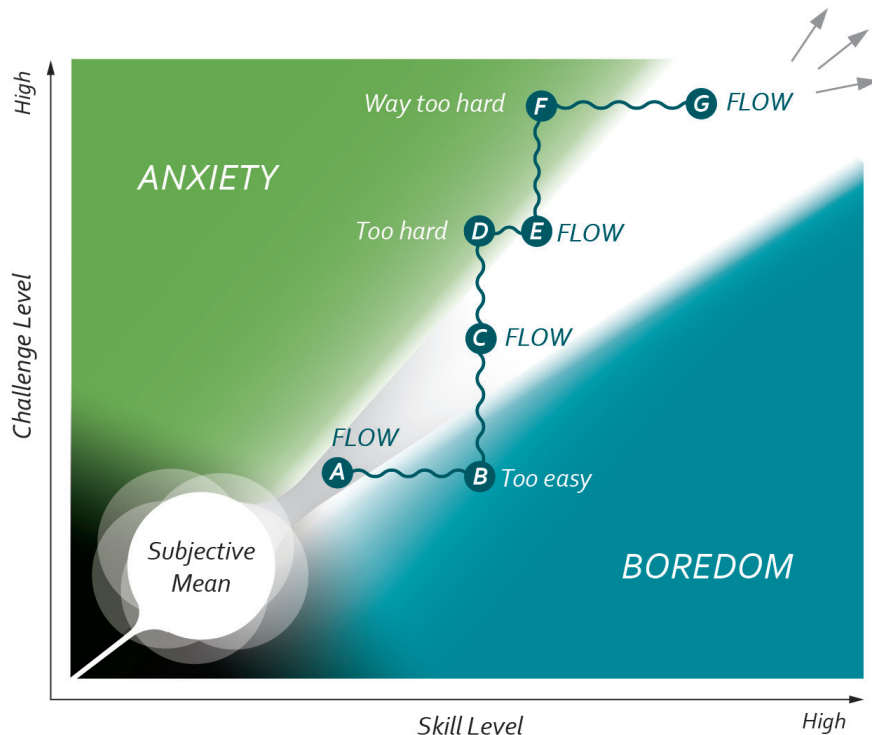
Illustration 1.4 – Flow Dynamics

[10] See Illustration 1.2 for the mood states named, and *Good Business* and Csikszentmihalyi's earlier works for detailed explanations of the various mood states.

Illustration 1.4 shows that person performing a simple activity experiences that – after a while – this becomes boring, too easy to perform. Some learning takes place, or has to take place, for the person to re-enter the theoretical Flow channel.

We have gone into the concept, the depiction, and the dynamics of Flow because the essence of this book and of the FLIGBY Game is how to link Flow and leadership, which is the focus of the next chapter.

Box 1.1 A glimpse of how Flow is handled in FLIGBY

Just to illustrate how deeply imbedded the concept of Flow is in FLIGBY, reproduced here is FLIGBY's "dashboard", with its "Flow Meter" (Illustration 1.5). In fact, whether a player will or will not win the "Spirit of the Wine" award (the ultimate FLIGBY prize) at the end of the Game will be determined in no small part by the player's ability to understand the Flow concept, and how entering into that state can be promoted both at the level of one's co-workers and also at the level of creating/sustaining a Flow-based corporate culture. (Details are found in the next two chapters and in Part II.)
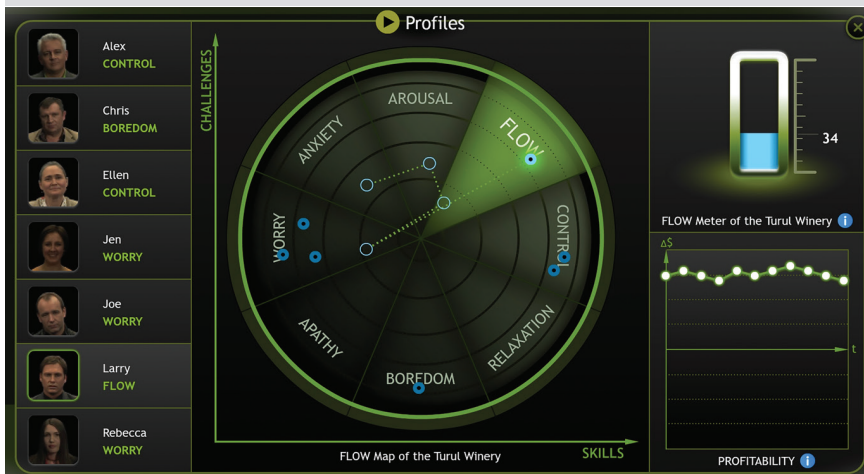
Illustration 1.5 – FLIGBY's dashboard with the "Flow Meter"

> *Discovery consists of seeing what everybody has seen and thinking what nobody else has thought.*

Albert Szent-Györgyi

2

LINKING FLOW AND LEADERSHIP

2.1 **Leaders versus managers**

At this point, we address briefly a controversy in the organizational literature: the presumed similarities and differences between "managers" and "leaders". The controversy is summarized and our views on it are stated in Box 2.1.

> **Box 2.1 How we use the terms "manager" and "leader"**
>
> An extensive body of literature has been focusing on what managers and leaders do. Some draw a sharp distinction. For example, "managers do things right, while leaders do the right things". Other experts, such as **Henry Mintzberg**, Cleghorn Professor of Management at McGill University, hold the view that compartmentalization is artificial. "Leadership involves plumbing as well as poetry. Instead of distinguishing leaders from managers, we should encourage all managers to be leaders. And we should define 'leadership' as management practiced well."[1]
>
> **Since our views are close to Mintzberg's, "managers" as well as "leaders" are terms we use interchangeably in this book.**

For the purpose of statements in the following subsections of this Chapter – or for how a person would play FLIGBY, and on how to interpret the skill-profile of anyone who has played the Game – one's views on the "managers versus leaders" debate makes not an iota of difference. Each player, stepping into the shoes of Turul Winery's GM, is expected make decisions and to conduct business in his or her very own style.

2.2 **Connecting Flow with management and leadership**

As Csikszentmihalyi wrote, and reaffirms in his contribution here, "Our jobs determine to a large extent what our lives are like."

How we feel ourselves at work has a decisive impact on our lives – positively or negatively. If the work environment is rewarding – not only or mainly in the form of compensation – but in terms of making us feel good about what we are accomplishing and, at the same time, that we are helping our organization

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[1]   http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/magazine/content/09_33/b4143068890733.htm

to achieve worthwhile goals, we are likely to be happy about it. Satisfaction and accomplishments at work will also contribute to our overall happiness as human beings.[2] Just think of what happens when one comes home from work all stressed out as opposed to when one arrives home and tells a loved one, "today (or in the past week or month) I really accomplished things and my contributions were appreciated."

The key statement that summarizes the Flow concept's relevance to management and leadership is that **the best way to manage people is to create an environment where employees enjoy their work and grow in the process of doing it**.

While the extent to which we enjoy our work and are contributing to the organization is partly a function of the attitude we bring to our tasks[3], managers and leaders can do a great deal to create a more rewarding work environment, thereby increasing the chances that the employees will be highly (or at least more) satisfied.

[2] An important distinction has been made between hedonic happiness, derived from material possessions and physical pleasure, that, in most cases, is temporary and whose intensity is difficult to sustain over long periods, and eudaimonic happiness, derived from doing one's best, given one's abilities and the challenges faced. An aspect of eudaimonic happiness, the one we are talking about in this volume, is finding meaning in what one does. (Hence the phrase, "the making of meaning", being part of the subtitle of Csikszentmihalyi's *Good Business* book.) The two types of happiness can coexist and be even complementary. Problems tend to arise when the pursuit of hedonic happiness dominates one's life. For a good discussion of the two types of happiness, see V. Huta and R. M. Ryan, "Pursuing Pleasure or Virtue: The Differences and the Overlapping Well-being Benefits of Hedonic and Eudaimonic Motives." *Journal of Happiness Studies,* Volume 11 (2010), pp. 735-762.

[3] An insightful way to categorize attitudes toward work is how one perceives the workplace: a job, a career, or a calling? A job tends to be not much more than the means to support self and family. A career can be important in terms of financial rewards (which can be a means to achieve things outside work the individual considers to be important). But the key marker of those who are career-oriented is their need to be recognized for their accomplishments by as many others as possible. Those who experience their jobs as a calling (i.e., vocation) are those who tend to experience Flow the most often – other things being equal. Of course, the attitude toward one's job can be greatly impacted by the skills of an organization's managers/leaders. (See Amy Wrzesniewski, "Finding Positive Meaning at Work." In Cameron *et al* (eds.), *Positive Organizational Scholarship: Foundations for a New Discipline* (San Francisco: Barret-Koehler, 2003).

High satisfaction – call it happiness – at work also brings substantial benefits to the organization because such a workplace

> » **attracts the most able individuals and is likely to keep them longer**
>
> » **obtains spontaneous effort from most as they do their tasks**
>
> » **promotes individual and team productivity**
>
> » **leads to a more committed organizational citizenship behavior,[4]**
>
> » **and improves organizational performance, broadly defined**.

One of the first and perhaps relatively the easiest of tasks to create an environment where employees enjoy their work is to ease or remove the many obstacles that typically stand in the way of experiencing **Flow** periodically, as well as **engagement** more continuously. Concurrently, and after the obstacles have been removed as much as possible, the continuing focus of attention of managers and leaders should be to behave and act so as to help generate Flow and to maintain a **Flow-friendly organizational atmosphere. (**Organizational or corporate "atmosphere" is a concept that is strongly linked to organizational culture and to theories of employee engagement) The next subsections, based on Csikszentmihalyi's *Good Business,* offer concrete, practical examples, respectively, of removing obstacles to Flow and creating a Flow-friendly corporate atmosphere.

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[4] Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is a concept developed by our colleague at the Kelley School of Business, Indiana University. OCB is defined as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that, in the aggregate, promotes the effective functioning of the organization". Dennis W. Organ, *Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Good Soldier Syndrome* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1998). A high OCB score may be considered an aspect of an employee's engagement. Examples of good OCB in, say, at an institution of higher education may include the frequency of attendance and the quality of contributions at important meetings and complying courteously and on time with staff requests for assistance with recruiting, attending alumni affairs, and turning in syllabi, book orders and student grades.

2.3 **Removing obstacles to Flow**

While people are internally wired to work because the human nervous system functions best when focused on a task and is challenged, **most jobs are not designed** to enable employees to get high satisfaction from doing their work. This is especially true when more and more of the employees and the rapidly growing number of external workers they hire on contract are knowledge workers.

> *What employees from the pharaohs down to modern TQM managers have been primarily concerned about is **not** how to tailor a job so as to bring out the best in the workers, but rather how to get the **most** out of them.[5]*

Building an enduring organization means, first and foremost, managing people so as to achieve a win-win situation for the employee and employer alike. The practical steps to achieve this can be organized under four subheads:

① Find ways to imbue the work with meaning.

② Make the objective conditions of the workplace as attractive as possible.

③ Select and reward individuals who find satisfaction in their work, and thereby steer the morale of the organization in a positive direction.

④ Articulate and practice a clearly defined and explained set of values.

2.3.1 **Imbue work with meaning**

Today, few jobs have clear goals. Organizations often have mission statements and the like but those tend to be too general. In the case of a large organization doing many things, mission statements probably must remain vague. More important would be to provide goals for a business unit, a team, and also for each individual employee. Much of what today's knowledge workers and other staff are required to do, for example by their job descriptions, are stated in terms of activities and rules that may make sense at some higher organizational

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5 *Good Business,* pp. 86-87.

level but whose purposes and objectives are unclear to the employee. In other words, while employees may understand *what* they are doing, it is often not clear to them *why*? Yet, without **well-defined goals in the short-, medium- and long-run, and the reasons for them,** it is difficult for an employee to be highly satisfied, to avoiding the feeling that she is just a cog in a big machine. One of the most difficult challenges for managers/leaders is to find ways to transform the chaotic and fast-changing external environment into a relatively stable and predictable work-environment, guided by clear rules, responsibilities and effective feedback.

For an individual employee to identify with an organization's mission or some specific goal is especially difficult if the organization does not produce goods and services that have real value, real meaning. For instance, if a firm manufactures or distributes cigarettes or weapons, engages in activities that severely pollute the environment, or if a government agency provides services that meet no real need, it is going to be difficult for an employee to be enthusiastic about its mission, except for the limited purposes of receiving a paycheck.[6]

Contemporary organizations often do not provide **adequate feedback.** To tell an employee that she is "doing OK" is insufficient. Feedback should be **specific and actionable**, delivered honestly but politely. Feedback should also discuss whether the employee as well as the unit or the larger organization has a need for the individual to grow, in terms of challenges and/or skills. And if the answer is affirmative on both sides, a mutually agreed plan and process about how to get there should be crafted and implemented.

There are large differences in generational attitudes toward expecting and giving feedback. Today's younger generation – the relatively recent newcomers into the labor market – has been socialized in a highly interactive and responsive virtual environment. When they hit the keyboard (if any, in this touch-screen

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[6]   So what if a leader, a manager, or a worker finds herself working for such an organization? She or he would have to make a decision whether the foregone intrinsic benefits of work at that particular place are sufficiently compensated by extrinsic benefits, such as power and pay, to remain there.

age), the response (feedback) is immediate. In all the many games they have played and are playing, there is instant feedback after just about every move. (This is so in FLIGBY, too: Chapter 8 is devoted entirely to explaining the many types of feedback during and after the Game). Thus, the feedback expectation of today's generation is so strong that it has become a conditioned part of their attitude also in the workplace.[7] By contrast, the "older" generation (even Generation X), whose members still hold most managerial/leadership positions, have more "old-fashioned" attitudes and practices in this area: their feedback tends to be less frequent and less specific than their subordinates expect. And while the younger generation's need for feedback may be the strongest, a frequent complaint on the part of many employees, irrespective of age, is not getting more frequent, more specific, more consistent, and more actionable feedback.

Good management/leadership should pay attention that **the skills of individual employees are well matched with the opportunities to apply them**. Having such a match – ideally, at gradually higher levels – is a necessary but not sufficient condition of experiencing Flow. A job that employs only a fraction of one's talents and skills is unlikely to be highly satisfactory in the long run. In such situations, opportunities for Flow as well as engagement are absent – or fewer and less intensive – than they could otherwise be. An effective leader tries to find out the special interests and skills of key members of her team; just as a good manager does with her subordinates. For example, a woman goes on a multi-year maternity leave, during which she voluntarily learns new skills. Being aware of this when she returns, and finding responsibilities where her new skills can be applied, is certain to be a win-win situation for the individual as well as for the organization.

A good leader/manager **balances the need for control from above** (that every complex organization must have) **with the need for a degree of autonomy that every employee holds dear.**

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7 One of the most frequent complaints of students in academia is that the grades they are receiving on their assignments and exams are not timely, the mistakes they supposedly made are not explained, and how they could do better the next time is not indicated.

> *Especially destructive is the behavior of those managers who insist upon controlling others not for the benefit of the organization [although they try to so justify it], but to bolster their own personal quest for power. ... A worker who feels micromanaged over every step of her performance [either faces continuous frustration or] soon loses interest in her job. ... In such by no means rare cases, subordinates become unwilling to sacrifice their own lives for another person's selfish agenda, and begin to withdraw psychic energy from the job.[8]*

Another issue that requires the ingenuity of leaders/managers is **how to allow some flexibility in the "9 to 5" or similar schedules that organizations impose on their workforce.** Individuals have their own time-clocks and outside responsibilities. There may not always be work to be done during all of 9 to 5. Some of the work could be done with equal or greater efficiency at the time of the employee's own choosing. Moving toward a more time-flexible approach, first and foremost for knowledge workers, is being facilitated by technological advances in communications. On the other hand, maintaining work morale is also important; too much flexibility may undermine it. However, the more an organization creates a Flow-friendly environment, including the right kind of performance-assessment and feedback system, the less likely it is that morale would be undermined by more flextime, part-time work, and the outsourcing of professional services to current and former employees and to others.

> *In conclusion,* writes Csikszentmihalyi, *achieving Flow at work is made difficult by obstacles that militate against the conditions necessary for Flow to occur. All too often, the job fails to provide clear goals, adequate feedback, a balance of challenges and skills, a sense of control, and a flexible use of time[9].*

An effective leader intent on creating or maintaining a Flow-promoting work environment would pay continuous attention to these (and other) leadership tasks.

8
    Good Business, pp.94-95.

9
    Good Business, p. 96.

2.3.2 **Make work-conditions attractive**

In addition to the foregoing, a lot of seemingly small things can be done to promote Flow and engagement at the workplace. Here is a quick and incomplete list, in no particular order; *Good Business* has many more, illustrating each with real-world examples. These things are not new, of course; they are simply viewed here from the prism of how they remove obstacles to, or actively promote, employees frequently experiencing Flow for short periods, and engagement on a continuous basis:

Limit constant interruptions to sustained concentration, which are obstacles to reaching or remaining in a Flow state. This task is the joint responsibility of each worker and her supervisor as well as that of managers and leaders at the top. *There are managers so preoccupied with their email messages that they never look up from their screens to see what is happening in the non-digital world. … One must draw a line and reassert control over the medium.*[10] Another one of those annoying interruptions is interminable, ineffective meetings.

» Make the physical work environment attractive (if possible) in terms of the architecture and the building's surroundings. While organizations differ greatly in what works, generally it is effective to pay attention to the lighting, to the cafeteria (make it cheerful), to serving appetizing food, to creating work-spaces that accommodate concentration as well teamwork, to civility in interactions, and to a dress-code conducive to creativity.

» If the workplace is in a large city, consider providing bus transportation to employees to prevent them from arriving exhausted after spending a long time in traffic jams.

» Regular, candid, and effective communication is supportive of Flow and engagement. *It is not unusual for managers who are insecure in their position to use "divide and conquer" tactics, keeping vital information to themselves, or releasing it unequally to their staff. Sooner or later this will lead to confusion and demoralize the team.*[11]

[10] *Good Business,* p. 135.

[11] *Good Business,* p. 119.

2.3.3 **Select and reward the right individuals**

One of the most fundamental requirements of creating an enduring organization where employee engagement is the norm and where experiencing Flow is facilitated is hiring, retaining, and advancing the right persons.

When **hiring**, and also when deciding whether to retain a person after a trial period, the first and most obvious question for a manager or management group is to ask: "Does the candidate fit the goals and values of our organization?"

One is unlikely to build a coherent, Flow-friendly, and enduring organization if people who comprise it have fundamentally different values, disagree about what issues are the most important (at the level appropriate for the candidate's position) and have different views on how operations should proceed. It is incumbent upon management to inform a candidate (and of course current employees, too) about the organization's fundamental values, key objectives, current priorities, and such basics as who reports to whom, who is responsible for what, and how employee performance will be evaluated. Unless this is done, employee dissatisfaction and chaos is likely to ensue.

With respect to **rewarding and promoting** employees, nothing destroys employee morale as quickly as knowing that self-serving, cynical, unengaged, or obsequious persons are tolerated, rewarded and promoted ahead of those who love the work for its own sake and believe in helping the entire organization realize its potential.

A subtle issue in evaluating and rewarding subordinates to which managers/ leaders need to pay attention is this:

> *In an organization where only success counts, and one in which an employee who does all the right things and fails is evaluated by the same measure as one who fails because of ineptitude, is an organization that is not likely to generate a great deal of loyalty. It is part of management's function to recognize and reward the performance **and** the attitude of employees, and not just their success, which may be due entirely to fortuitous circumstances.*[12]

[12] *Good Business*, p. 105.

Aligning words and actions is critically important. It is one thing for a leader to make the right pronouncements about the organization's mission, values, priorities, and *modus operandi*. However, if what is said is not supported by the leader's attitude and actions, employee dissatisfaction is going to be prevalent and the organization or the unit is not likely to perform well.

2.4 The role of values

Csikszentmihalyi's many publications relating to Flow always include statements and discussions of his set of values. The values he promotes reflect his fundamental philosophy of life and its meaning and purpose. At the same time, the values he advocates are also of the kind that, if implemented well, would enhance the satisfaction of individuals (in their private lives and as employees), would improve organizational performance (broadly defined), and would also move people toward greater social harmony within the organization, the nation, and perhaps beyond.

Focusing here on those aspects of Csikszentmihalyi's value system that are especially relevant for improving organizational performance, we present his ideas in two parallel and mutually reinforcing frameworks.[13] They are **an ethical responsibility framework,** for individuals, and **a leadership responsibility framework** that suggests additional value propositions for those managing/leading a team, a business unit, or an organization.

2.4.1 An ethical responsibility framework

Csikszentmihalyi's views on what it means to be an all-around good person can be summed up in three recommended ethical principles of behavior. We label these "three commandments", a term we coined without implying any kind of sanctity by this phrase:

> ① Do no harm for selfish reasons
>
> ② Help others experience Flow
>
> ③ Contribute to something beyond yourself

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[13] The two frameworks' labels are our contributions; ways to categorize (and comment on) the most applicable aspects of Csikszentmihalyi's value system.

Furthermore, neither Csikszentmihalyi nor we, the authors, claim that these are original concepts, with the exception of the second commandment: "help others experience Flow."

Illustration 2.1 depicts the three commandments; the text below explains and gives examples of the benefits of putting them into practice for oneself, for the organization(s) one is affiliated with, and for society at large.

Illustration 2.1 – An individual ethical responsibility framework

① Everyone is a leader in his or her own way. Within and around us there are countless challenges and opportunities each and every day. As long as we are guided by **"do no harm for selfish reasons",** we can and should learn from our successes and mistakes so that we gradually become better persons and, at the same time, more effective, "value-guided" managers/leaders.

② Every one of us is a part of several "teams" – from our family, to our social group, and in the workplace. It is our responsibility to bring out the best in our team members, including especially our co-workers and subordinates, realizing that our decisions affect their professional as well as personal lives. Extending this to organizations, knowledge-workers (especially) increasingly choose workplaces that offer more than just a paycheck. Organizations that **"help others to experience Flow"** are proven to be more successful on many performance dimensions than others that do not.

