Leading Software Teams with Systems Thinking

Francisco Trindade

Engineering Director at Braze

medium.com/@franciscomt

There is a lot going on for an Engineering Manager

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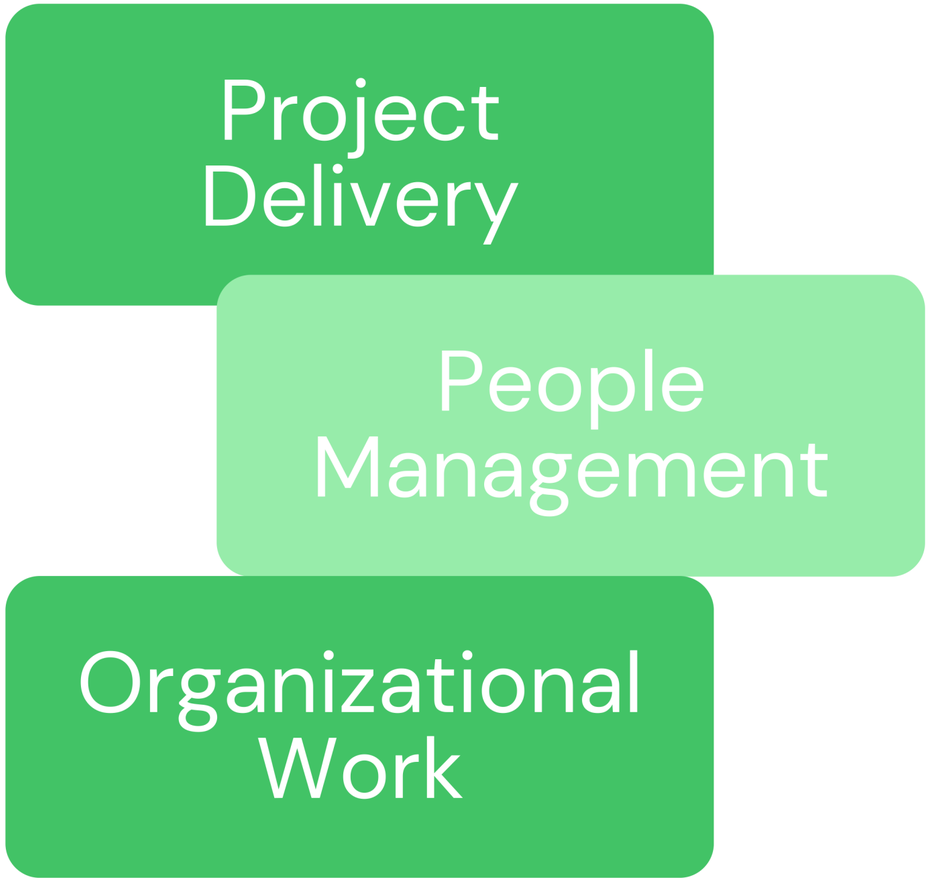
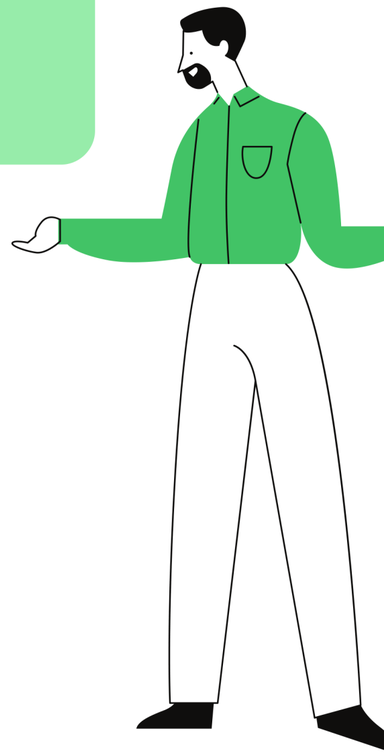


