The Say-Do Ratio
A Metric for Reliability and Accountability

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What is the Say-Do Ratio?

- A metric that compares what is committed to what is delivered.
- Measures the consistency between words and actions.
- Applies to individuals or teams.

- ⬆️ High say-do ratio is associated to reliability and effectiveness.

- Aids in planning and decision-making.
- Helps identify **issues** and **opportunities**.
- Good predictor of **execution effectiveness**.

- **Commitment vs. Delivery** – Measures completion within sprints.
- **Predictability & Velocity** – Helps refine estimation and planning.
- **Continuous Improvement** – Useful in retrospectives.

Example 1: Say-Do Ratio with Story Points

Scenario:

- A Scrum team commits to completing 50 story points in a sprint.
- At the end of the sprint, they complete 40 story points.

Say-Do Ratio Calculation:

$$\text{Say-Do Ratio} = \frac{\text{Completed Work}}{\text{Committed Work}} = \frac{40}{50} = 0.8 \ (80\%)$$

Interpretation:

- A ratio below 100% suggests overcommitment or blockers.
- This data can guide better future sprint planning.

Scenario:

- A development team commits to completing 8 features in a sprint.
- They work efficiently and manage to complete 12 features.

Say-Do Ratio Calculation:

$$\text{Say-Do Ratio} = \frac{\text{Completed Features}}{\text{Committed Features}} = \frac{12}{8} = 1.5 \ (150\%)$$

Interpretation:

- This could indicate high efficiency, but also suggests **conservative planning**.
- ⚖️ A balance is needed to maintain **realistic yet ambitious commitments**.

- **Punishing Honest Communication** – Can discourage openness and ambition.
- **Measuring Performance in Isolation** – One of many KPIs.
- **Discouraging Risk Taking** – Innovation requires some risk.
- **Micromanagement** – Strict tracking can limit adaptability.
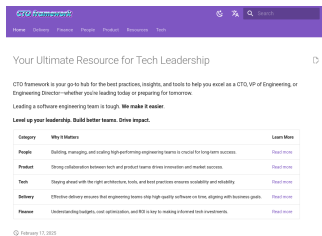- **Rigid Performance Measurement** – Agile requires flexibility.

Conclusion

- The say-do ratio is a **guiding metric** that represents commitment and delivery.
- Helps teams refine **predictability, sprint planning, and trust**.
- Should support **continuous improvement** rather than stifle innovation.

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