③ As individuals, while we enjoy doing our best, at the same time we should also "**contribute to something beyond self"**. Examples from the world of business would be working toward the real sustainability of our goods and services, our business model, and the environment. In more and more societies, such issues are moving from the periphery to the center of concerns; all stakeholders of organizations are expected to be in the forefront of solving the problems of the "commons".

2.4.2 **A leadership responsibility framework**

It is Csikszentmihalyi's conviction that

> *leadership must embrace the idea that before products, profit, and market share they are primarily responsible for the emotional well-being of their workers.*[14]

Emotional well-being in this context does not mean cuddling the employees or serving as their psychiatrists. It means, essentially, building and maintaining a work environment that generates engagement and facilitates Flow. And the principal objective of creating such an environment is not to exploit the talents and dedication of the workers for generating higher profits.

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[14] *Good Business,* p. 101.

The main objective of creating a Flow-friendly work environment is to make it possible for employees to grow as individuals, thus contributing to their happier lives. The improved performance of the organization is almost certain to be its valuable byproduct, creating a win-win situation for all.

To express the above idea slightly differently, it is incumbent upon today's managers and leaders to run a Flow-friendly organization to promote **employee engagement** and positive attitudes at the workplace. Done well, this helps reduce costs and employee complaints and makes the organization a place that people enjoy being a part of. Flow also has the ability to improve the quality of life of those who experience, as well as those who work in a Flow-friendly environment.

* * *

A key distinguishing trait of effective, visionary leaders is that they believe in a goal that benefits not only themselves, but others as well. People want to work for a cause, not just for a living. We all, but business leaders especially, must have the conviction that our existence – a large part of it devoted to work – serves a useful purpose and has value. Therefore, "sense-making" is largely the responsibility of managers and leaders.

One way to highlight the importance of leaders' "sense making" responsibilities is this. The first questions a leader should ask and then answer (taking into account input by the relevant stakeholders): "Who do we intend to be?" and not "What are we going to do?"

* * *

The implementation of effective, value-based leadership requires a new world view today; increasingly so tomorrow. The key element of the new world view is a recognition that leadership responsibilities today are much broader, much more encompassing, than at any time before in history. A leader's responsibility today is quantitatively as well as qualitatively different than it was earlier. We live in an increasingly complex "network age", which means greatly increased

interdependence among individuals, organizations, as well as nations; everything is linked to just about everything else.

One consequence of this enhanced interdependence is that although individuals and organizations naturally compete with one another, modern leadership also recognizes the need for rivals to cooperate, whether as members of teams or as parties to strategic alliances. A term often used to call attention to the increased interdependence among individuals and economic units is "**#ecosystem**". A simple example is the relationship between major film studios. While competition among them is intense, they also routinely lease to one another their assets, such as facilities, sceneries, even specialist personnel. This trend toward forming strategic alliances had been spreading for several decades, especially in global industries, such as airlines, automotive manufacturing, telecommunications, and pharmaceuticals.

Another reason that leadership responsibilities today are much broader than they used to be is that organizations have to be simultaneously present in different networks to be aware of emerging innovations and changing global trends. Such networks run across what used to be traditional industry sectors, technological and scientific platforms, and nation states.

* * *

This globally networked age also means that employees are interacting with a much large group of professionals, located in a much broader spectrum of occupations, than used to be the case prior to the technological revolution in communications. And professional interactions with those outside one's own organization have also become much easier, more frequent, and "open". One consequence of this new trend is that not mainly the "bosses" but employees, too, gain access to information and knowledge that can be vitally important for an organization. This results in **a more equidistant relationship between an organization's leaders and their subordinates,** contrary to the more traditional view. Employees as well as the leaders of other organizations in a network become each other's "followers". This means, increasingly, that good

leaders can only attract followers if they themselves are attractive to be fol-
lowed. Employees want respect **from** the boss, but just as strong is their needs
to feel respect **for** the boss! Employees want to find that their boss is a leader
who is worthy of their loyalty.

Therefore, the authors of this book are of the view that those managers and
leaders who have Flow-based values and attitudes and embrace Flow-promot-
ing practices are **more likely to be followed** than those who have the kinds of
dysfunctional practices mentioned earlier in this chapter.

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Leadership today has moved beyond a professional running of an organization.
Increasingly, leadership means taking decision initiatives outside formal organi-
zations. In today's increasingly complex network society – where entrepreneurs,
subcontractors, consultants, and freelancers are slowly outnumbering classical
employees of knowledge-based organizations – leadership can require not only
the running of a bureaucracy but also the provision of expertise, credibility, and
trust – in other words, values – and the professional-human relationships that
are formed during one's career. **Leadership in this newer world means confi-
dent, value-based decision-making and the ready acceptance of its conse-
quences**.

2.5   **Flow-based leadership practices in the real world**

At this point the reader may think and ask:

> *OK, I am now aware of the basic concept of Flow. I do see how a
> Flow-friendly organization is likely to perform better than one that is
> Flow-unfriendly. I understand that working in such an environment,
> and being in a Flow state as often as possible, contributes to an
> individual's satisfaction about his or her life. Therefore, by and large
> I concur with the usefulness of the statements on how to build a Flow-
> friendly organizational culture. But what I would like to see now is*

> *how these impressive-sounding ideas and recommendations can be –*
> *or have been – put into practice in real-world organizations. Are there*
> *such case studies?*

An excellent question; we can only offer two half-satisfactory answers.

First, Csikszentmihalyi's *Good Business* book is built on many case studies. He cites case after case to illustrate particular observations and recommenda-tions. But those are not complete case studies. They do not show how an entre-preneur or a new CEO, or the leader of a nonprofit organization, or the head of a government agency did go about building a Flow-friendly organization, from the bottom up, step-by-step.

Second, we are aware that a few such complete case studies do exist. One of the most remarkable is the Ph.D. dissertation of Michael Crooke (MC, as he likes to be called), written while he served as the newly-appointed CEO of a large multi-national, Patagonia.[15] MC wrote his thesis under Prof. Csikszentmihalyi, focus-ing entirely on creating a workplace environment conducive to Flow. Patagonia was his laboratory. "Flow," he says, "was at the center of everything I was doing at Patagonia, and remains at the heart of all my professional activities since." [16]

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[15] Patagonia, the company – that used to be famous for high performance outdoor wear and its strong commitment to the environment – had entered a period of competitive and organi-zational uncertainty. The situation forced the company's founders to put the company up for sale. This is when MC took over as CEO and began working with the founders and a new man-agement team to turn things around by systematically applying Flow engagement strategic initiatives. During the next five years, the company moved from 88th to 15th on Fortune's list of the **100 Best Companies To Work For.**

[16] *ReEvolution of Business: A Mandala for Organizations in the 21st Century* (Ph.D. thesis, Claremont University, 2008). Today, MC combines careers as a sought-after business consultant with aca-demic positions. He is the inaugural Avemere Professor of Practice and founding faculty of Ad-vanced Strategy at the Lundquist College of Business at the University of Oregon, where he is Interim Associate Dean. MC is also the founder and Lead Faculty for the Socially, Environmen-tally, and Ethically Responsible (SEER) business certificate program at Pepperdine University. Based on his vast business experience, dissertation, and continuing work with Csikszentmi-halyi, the SEER business model focuses on innovating winning business strategies that profit-ably incorporate social, ethical and environmental values into the organizational value chain.

Another case study of the systematic application of Flow comes from a most surprising source: American football. The coach of two Super Bowl champion teams, Jimmy Johnson, wrote:

> *For many years I've admired Dr. Csikszentmihalyi's pioneering work and tried to apply his concepts on the football field.... Being totally absorbed in the task at hand is essential to becoming a sports champion. ... Flow tells you how to get into that positive, winning mindset."* [17]

Csikszentmihalyi himself wrote a book (with sports psychologist Susan Jackson), *Flow in Sports,* that recommend a set of actions on the part of athletes and coaches to optimize the conditions in training and performance that allow Flow to occur. The book is full of vivid examples, captivating quotes, with research findings and interpretations. A more recent book by the master of the Flow concept that applied it in sports appeared in 2017. [18]

Even firefighters can experience, and can thus teach us about Flow-promoting Leadership. (See Judith L. Glick-Smith, Flow-Based Leadership (Baskin Ridge, NJ: Techniques Pub, 2016).

Let us close this chapter by noting that US President Bill Clinton and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair were among the thousands of accomplished persons who named Csikszentmihalyi as one of their favored authors.

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[17] Jimmy Johnson, *Turning the Thing Around: Pulling America's Team Out of the Dumps — And Myself Out of the Doghouse* (New York City: Hyperion Books, 1994) tells how he applied Flow-based management in coaching the Dallas Cowboys to two Super Bowl championships in 1992 and 1993.

[18] Susan Jackson and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow in Sports* (Champaign, Ill.: Human Kinetics, 1999). Another excellent study of Flow in all kinds of sports is by Steven Kotler, *The Rise of Superman: Decoding the Science of Ultimate Human Performance* (NYC: Houghton Miffin Harcourt, 2014). In his *Fortune* interview (March 17, 2014) Kotler spoke about the science behind Flow, its potential to boost workplace productivity, and how to get oneself in the zone. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Philip Latter and Christine Weinkauff Duranso, Running Flow: Mental immersion techniques for better running (Champaign, Ill: Human Kinetics, 2017)

* * *

The next chapter focuses on a pioneering new way to measure managerial/leadership skills, with particular attention to those that are especially useful for building and maintaining a Flow-based work environment. Since measuring such skills is at the very heart of the FLIGBY Game, and since the large databank being created by FLIGBY has already measured the skillsets of about 7,000 individuals, the chapter that follows is important for those who wish to understand the scientific foundations of the Game as well as for those who consider using the databank being generated to support academic as well as applied research.

* * *

A large body of research has shown that maintaining a Flow-friendly workplace is a win-win proposition for owners, managers, as well as for the workforce, irrespective of whether the organization is a business, a government agency, or a nonprofit organizations.

The mission of the game FLIGBY, and also the objective of this book, is to identify, measure, and help develop leadership skills that, if applied, would help create a Flow-promoting work environment.

"

Don't pay any attention to what they write about you. Just measure the results.

Andy Warhol

3

MEASURING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

3.1 Skills are measured during the Game

A key task in order to build scientific measures relating to Flow-based leadership personalities and competencies was identifying the management/leadership skills that facilitate the creation and maintenance of a Flow-based organizational culture.

The producers of FLIGBY did just that, in cooperation with Prof. Csikszentmihalyi. His *Good Business* book (and the many interviews with business executives on which the empirical parts of his book are based) mention – but do not categorize – the particular leadership skills relevant for promoting Flow.

All in all, FLIGBY measures 29 management/leadership skills, as is shown in Illustration 3.1. (**DA-3.1** defines each skill.)

Illustration 3.1 – Leadership skillset identified and built into FLIGBY
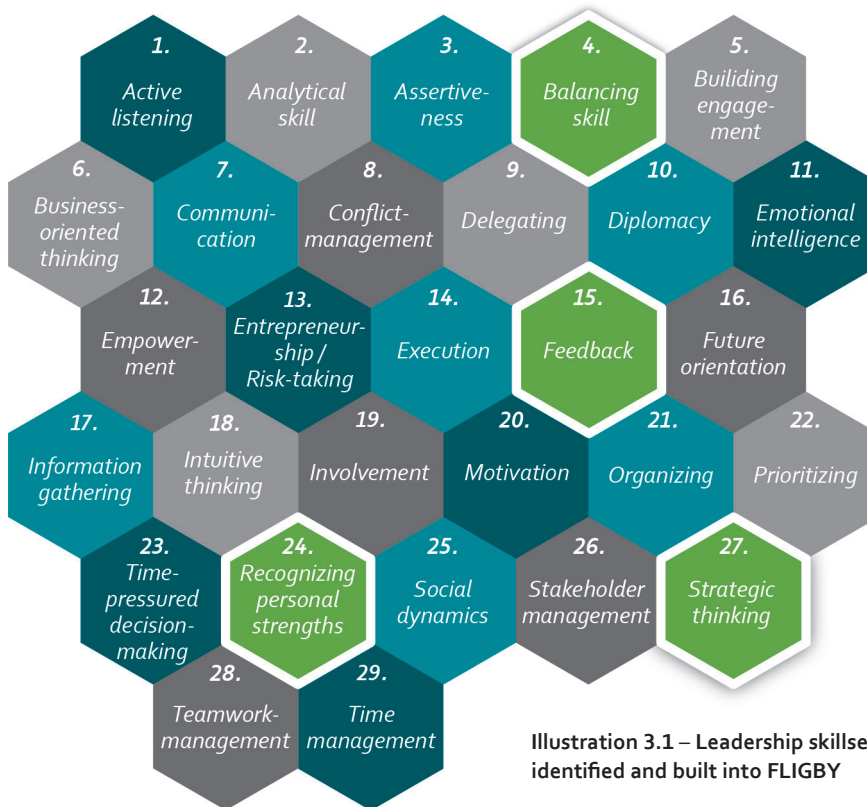
It is important to stress that 25 of the 29 skills are by and large those that can be found in most theoretical and empirical descriptions of what leadership is about, along with the skill-classification systems that often accompany those theories and descriptions. This, of course, is what one would expect as a matter of course. Generating Flow is not something that is fundamentally different from those well-known practices that good managers/leaders are expected to follow as a matter of course.

In terms of managerial-leadership skills, the modest contribution of the **#FLIGBY-leadership-competency-skillset** is adding four competencies that other classifications tend to emphasize less – or define somewhat differently than we do – but which are also important, along with the many standard leadership competencies, in helping to generate Flow. The newly-emphasized skills (colored green in Illustration 3.1 and defined in the footnotes) are:

> » **Balancing skill[1]**
> » **Feedback[2]**
> » **Recognizing personal strengths[3]**
> » **Strategic thinking[4]**

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[1] This refers to managers' and leaders' (a) awareness of both the on-the-job challenges and the skill levels of their subordinates and (b) the actions taken to help achieve, for each key subordinate, a reasonable, dynamic balance between the challenges they face and their skill levels.

[2] Feedback to subordinates and colleagues is information regarding their performance that they can act upon. Feedback should be as immediate as possible and provided respectfully.

[3] This means the readiness to realize one's own – and others' – strengths, which are personal attributes one could have been born with and/or cultivated over many years, through experiences. This skill means the realization that such strengths can be potentially used to the benefit of the organization, and finding ways to do so.

[4] In addition to what this phrase usually means, in this context it also entails the effective communication of the mission and goals of the organization, with a clear explanation of why and how the tasks of subordinates and colleagues are concrete steps toward achieving the mission and the goals of the organization and/or the unit. Receiving concrete goals and milestone markers along the way are necessary but not sufficient conditions for reaching a Flow state. The true enjoyment often comes from the steps taken toward attaining a goal, not from actually reaching it.

"Strategic thinking" is among the four because we define it somewhat differently than the concept is typically used in the literature; see **DA-3.1**.

Greatly simplified, FLIGBY (and Csikszentmihalyi) stress that before making an important decision, the impact of alternatives on employee engagement (whether through the Flow states of individuals or through their effect on the **#corporate-atmosphere**) should also be considered. This does not mean that generating Flow or improving the corporate atmosphere should always have priority over other considerations! It means only that the impacts on Flow and on the corporate atmosphere should not be neglected when an important decision is made.

In FLIGBY's and in our conceptualization, the corporate atmosphere improves when a leader's decision furthers the team spirit, collegiality, and trusting each other; more generally, whatever is conducive to individual and group engagement.[5]

The 29 skills can be sorted, in several ways, into just a handful of skill categories, as will be shown below.

3.2 Validating FLIGBY's leadership skillset

To give a reader a feel for what the FLIGBY skillset is comprised of, and indirectly to validate it (in the sense that its skillset is in the mainstream), Illustration 3.2 combines the 29 skills into the same five categories as those that one of the most widely-used such frameworks employs, the so-called **#Executive-Core-Qualifications-(ECQ)-system[6].** The ECQ system happens to be the standard for measuring the skills and competencies of applicants for high-level positions in the US federal government. The ECQ system thus

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[5]   It is not clear to us whether it is possible to say that an improved corporate atmosphere implies enhanced group-level Flow. This raises the issues of whether there is such a thing as group-level Flow and if yes, can it be measured? The architects of FLIGBY have answered both questions in the affirmative: a #"corporate-atmosphere-meter" (CAM) has been built into FLIGBY. How the CAM changes after certain key decisions is shown on FLIGBY's dashboard. We make no claim that our definition and measurement approach should be considered, or should become, a standard. This area certainly invites further research.

[6]   Description of the ECQ system and its categories can be found on www.opm.gov.

defines the competencies supposedly needed to build an organizational culture that drives for results, serves customers well, and builds successful teams and coalitions within and outside the organization.

Illustration 3.2 shows that all five major skills categories in the ECQ system are well covered by the 29 FLIGBY skills. It is important to note that the 29 skills measured by FLIGBY can be regrouped along any other categorization of leadership skills, such as those mentioned in this footnote.[7]

For example, one of the instructors using FLIGBY, Prof Michael Crooke of the University of Oregon, has compared the FLIGBY's skillset with one of the globally most frequently used leadership skillsets, that of **#Gallup's-Strengths-Finder.** The comparison is presented in two pie-charts (Illustrations 3.3 and 3.4). The four different colors mark the same four categories into which Strengths-finder's and FLIGBY's individual leadership skills are sorted.[8]

Illustration 3.3 shows how Strengthsfinder's skills divide when classified into four broad skill-categories; Illustration 3.4 the FLIGBY-Csikszentmihalyi skillset when classified into the same four broad categories as Strengthsfinder's (pp.62-63.)

There is a high correlation in the two pie-charts between the skills shown, as well as in the relative weights of each of the four identical skill categories; no surprise, as expected. The main difference is that FLIGBY's also includes those four managerial/leadership skills that are especially important for successfully applying the Flow-theory-based decision framework. (Further details **DA-3.1.**)

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[7] Here are some common examples of how others categorized management/leadership skills: Bloomberg published their grouping in Jan 2015 (http://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2015-job-skills-report/); McKinsey also identifies essential leadership behaviors and categorizes them (*McKinsey Quarterly* January 2015). Also Korn/Ferry International, a headhunting firm, identified and published a categorization in *Forbes* (April 2013).

[8] Prepared by Professor Michael Crooke and Professor Robert Bikel for instructional purposes in their MBA course on leadership; permission to reproduce them here is acknowledged, with thanks. (For a comparison of skill categorizations, see **DA-3.2.**)

3.3 Business use of FLIGBY's tailor-made skill combinations

The previous section gave just two examples out of an almost infinite possible number of ways it is possible to regroup the 29 management/leadership skills. Since companies as well as government agencies and NPOs operate in different industries, purposes, and business contexts, they often identify quite specific management/leadership competencies they believe are needed for success. Organizational success typically requires a **contextually different blend of skills.** Each such "blend" can be custom-made from the FLIGBY 29.

The applied significance of this capability to recombine the 29 skills into different categories, as needed, is that by playing FLIGBY, it is possible to determine **the current skill profiles** of an organization's current and/or prospective management group. This way, it is thus possible to identify **skill gaps**. And if the Game were to be played repeatedly at, say, annual intervals, it would provide a baseline and a planning tool for improvement, yielding useful information to strategic **#HRM** and corporate strategists on the direction in which individuals' and the group's leadership capability has changed and/or needs to be changed to better accomplish the agreed strategy.

The Game thus covers and integrates, at a highly sophisticated level, advanced strategy and leadership topics. Incorporating games into business programs has become ever more frequent in recent years because good games have proven to be effective teaching and learning devices and because participants not only appreciate but also increasingly expect to encounter such games in their programs. Thus, the use of on-line simulation games has become an ever more prevalent and sought-after tool. That this is a growing trend has been documented by the results of a survey published in 2013.[9]

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[9] Training Industry, Inc., "Using Virtual Environments for Leadership Development and Training". (Document ON24; 2013); www.virtual_leadership_training_report_2013.pdf

Major Categories in the Executive Core Qualifications (ECQ) System

Leading Change	Leading People	Results Driven	Business Acumen	Building Coalitions
This core qualification involves the ability to bring about strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals. Inherent to this is the ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment.	This core qualification involves the ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Inherent to this is the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts.	This core qualification involves the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. Inherent to this is the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, and calculating risks.	This core qualification involves the ability to manage human, financial, and information resources strategically.	This core qualification involves the ability to build coalitions internally and externally, with non-profit and private sector organizations and international partners to achieve common goals.