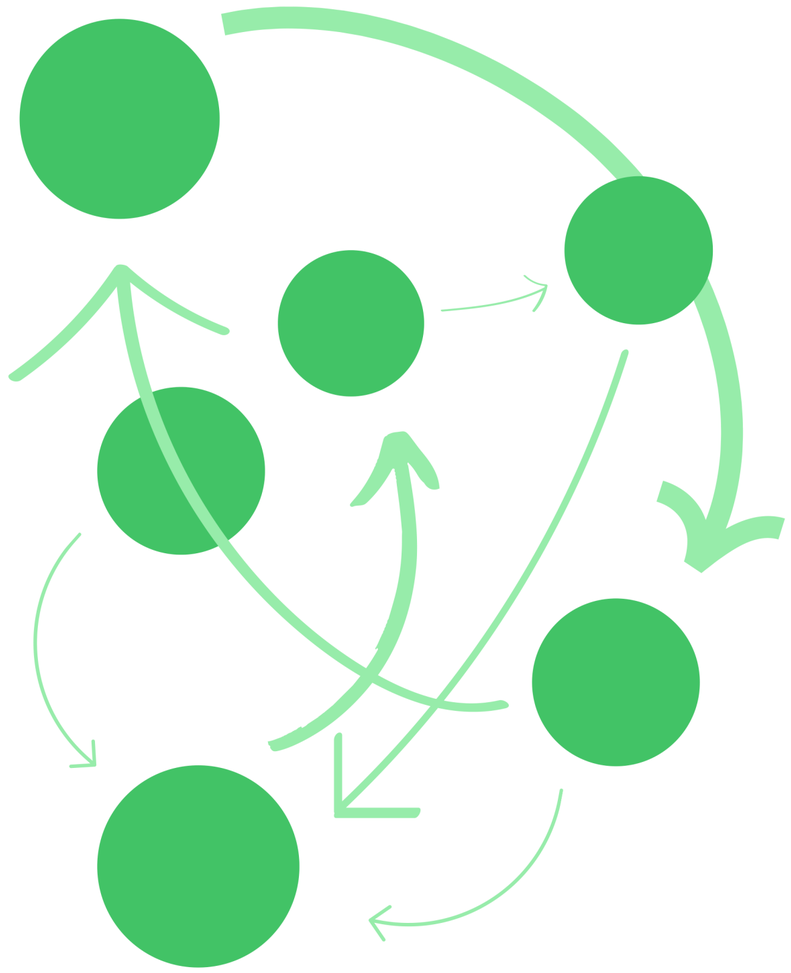
There is a lot going on for an Engineering Manager

Project Delivery

People Management

Organizational Work



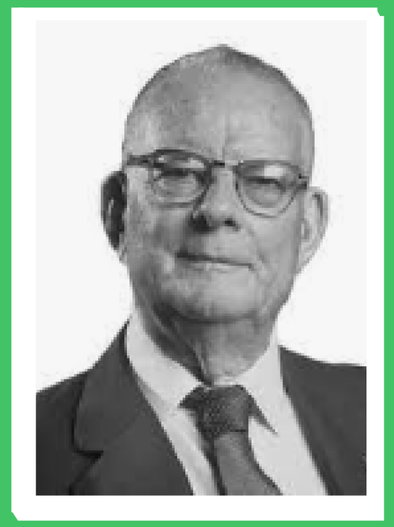


Use Systems Thinking to drive your focus

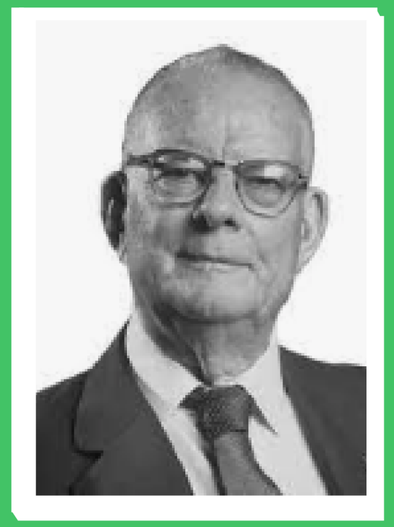
What is Systems Thinking?

Systems thinking is a way of making sense of the complexity of the world by looking at it in terms of wholes and relationships rather than by splitting it down into its parts.