Corresponding Management/Leadership Competencies measured in FLIGBY

Leading Change	Leading People	Results Driven	Business Acumen	Building Coalitions
Future orientation	Emotional intelligence	Business-oriented thinking	Analytical skill	Assertiveness
Intuitive thinking	**Feedback**	Execution	Information gathering	Communication
Strategic thinking	Motivation	Entrepreneurship/ Risk-taking	Organizing	Builing engagement
Involvement	**Recognizing personal strengths**	Prioritizing	Delegating	Diplomacy
Empowerment	**Balancing skill**	Time-pressured decision-making		Conflict management
Stakeholder management	Teamwork- mamangement	Time management		Social dynamics
	Active listening			

Illustration 3.2 – FLIGBY skills and categories juxtaposed with those of the ECQ system

Illustration 3.3 – StrengthsFinder's leadership skills arranged according to Strengthsfinder's themes
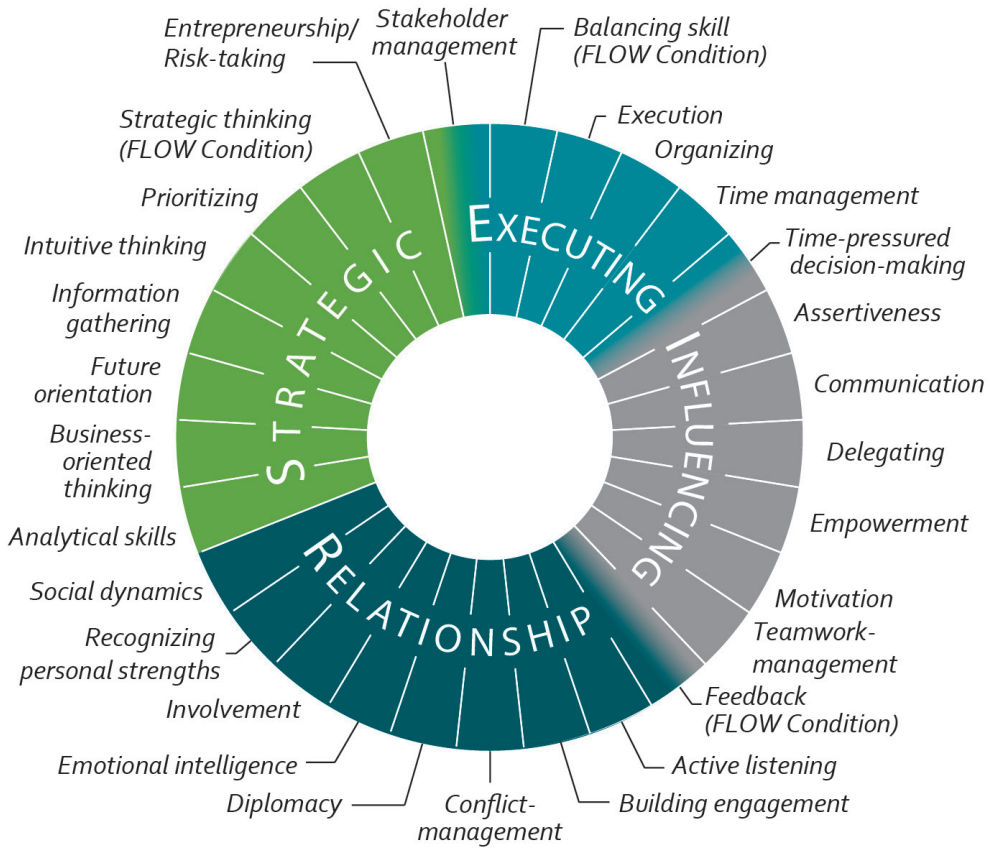
Illustration 3.4 – FLIGBY-Csikszentmihalyi leadership skills arranged according to StrengthsFinder's themes

» A majority of companies plan to use virtual environments for leadership training as well as for continuing professional education.

» Learning leaders whose organizations used virtual environments were more likely to rate their organization effective in providing leadership training than those that did not use virtual environments. Virtual environments were rated as most effective for delivering continuing professional education.

To this survey's findings we can add that:

» Employers can consider FLIGBY as a key element of their "blended-learning" approach to training (blended learning is discussed in Chapter 5). This means that the experiences of the participants in the FLIGBY Game, played individually, are then discussed in a group, and the lessons applied in the context of the organization's own environment and problems;

» FLIGBY's own "skillset" measurements can be adapted (translated) into the organization's own competency system. The main advantage of this approach is the unbiased nature of the resulting skill measurements obtained via FLIGBY as compared with the typically biased other measures generated via the organization's own survey or one of the standard surveys. The reason for the bias typically found in those other approaches is that participants quickly learn "to game" such surveys to their own (presumed) advantage. By contrast, playing FLIGBY is so absorbing, and how a player's leadership skills will be measured is so hidden, that the only way "to game" the Game is to try to win it.

Irrespective of whether an organization does or does not have its own competency-measurement system, FLIGBY's skillset measurements can throw **new light on the skills of an organization's own personnel.** The results can then be benchmarked in various ways, within and outside the organization. Knowledge of the skill-levels so obtained can be especially useful when an organization faces

a new challenge, such as a merger or an acquisition, and it wishes to smooth the adaptation to the new situation. For example, given that the incompatibility of organizational cultures is often a fundamental cause of merger failure, **#predictive-people-analytics** can be part of a cultural due diligence process, helping to detect the risks arising from organizational skill gaps, and creating the right remedial strategies.

More generally, when an organization faces a new challenge that implies that certain skills are particularly valuable for successfully managing them, predictive analysis can help identifying skill gaps and suggest remedial action.

* * *

This section has focused on the business relevance of FLIGBY and its large skills-databank. Those are also tools for supporting more theoretical research, an issue we'll return to in the concluding chapter. For either type of use – scholarship or business – the analyst will want to understand how the leadership skills of those playing FLIGBY are measured. Only if the analyst gains confidence in the method – reinforced if its limitations are also explained clearly – would there be a basis for considering investing time and resources in FLIGBY. Therefore, the Game's skill-assessment methodology is the focus of the next section.

3.4 Methodology of establishing a player's leadership skill profile

In FLIGBY, each player's leadership profile is comprised of his or her scores on each of the 29 leadership competences that were enumerated in Illustration 3.1. The profiles are automatically generated at the end of the stimulation for those who had completed the Game. The continuous recording of every stroke of every player, as well as the complex statistical analysis of the results, are done routinely in the automated and pre-programmed algorithm embedded in FLIGBY's sophisticated **#Master-Analytics-Profiler (MAP)**, described in Chapter 7.

On each of the approximately 90 of the more than 150 decisions that the "GM" has to make in the Game, there are anywhere from two to five choices.[10] On each decision, two independent FLIGBY expert teams ranked the answers from the "most appropriate" (in which case the player gets positive feedback within the Game already and the algorithm scores positively certain elements in the player's skills profile), to the "least appropriate" (in which case, and in all the in-between cases, the skill scores do not change).[11]

On the decisions subject to scoring a player's skills, the two independent expert groups agreed on what would be the "best" decisions. (In a few cases only, they also scored positively the still acceptable "second best" decision.) Most decisions during the Game are assumed to require (and thus reflect) anywhere from one to a half-a-dozen of the 29 leadership skills. In each instance when a player makes the "most preferred" ("ideal" or "best" choice; however, these labels should not be interpreted literally), he or she earns a point for the decision.[12]

For some of the items in the FLIGBY Leadership Skillset a player has as many as 30 occasions to earn points; no item has fewer than nine. This approach of course means that the strength of the evidence on which a player's

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10   Decisions on the 60 or so other dilemmas involve routine conversations or administrative issues, so handling them does not presume to entail any particular leadership skill.

11   One team, led by a psychologist deeply familiar with Flow theory, designed the 150+ decision questions, the answer choices, and identified the "best" answer for each decision. Later on, another team, comprised of different leadership development experts, played the Game "blind" to ascertain whether they would reach the same consensus on the "best" answer as did the original design team. In those few cases when there were disagreements between the two teams, those were reconciled, in some cases by modifying the phrasing of the decision question.

12   If the "right" answer was selected, a single point was assigned to those skills presumed to be needed to make the correct decision. The reason that a player's decision can only add but not subtract points in measuring the particular skill categories of the player is that the focus of the MAP is to show potential leadership skills, rather than highlighting any player' skill-gaps. Even this approach, however, will show the player's skill strengths and weaknesses, but not as sharply as if not hitting the "right" answer would be penalized by taking points away.

competence level is determined is "well established" on certain skills and "less well established" on certain other skills in the set.[13]

For **each particular skill,** the maximum number of points that can be earned is standardized at 100%. This makes it possible to determine the percentage score of each player on each skill. This approach facilitates the comparison of a player's level of skill among the 29 skills and to compare it with the average of the group the player was a member of. The approach also allows making comparative analyses vis-à-vis other cohorts, across industry sectors, by nationality background, by job tasks, and many more.

While one can have confidence in the skill-profile measurements of the players (subject to the caveats mentioned), one has to **exercise care and judgment when interpreting a player's numerical results.** For example, can one meaningfully compare the skill scores of an undergraduate student with those of a seasoned executive? Obviously, one cannot.

The "solution" to this problem, in the first instance, is to focus on in-group comparisons. For example, the scores of a group of managers in an organization – having played FLIGBY individually – can be compared with one another or, even better, with the average scores of the entire group. The same approach would make sense, say, for a group of undergraduates, for an MBA class, or for those dozen or more persons who are applying for managerial positions in a firm or in a government bureau.

In the second instance, another approach that would "solve" the problem of comparing apples (undergraduates) with oranges (experienced executives) would be to juxtapose the averages of similar groups, or an individual's scores in a group with the average scores of persons in all similar groups. However, even then there can be small snags, as shown by an example: when we compared the average scores of a full-time MBA class in India with those of a full-time MBA class in the USA (Box 3-1).

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[13] **DA-3.1**, which defines and describes each of FLIGBY's 29 skills, also shows the maximum number of occasions when it is possible to earn points for a given skill.

Box 3.1 FLIGBY players' scores: India versus the USA

When one of us (PM) assigned FLIGBY to an all-Indian student group of 60 in a full-time MBA course in Mumbai, the majority of the Indian students answered the following question (just an example) differently than most of their counterparts did in an MBA course the same instructor taught only weeks apart in a full-time USA MBA program:

*How should Turul Winery's GM ("you") respond to a long-time woman employee's rather emphatic request for you to let her participate in an upcoming management meeting? She backed her request by stating that she has lots of good ideas for consideration to be discussed with you, the new GM, and with the other managers at the meeting. (She is **not** part of management.)*

A large majority of Indian MBAs opted to deny the request, whereas a significant percent of US MBAs opted to accede to it. The issue is, of course, more complex than the above brief facts might suggest. For example, also important to consider is the morale at Turul Winery before you, the new GM, took over. In any case, it is clear that a systematic cultural bias had entered into the decision for a majority of US and Indian MBAs.

One conclusion from this case is that the skill profiles of players from cultures fundamentally different than that of the USA (or even of Western Europe, within which there are also large differences in business cultures) are measured less accurately than a simple comparison of numerical scores, even of groups seemingly well matched, would suggest.

At the same time, differences in average profiles obtained from the Indian and US MBA groups was a good occasion for discussing important issues with both groups: For the Indian students, it helped them to become aware and to illustrate certain aspects of US business culture, just as it was useful for US students to learn about interesting dimensions of India's business culture.[14]

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[14] See the photos of PM teaching all-Indian and mostly US MBAs, respectively (Chapter 8, Section 5).

> FLIGBY offers a rich menu of situations for discussing with any group how the impact of differences in the ethnic and national (perhaps also industry and corporate) cultures of the players can influence what would be considered the "most appropriate" decision choices in other cultures or situations.

Whenever FLIGBY is played, **some** participants – including instructors – call into question some of FLIGBY's "preferred" decision choices: are those truly the "best" in the given situation? Players often come up with their own – and in their opinion, "better" – decisions than any of the alternatives offered, and defend their reasoning vigorously.

It is for this reason – and to satisfy those players who ask for explanations as to why one or another of the decision choices identified by Mr. Fligby as the best is really so – that we are making available (for instructors only) a Private Guide to Key Decisions (**DA-3.3**), which states the experts' rationale behind their choices. Yes, it is quite OK for anyone – instructor, player, research scholar, FLIGBY reviewer – to disagree with any of the rationales stated in **DA-3.3**, since what we are dealing with is not exact science. We'll not defend our "preferred" answer as being definitely "the best" under all circumstances. What we think important for the integrity of the Game and for the research that FLIGBY's databank might support is to be transparent about our method. A criticism surely more harmful would be if Mr. Fligby's "right" choice would be seen to be arbitrary because no explanations were given.

We encourage instructors facing such "contentious" decision situations to ask players to discuss their views, their decision alternatives, their reasoning, and the outcomes they would expect from an alternative decision. Such discussions can take place during a debriefing session, on a digital course discussion forum, or on shared blog surfaces. The aims of this kind of exercise are to further enhance the learning process by the players becoming aware of different perspectives (teaching them to be more tolerant of alternative views) and to familiarize themselves with Flow-based leadership interventions.

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PART II.
FLIGBY:
game objectives,
features, and
instructional uses

I.

II.

4

5

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7

8

III.

"

You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation.

Plato

4

FLIGBY'S PLOT AND HOW THE GAME PROCEEDS

4.1   **The plot links leadership and Flow**

You (the player of FLIGBY) are the recently appointed GM of the fictional Turul Winery in California (see **DA-4.1**). You face the challenging task of having to achieve a state of harmony and co-operation in a team significantly weakened by internal conflicts due to the dysfunctional leadership style of the previous GM. As the new GM, your tasks include regaining the Winery's economic strength, now facing competitive pressure, and to establish good relations with Turul's external stakeholders, including the local community.

The general **objective** of FLIGBY is to prompt you to **solve dilemmas and make decisions** that are consistent with Csikszentmihalyi's *Good Business* precepts in general, as summarized in the Chapter 1. This, of course, means decisions in accordance with Flow-based leadership practices, also integrating ethical values and leadership responsibilities discussed in Part I.

A key task is to create an environment that promotes teamwork and enhances Flow. Thus, one of the key **aims** of the Game is to bring as many colleagues as possible – even if just for a short time – **into a Flow** state. You have to judge when to be supportive of a colleague and when you have to practice "tough love" in the interest of the team, the Winery, its stakeholders, and prudent environmental management. At the same time, your decisions concerning strategic questions on the future of the company have to be made in accordance with the expectations of the Winery's owner, Bob Turul.

The Game is a 23-scene adventure, each like a little story or a problem to solve within the overall plot. (**DA-4.2** gives synopses of the 23 Scenes.) You will be signaled each time you earn a "Flow Trophy" for helping a colleague into a Flow state, or a "Sustainability Badge" for making an environment-friendly decision. In addition, you will be able to continuously monitor your progress on various aspects of your GM's performance. Illustration 4.1 shows a snapshot of the main user interface; **DA-4.3** gives a more detailed explanation.

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Flow Trophies   **FLIGBY's Interactive Movie Screen with subtitle**   **Game Control Panel**

Illustration 4.1 – Snapshot of FLIGBY's main user interface: what the player sees

From left to right: the number of Flow Trophies the player has earned up to this point in the Game. At the center is FLIGBY's interactive movie screen, each with a subtitle; this shot is showing Jan, the GM's assistant, complaining. On the right is the Game control panel, where the player can set and modify various game functions.

4.2 **Interacting with your team and making decisions**

Why don't you take a few minutes now and meet the colleagues you'll be work-ing with and managing? This would give you a "hands-on" feeling about the company and the wine-making business and a glimpse of the roles and per-sonalities of the Game's key people. You can meet your new colleagues either by using the QR code in Illustration 4.2, or by visiting www.fligby.com/tour-your-team/. In either case, the introductions would take you about 10 minutes. Or you can skip the introductions and continue to read. (**DA-4.4** gives more information about each character.)

Illustration 4.2 – Listen to a brief introduction of your Turul Winery team[1]

[1] Click on the QR code or go to the http://fligby.com/tour-your-team site.

During the Game you'll be called upon to make about 150 decisions. What kind of decisions?

Since a picture is worth a thousand words, let the drawing below illustrate the kinds of problems you will have to deal with.

Illustration 4.3 - Stylized examples of typical dilemmas

On most decisions – for example, on how to run a strategy meeting with your team – **you must choose** one answer from 2 to 5 options presented to you. The answers you select will put you on your own individual path. There are many possible paths to reaching different results by the end of the Game. On whatever path your early answers take you, your subsequent answers can continue or reverse, even several times, the path you have started out on, since there are many forks ("story branches") on the road and you'll be learning as the story unfolds.

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4.3   How do I win this Game?

You, the player, will have to balance multiple objectives, just like any manager has to do in the real world of business.

Since FLIGBY's main purpose is to teach Flow-promoting management/leadership skills, it should not come as a surprise that most important among the objectives is to promote Flow at the Winery. This can be done in two ways. One: by helping to get some of your colleagues into a Flow state, trying to do it more than once. (But you have to be careful not to promote Flow too much at the expense of meeting other business objectives). Two: by calibrating your decisions so as to promote a Flow-friendly **#corporate-atmosphere**.[2]

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One other objective is managing Turul Winery's profit potential.[3] The third objective is that the Winery should follow business processes friendly to the physical environment.

Your performance as the GM of Turul Winery will be indicated (in part) by winning or not the Game's ultimate prize, the so-called **#Spirit-of-the-Wine-Award** (See **DA-4.5** for details).

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[2]   "Corporate atmosphere" shows the average "mood" and level of probability of having an atmosphere in which the Winery and its managers have clear goals, information, manageable challenges, and effective teamwork.

[3]   Profit potential rather than actual profitability is measured because the Game spans six months of virtual time, too short for your investment in innovations and in people to bring impressive profit results.

While playing the Game, you can periodically win two other types of lesser awards: **Flow Trophies** (each time your decisions help put a colleague into Flow) and **Sustainability Badges** (each time you make an important decision that helps protect the environment). However, you must watch Turul's expenses incurred in both of these good causes so as not to undermine profitability too much – just as in real life. How winning the Award is determined and how you, the player, should interpret the outcome that you did not win it are explained in Box 4.1

Box 4.1 Interpreting "winning" and "not winning"

Many define a video game as a goal-oriented, rule-based activity, with the following two key characteristics: interactivity in a virtual environment and that the player must struggle against resistance forces. The latter means a challenge to "win". Given that FLIGBY is meant for leadership development and people analytics (measuring skills), it was a dilemma whether to make FLIGBY a game that can be "won". Its architects decided to make FLIGBY "winnable", for these reasons:

» During the test period we found that it was an elementary need of players to know whether they had won or not. (This is how we are as people: when we play we need both an interesting challenge and a precise feedback, perhaps because it is so difficult to get either of those in real life.)

» It was discovered that the incentive to play FLIGBY "just" to become a better manager/leader has insufficient motivational power to approach the task with enthusiasm. Therefore, we came up with an imaginary "Spirit of the Wine" award. The control groups that were told only that their single game task was to win the Award (saying nothing about developing leadership skills) responded, unexpectedly, with enthusiasm, and dived into the Game with much greater spirit than those who were told FLIGBY's real purpose.

» Winning the Award or not winning it is considered by players as a concise, unambiguous feedback on how they have performed.

The formula for winning was established largely on the basis of whether the player's decisions were in accordance with the principles and practices of Flow-based leadership. The design of the award formula starts with the idea that the player has to balance three key performance indicators (KPI) of Turul Winery: (1) profitability at the end of the Game; (2) the number of Flow Trophies won throughout the Game and the "corporate atmosphere" by the Game's end (both of which are linked to the GM being able to create and maintain a Flow-friendly work environment); and (3) taking environmentally friendly decisions. The sum of points so earned by a player on the above KPIs is juxtaposed with the average points earned by the entire population of FLIGBY players who had completed the Game up to that point. To decide who wins the Award and who does not, we draw the line so as to yield a more or less normal (bell-curve) distribution: 40% of those "above the line" win the Award.

Comments by many instructors and professors have indicated that players are really concerned about winning! If they do not, they tend to draw serious – and unwarranted – conclusions about their leadership capabilities. For this reason **it is important to stress that a player's "skill profile" (received as an individual report after the Game) is not directly linked to winning or not winning the Award.** In other words, it is possible to win the Award with all sorts of skill profile combinations.

To highlight the importance and contributions of a Flow-based organizational culture – without neglecting an organization's "profit potential" as well as its "impact on the environment", FLIGBY came up with the **#Triple-Scorecard** idea. This concept measures the managerial/leadership performance of each player of FLIGBY at the end of having made 150+ decisions. **Triple Scorecard** is a new construct developed by FLIGBY's architects, reflecting Csikszentmihalyi's FLOW-based value framework (Illustration 4.4).[4]

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[4] Similarities and differences between FLIGBY's Triple Scorecard framework and (1) the Balanced Score Card (BSC) and (2) the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) frameworks, both well known in the literature on leadership and organizational performance, are elaborated in **DA-4.6**.
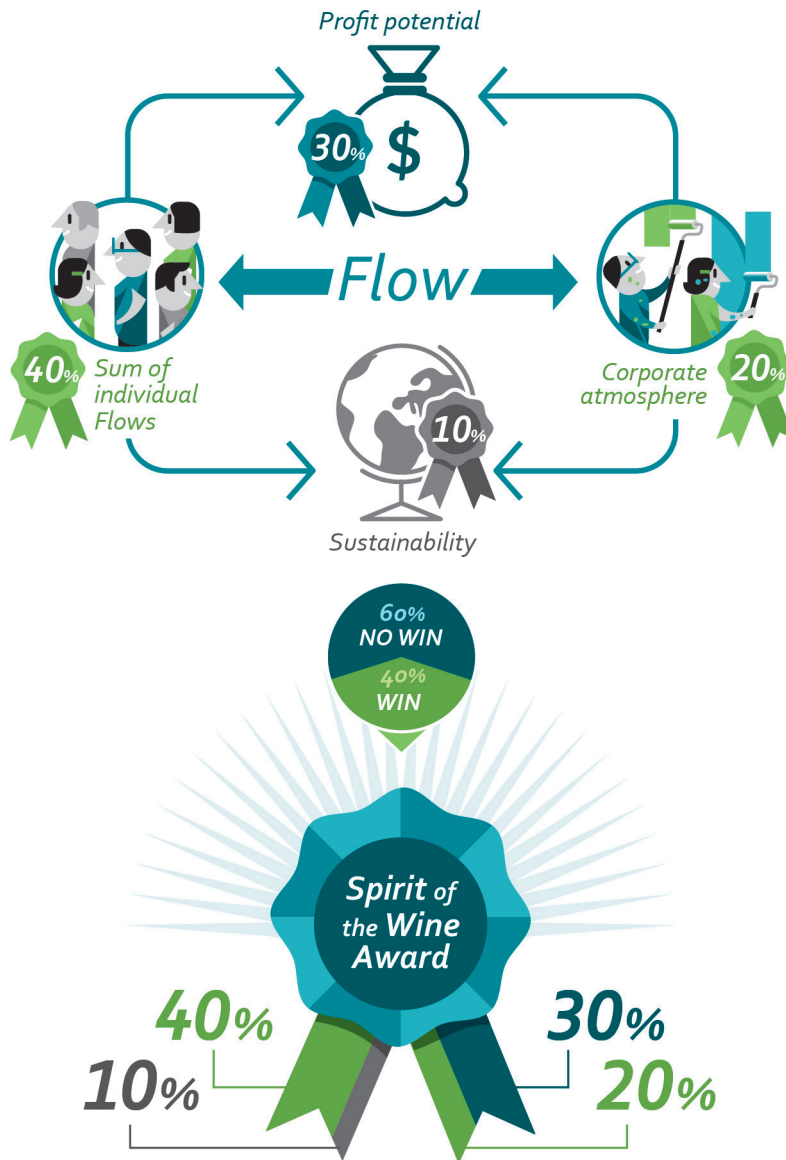
Illustration 4.4 – FLIGBY's "Triple Scorecard" and the "Spirit of the Wine" award

The Triple Scorecard framework is applied in the FLIGBY Game as follows:

The **final score** of each player (making decisions as the GM of Turul Winery) is the weighted sum of his/her decisions' impacts on **(1) generating Flow** in individual team members **and** contributing to a Flow-friendly "corporate atmosphere" (60% combined weight); (2) sustaining or improving the Winery's **profit potential** (30%); and (3) making sure that its products and production processes are **environmentally sustainable** (10%).