Wikipedia

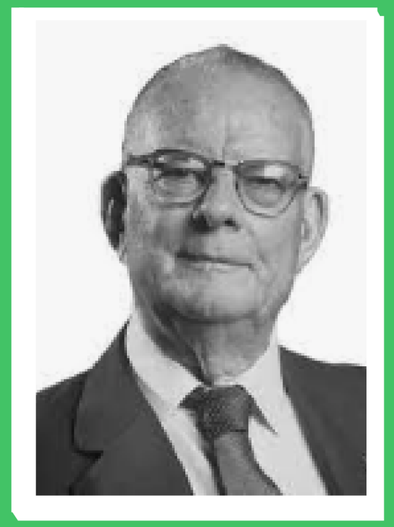


W. Deming



W. Deming

"A bad system will beat a good person every time"



W. Deming

"94% of problems in business are system driven"

System Type	Productive	Counter Productive
Authorized	*Well designed & Implemented*	*Restrictive*
Unauthorized	*Breaking rules*	*Power based*

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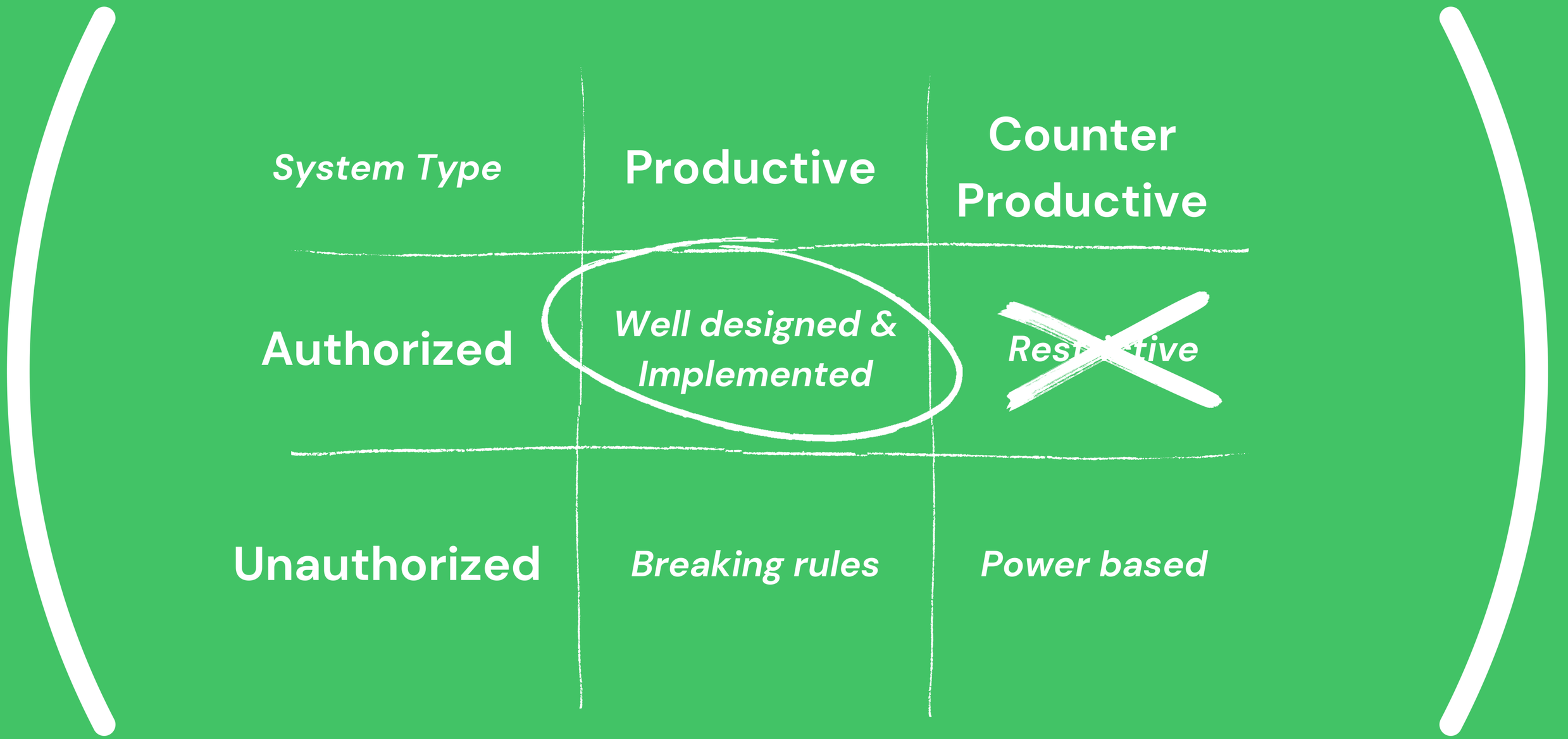
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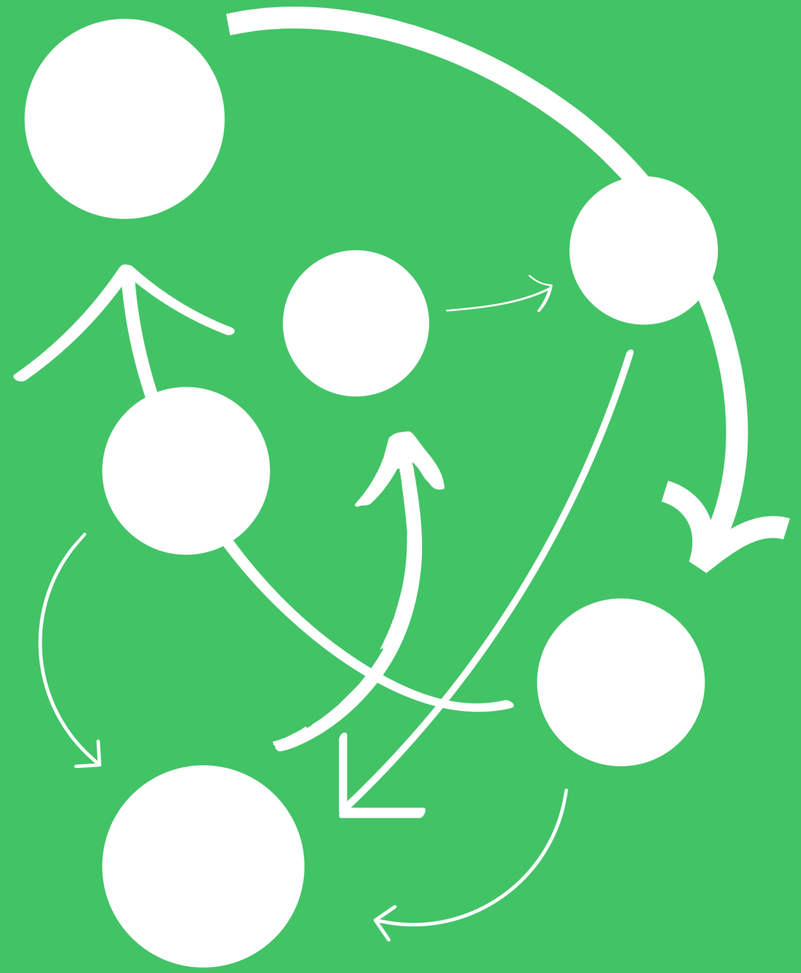

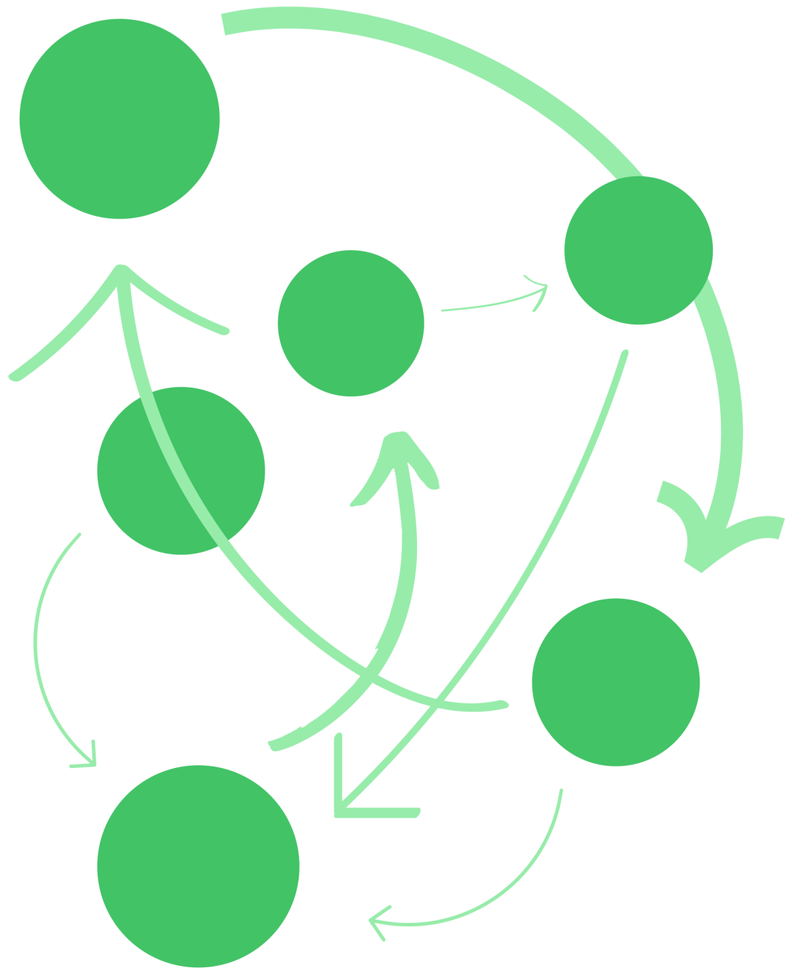

Leading with Systems Thinking

1. Inspect the work as a series of systems

2. Actively manage your team's systems

Leading with Systems Thinking

Leading Software Teams with Systems Thinking

Goals

Be highly productive and continuously improve

Have engineers that are fulfilled and growing in their careers

Understand the Systems within your Team

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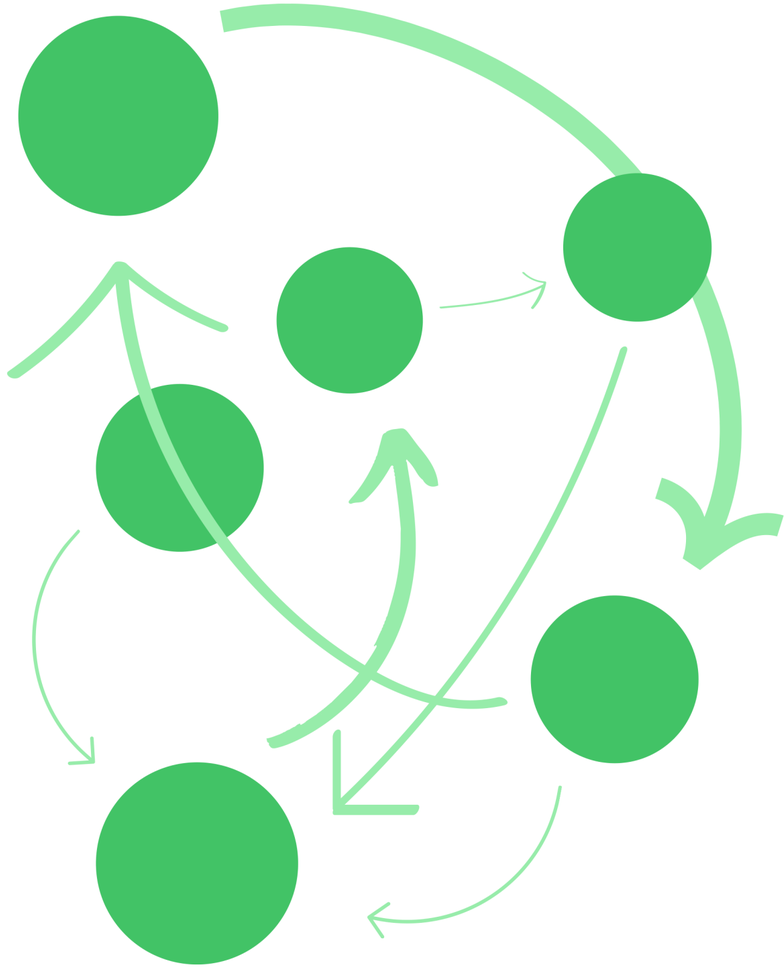


Understand the Systems within your Team

Product

Engineering

People

Understand the Systems within your Team

Product

Engineering

People

How does work go from idea to production?

How are requirements and tasks defined?

How is success defined?

Understand the Systems within your Team

Product

Engineering

People

How are iterations managed?

How does a task go from creation to delivery?

How is quality verified?