Is it realistic to give such a high weight to Flow and so much lower weight to profitability?

Our answers are two-fold: Most of the 29 skills that FLIGBY measures (Illustration 3.1) are standard leadership competencies, so that those who do well on them are certainly expected to perform well also on profitability. Let us recall that promoting Flow and profitability are not either/or propositions, but reinforcing ones, with the causation running primarily from Flow to profitability, for the many reasons already mentioned (especially in Chapter 2).

Second, given this book's focus on the relationship between Flow and leadership (and that the subtitle of the book is *FLIGBY: The Official Flow-Leadership Game*), the main objective of the Game is to teach and to measure (then teach it some more and measure it anew) the ability of a player to understand and apply the Flow concept, along with Flow-based ethical values and responsibilities. At the same time, this must be done in a business-realistic setting, which means that the organization's profit potential and the environmental sustainability of operations should not be disregarded.

Facing triple – and in some cases contradictory – challenges means that the GM has to find a good balance between the elements that will determine his/her performance. Those players whose final score will be above the 40 percentile threshold – set by the Game's architects – will win the Game's epic prize, the **#Spirit-of-the-Wine-Award**. (For a detailed discussion of further aspects of the Game, see Chapters 6 and 7 and the DAs supporting them).[5]

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4.4   **How much time to play the Game?**

Nearly everybody plays FLIGBY outside class-time or work-time. The over-whelming majority of the thousands who had played the Game already did so in several installments over a period of days or weeks; an approach that the architects of FLIGBY recommend. This is a "serious game." There is no "game over" until after all 23 Scenes have been completed. The 23 Scenes take place during a season at the Winery – about six months of actual time compressed in the Game into six months of virtual time, during which all 150+ decisions have to be made.

It is difficult to be precise about how much time it will take you to play FLIGBY through. Although a few players had completed the Game in "one sitting" (either because they got into Flow themselves and lost the sense of time while playing, or because they waited until just before the instructor's deadline). Depending on how often you restart one or several Scenes (the options explained in Chap-ter 6), how much time you'll spend in FLIGBY's **#Multimedia-Library** (**DA-4.7**), and various other factors, the average game-time of those who had completed it was 7 to 10 hours. As was noted and we recommend, the large majority did so in several installments.

Let us close this Game-introducing chapter by noting that while playing FLIGBY requires no special knowledge or skill, playing (and teaching) FLIGBY well are more complex than it may appear at first sight. Therefore, the next several chapters and the many supporting Digital Appendices provide details about various aspects of playing – **especially about leadership teaching and training** with – FLIGBY well.

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5   Whether any particular individual who played FLIGBY will win the "Spirit of the Wine" award is determined by whether his or her score will be higher or lower than the average score of the many thousands who had played FLIGBY up to that point. If the player happens to be a member of the group, playing at the same time, where many perform above the universal av-erage (such as a group of MBAs in a leading business school), then it is likely that the majority of the players in that group will win the Award. Conversely, if the Game is played by a group of undergraduates in a no-name business school, it is likely that most will not win the Award. (For a comprehensive explanation of the "Spirit of the Wine" award, and the description of a similar award that the California Wine-Growers' Association actually gives out annually, in real life, see **DA-4.5**.)

The next chapter discusses the growing importance around the globe of "serious games" in education and training, the reasons for it, how games have become ever more sophisticated, and the advantages games have over the more traditional approaches in education and training. Several of the points made will be illustrated with the example of FLIGBY.

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*I guess you guys aren't ready
for that yet. But your kids
are gonna love it!*

Marty McFly,
"Back to the Future" movie character

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THE WORLD OF SERIOUS GAMES

In Part I the reader became familiar with the theory of Flow and its relevance and application in improving the science and art of management/leadership. The previous chapter (4) introduced the reader to the game FLIGBY, whose objective is to identify, measure, and help develop leadership skills that, if applied, would help create a Flow-promoting work environment.

At this juncture, it is time to step away, temporarily, from a further discussion of FLIGBY'S features and offer a few key facts about the rapidly growing and maturing world of serious games. References to FLIGBY illustrate various aspects of the genre.

5.1 Definition and key features

A **#serious game** is typically an on-line application that makes use of the mechanisms of videogames to communicate specific information (knowledge) that helps introduce relevant concepts and the application of those concepts to solve problems. Serious games differ from classical videogames in that their primary objective is not entertainment but effective learning. A well-constructed serious game can also be fun to play, as is FLIGBY.

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The terms **#game-based-learning (GBL)** and serious games are sometimes used interchangeably. However, there is a difference: serious games usually have as one their purposes the **behavioral change** of the players – in education, in industry, in business, in marketing/advertising, in the military, in government, and in the nonprofit sectors – whereas in GBL the emphasis is more on the retention of knowledge, less on inducing behavioral change.[1]

Serious games often involve **#simulation** of real-world events or processes designed for the purpose of solving a problem.

It is difficult to run "real-life" experiments on complex systems, such as the functioning of an organization designed to achieve certain purposes. Quite often it would be helpful to know – or at least to plausibly guess – "What would happen if our organization or unit would do this or do that?" "What if I, the manager,

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[1]   For a thorough discussion of this issue and of the impacts of various types of games on the young, see Thomas M. Connally, et. al., "A systematic literature review of empirical evidence on computer games and serious games". *Computers and Education,* 59 (2012), pp. 661-682.

were to make the following decision on a difficult dilemma?" Or "Would it be better for the organization and for me if I chose alternative B?"

Simulations can help answer these types of questions. Simulation is an approach and a tool that makes possible **controlled experiments**, based on clear rules for the player. A good simulation requires a model that reflects reality, but in a simplified way. For example, FLIGBY models an imaginary Californian winery. The **#micro-simulation** depicts certain aspects of running a winery in a fully realistic way; in this case, the kinds of problems that a winery manager is likely to face. The simulation builds the characters of the management team realistically, depicting personalities and their conflicts in ways that any FLIGBY player is likely to have routinely encountered in his or her work-life. At the same time, the simulation neglects certain other aspects of operating a winery, or deals with them in a highly simplified manner.

Simulation is also known as **#problem-based-learning**, or whole-task learning, that puts the player into the role of a problem solver, responding to realistic workplace scenarios. The lessons are built around a series of progressively more complex situations. A scenario-based game is somewhat similar to a decision-dilemma-driven teaching case study. Scenario-based learning lets players acquire experience through a trial-and-error process that is as effective as getting on-the-job training, without having to face possible real adverse consequences, such as the burden of having made wrong decisions.

Scenario-based learning combines the magical appeal and relevance of stories with the realism of hands-on training. Virtual scenarios let learners gather professional expertise and experience within a much shorter time than what they would have obtained working in real jobs. For example, in FLIGBY, six months of virtual time in the life of Turul Winery is compressed into a game of a few hours.

A good way of positioning serious games involving simulation is shown on Illustration 5.1 (drawn by the authors), where the core segments labeled "Serious Gaming" and "Simulation Games" represent the genre just described.

Interactivity is a key feature of serious videogames. Narrative conversation is an important way we interact with one another in the real world and make sense
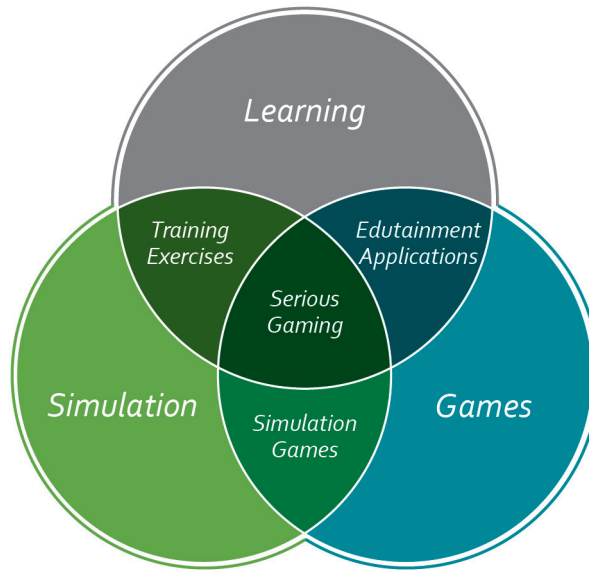
llustration 5.1 – Serious games at the intersection of learning, games, and simulation

of our environment. Similarly, a game with an interactive narrative system feature tells stories in a virtual world in which the user is an interactive participant. Since the behaviors the user exhibits by his or her "verbal" decisions during the game will affect the way in which the storyline unfolds, interactive narrative systems, like FLIGBY, use a branching story structure where non-interactive story presentations are intertwined with player decision points.

#Story branching occurs when the player's choices determine which levels, objectives, and decision-choices they will face later in the game. Consequently, the game offers multiple endings (as FLIGBY), depending on how the player performs at key branching points within the simulation.

The **#game-restart-function** of an interactive videogame takes the branching approach further. The game restart function allows and encourages players to experience two or all possible endings in order to fully understand the game's overarching narrative. Players can decide if they wish to travel just on one path

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(branch) or, sequentially, on several branches of the story consecutively, and learn more thereby. (Chapter 6 explains when and how restarts are permitted in FLIGBY.)

This brings us to the **#trial-and-error** feature of serious games with interactive simulations. Trial and error in the virtual world is an important feature of serious videogames because it effectively "neutralizes" (disengages) human beings' fear of failure. Worry about failing some tasks is wired into human beings: afraid of losing our reputations, being labeled losers, considered to be someone who is "not good enough". It is worth noting, incidentally, that everyone fails in life sometimes; it cannot be avoided; failure is part of a learning process. Depending on how one reacts to the experience, failures can make us stronger. Many successful people have failed often and learned much from the experience. As one observer put it:[2]

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> *To me, failure and self-development come hand in hand. It is not a question if:* **'Will you fail or not?'***, but rather* **'What level of risk did you take?'** *when you fail. Successful managers and leaders suggest testing concepts, ideas in low-risk environment to minimize risk associated with failure.*

If one thinks about it, our whole life is based on **trial and error.** It is the multitude of experiences we collect throughout life, including the mistakes we make, that shapes who we are and how we make decisions. One of the most attractive features of serious, interactive videogames is that they test one's skills – in FLIGBY's case, the player's management/leadership skills – in a safe, zero-risk environment that allows the player to fail and to experiment and learn without having to face the real-life consequences of failure.

This brings us to another important feature of serious simulation video games: **re-playability**, essential in an educational setting. With FLIGBY as a case in point, re-playability refers to two aspects:

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[2] Joseph F. Frederick, "What is 'trial and error?" http://flowleadership.org/tag/leadership-skills/.

First, can/should an instructor or a trainer use the identical game, played by several or many individuals, **each one alone**, at the same time?[3] A twist on this question is whether the same videogame can be assigned to different groups at the same time or at different times? Repeat play (labeled "re-play-ability") involving people who might know each other would not be advisable if the game score were to rely heavily on response(s) to a single or to a few "big surprise(s)". This is so because others may then be warned to watch out for "the surprise(s)" and to react in a certain way. FLIGBY's storyline does **not** involve big surprises, so on that account, the Game is suitable for repeat play by many, simultaneously or sequentially.

Second, could an individual who had already played the game through once be motivated to play it again? In the case of FLIGBY, there **are** motivations to do so. When one plays the Game the second or the third time and selects answers on certain key decisions different than the first time, the Game will change in non-trivial ways, owing to its **story-branching** feature. The feedback will be different, and the final score as well as the player's skill profile, too, will change. This makes replaying an excellent learning experience. And for those who did not win the "Spirit of the Wine" award the first time, a strong incentive to replay would be to see if they can succeed the next time.

Thus, in both meanings of the term, FLIGBY does have good "re-playability" feature.

A good way to sum up this section is to enumerate those broad game features ("rules of game construction") that are prerequisites for any serious video game to have a chance to be successful. The reasons for most rules are self-evident; a few are explained in footnotes.

3

In a single-player game – as most in this genre are – input from only one player is expected. In FLIGBY's case this is so because the persona of the GM is an individual, not a committee. Furthermore, single-person-playing is a requirement because each player's skills will be measured, and the results can be meaningfully interpreted only for an individual, not for a group. However, there are great group-learning opportunities in FLIGBY after the gaming session, as discussed in Chapter 9.

Features of successful simulation games:

» Build an engaging story[4]

» Have strong characters a player can identify with or dislike

» Make successive tasks increasingly difficult

» Offer an attractive prize or a succession of prizes

» Add unexpected turn of events; surprises (keeping in mind the stated caveats)

» Give players a significant degree of control over the game[5]

» Set and enforce clear game-playing rules

» Ensure that all interdependent aspects "fit" together well

» Allow trial and error

» Limit the number of objectives the player should try to reach in the game[6]

» Give frequent feedback (See Chapter 7 on FLIGBY's multiple feed-back system)

» Try to make the game original and creative [7]

» Perform user experience tests[8].

[4] FLIGBY's scene by scene plot is available in **DA-4.2.**

[5] The player influences the game during the 150+ decisions.

[6] Too many objectives would place limitations within the design process, the costs can rise quickly, and the interpretation of the final objectives and result would be blurred. Chapter 4 introduced and described FLIGBY's "Triple Scorecard".

[7] One creative idea in FLIGBY was to include a comprehensive "Multimedia Library". The player receives a signal when there is a reading or a video that could help with a decision. If the player clicks on the signal, he or she will be taken directly to the appropriate reading.

[8] This means testing the computer skills, the interests, and other determinants of the target population. Testing reduces the chances that the game will not be user-friendly. Furthermore, the opinions and suggestions of representatives of the target population can be taken into ac-count in the final game design. The user experiments that FLIGBY's creators performed before finalizing the design were mentioned in the previous chapter (see Box 4.1).

FLOW

Balancing challenge and your own skill level - The more a FLIGBY player learns about him/herself and remembers the characters and their motivations, the better chances to win the Award.

YOU ARE IN THE DRIVING SEAT

FLIGBY's player is put in charge of running Turul Winery, to set its strategy and to manage its people.

TRIAL AND ERROR

FLIGBY provides several opportunities by restarting a scene or the entire Game.

AN ENGAGING STORY

FLIGBY's complex virtual characters tend to elicit strong emotional reactions from players.

INSTANT FEEDBACK

One of FLIGBY's strengths is that it provides 20 different types of feedback.

ELEMENTS AND ASPECTS INTER-DEPENDENT

Built into FLIGBY are quite a few surprises as well as events whose significance will become apparent only later.

Illustration 5.2 – Key game-enhancing features of FLIGBY

Illustration 5.2, depicting a console – a physical device to operate a computer – summarizes selected game features of FLIGBY, illustrating the application of some of the bullet-point-statements above.

Conclusion: to design and to build a serious videogame that has a good chance of being judged successful by experts as well as by the market is a complex and expensive undertaking.

5.2 **Growing demand for simulation videogames**

Ever since computer games have gained an ever-wider following, starting about a generation (25-30 years) ago, there have been concerns about their potentially negative impacts on the players and on society – particularly those in the "violent entertainment games" category. While those concerns have not abated, the positive effects of playing videogames – especially those in the "serious simulation games" category – have become ever more recognized and demand for them has grown by leaps and bounds during the past decade. And it is practically certain that demand will continue to rise well into the future.

One of the most basic reasons for the rapid expansion of demand for serious simulation games is that an entire global generation of youngsters has grown up who have been socialized into "videogames" from a very early age. No need to cite here the staggering statistics about the time youngsters spend playing computer games on an average day, week, month, or year. Computer games have become second nature to them, impacting their ability to focus, their attention span, their voracious demand for instant feedback (mentioned in Chapter 2), the way they interact with others, and – most importantly – the way they learn.

However, it would be a mistake to assume that videogames are the exclusive domain of the young. A recent survey of the US population revealed the following surprising facts about the gamers' age:[9]

between ages 18-50

49%

25%   **26%**
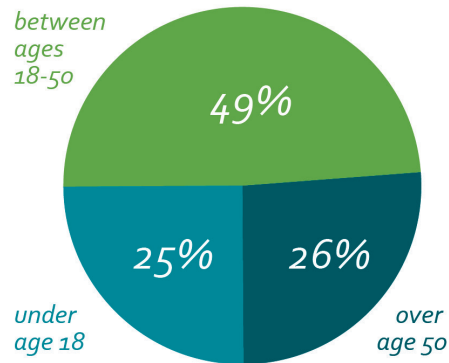
under age 18   _over age 50_

Illustration 5.3 – Age distribution of video-game-players in the USA

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Entertainment Software Rating Board, "How Much Do You Know about Videogames?"
http://www.esrb.org/about/video-game-industry-statistics.aspx (accessed September 2, 2015).

Thus, about half of all gamers are between 18 and 49 years of age; the remaining 25-25% are divided equally between youngsters under 18 and "oldsters" over 50! A further notable data: 40% of all gamers are female! One implication of the statistics cited is that the creators of serious, interactive, simulation videogames don't have to wait until the current young generation grows up: effective demand (meaning, ability to pay) is already out there.

Another basic reason for the rapid expansion of demand for "serious simulation games" is the impressive and continuous advancement in game technology that makes serious games increasingly player-friendly, realistic, and **fun to play**.

5.3 Serious games in (business) education and training

It was already mentioned that serious videogames have a wide range of applications and current uses in many fields, including healthcare, the military, government, and the nonprofit sectors. This section focuses on serious games in business education and company training, fields where FLIGBY has the most obvious relevance.

Play and games have long infused the language of business: we talk of players, moves, playbooks, game theory (relevant, for example, in predicting the competitive strategies of firms in an oligopolistic industry), gaining competitive advantage, scoring individual and unit performance, the importance of feedback, and so on.

The application of simulation videogames has much in common in business education **and** in company training. The first section of this chapter, defining serious games and listing their key features, is obviously common, irrespective of whether a computer game is supporting business education or in-company training. Nonetheless, it is useful to stress the particular advantages that game-based-learning (GBL) offers in each of the two areas. The applicability of a given advantage in business education to that in corporate training, and *vice versa*, is obvious.

The advantages of incorporating GBL in **business education** over relying **exclusively** on the more traditional approaches, such as print assignments and lectures, are the following:

» Books and other reading material are great to foster intellectual understanding but are not interactive and do not reflect the reality of busy schedules of almost everybody (especially students in graduate programs) and the declining attention spans (especially of the younger generation).

» Games immerse students in a way that books and lectures do not because games are participatory.

» Deep, actionable knowledge and decision-making skills develop when students have a chance, by playing a relevant game, to apply classroom theory in the real world, with its messy complexity, time pressures, and irreversible consequences.[10]

» Learning is more effective when you can make students forget that they are engaged in learning. Almost everyone, but students especially, like to follow their own instincts; they don't like to be told that "this is what you must learn".[11]

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It is very important to stress that traditional teaching and learning and game-based simulation are not either/or propositions. In many cases, it is ideal is to have a well-designed **#blended-learning** approach.

A blended-learning approach already takes place when serious games are designed for educational purposes because the development of a game itself typically involves cooperation between scholars and other professionals on the one hand and experts in game design and programming on the other. Scholars bring theoretical knowledge; and they – and other experts, too – contribute applied knowledge on the topic. The creation of FLIGBY is a good illustration.

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10 Statement by MIT Sloan Professor John Sterman, who developed and uses prize-winning computer-simulation games in his courses. (https://mitsloan.mit.edu/newsroom/2014-fishbanks.php).

11 This is the message (paraphrased by us) of Clark Aldrich, found in several of his books. Aldrich, a US author and practitioner in the field of educational simulations and serious games, is one of the pioneers in these fields. His *Virtual Leader* game was the first online, game-based simulation to win the top prize for a training product in 2004.

A more common use of the term, blended learning, refers to a teaching situation in which the traditional approaches – readings and lectures – are effectively combined with online GBL, involving simulation. Using FLIGBY as an example, Illustration 5.4 shows how teaching with the Game would itself be more effective via a blended learning approach. The drawing also depicts a so-called **#flipped-classroom:** a new pedagogical model where the typical "lecture", followed by "homework", is reversed. Video lectures are viewed or serious videogames are played by students at home (out of class), while class time is devoted to discussion, exercises, and projects.

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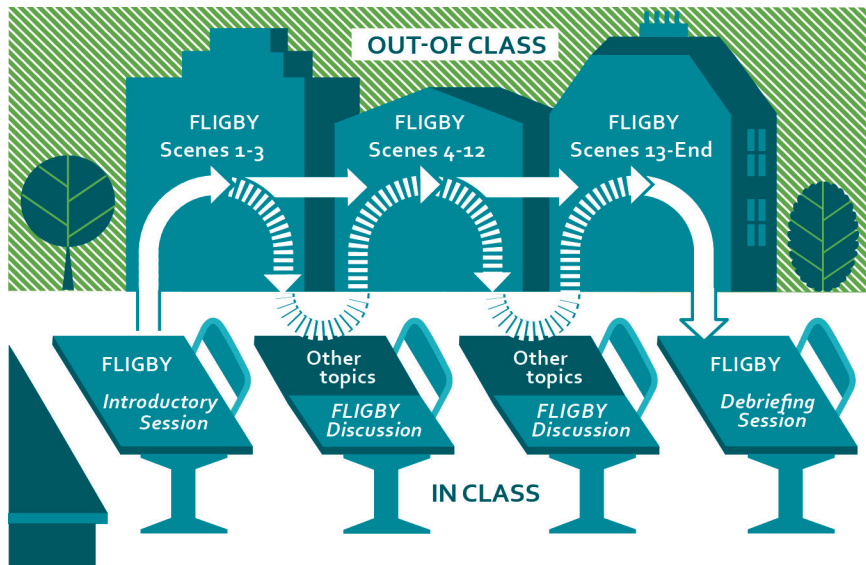
Illustration 5.4 – Teaching with FLIGBY:
A blended learning approach with a "flipped" classroom

During the first class session when the teacher introduces FLIGBY, he or she explains the objectives of the Game, what concepts and practices it is designed to illustrate (there are many, so the teacher is free to stress those he or she considers to be the most relevant for the course), and explains basics, such as the deadlines by when students must complete FLIGBY outside the classroom

through a given Scene, and the deadline by when all must have finished the Game. This takes place in the classroom, titled "Introductory Session" in Illustration 5.4.

Then, during the time the instructor designates, students must play – out of class, on their own time – say, the first three Scenes. Then follows again a session in class, say, a week later, when a short time can be devoted to discuss what students have experienced early in the Game; answering also their FLIGBY-related questions so as to facilitate their continued play.[12]

This alteration between playing FLIGBY out of class and then discussing part of it in class may be repeated once or twice (the sessions titled "FLIGBY Discussion" in Illustration 5.3).

Finally, the teacher plans the "Debriefing Session", held after the announced deadline by when everyone must have completed the Game. The "Debriefing Session" should be a "blended learning" class (suggestions of how it might be conducted are found in Chapter 7).

FLIGBY is a modern teaching tool for university and business schools, but it has been developed also for **corporate training** and leadership development programs. Therefore, we outline briefly the advantages of incorporating GBL in a company's management/leadership/strategy training programs, using FLIGBY as an illustration:

> » In addition to employing FLIGBY for its intended purpose, namely, to help individual managers/leaders and organizations to create a Flow-friendly workplace, the further value of a game like FLGIBY is its ability to **measure, without bias, the leadership skill set** of prospective (to be hired) managers or that of its current management group. An organization may rely on FLIGBY's skill set

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[12] The instructor has automatic access to the Game progress of each member of the class. Thus, during an intermediate session she or he can say, "I see that XYZ have not even started, while RSQ have gone way ahead and have already finished the Game." The students learning that the instructor can track their progress, real time, is likely to reinforce that all will complete the Game by the designated deadline.

(which overlaps a great deal with other, frequently used, leadership skill set classifications, as we have seen in Chapter 3) if it does not have its own so-called "competency system", or FLIGBY's skillset can be readily translated into any organization's own leadership competency system. In either way, the skill feedback a company obtains at the conclusion of the Game about its own personnel can be benchmarked, in various ways, within and outside the organization. The results can serve as the basis for a company to establish personal development plans for each participant.

» Knowledge of the skill-levels so obtained can be especially useful for **#predictive-analysis.** This new, analytical approach is employed when an organization faces (or might soon be facing) a new challenge, which suggests that certain managerial/leadership/strategic skills are particularly valuable to successfully manage them. One of the most useful applications of predictive analysis is in the case of planned mergers and acquisitions, where the incompatibility of organizational cultures can be – and often is – a fundamental cause of failure.[13] In sum, GBL, used appropriately, can help corporations build strategic skills in a timely, cost-effective and focused manner – a critical capability in today's dynamic business environments.

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» Furthermore, GBL can create an experiential, interactive and tailored **common understanding of key management/leadership/ strategy concepts** at a low cost and in an easily scalable manner across the entire organization. Games can be rolled out easily to all relevant managers and key staff members. Whereas conferences, seminars and coaching practically limit the number of participants,

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13 In 1998, Daimler-Benz and Chrysler Corporation announced the world's largest cross-border deal ever up to that time, which Daimler-Benz's then CEO, Jurgen Schrempp, claimed was "A marriage made in Heaven". The heavenly marriage never worked well; one of the main problems was the business culture incompatibility between the German and the US companies. Daimler-Benz sold Chrysler in 2007. See, for example, Bill Vlasic and Bradley A. Stertz, *Taken for a Ride: How Daimler-Benz Drove Off with Chrysler* (New York: Harper-Collins, 2000).

digital games display almost unlimited scalability. Games only need to be programmed once, but can be rolled out to a large target audience at modest incremental costs.

» Finally, **scenario modifications** in GBL are possible, **at comparatively low cost,** by adjusting a few parameters. GBL allows managers to suspend normal rules in an acceptable way and provide an effective audiovisual medium for absorbing ideas, especially when the results are discussed in a group setting, with the trainer asking for suggestions on how some of the Game's lessons can be applied within the organization.

5.4 **Creating and using serious games**

Section 5.2 above discussed some of the reasons why the demand for serious games has been rising dramatically during the past decade and why it is practically certain that the demand will continue to grow unabated.

Little was said, however, about the supply of serious games; those, too, have been growing by leaps and bounds. Given that this volume started out as a handbook for FLIGBY – a purpose it still serves – but the book's horizon has then been broadened by including a discussion of the scientific concept of Flow, how it applies to teaching and training leadership-development, and the new research vistas that FLIGBY's large databank has opened up and is ready to support (Chapter 10), we may have given the impression, inadvertently, that FLIGBY is somehow one of its kind in the world of serious games. Far from it! While FLIGBY has certain unique features we emphasized (perhaps even too much, for some tastes), this Game is only one among several dozen being developed, and hundreds used widely, every day. Just in graduate business education there are hundreds of impressive games, long in use in courses at such major institutions of higher learning as Harvard, MIT, Stanford, and hundreds more in the USA and around the world.

Even in a modest-size institution like the Business School of Central European University, FLIGBY is only one of several serious games employed in teaching;

in fact, serious simulation games have been developed by the School's other faculty members for their MBA courses. One illustration is the award-winning Board Executive Exercise (BEE) game developed by our faculty member Tibor Voros (with input by Zoltan Buzady). Participants manage the operations of an imaginary but realistic global mobile handset manufacturer, selling its products on the US, European and Chinese markets. A key feature of the BEE is that the simulation incorporates supply chain, finance, pricing, investment, and marketing areas.[14]

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Hundreds of other examples could be cited; all one would need is to google "serious games", together with the name of just about any university or program. A few examples:

» NYU's Polytechnic School of Engineering has a Game Innovation Lab that brings together faculty and students to do research focused on games as an innovation challenge. The Lab's emphasis is on the technical/engineering/science side of games and simulations.[15]

» Purdue University (Lafayette, Indiana) has a "Serious Game Center" whose mission is to provide support for implementing, designing and developing serious games and virtual environments for learning.

» Developing serious games has become a global business. The University of the Sunshine Coast (Australia) offers a new "Bachelor of Serious Games Development"; the first-of-its-kind university degree program that commenced in September 2015.

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14   Prof. Voros won a major award for his BEE simulation
(http://www.ceeman.org/competitions-awards/ceeman-champion-awards/champions-2010).

15   http://www.fastcompany.com/3038466/video-games-for-grown-ups.

The importance of serious games and gaming is not new to more established knowledge providers and developers. A just-published HBR article, "Games Can Make You a Better Strategist", states:[16]

> *A smart game keeps the manager in what psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi calls the **"flow"** zone, an optimal corridor between challenge and skill, by building a series of rounds of increasing difficulty. The learning curve of a game can thus be tailored to the individual player, without overwhelming them as reality often does.*

The combination of demand and supply factors has brought about an explosion in the serious-gaming industry. So much so that it requires a differentiation among the major types of digital learning products.

Illustration 5.5 enumerates the (currently seven) different kinds of digital learning product categories. The red borders show where FLIGBY fits in the digital learning products' spectrum. [17]
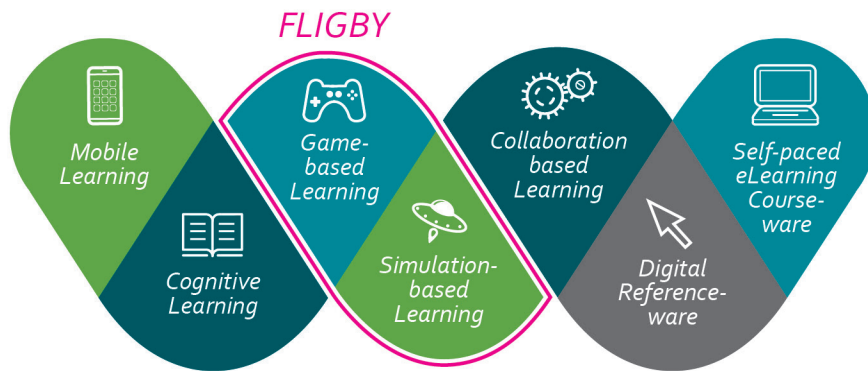
Illustration 5.5 – Seven types of digital learning products

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[16] HBR, September 7, 2015 (https://hbr.org/2015/09/games-can-make-you-a-better-strategist).

[17] Key Findings from Recent Ambient Insight Research, presented at the Serious Game Conference, August 19-22, 2013, slide #4.

In this sense, FLIGBY as an instructional tool is in the mainstream; it is not unique in creating learning games for managers. One innovative feature of FLIGBY, however, is that it combines two types of digital learning approaches, Game-based and Simulation-based learning.

*　*　*

DA-5.1 discusses the most important technical features of the Game FLIGBY and enumerates the upgrades and other advences that have taken place since the Game has become fully operational and won the global top prize in its category in 2012. DA-5.1 also lists additional technical upgrades and extensions that are under way or planned, with expected dates of compli- tion.

*　*　*

Note to the Reader: the next two chapters focus on some of the details of how FLIGBY can be used as an instructional tool. It is OK to skip those chapters and return to them if you are using, or plan to employ, FLIGBY as an instructional tool. For all others, we recommend to continue with Chapters 9 and 10.

"

A good puzzle, it's a fair thing.
Nobody is lying. It's very clear, and
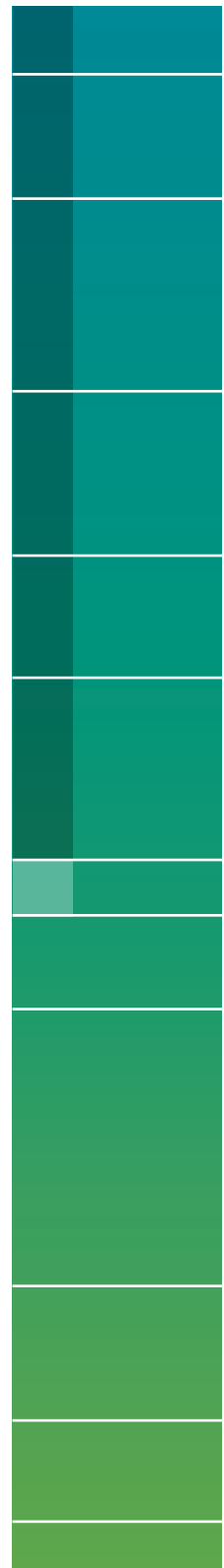the problem depends just on you.

Ernő Rubik

6

PLAYING FLIGBY: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

*This section contains essentially the information each instructor/trainer should make available to the players just before they start the Game. Instructors are encouraged to distribute this to students, either by printing this or by obtaining its digital version (***DA-6.1***) and resending it to the participants.*

Q1: Is FLIGBY played individually or in teams?

A1: Played individually, but the debriefing discussion after the deadline (established by the instructor for a given cohort) should definitely be in a plenary session; or, if the group is large, in smaller groups. Discussion of the reasoning behind the individual players' decisions on key issues is an invaluable source of additional learning.

Q2: In what sense is FLIGBY a game, and a "serious" one?

A2: This Game was designed so as to have all the standard game features of the video-gaming **industry. It is a "serious game" in that its purpose is more than just entertainment.**

Q3: How long does it take to play FLIGBY?

A3: Depending on how deeply the player delves into the issues, whether he or she restarts a particular Scene or the entire game, whether and how extensively a player makes use of the Media Library' readings, total time might range between 6 and 12 hours. The average of the thousands of persons who had played the Game through 2015 was 7.5 hours. This average, as well as the above time-range estimates, is net gaming times to which in-class activities should be added.[1]

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[1] The Game can be played over a few days or weeks, based on the time available, the player's inclination to play it, and the instructor's deadline by when the entire group must finish the Game. *It is not advisable to stretch game time beyond a month because the story is complex and highly contextual, so that over a longer period details of the drama of the story and the dynamics of learning can fade.*

Q4: How do I gain access to FLIGBY?

A4: If you are part of a group, all players are registered in the system by the instructor/trainer. If you are **not** part of a group or are **no**t a Certified FLIGBY Consultant (CFC), then please contact the FLIGBY Service Center (www.fligby.com). For starting the Game, each participant will receive an auto-generated "registration e-mail" from the system (support@fligby.com).

Q5: What will registration entail?

A5: Each participant's username will be the e-mail address to which he/she receives the registration e-mail. **The username cannot be modified later**. From then on, participants can log into the simulation with this username and a self-created password. Part of the registration process is to fill out a compact questionnaire about the player's professional background and interests in order to enable generalized benchmarking. (Each player's anonymity is strictly observed.) Registration is completed by accepting the Game's standard Terms and Conditions. Following registration, participants can enter and re-enter the simulation at any time on the website www.fligby.com by clicking the "Sign in" icon. The Game always continues from where the participant stopped the last time.

Q6: For how long will I continue to have access?

A6: For six months exactly, from the time you registered (unless other individual arrangements have been made). Thus, you will continue to have access to the Game even after the instructor's deadline, which of course you will have to observe. This gives you the opportunity to replay and experiment with "what if" situations. However, if you do **not** finish the Game by the instructor's deadline, your subsequent result will not be included with those of your peer group. The penalty for missing your group's deadline is up to your instructor.

Q7: What are the rules for re-starting a Scene or the entire Game, and how will repeated restarts impact my Game results?

A7: Until the 12th Scene (out of 23), that is, through Scene 11, two restarting functions are available. One restarting option is to replay a Scene; another, to

restart the Game from the beginning. Restarting a Scene would mean that the data of that Scene, and only for that Scene, will be over-ridden, whereas restarting the entire Game would mean that all your previous data will be over-ridden. At your completion of Scene 11, the restarting functions are inactivated. However, once you finished the Game, you are welcome to replay it as many times as you wish, within your access period.

Q8: In case I replay FLIGBY, which version of my gameplay will be assessed?

A8: After every full replay, the player will be getting a report. However, if you played FLIGBY as a member of a group (for example, in an MBA course or in a corporate program) only your original scores will be incorporated when reporting group-average scores.

Q9: What are the technical requirements for playing the Game?

A9: FLIGBY requires an adequate Internet connection and a valid e-mail address to access the Game's internet-based features, authenticate the player's account, and perform all the Game tasks. You can check your device's FLIGBY compatibility by clicking on www.fligby.com/systemcheck/ .

Q10: Where do I get help in case of a technical problem?

A10: www.fligby.com/get-fligby/

Q11: What do I need to know before starting the Game?

A11: Several things.

a. FLIGBY is a game-based learning platform where you compete mainly against yourself: "Will I win the "Spirit of the Wine" award upon completion? How do I score on several other measures, such as the number of Flow Trophies and Sustainability Badges I earn as compared with the maximum attainable?" Your instructor will have the end results of your and your group's other players—and can thus compare and discuss anyone's results relative to the average results of his or her cohort.

b. The Game is built on a compelling storyline, attainable challenges, instant rewards, and feedback by Mr. Fligby.

c. The Game's reward/penalty system functions as an assessment method with explicit pedagogical goals. Your performance will reflect the extent to which you are managing the Winery in line with Prof. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's *Flow Is Good Business* and Flow-based leadership precepts. (For a summary of the Flow theory and the ethical and leadership responsibilities, see Chapters 1 and 2 in <u>this</u> volume.)[2]

d. Since managerial decisions are not like physics or math where there is typically just one correct answer, in some cases more than one, in others perhaps all possible answers are acceptable. In most cases, however, there are certain answers that are judged by the Game's architects to be better (in terms of the Flow framework) than others; your within-Game-scoring is based on them.

e. After each set of episodes ("Scenes"; there are 23), Mr. Fligby (your personal coach) comes on the screen and comments on your decisions in that Scene. Sometimes he will praise you for choosing well; at other times he will critique your decisions and will explain why. Please note that even when Mr. Fligby is critical, it does not necessarily mean that you made a bad choice, since perceptions, attitudes, the personalities of the respondents; and their assumptions naturally vary. (One or several "not the best" decisions by you **will not disqualify you** from winning the "Spirit of the Wine" award because altogether there are 150+ decisions; your answers to about 90 of them will be scored in terms of the leadership skills they reflect. Turul Winery is a quintessential American firm whose managers embody several typical US personality traits as well as aspects of US business culture. Therefore, some of Mr. Fligby's feedback might sound impolite, offensive, or even insulting, especially for those with different cultural backgrounds. [3]

---

[2] Each time you, the GM, are faced with a key decision during the Game, you'll get a signal that FLIGBY'S Multimedia Library has a short reading that may guide you toward a good decision. With just a click, FLIGBY takes you to the designated video or reading.

Q12: I would appreciate helpful hints about playing FLIGBY.

A12: Glad you asked:

Set aside time for this project – According to our experience, the best strategy is to spend periods of time on multiple occasions. The system records where you stopped, so when you return you can continue playing and learning from where you left off.

Avoid multitasking – FLIGBY is a real-life simulation, requiring strong concentration. Otherwise you can easily forget an earlier detail that becomes important later on. Without effective concentration, you can be misled more easily by some of the characters who might try cunning to get what they want. Please note also that once you have been prompted for a decision in a Scene, the preceding video segment cannot be replayed. (For replaying rules, see Q-7.) If you need a short break, pause the video segment or the Game. Note that after about 10 minutes of inactivity, you will be logged out. Afterwards, you can log-in again and you will be automatically at the place where you stopped before.

Don't leave playing FLIGBY to the last moment – The Game is too complex to start the rescue of the Turul Winery one or two days before your deadline. Having to rush means that you'll enjoy the Game less and are likely to forgo your own Flow-experience. Many players have had such Flow experience while playing FLIGBY.

Trial and Success – Try as many strategies as you can, and check how the virtual environment reacts to your different managerial decisions. (Make sure that you are aware of the restarting rules; see **Q-7.**)

The Multi-Media Library can be helpful but its use is optional – Using the support videos and readings can help you to understand some complex issues and managerial dilemmas relevant for the Game and – later on – for your leadership experiences in the real world.

3

In this way, the Game also highlights intercultural differences; an excellent discussion topic for a post-game debriefing session with cohorts whose members are not all US citizens or residents. (See Box 3.1 for a concrete illustration.)

*Computers are great because
you get immediate results if your
program works. It's feedback you
don't get from other things.*

Bill Gates

7

MULTIPLE FEEDBACK TO PLAYERS

9 p —

7.1 Overview

FLIGBY has been designed to give each player a continuous stream of valuable, multidimensional **feedback during and after the Game**. Let us recall that providing frequent, specific, and actionable feedback is one of the most important features of Flow-promoting leadership practices – as it is a crucial element also in most other contemporary leadership development themes and programs – as was discussed in Chapter 2.

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The two dozen or so different kinds of feedback given to FLIGBY players are of three types, if we use as the basis of classification the time when the feedback is given:[1]

> ① Multiple feedback while playing the Game;
>
> ② A comprehensive, automatically-generated report on the strengths and weaknesses of each player's leadership profile, sent individually to each player (as well as to his or her instructor/trainer) right after the Game; and
>
> ③ Discussion with the player's peers – during the debriefing sessions arranged by the instructor/trainer – on the reasons why some players have made different choices on key decisions than other players or the Game's designers did.

The three major types of feedback are summarized and briefly illustrated in the next three subsections; more comprehensive explanations of the variety of feedback are given in **DA-7.1.**

7.2 Feedback during Game-playing

The player can periodically or continually check the **Game's dashboard** for instruments that show how the GM's decisions impact the Flow state of each member of the management team, the "corporate atmosphere" (defined in Chapter 4, fn. 2, and in the Glossary), and the Winery's profit potential.

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[1] There are several other criteria for classifying feedback. **DA-7.1** offers several of them, with a more detailed explanation of each type of feedback than is given in this chapter.

Each time the player manages to get someone into a Flow state, FLIGBY signals that the player has collected a **Flow trophy**, and each time the player's decisions promote/enhance the environmental sustainability of the Winery's operations, FLIGBY signals that a **Sustainability badge** has been earned. How many trophies and badges a player earns by the Game's end (of the maximum possible numbers) is one measure of the player's skill and they are inputs into winning or not the Game's main prize, the "Spirit of the Wine" award. (Check out FLIGBY's super-dashboard in Chapter 4, Illustration 4.1, and details of the "Spirit of the Wine" award also there (Section 4.3 and Illustration 4.4).

However, each player receives much more than quantifiable feedback! He or she will also obtain, continually and visually, **emotional-reaction-based feedback** from the members of the team as they respond with voice-tone and body-language to the GM's communications with them and to the GM's decisions affecting them. One characteristic of a Flow-friendly manager is that he or she pays attention to such type of feedback, as opposed to just continuing on his or her merry way, as many "bosses" do in real life.

And that is not all! The player has the option of **restarting** a Scene, or the entire Game, discovering what the GM's virtual team members' reactions would be if the player made different decisions.[2] What a learning opportunity, in complete privacy; something we can only wish for in real life, wondering about "what if...?"

And that is still not all! At the end of each of the 23 Scenes, **Mr. Fligby,** the player's personal game and leadership mentor and coach, is ready to offer personal feedback. Illustration 7.1 presents just one of dozens of different comments that Mr. Fligby might make: "Pay more attention to what people say and the way they say it."