Understand the Systems within your Team

Product

Engineering

People

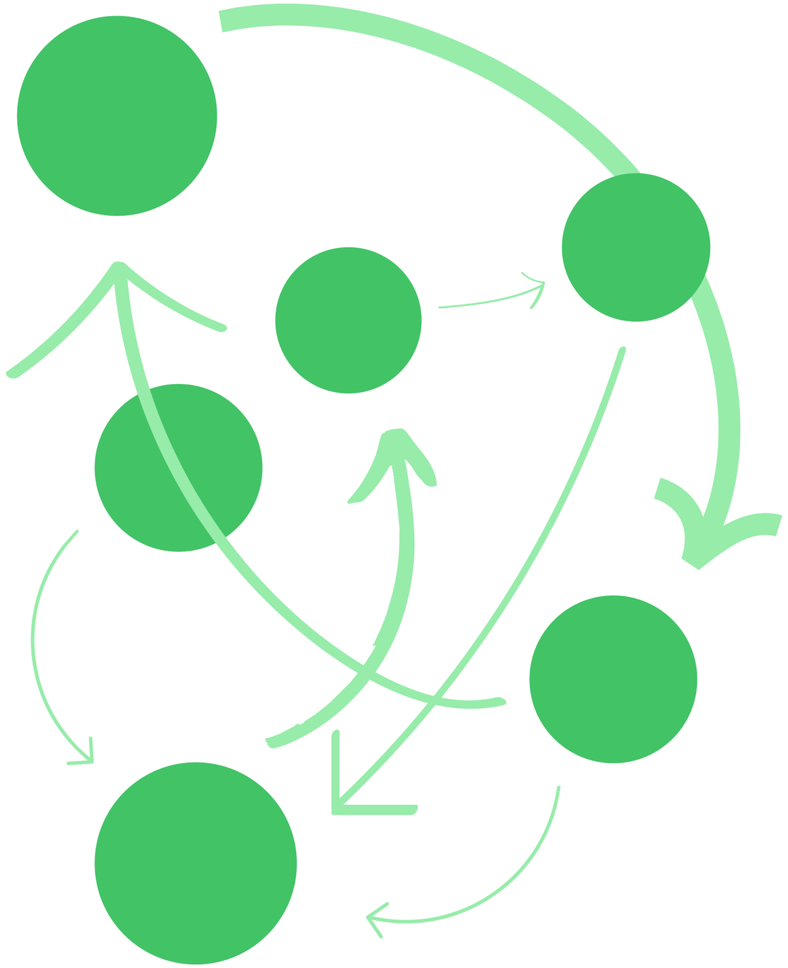
What are the feedback loops for engineers?

How does an engineer learn on the job?

How does career growth work?