At several junctures in the Game, the player will get a signal that **FLIGBY'S Multimedia Library** has a brief classic reading or video to guide the GM on the decision he or she is about to make. Those resources provide intellectual-academic learning and reinforce the overall purpose of the course or the training program where FLIGBY is used. The player has the choice of making use of those aids or skipping them and possibly revisiting them later.[3]

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[2] The player's intermediate and final Game results may also change, of course.
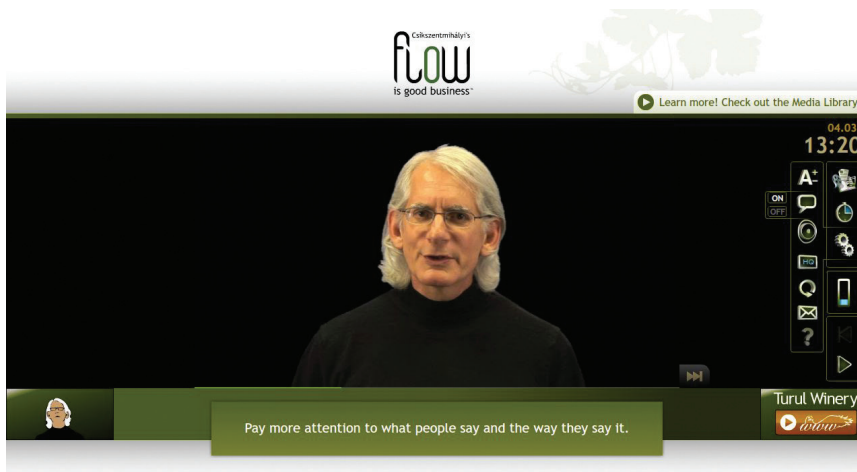
Illustration 7.1 – Example of Mr. Fligby's personalized coaching feedback

And there is, of course, the grand prize: **the "Spirit of the Wine" award.** The player will learn only at the Game's end whether he or she has succeeded in earning that Award, a measure of the player's success in skillfully balancing difficult tradeoffs, such as generating individual Flow, enhancing the level of corporate atmosphere, earning satisfactory profit, and adequately protecting the environment (details about the "Spirit of the Wine" award in Chapter 4).

How deeply a player wants to engage in playing FLIGBY is up to him or her, guided of course by the instructor or trainer (for example, by making certain readings mandatory). At the other end of the options, a player may play FLIGBY straight through, enjoying its decision challenges, and seeing where "gut" decisions are leading. Alternatively, the player can make use of some or all of FLIGBY's "bells and whistles" by checking, or asking for and responding to, the multiple feedback available throughout the Game.

3
    An annotated list of resources in the Multimedia Library is available in **DA-4.7**. As long as a player has a valid account, up to six months from the initial date of registration, he or she can access the Game and, through it, the Multimedia Library as well.

7.3 **A report on the strengths and weaknesses of a player's leadership profile**

One of the first steps in the development of FLIGBY was identifying the skills helpful for generating Flow, along with other typical management/leadership skills. Chapter 3 detailed FLIGBY's 29 skills, the method of how each is measured during the Game, and how FLIGBY's skillset compares with similar (but not quite identical) other skill-classification systems.

Upon finishing the Game, the player receives a detailed, benchmarked report on his or her managerial/leadership skills, as well as areas suggested for further development. The report shows **relative strengths and weaknesses within each individual's own skills profile.** At the same time, each skill and group of skills is automatically **also benchmarked against the average of the player's cohort.** In addition, instructors and trainers may request other, tailor-made comparisons with specified benchmark groups (e.g., by industry, age, leadership level), which FLIGBY's service providers will assemble from the detailed (but anonymous) scores of the thousands who had played FLIGBY up to that point.

For those who might be interested in seeing where FLIGBY's skills profile is generated, where the databank is located, and how these two components are linked to the software of the Game itself, Box 7.1 illustrates them, with brief explanations.

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Box 7.1 Core elements of FLIGBY's software architecture

The large data set generated by FLIGBY players during gameplay is stored in FLIGBY'S DATABANK; it includes information about the player's game behavior: decisions taken, options chosen, how much time the player spent in the Multimedia Library, it tracks log-in/log-out times, and calculates the cumulative time spent on playing the Game. The data in the DATABANK are managed by FLIGBY's so-called **Master Analytics Profiler (MAP)** system, which generates the reports to the players and instructors (and performs other analytic functions). Illustration 7.2 offers a visual image of these two core elements of FLIGBY's software architecture (the center and the right panels); **DA-7.2** further explains them.

The DATABANK shown at the center of Illustration 7.2 is also used to "drive" the simulation game's interactive user interface (the left panel), i.e., the visible, movie-like scenes presenting organizational reality virtually, with the contextual decision options offered to each player, and the many elements of the instantaneous feedback system during gameplay.

In sum: although FLIGBY is, essentially, an immense DATABANK, programming enables it to show its two "faces" to the player: the simulation game itself (symbolized by the small green screen at the bottom left of Illustration 7.2) and the personalized skills profile plus benchmark reports generated at the end of gameplay (symbolized by the small blue screen at bottom right).
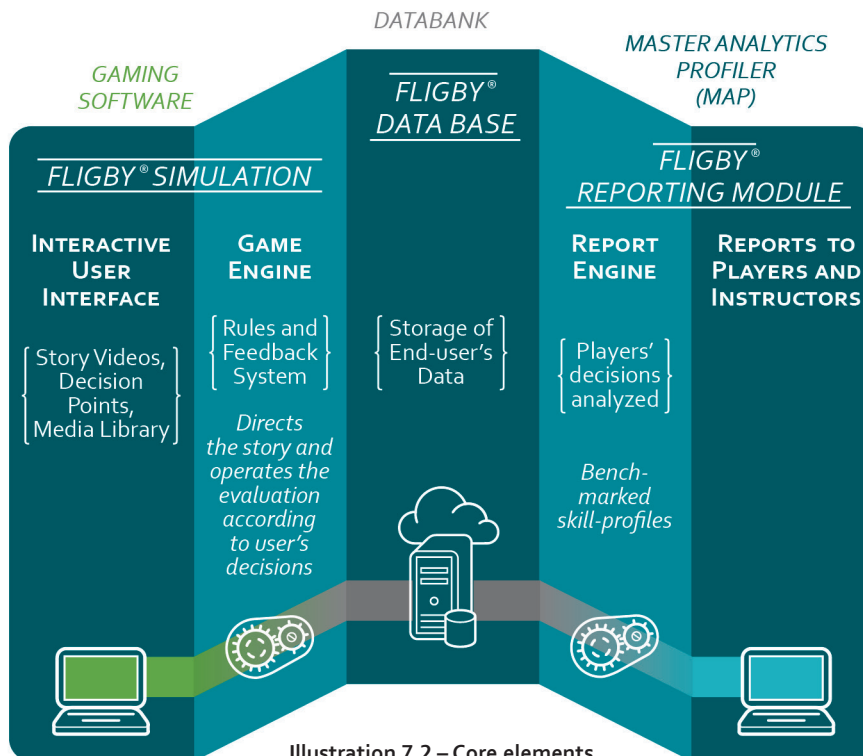
Illustration 7.2 – Core elements of FLIGBY's software architecture

7.4 **Debriefing discussions**

Some participants always ask: "What should have been the 'right' choice to pick on certain key decisions?" Although each instructor/trainer is given access to a "key", called Private Guide to Key Decisions, with an explanation of the FLIGBY expert teams' reasoning on each of those approximately 90 decisions to which certain skills were attached (for details, see Chapter 3), the immediate response should be that there are no clearly "right" versus "wrong" answers, only "preferred choices", based on Csikszentmihalyi's Flow-based decision framework. [4]

After this *caveat*, participants will hear the explanations behind the preferred decisions; a great learning experience for all. Inevitably, some participants will shout: "but my decision was different because I reasoned that ...". Such interventions, too, will offer valuable lessons to the participants, learning how knowledgeable and concerned individuals who are in agreement on the main goals of the organization can have different takes on certain issues.[5]

Debriefing sessions are always exciting and memorable as participants explain their thinking and reasoning on decision dilemmas, and debate each other. The additional learning is priceless: everyone will hear that there are numerous plausible and defensible ways to think about a problem or to react to a situation. Some differences will reflect varied cultural backgrounds (the instructor may emphasize); others can be traced to distinct personalities, shaped by inherited genes and individual experiences. Such discussions are bound to open minds, strengthen tolerance toward other views, and teach the importance

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4 **DA-3.3** shows the reasoning of how the preferred (never "the right") answers were obtained and rechecked by FLIGBY's independent expert teams. The answer key will also identify "dilemmas" which do not offer a single optimal solution because the answers are situation-specific. **DA-3.3** also lists key decisions on which there are no single solutions, so two or more options are considered "good" and so scored in the Game. Such "dilemmas" were embedded to enhance the realism of the managerial decision process.

5 Instructors/trainers may want to suggest that participants discuss their thought-processes on certain "key" decisions. This should yield a more orderly discussion than a "free-for-all", jumping back-and forth among the issues. This approach would also enable the instructor to stress those key takeaways that he or she considers to be most relevant for the course or the training program.

of empathy with others (especially subordinates). Tolerance toward different views and empathy with others are essential skills in a Flow-based management framework.

The architects of FLIGBY and the authors of this volume think that all debriefing discussions on the dilemmas managers/leaders continually face should be concluded with the instructor's statement that key **decisions must always be made** – that is the principal responsibility of a GM and any one in a leadership position – carefully but on a timely basis.

Debriefing after the Game is a good opportunity for the instructor to convey another "wisdom" of the Csikszentmihalyi-FLIGBY ethical responsibility framework (Chapter 1), namely, that good managers/leaders always **accept and own up to the consequences of their decisions** – foreseen or not – instead of finding excuses and blaming others for possibly adverse consequences.

7.5 Summary of the Game's multiple feedback points

So far this chapter highlighted and gave examples of the different kinds of feedback players automatically receive (or have access to) along the gameplay process: (1) during gameplay, (2) after the Game, and (3) during the final debriefing session. Illustration 7.3 shows these three groupings in FLIGBY's rich "Galaxy of feedback types".

For those who are particularly interested in pedagogical or developmental aspects of using FLIGBY, we note that **DA-7.1** lists all of the almost two dozen types of feedback, briefly explains each and presents them under additional categorizations, such as: "objective/subjective" feedback, the purpose of the feedback, the source of the feedback, the target of the feedback (thinking or feeling). (It is, of course, also useful to obtain feedback from participants; **DA-7.3** offers a standard form for that purpose.)

* * *

DURING THE GAME

The Plot

Flow Radar

Media Library Usage

Number of Trophies

Mr. FLIGBY's Instant Feedback

Profitability Index

CAM

Sustainability Badge

Virtual Real Characters

Game Progress

Restarting and Replaying the Game Option

Expert Feedback

Global Benchmarking by MAP

Spirit of the Wine' Award

Game Progress

Flashback by Mr. FLIGBY

P2P Feedback

360° Flashback Review

Personal Flow & Leadership Skills Profile

Predictive Feedback by MAP

Predictive Feedback by MAP

Personal Flow & Leadership Skills Profile

AFTER THE GAME

DURING DEBRIEFING

After this somewhat technical chapter, the reader may "relax" by thumbing through the photo documentary (next Chapter) about the creation and use of FLIGBY.

Dear Reader: *please do not to skip Part III; it contains further practical sugges-tions about using FLIGBY in instructional/ training settings (Chapter 9) and out-lines future research plans being initiated under the "Leadership and Flow" global program, and why you and/or some of your colleagues should consider joining its network (Chapter 10).*

Illustration 7.3 – **The constellation of FLIGBY's feedback system (previous page)**

8

FLIGBY: A PHOTO DOCUMENTARY

24 p —

1. Inception

Zad, 35, from Hungary and his small, entrepreneurial, family company (already with impressive serious-gaming credentials, having won first Hungary's and then the EU's top prize) comes across Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's Good Business book, focusing on the application of Flow in the world of business. An idea strikes Zad, like lightning: "I got to make a serious game from this to help others to implement the Prof's great ideas."

Zad sketches his serious game idea about Flow; the Prof's first reaction is skeptical, as he himself says in his essay in this volume, and as is implied in their first-meeting photo below. Gradually, over a week, the Prof. warms to the idea and suggests the Game's venue, the plot, and the characters.

Zad returns to Budapest all charged up; finds Mary Lasseter to develop the story plot (photo). Later Csikszentmihalyi comes to Hungary and goes over each planned FLIGBY Scene with Zad and his staff. Their discussions are lubricated by slipping quality wine (photo).

Aside: FLIGBY was inspired by scholarly research. Today, FLIGBY inspires advances in scholarly research in ways it was never even thought about at the start.

Two worlds meet and collide - Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi wondering, "Gamifying me?", with Zad Vecsey, "I think I got him on board".
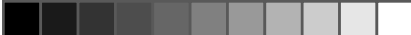
"Now that we've agreed, how do I do it?"

Mary Lasseter, Script Writer: "I just finished the story of FLIGBY!"

"Just agreed on another scene! Let's celebrate with wine!" The content developers' team at work.

The Professor endorses FLIGBY, the production can begin.

2. Content development

This is a process that bridges concept and implementation. It involves (1) defining the skills and how to assess them; (2) writing the script; (3) designing the scoring system associated with the Game's features; and (4) preparing and rehearsing the production of the film.

Content development requires a cross-functional team, integrating experts from psychology, management, script writing, and winery operations; programmers; location managers; movie-making staff; special effect professionals, and of course the actors and the actresses.

Producer Zad Vecsey proposes an idea; John Rado, the Director, is sceptical.

John Rado is explaining his concept to the actors (in front) and to the staff (in the back).

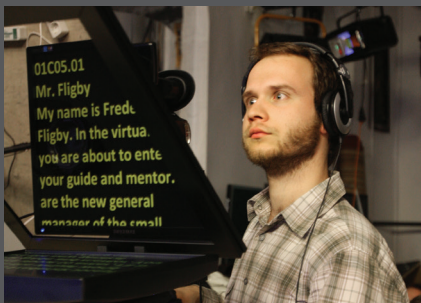On the stage and behind - the team is in FLOW.

Mark Adamsbaum (white hair), playing Mr. Fligby, consults with the staff.

A reluctant portrait of the executive production team: (from left to right) Balint Kovari - Director of Special Effects; David Reisinger - Director of Photography; Aron Solecki - Senior Game Designer; John Rado - Director; Zad Vecsey - Producer.

3. "Blue Box"

"Blue box" is a film-making technique used in the production of FLIGBY in order to achieve simulation that is as close as possible to a realistic physical and work environment in a California winery.

It should be noted that the action in FLIGBY switches back and forth between two worlds. One is an imaginary world; the story is told in cartoons. In that world members of Turul Winery's management team appear as cartoon characters, drawn on the basis of the actual photos of the actors who play them. The other is the photo-real world, in which the actors play their roles, just like in any l film. Most of the action in the simulation takes place in the imag-inary world of cartoons, except when a character interacts directly with the GM – that is, with you, who are play-ing the Game. At that moment, the cartoon character is transformed, as if by magic, into a photo-real player. The purpose of moving back and forth between the two worlds is to stress vis-ually, too, that when a "real" person appears, you the player are expected to make a decision.

Act I, Scene 1, Take 1. Action!
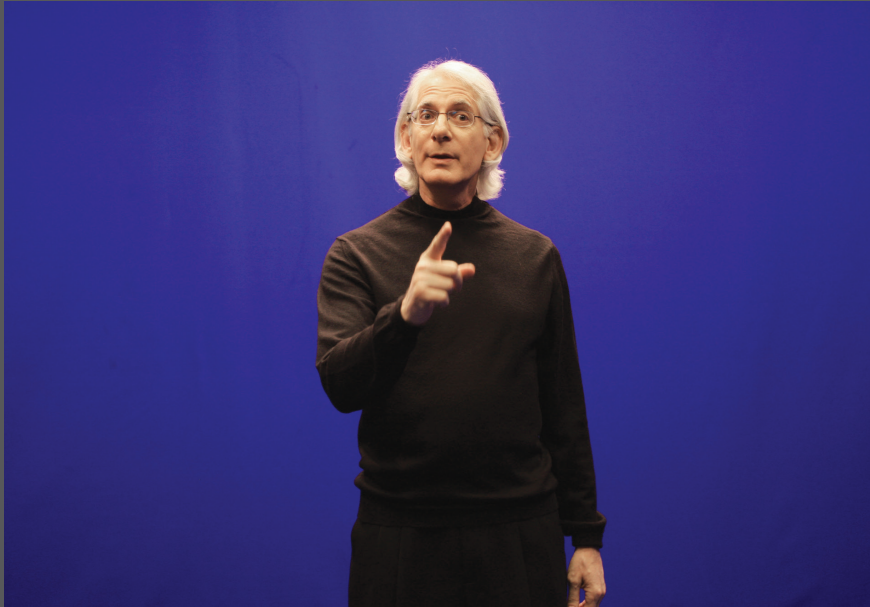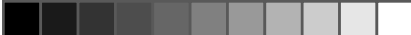
Adrienne Atthanas, playing Ellen, happy about the take.

Preparing to shoot: (from left to right) Scott Young, "Chris"; Esther Holbrook, "Rebecca"; Adrienne Athanas, "Ellen"; Matt Devere, "Larry"; Peter Linka, "Alex"; Nathalie Bowlus,"Jen".

Mark Adamsbaum, "Mr. Fligby": "I don't think you were sufficiently circumspect in your last decision!"

Concentration - Consensus - Team Flow...

4. FLIGBY wins top global award

FLIGBY won the Gold Medal of the "*International Serious Play Awards*" *in the category of Corporate Games. A panel of leading experts selected FLIGBY as the best digital game for managers of the year 2012.*

The awarded were named in the annual Serious Play Conference in Seattle. The professional director of the conference, Clark Aldrich, said in his justification that FLIGBY earned the recognition for the high-level unity and quality of its design, content excellence, and exciting game experience. In the gaming industry, the Gold Medal is the equivalent of an Oscar.

Simultaneously with winning the award, FLIGBY gained the Certification of the American Serious Gaming Association, which draws the attention of corporate

decision-makers to innovative and forward-looking training solutions.

Zad Vecsey, the CEO of the Californian ALEAS Simulations, Inc., which is the producer and owner of the FLIGBY project, emphasizes that the award reflects both the popularity of Flow and the recognition of the professionals participating in the making of FLIGBY. World-famous scientist Professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi of Hungarian origin, who is known for his Flow theory, took an active part in the four-year intensive effort to produce it.

Zad shows the award, shares his joy, and thanks Mihaly (Seattle, 2012).

Synergy between the internet, social media, and serious games.

The Game is being played in business schools, discussed at leadership conferences, and employed in corporate environments all around the world.
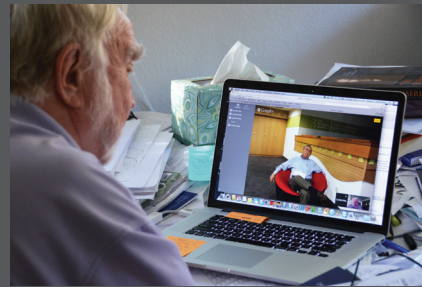
Planning another Certified Fligby Consultant (CFC) training.

CFC training in Sao Paulo, Brazil (2012).

Prof. Buzady debriefing on FLIGBY, Executive MBA Leadership course, CEU Business School (2014).

German fans of Flow on a FLIGBY workshop, Berlin (2013).

Prof. Marer announcing the winners of the "Spirit of the Wine" award at his MBA International Business class at Somaiya University, Mumbai, India (2014).

The FLIGBY stand with the Turkish partner (Simworks) at the HR-Learning Exhibition, Istanbul (2015).
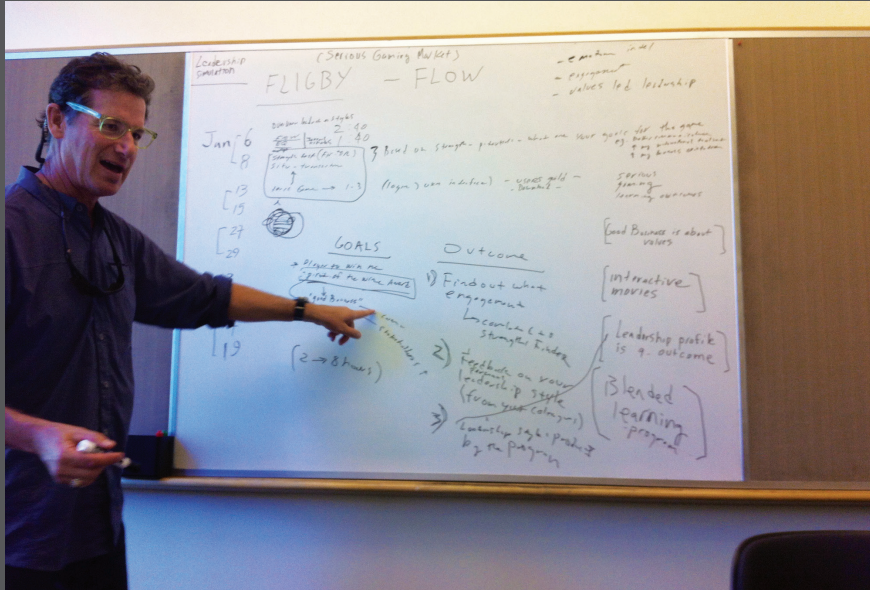
Prof. Crooke (formerly CEO of Patagonia) instructs with FLIGBY in his MBA Advanced Strategy course, University of Oregon (2014).

Debriefing the European executives of E&Y at a top winery, after they played FLIGBY.

6. Leadership and Flow research

FLIGBY was inspired by scholarly research. Today, FLIGBY and its rapidly-growing #Big Data inspire advances in scholarly research in ways never thought of at the start.

It was the FLIGBY project that, for the first time, identified and categorized leadership skills that are the most useful in practicing Flow-based leadership, which embodies a simple set of universal values. It was the FLIGBY project that came up with unbiased and measurable estimates of leadership competencies. And it is the FLIGBY project that is generating a massive data bank available to support most any type of research on leadership skills (as detailed in Chapter 10).

The photos below document the first steps already taken by Prof. Csikszentmihalyi and the authors of this book to establish, under the auspices of the Business School of Central European University, a global network of scholars and institutions interested in research involving Flow and leadership.

"OK. Let' s continue together." - Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Paul Marer (on screen)

The three authors are discussing the research potential of FLIGBY's Big Data.

Discussing the structuring of Big Data for research with Szabolcs Botkos (top left), the Chief IT-Architect of FLIGBY, and Esztella Fazekas (in red), Research Coordinator.

Ideas bandied about establishing the new global Leadership and Flow research program.

Passing the baton back and forth. Zoltan Vecsey, Chairman, ALEAS Group Board, with his sons Zad (left) and Bank (right).

Editing board prepares a new "Hangout-On-Air" (HOA) session. Flow and Leadership community members from around the globe can join live.

" 'Unique' is the most overused word... but in this case, maybe not! " - Paul Marer
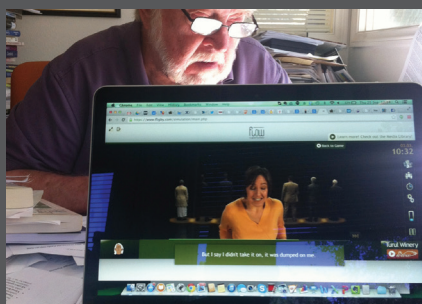
"My research idea in two words!" - Zoltan Buzady

Leadership and Flow - new horizons.

PART III.
LEADERSHIP AND FLOW: new vistas for teaching and research

I.

II.

III.

9

10

"

I cannot teach anybody anything. I can only make them think.

Socrates

9

FLIGBY AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL AND RESEARCH TOOL

12 p —

9.1 **Summary of the book through this penultimate chapter**

The early chapters of this book defined **Flow as a mental state in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment**. It is a concept whose definition, measurement, and significance were pioneered by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi in the 1970s; since then, an immense body of literature related to that concept has been built up, by him and by others.

Flow has applications in many fields, including psychology, religions (especially Eastern), architecture (designing buildings and playgrounds), music, sports, self-improvement, education, and management. Nowhere does Flow have greater significance than at the workplace where people – all around the globe and in all walks of life – are spending such a large segment of their lives.

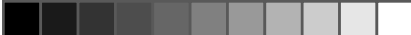The key message of the science of Flow in the world of work (Chapter 1) is this: Evidence shows that adopting Flow-based values and practices yields two types of substantial, linked benefits whether the context is managing oneself, interacting with others, or leading a team or an organization.

The first benefit of adopting Flow-based values and practices comes from **improving the life satisfaction** of self, as well as of those individuals who are exposed, directly or indirectly, to others who are conducting themselves in synch with Flow theory's simple precepts.[1]

The second, complementary benefit of a Flow-friendly work environment is that it **improves, *ceteris paribus*, the multi-dimensional performance** of the team, the unit, or the organization, as compared with a hypothetical situation in which no attention is paid to Flow-promoting practices or (and especially) if the group is being managed dysfunctionally from a Flow perspective. Multidimensional performance means measuring accomplishments not only via profits (in the case of not-for-profit entities, "surplus"), but by also taking into account

FVS

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[1] As to the relationship between improved life satisfaction and happiness, our reasoning goes like this: Flow's definition includes the phrase that it "produces intense feelings of enjoyment". Although enjoyment is not synonymous with happiness, the type of enjoyment that comes from experiencing Flow quite regularly does have a long-term positive effect on happiness (see Chapter 2, fn. 2).

such other aspects of performance as employee satisfaction and engagement, the sustainability of operations, and protection of the environment.

The focus of this book is on the **practices and benefits of managing/leading** a team or an organization in accordance with Flow-promoting values and practices. Based on Csikszentmihalyi's *Good Business* book, Chapter 2 summarizes and illustrates how managers/leaders can create and maintain Flow-friendly workplaces, and why and how such work-environments generate the above kinds of win-win benefits for employees, for managers, for owners, and for other stakeholders.

Chapter 3 lists and discusses the kinds of leadership skills that are positively associated with the ability to create a Flow-friendly workplace. A key message of that chapter is that supporting a Flow-enhancing work environment requires by and large the same kinds of leadership skills as those that a vast body of literature has already identified as desirable and effective management. Generating a Flow-friendly work environment **requires only** that greater emphasis be given to a few particular important competencies. For example, of the 29 leadership skills that Csikszentmihalyi and the architects of FLIGBY jointly identified as being Flow-compatible, only four are highlighted as notably important for supporting a Flow-promoting work environment.

"Four out of 29" is neither a magic number or ratio, nor some kind of an "iron law" of Flow-based versus general-leadership competencies. The numbers and the ratio can vary, depending on a scholar's or practitioner's conceptualization of the types of competencies believed to be important, generally or for a particular organization – in a given industry, cultural context, and situation. The "four out of 29" is only indicative of the approximate orders of magnitude involved in the skills that are particularly important in generating Flow, in the context of large number of leadership skills that are generally important, for all kinds of reasons.

FVS

The key conclusion to be drawn here is that **Flow-friendly management/leadership skills are fully compatible with just about any mainstream theory of leadership and its practice implications.** The theory of Flow-based leadership does not contradict any other theory; it does not offer itself as an alternative to

other conceptualizations of what constitutes effective leadership. **The precepts of Flow-based leadership simply add considerations** that may not have been stressed – or stressed sufficiently – before Csikszentmihalyi developed the concept of Flow and its implications for a wide range of human activities, including the practice of good management and effective leadership.

Chapter 4 is an overview introduction of the computer simulation game, **FLIGBY, whose objective is to identify, measure, and help develop management/leadership skills that, if applied, would help create a Flow-promoting work-environment.** This is also the main objective of this book, supporting FLIGBY's objective by explaining the Game's scientific foundations and its methods of defining and measuring Flow-promoting leadership skills. These contributions of the book are intended to enhance the credibility – and thus the acceptance – of the Game as an innovative teaching and training tool while, at the same time, calling attention to the numerous important caveats to keep in mind in interpreting a player's game results.

Chapter 5 summarizes key facts about the rapidly growing global field of serious computer games. Selected aspects of FLIGBY illustrate many of the common success features of such games. The chapter also positions FLIGBY within the growing spectrum of gamified teaching and training products.

An important **original contribution** of this book is calling attention to, explaining, and illustrating why and how the large and rapidly-growing FLIGBY databank, already containing millions of well-classified data points, is **providing a valuable research tool** to advance the science of leadership, especially at the intersection of Flow and leadership. This contribution is outlined in the next (concluding) chapter.

An intended **service contribution** of this book is to assist those who – being (already or newly) convinced of the merits of Flow-friendly management/leadership – plan to use FLIGBY as a tool in higher education or as an instrument of testing/training managers in organizations. Chapter 6 offers a step-by-step guide to those about to play – especially to those who also plan to be teaching with – the Game.

Chapter 7 focuses on one of the most critically important aspect of Flow-based leadership, and therefore of the Game itself, too: explaining and illustrating the many ways in which appropriate, multiple feedback are being provided to all players, as well as to their instructors and trainers.

Chapter 8 is a photo documentary of how FLIGBY was conceived, developed, and is being used around the world.

The rest of this penultimate chapter is a summary of how FLIGBY and its data-bank can be used effectively in teaching.

9.2 FLIGBY as an instructional tool

FLIGBY is a much more effective teaching tool than any case study can be because the story unfolds in response to the player's actions in dynamic and ever-more-complex ways. FLIGBY also trumps traditional teaching case studies because the player receives instant feedback, in a variety of ways, about the 150+ decisions that he/she must make during the Game. In contrast to a typical written case study, the player has to make not just one big decision about a dilemma, but dozens of more and less momentous ones, as in real life. Most deci-sions can, themselves, be the subject of extensive discussion among the partic-ipants, as if numerous case studies and their dilemmas were wrapped into one.

FLIGBY has already been employed, reportedly with success, in management/leadership and other courses at universities as well as in training programs in the corporate world. Based on thousands of feedback from players around the globe, most participants enjoy and thus appreciate the opportunity to learn by playing a well-designed, interactive business game.

INO

There are many off-line as well as on-line educational games and business simu-lations supporting the learning of numerical, pre-programmed topics (such as in accounting and finance, money markets, project management, marketing and market planning, operations management, strategy and corporate planning).

FLIGBY is distinctive for its educational content as well as in its approach to learning. FLIGBY's focus is on real human interactions, not fully pre-programmed

(meaning so that each player helps to shape the story by the choices he or she makes along the way). The Game incorporates insights from psychology, Flow theory, the standard literature on general management/leadership, as well as from the experiences of practicing managers/leaders, so as to be able to simulate realistically the complex processes of effective people management.

Instructors have a wide variety of options for incorporating FLIGBY into their college and university courses and executive training programs; suggestions can be found in **DA-9.1**.

The topics covered by FLIGBY's plot and the decision dilemmas during the Game make it an appropriate teaching tool in a variety of courses, such as:

- » Leadership – Managing People (Human Resources)
- » Leadership Development – Self-Management
- » Business Strategy and Business Development
- » Marketing in the Context of General Management
- » Organizational Behavior and Managing Change
- » Managing Agricultural Enterprises, especially Wineries
- » Leading Teams
- » Entrepreneurship
- » Cross-cultural Management
- » Management
- » Sustainability in Business
- » Business Ethics
- » Applied Psychology

Based on experiences so far, FLIGBY has been employed most successfully in MBA and Executive MBA programs, where the Game covers and integrates strategy and leadership topics. Incorporating games into business programs has become ever more popular in recent years, both because good games have proven to be effective teaching and learning devices and because participants not only appreciate but also expect to encounter such games in their programs.

If an instructor or trainer plans to adopt FLIGBY in a course or training program, the preparation/implementation requirements have three phases:

① **Personal preparation** – The instructor herself or himself should be playing FLIGBY first, completing the Game. It is essential that a teacher play FLIGBY so as to experience the Game's potential, to be prepared to understand students' comments later, to be able to answer their questions, and to be ready to conduct stimulating debriefing session(s) during the third phase. Depending on how deeply the instructor wishes to get into the Game and how much time will be spent in FLIGBY's extensive Multimedia Library of classical and contemporary readings and videos by Prof. Csikszentmihalyi and others, an initial time-investment of between 7 and 10 hours would be needed. The returns on this significant investment in time will (or can) be of several types:

> » The experience of playing a stimulating game (many players and instructors reported entering into a Flow-like state while at the Game's controls).

> » More importantly, the teacher assigning FLIGBY is likely to be recognized as a particularly effective instructor/trainer who relies on a leading-edge, interactive simulation tool to excite, motivate, and involve his/her audience in the learning process. (This assumes, of course, at least one or several well-run debriefing sessions, which, for many students, are the highlights of their Game experience.)

> » Assigning FLIGBY again, to another group, will require little or no additional time investment by the teacher.[2] In fact, the more

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[2] Let us note that FLIGBY has unimpeded "re-playability", for the reasons explained in Chapter 6.

frequently the Game is employed as a teaching tool, the more interesting and effective the debriefing sessions tend to become.

» Getting familiar with FLIGBY's Flow-friendly leadership skillset and the unique properties of its large databank may prompt new ideas for research, or an interest in research collaboration with colleagues with similar interests around the world. Any educational partner with experience with the Game will be given free access to FLIGBY's databank. (The unique properties of the databank, making it attractive as a research resource, and the planned global research network that any bona fide teacher, trainer, researcher, and corporate executive may join, are described in the following chapter.)

② **Introducing FLIGBY to the participants.** – The authors suggest that during the introductory session the instructor summarize the key features of the Game and indicate where and how FLIGBY fits into the course material. Tell the participants that they will play (all or most of) the Game at a time of their own choosing, the approximate duration of the gameplay to finish it, and the participants' deadline (set by the teacher) for fully completing it. Based on the authors' experience, the final deadline should be set not sooner than 10 days from the time when access to the Game is received (details in Chapter 6) and not longer than four weeks.[3] (Of course, if the Game is to be played during a training retreat, the deadlines will differ.)

As far as how the Game is to be played, it is perfectly adequate just to distribute to the participants the "Step by step guide to playing FLIGBY" (Chapter 6); available digitally, too, as **DA- 6.1.**

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[3] Not giving more than a month to complete the Game because a much longer time might encourage students to postpone starting or, if they start in time, having longer intervals between playing the segments makes it easy to forget important details from earlier. Also, stretching the playing time too much reduces the chances of the player experiencing Flow.

The instructor is to decide whether he/she wishes to assign any Flow-related study materials; and if yes, whether any would come from FLIGBY's Multimedia Library (**DA-4.6**) and if so, which ones. Any such assignments should be given not later than the intro session.

In case of academic programs, the teacher should explain how the participants will be graded for playing the Game and on any of the assigned Game-related "deliverables". We recommend that whether a student wins the "Spirit of the Wine" award should **not** be a factor in grading (see Chapter 4, Box 4.1, for the reasons).

Gameplay can be actively supported and made more relevant, especially in Executive MBA type programs, by suggesting/requiring participants to keep a "personal blog". Its essence is frequent entries on their gameplay experiences, juxtaposing them with the challenges they face at their own workplace. The individual blogs can/should be shared among the participants as well as with the instructor, obviously benefitting all.[4]

INO

If the teacher wishes to exploit the **blended learning potential** of FLIGBY, then "in-between sessions" may be planned, devoted partly to a discussion of certain FLIGBY scenes and partly to non-Game-related topics. (The text in Chapter 5, pp. 98-100, and Illustration 5.4, explain the "blended learning" and the "flipped classroom" concepts.) There are several further options as to what might be useful to enrich the introductory session.[5]

③ **Group debriefing session** – This session or sessions are most important. It is highly recommended to conduct at least one debriefing session as soon as possible after the deadline, that is, after everyone had completed the Game.

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[4] For a sample "blog assignment" see **DA-4.7.** Further suggestions on deliverables, and grading, in **DA-9.3.**

[5] Those include exploring with the participants the Game's technical features, how to navigate within the Game, discussing what the control panel shows, going over briefly the content of the Game's multi-media library, even playing a video segment from the Game and discussing it. These additional activities help learners to become familiar with the Game; it can also be used to initiate an early critical discussion of the Game in class. Further suggestions for in-class activities are found in **DA-9.2.**

Debriefing is an essential part of the FLIGBY experience for students: an opportunity to discuss and embed the lessons FLIGBY intends to teach.

Since the debriefing process was already discussed previously, in connection with feedback (Chapter 7, Section 4), we suggest that those interested refer back to that section. However, there is one further fact to note in connection with the preparation for debriefing: Any teacher using FLIGBY for instructional purposes will have ready access to information about his or her students' gameplay, for example, how far each and every one in the group has gotten in the Game. This is a real-time report, automatically updated each and every time any member of your group plays FLIGBY. Accessing this report can be useful to a teacher in several ways. For example, he/she might say or send a message to student X that "I see that as of today, one week after the official start of FLIGBY, you have not even started playing, etc." Or, "Y, you seem to be stuck after playing Scene 4 – which you completed a week ago – and have had no activity since. Is there any way I may help you?" This functionality is useful to the instructor in urging in time that participants should finish the Game by the deadline, before the debriefing session.

9.3   **FLIGBY as a corporate leadership development tool**

In the corporate world, FLIGBY fits best with "Leadership Development" programs.[6] Similarly to the practices of business schools, the use of on-line simulation games has become ever more prevalent and sought-after tool in the business, government, and nonprofit sectors.

Beyond the observations about the use of FLIGBY as a teaching tool, most of them are also relevant in corporate training. FLIGBY can further assist organizations in the following ways:

> » Employers may consider FLIGBY as a key element of their "blended-learning" approach to training. This means that the experiences of the participants in the FLIGBY Game are applied and discussed in the context of the organization's own environment and problems.

6
   Leadership development involves courses, training, or educational programs with the purpose of improving the performance of managers and leaders within an organization.

FLIGBY-based training extends individual experiences and learning into a group-based experience and learning.

» FLIGBY's own "skillset" values can be adapted (translated) into the organization's own competency system. The main advantage of this approach is the unbiased nature of the resulting skill measurements obtained via FLIGBY as compared with the typically biased other measures generated via the organization's own survey or one of the standard surveys. (Further discussion of this in the next chapter.) Box 9-1 gives a seemingly easy, but in reality quite subtle, example of a decision to be made to test certain competencies.

Box 9.1 An example of FLIGBY as a leadership development tool

The modeling of decisions in the Game is competency-based. That is, the designers shaped the story so that the player's decisions indicate the strengths and weaknesses of certain competencies that can be quantifiably measured, as explained in Chapter 4. Let's take an interesting example from FLIGBY. You, the new GM, are asked on your very first day at work by Turul Winery's owner, Bob: "Would you like to go over the Winery's web-page with me now?" You have zillion things to do and your first thought might be that "I can do that on my own, when I have the time, why waste time on it now?" so you answer, "I would rather do it later." You were passingly told earlier that the web-page was designed by the owner's nephew, who also works at the Winery. Even more important should be the thought: "what an opportunity to get a good idea, quickly, about what Bob considers to be important, what he is the most proud of. That is, to learn, right off the bat, what the owner thinks about his company." How the player answers this question suggests whether he/she is an "active listener"; it could even be a partial indicator of his or her "emotional intelligence", as well as his or her ability to "gain information". These are three of FLIGBY's particularly important Flow-friendly competencies among the 29 general leadership skills.

» Based on the skill feedback obtained at the conclusion of the Game, an organization can establish its own personal development plan for each participant. Irrespective of whether an organization does or does not have its own competency-measurement system, FLIGBY's skillset measurements can throw new light on the skills of the organization's own personnel, which can be benchmarked in various ways within and outside the organization. Knowledge of the skill-levels so obtained can be especially useful for **#predictive-analysis-modeling**, for example, when an organization faces a new challenge, such as a merger or an acquisition, and it wishes to smooth the adaptation to the new situation. Facing a new challenge often implies that certain skills are particularly valuable to successfully managing them. Predictive analysis can identify important skill gaps in management, making possible high-level strategic HR modeling (see Chapter 7, Section 3).

9.4 Digital Appendices supporting instructors and scholars

Linked to and supporting FLIGBY and this book are two dozen, continually updated, on-line digital files, called Digital Appendices (DA), **available preferentially to *bona fide* registered university teachers, professional trainers, and research partners.** For information please contact: instructors@fligby.com

The digital appendices further enhance the FLIGBY learning experience and give a competitive edge to the instructors and trainers relative to their students. Several DAs should also be helpful for research purposes, for example, those that provide details about the FLIGBY skillset.

List of Digital Appendices	
DA-1.1	Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi talks about his life and work
DA-3.1	Leadership skills defined and measured in FLIGBY
DA-3.2	Comparing FLIGBY's and Strengthsfinder's leadership skillsets
DA-3.3	A private guide to key decisions by FLIGBY's General Manager
DA-4.1	Turul Winery
DA-4.2	Synopses of FLIGBY's 23 scenes
DA-4.3	A guide to FLIGBY's Main User Interface
DA-4.4	Who is who in Turul Winery?
DA-4.5	The "Spirit of the Wine" award
DA-4.6	The "Triple Scorecard", the "Balanced Scorecard", and the "Triple Bottom Line"
DA-4.7	FLIGBY's Multimedia Library
DA-5.1	FLIGBY's technology today and tomorrow
DA-6.1	A step-by-step guide to playing FLIGBY
DA-7.1	Multiple feedback to FLIGBY players and instructors
DA-7.2	FLIGBY's state-of-the-art digital architecture
DA-7.3	Player feedback form
DA-9.1	Course structure options
DA-9.2	Planning in-class activities and discussion
DA-9.3	A sample "Blog Exercise"
DA-9.4	Suggestions to instructors on student deliverables/grading
DA-10.1	"Leadership and Flow" planned research program

"

Play is the highest form of research.

Albert Einstein

10

"LEADERSHIP AND FLOW": A RESEARCH PROGRAM

This chapter summarizes the research concept and the envisaged network organization that were inspired by the work of Csikszentmihalyi as well as the many applications and research opportunities that arose as the authors delved into FLIGBY during the past years.

10.1   FLIGBY offers a creative platform for academic research

In addition to FLIGBY's credentials as a game-based leadership teaching and training tool, the Game also offers a **unique databank**, generated by thousands of player decisions linked to skill measures, ready to be exploited for academic research purposes.

In the above sentence, the adjective "unique" – so often used to fluff and hype ordinary things – is an appropriate descriptor for the large number of data observations that players of FLIGBY contribute to the data bank during their game-play.

In order to document the unique properties of the FLIGBY dataset and its particular suitability for research, we need to explain briefly the distinctive, systematic biases that are unfailingly present in the other methods of establishing (rating) leadership competencies.

The traditional methods of measuring leadership skills are of two types:[1]

One, asking individuals via questionnaires to rate themselves on selected leadership competencies. In some cases, the self-rating involves checking or ranking the strengths of the listed traits; in others, there are little short stories and the person is supposed to choose among the answers to questions related to the stories. The **bias** in all such standardized personality questionnaires arises from the fact that the respondent either *knows* or (subconsciously perhaps) *guesses* the "right" or the "most appropriate" answers in order to present a more favorable portrait of self. A further difficulty is that most such psychometric tests of this kind focus on personality, ignoring actual skills and competencies that are particularly important in the context of the Flow theory.

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[1]   Both problems are discussed and documented in Marcus Buckingham, "Most HR Data Is Bad Data", *Harvard Business Review*, February 9, 2015.

Two, the alternative approach is to get a person's colleagues, direct reports, and/or superiors to rate the leadership skills/competencies of the subject. It has been amply demonstrated in the literature that all such "rating" approaches have fundamental flaws: the ratings tend to reflect the biases of the person(s) performing the rating. This phenomenon has been termed the **#Idiosyncratic-Rater-Effect**, a bias that cannot be eliminated even if evaluators are told about the problem and are trained to avoid it. Thus, competency profiles and predictions so obtained tend to reveal more about the profiler than providing sound information about the person being profiled.

This is where FLIGBY comes to the rescue! The Game creates an environment that offers a new type of platform for observing management behavior. The player gets totally absorbed into the story (indicated by the fact that the global average actual playing time is 7.5 hours), concentrating on handling the 150+ decisions that he or she has to make. Since the "scoring" of those decisions (about 90 of the total) – in terms of any of the 29 leadership skills being measured takes place behind the scenes – and the player is completely unaware of how his or her decisions might affect his or her skill scores, the player unwittingly **reveals his or her real self**. This approach to testing skills is **non-intrusive**. It is not influenced by the Idiosyncratic Rater Effect. It is not distorted by the player feeling observed and thinking that he/she must respond as expected. And the player is not worried about the embarrassment of having to respond in front of peers, who will judge him/her. In playing FLIGBY, each player can and will behave like he/she would in similar situations in real life; being true to himself/herself.

Up to the writing of this chapter, many thousands of persons have played FLIGBY, generating more than three million data points, a number that is expected to increase ten- to hundred-fold in the coming years.[2] Thus, the more successful FLIGBY becomes in terms of the number of persons playing it, the greater the number of competency/skill-related data points that will be accumulated.

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[2] Our "back of an envelope calculation": Of the 150+ decisions, about 90 are associated with one or several skill categories. And since on each question there are, on average, 3 to 5 choices, this means that each player generates up to 500 skill-related data points. Thus, the 20,000 players so far have generated the above-estimated number of observations.

INO

The accumulated **#Big-Data** available for research purposes are anonymous in that the identity of the players is fully protected. At the same time, the replies can be sorted by age bracket, experience level, gender, nationality, work-culture, and branch of the economy of the player at the time of his or her playing the Game.

Conclusion: given the large size and the uniquely unbiased properties of the FLIGBY databank, it obviously represents a great empirical resource for leadership research.

10.2   **Example of a planned research project**

An example of a planned research project is where we are going to *empirically tie* particular *types of* workplace and business *challenges* to particular *subsets* of managerial and leadership *skills* that are most useful in order to effectively handle those challenges, to achieve Flow, and thus to improve organizational performance.

The essence of being in a Flow state is the matching of challenges with management/leadership skills. Whereas the skill side of this coupling has been widely researched and categorized (and is often used in everyday practice), the challenge side has been underexplored, certainly remains uncategorized (to the best of our knowledge). This is one important area we plan to work on under the Leadership and Flow Research Program. We plan to create holistic and universal categories of business challenges based on three aspects:

>>   First, based on an *organization's hierarchical levels*. That is, at various levels of management/leadership, the challenges tend to be of different types than at other levels; the differences are especially large between relatively high and low levels. For example, at lower levels of management, the communications challenge is to deal appropriately with colleagues, suppliers and customers. However, at the CEO level of a global organization, the communication challenge encompasses all internal as well as external stakeholders. Often this means effectively conveying messages in different cultures. Also important, CEOs are expected to articulate organizational identity (vision and mission) in their communications; not a task that is bound to arise at much lower levels.

ITA

» Second, considering the type of *professional role and identity*, challenges are different for administrators, experts, entrepreneurs, managers and leaders (for definitions of these categories, see Box 10.1). For example, for an entrepreneur and a leader, driving change is very important, while for administrators, stability of procedures is preferred.

» Third, we also plan to include challenges emerging from the dynamics of teams and project work to both the leader and the members of teams, all of whom face different kinds of challenges during the evolution of a project's phases. For example, having a vision is important at the start (requiring analytic and organizing skills) whereas later on, motivating and delegating skills become more essential.

Box 10.1 FLIGBY's classification of job categories

All such definitions entail some degree of arbitrariness. We show this classification because it is on this basis that – beyond their nationality, industry segment, hierarchical level and job function – players also answer the brief survey question when they register to play FLIGBY about their current job categories. Therefore, any researcher working with the FLIGBY Data Bank (matching challenges with positions) will need to know these definitions.

» An **administrato**r is a person whose job is to manage a set of tasks that involves the implementing or controlling of certain defined, routine processes, on a daily basis.

» A **manager** is a the middle-level executive whose function is to implement the policies, the objectives, or the strategies determined by the owner(s), by coordinating the resources and the efforts of people efficiently and effectively, with the aim to getting things done. Managers typically supervise several subordinates, usually six and up.

> » An **exper**t is someone widely recognized as a reliable source of tech-nique or skill for judging or deciding things in the right way. More generally, an expert is a person with extensive knowledge based on study, research, or experience in a particular field of endeavor.
>
> » An **entrepreneur** actively explores opportunities for innovation for the purpose of altering existing or initiating new businesses, enter-prises, products and/or services as well as ways of organizing. At the core is the creation of new value by assuming certain financial, psy-chological, and social risks. An entrepreneur seeks monetary and per-sonal satisfaction rewards.
>
> » A **leader** *is a person who influences followers to achieve a certain vision and/or goal(s) in a particular organizational context. In some cases a leader is simply the top person appointed to direct an organization of substantial size.*

We plan to start by assembling a substantial **collection of the most important challenges** one can identify at the workplace. Next, those challenges need to be categorized, if possible, already according to the above three dimensions. The research can then proceed by finding statistical correlations between chal-lenges and skills (matrix) that are particularly helpful or unhelpful (hinder) mas-tering the concrete challenge type.

Taking our research ideas to another level, future research results can find uses in better predicting the future dynamics of organizational changes by employ-ing predictive Big Data modeling. By identifying the most relevant emerging challenges in the external business environment (which will indicate the kinds of skills most relevant for dealing with them), current skillsets can be compared with those needed in the future. Based on such **gap analysis**, the research will be able to assess the appropriateness of current learning and development tools, techniques and strategies. The objective is to find new and effective ways of leadership skill measurements and development.

10.3 **The research program and network**

Illustration 10.1 shows three aspects that the planned "Leadership and Flow" research program integrates, thus rendering the research platform of this program one of its kind in this field.

The previous sections sketched the background that has prompted the authors of this book and the staff at ALEAS Simulations, working closely with Prof. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, CORVINUS Business School (Prof. Zoltan Buzady), and ALEAS Simulations to plan and organize a "Leadership and Flow" global research program.

The basic idea is to create a non-profit, no-membership-fee **global network** of institutions and scholars that will be (1) granted access to the FLIGBY Data Bank for the purpose of advancing research into leadership and management, especially in areas that are linked to the Flow concept and its value system, and (2) sharing research ideas and result.
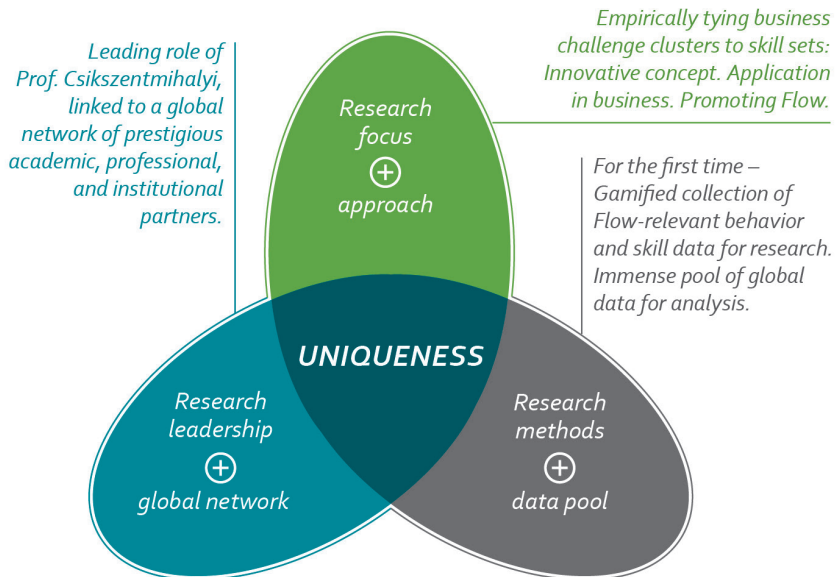

Leading role of Prof. Csikszentmihalyi, linked to a global network of prestigious academic, professional, and institutional partners.

Empirically tying business challenge clusters to skill sets: Innovative concept. Application in business. Promoting Flow.

Research focus ⊕ approach

For the first time – Gamified collection of Flow-relevant behavior and skill data for research. Immense pool of global data for analysis.

UNIQUENESS

Research leadership ⊕ global network

Research methods ⊕ data pool

Illustration 10.1 – Distinctive elements of the "Leadership and Flow" research program

The planned organization of the global "Leadership and Flow" network is shown on Illustration 10.2; further planning ideas are summarized in **DA-10.1.**

The three prospective principal sponsors of the global "Leadership and Flow" research program are the Quality of Life Research Center at Claremont University (Prof. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi), CORVINUS Business School (Profs. Zoltan Buzady and Paul Marer), and ALEAS Simulations (CEO Zad Vecsey), shown in the blue circles on the left side of Illustration 10.2.

Program management is planned to be coordinated by the two units (Advisory Board and Program Implementation) shown in the center circle.

Affiliated with the Program will be a network of scholars and institutions interested in teaching with FLIGBY, as well as in research related to the leadership and Flow topics (shown in the small green circles on the right side of Illustration 10.2). Initially, we plan to approach business schools that have faculty expertise on topics related to management/leadership and Flow; thereafter, any scholar, professional educator and trainer, and the institutions with which they are affiliated, will be welcome to join the Network.

The enlarging and then evolving research network plans to team-up with interested colleagues and experts with different functional and academic interests and credentials; that is, primarily leadership teachers and scholars, those interested in the applications of the Flow concept in various disciplines, statisticians, those with experience in administering publicly-funded research programs, and editors. Naturally, we plan this new academic-professional eco-system to be wide and inclusive, built on the reciprocal benefits that active participants will offer and enjoy.[3]

To find out more about the Leadership and Flow Research Program, with a view toward exploring joining the network, please visit us on: *join.flowleadership.org*

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[3] The Managing Board of the Research Program is looking for volunteers (such as pre- or post-Ph.D. students and other young academics) who would be interested in joining the Network, doing such tasks as focused literature search, statistical methodology work reviews, etc.) Please contact Prof. Zoltan Buzady, CORVINUS Business School at zoltan@buzady.hu.
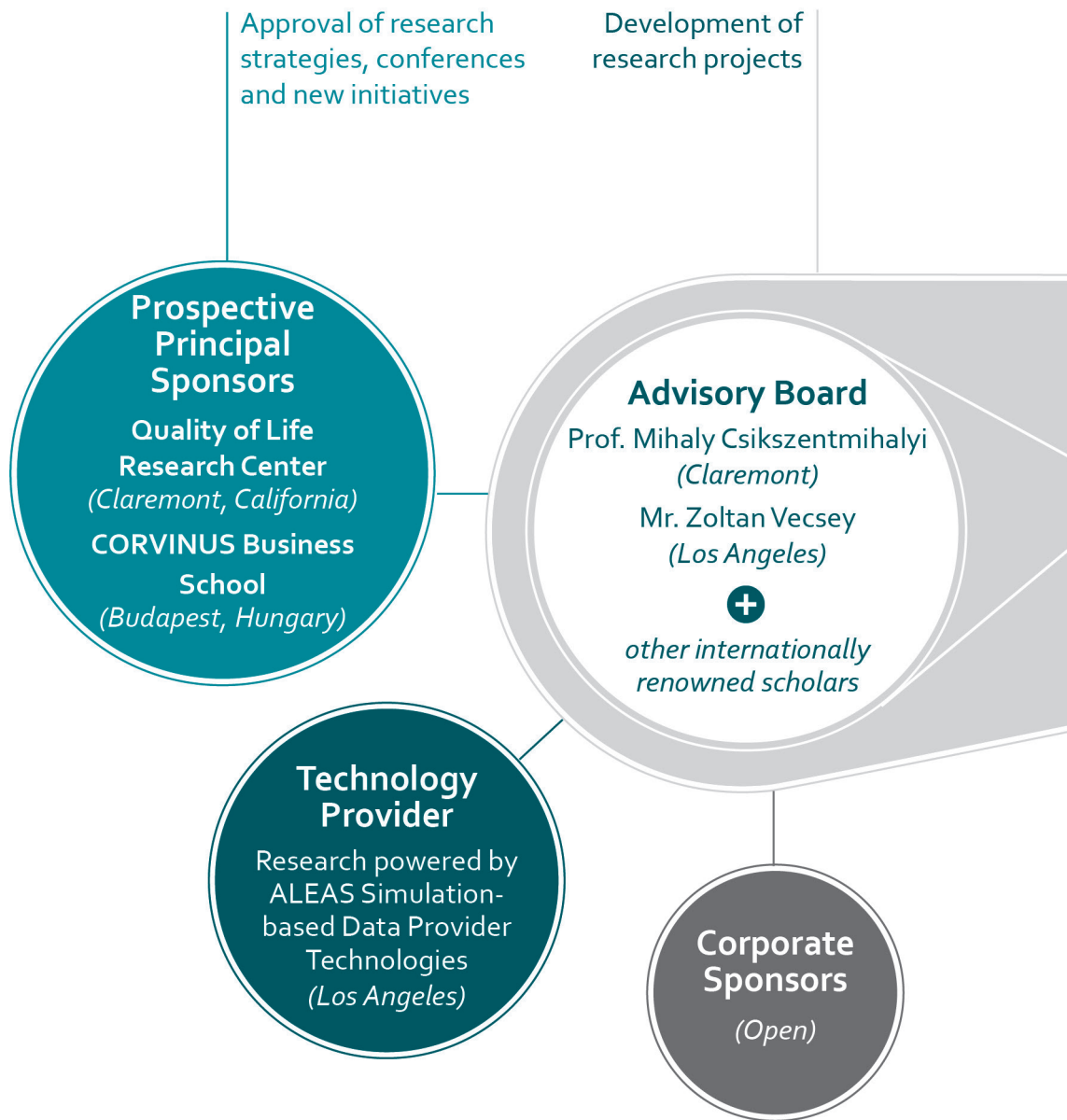
Approval of research strategies, conferences and new initiatives

Development of research projects

Prospective Principal Sponsors

Quality of Life Research Center *(Claremont, California)*

CORVINUS Business School *(Budapest, Hungary)*

Advisory Board

Prof. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi *(Claremont)*

Mr. Zoltan Vecsey *(Los Angeles)*

+

other internationally renowned scholars

Technology Provider

Research powered by ALEAS Simulation-based Data Provider Technologies *(Los Angeles)*

Corporate Sponsors

(Open)

Illustration 10.2 – Organogram of the planned "Leadership and Flow" program and network

Academic partners from

Program Management

Prof. Zoltan Buzady
(Los Angeles, Budapest)

Business School 6
(China)

Business School 1
(Europe)

Business School 7
(India)

Business School 2
(US)

Your Institution

Business School 8
(Brazil)

Business School 3
(Europe)

Business School 11
(Russia)

Business School 4
(US)

Business School 9
(Korea)

CEMS

Business School 5
(US)

Business School 10
(Africa)

Business School 12
(Japan)

Other type of Institution 1.

Other type of Institution 2.

Balanced Scorecard (BSC), a strategy performance management tool, linking the financial aspects with the customers' perspective, internal business processes, organizational learning dynamics, and other key dimensions of organizational performance.

Blended Learning, the combination of traditional learning content and techniques with the positive features of modern, computer-based applications and other innovative learning approaches.

Challenges, one of the two core dimensions at the heart of Flow theory. Challenges are opportunities to act, which are individually and contextually determined. One objective of the proposed Leadership & Flow Research Program is to meaningfully categorize leadership challenges.

Creativity, a phenomenon whereby something new and valuable is formed. The created item may be intangible (such as an idea, a scientific theory, a musical composition or a joke) or an original physical object (such as an invention, a literary work or a painting).

Corporate Atmosphere Index (percent), also called the "Flow Meter", measures the average mood of your team, which in-turn is a probability function - influenced by your decisions - of having an atmosphere in which the Winery's goals are clear, relevant information is available to every member of the team, and these motivate them. In its ideal state, it poses manageable challenges for the company and your colleagues.

Digital Appendices, a collection of about two-dozen FLIGBY-related teaching and training resources to supplement this book, periodically updated.

Epic Win, a win or final achievement so great and attractive that it becomes the ultimate target a player wishes to achieve during a video game.

Executive Core Qualifications (ECQ), defined by the U.S. Federal Services as leadership skills needed to build a corporate culture that drives for results, serves customers, and builds successful teams and coalitions within and outside the organization. A good score on ECQ test is required

for entry into the Senior Executive Service in the US government. The ECQ is widely accepted as a guidance by the corporate world as well.

Feedback, qualitative or quantitative reactions to a person's performance of tasks, intended as the basis for improvement.

FLIGBY Big Data, a research-analytic activity, making use of the FLIGBY Databank to reveal patterns, trends, and associations related to leadership behavior.

FLIGBY Dashboard, the main platform for continuous performance feedback to players on their decisions' impacts on individual team members' Flow state, the corporate atmosphere, and the Winery's profit potential. The dashboard appears throughout FLIGBY gameplay.

FLIGBY Databank, a technological storing of game-player-related information, such as log-in data, gameplay tracking, decisions made during the Game, and skill-profile data.

FLIGBY Game-play Data, information stored in FLIGBY Database about each players' playing time, on-line library activities, and decisions during the Game.

FLIGBY Management/Leadership Skill Set, 29 skills identified by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and the architects of FLIGBY to measure leadership and management capabilities and potential.

FLIGBY Master Analytics Profiler (MAP), a database, software and programming package to store and manipulate skills-profile and related data.

FLIGBY Media Library, the online, digital collection of relevant readings and videos on management/leadership, Flow-theory, and viniculture.

Flipped classroom, an instructional strategy and type of blended learning that reverses the traditional educational sequencing of "lecture and then homework" to "first viewing a lecture video or playing a serious game", to be followed by class-discussion.

Flow, the mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement,

and enjoyment in the process of the activity. Flow state, also called 'being in the Zone', is characterized by complete absorption in what one does.

Gallup's Strengthsfinder, an online personal assessment test designed to profile management skills and strengths.

Gamification, the application of typical elements of game playing (e.g. point scoring, competition with others, rules of play) to other areas of activity, such as online learning.

Idiosyncratic rater effect, the typical bias occurring during the process of rating a person, such as a colleague or a subordinate.

Leadership and Flow Research Program and Network, a global network of academic and corporate partners to explore conceptual and practical implications of applying Flow theory to leadership concepts and practices, primarily by using game-play data generated in FLIGBY.

Management/Leadership *Skills* and *Competencies*, skills are the abilities needed for performing well or being an expert in managing and/or leading. Competencies are considered as the active application of skills. It is believed that skills can be learned.

Manager vs. Leader, refers to the classic debate in the management literature on whether the two roles and functions can and should be separated, or not.

METRIX is FLIGBY's game portal for managing individual and group accounts and gameplay reports.

Mr. Fligby, a fictional character who serves as Game master, personal mentor and coach during FLIGBY's gameplay.

Positive Psychology, the scientific study of the strengths that enable individuals and communities to thrive. The field is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, to cultivate what is best within themselves, and to enhance their experiences of love, work, and play.

Predictive people analytics, an emerging science and practice to make predictions of how key people,

like managers, would behave under plausible future scenarios.

Serious Games, simulations of real-world events and processes designed to solve problems. Although serious games are also often entertaining, their main purpose is to educate or to train.

"Spirit of the Wine" award, the ultimate prize to win in FLIGBY.

Strategic human resource management (strategic HRM, or SHRM), an approach to managing human resources for the purpose of better implementing long-term organizational objectives within a strategic framework.

Subjective Mean, the average level of challenges and skills of an ordinary person, through an average week.

Sustainability Badge reflects decisions by an organization that its product, services, and production processes are both environmentally and socially sustainable.

Triple Bottom Line (TBL), an assessment framework that strikes a balance between the three fundamental dimensions of sustainability: social, environmental and financial.

Triple Scorecard, FLIGBY's multi-dimensional performance measurement concept, comprised of individual Flow, corporate atmosphere, profit potential and environmental sustainability.

Zoltan Buzady, Ph.D. (zoltan@buzady.hu)

Associate Professor of Management and Organization
CORVINUS Business School, Budapest

Director
Leadership & Flow Global Research Program Implementation

A Hungarian who grew up in Germany, Zoltan earned his first degree in Law at the London School of Economics (UK). His practice orientation and strong interest in the real dilemmas of people management prompted him to complete a Global MBA at CASS Business School (UK). After the fall of the Iron Curtain he returned to Hungary to earn a Ph.D., focusing on the strategic challenges in transition economies. Parallel to his academic work, his hobby to meet people and his entrepreneurial spirit drove him to become the co-founder of the first Specialities Tea House in Hungary.

Since 2005, his flagship MBA courses are "Leadership" and "Design Thinking". During 2012-2015 he had served as Faculty Director of the School's MBA Programs.

Guided by the motto "*Learning, Leading, Leapfrogging*", Zoltan has a quarter-century of experimentation and innovation at the interface of Leadership, Cross-cultural Management and Strategy. He has authored several global-award-winning teaching case studies and has extensive practical experience as a team and executive coach. His current research focuses on Leadership and Flow Theory, combining it with Self-Development and Change Management ideas, aiming to further Leadership Development that is applicable in different cultural and situational contexts.

Paul Marer, Ph.D.

Emeritus Professor of International Business
Kelley School of Business, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA

Born in Hungary; emigrated to the USA in 1956; a US citizen since 1961; and a dual US/Hungarian citizen since

2000. His M.A. and Ph.D. degrees are from University of Pennsylvania (Wharton School), concentrating on economics and business. Paul had a 25-year career as professor of business at the Kelley School of Business, Indiana University, Bloomimgton.

During 1987-89, at George Soros' request, he was involved in establishing the first business school in Central and Eastern Europe, the International Management Center (IMC), that later became CEU Business School. Paul moved to Hungary in 2000 to teach at CEU Business School, where he was a full time faculty member, having served three terms as Academic Dean. Paul is the author or editor of 24 books and 150 articles and chapters, mainly on the changing economic and business situation in Hungary and in the other countries of CEE. He has an honorary doctorate from the Budapest University of Economic Sciences (1999).

Zad Vecsey, MBA (zad@aleasgroup.com)

Co-founder and CEO
ALEAS Simulations Inc., Budapest and Los Angeles

Member
Leadership & Flow Global Research Program Implementation

Zad received a master degree in organizational sociology from CORVINUS University and an MBA from the London Business School. He began his career in the legal and consulting unit of Coopers & Lybrand. Then he became managing director of IQ ConsultinG Ltd, introducing and representing in Hungary such international brands as LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY as well as the *CDP on-line survey of European competitiveness.*

Zad's enthusiastic mission as founder and CEO of ALEAS Simulations is to find innovative ways to teach leadership development via creative, "blended learning" video games. In this field he had earned the top prize in Hungary and later, in the EU, even before he embarked on creating FLIGBY, which had garnered the globe's top award in its category (the "Oscar" in this field). Zad is the author of the book, *On the Brink of Chaos*.

A complex project like a book is hardly ever the fruit of the work of just its author or authors. In our case, we were supported by the skill and dedication of so many people that space is insufficient to mention them all.

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Gary and Diana Gute, among the most proficient academic users of FLIGBY in the USA. Their experiences with generations of students have been a source of