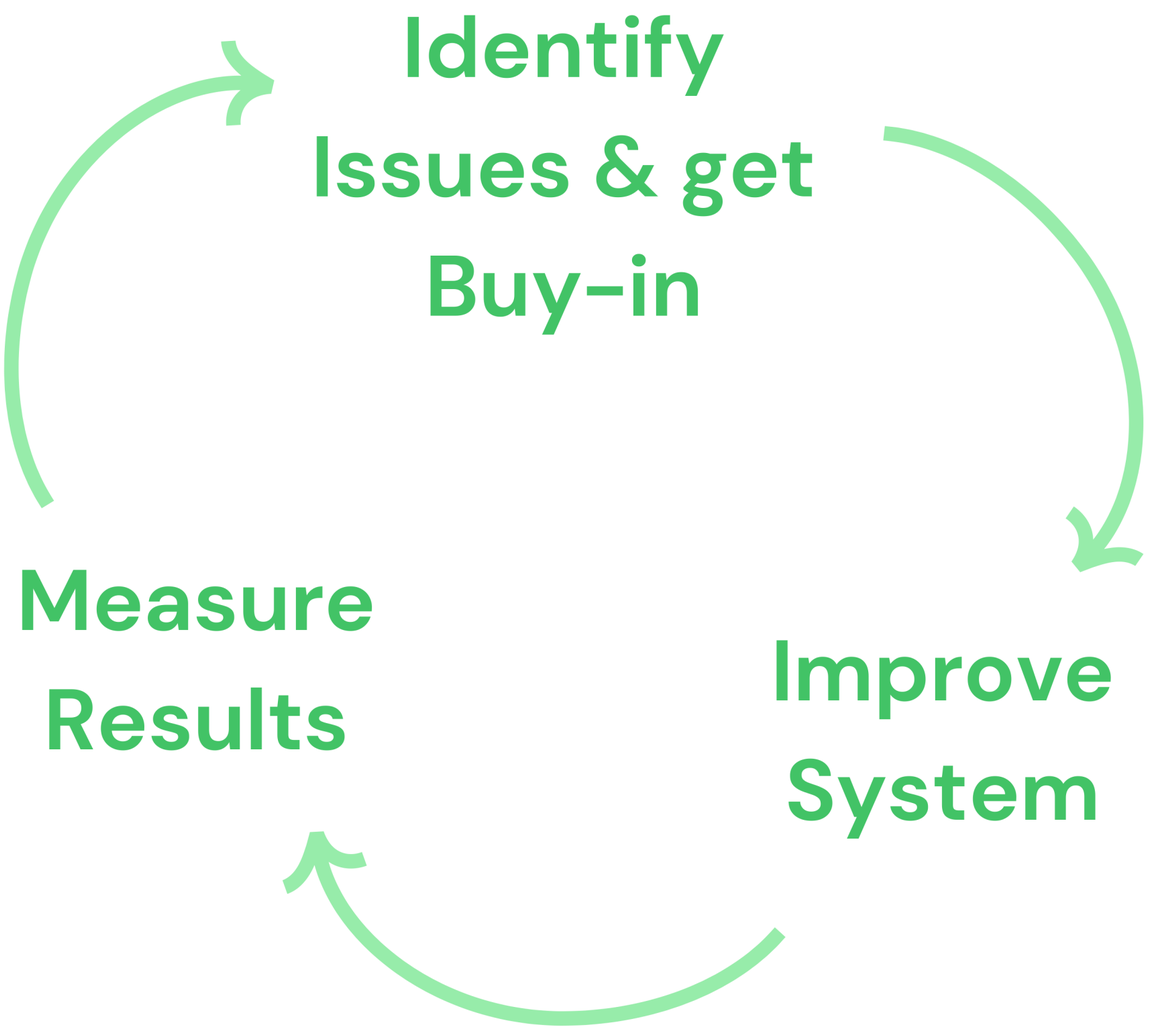
Understand the Systems within your Team

Remember that all is connected

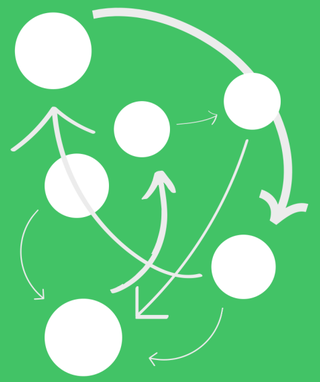


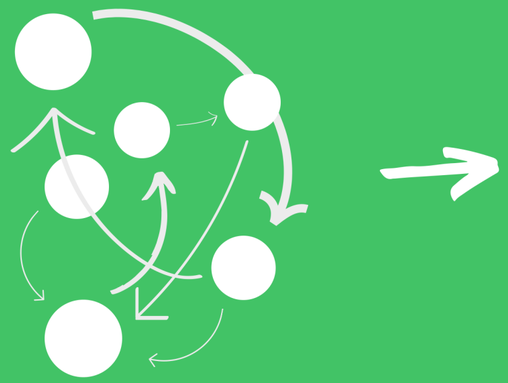
Understand the Systems within your Team

Act



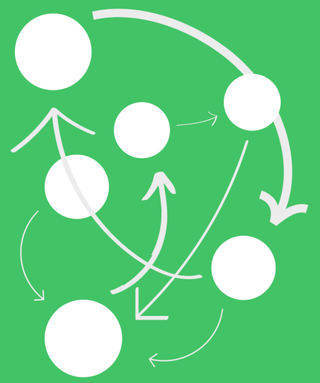
In Summary





Be highly productive and continuously improve

Have engineers that are fulfilled and growing in their careers



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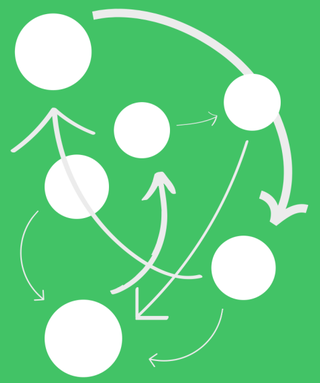
Product

Technology

People



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Product

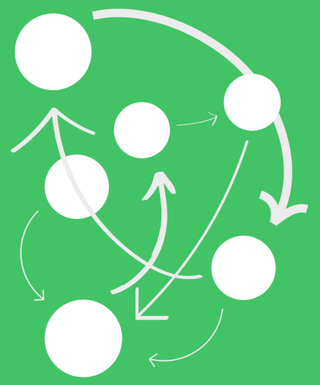
Technology

People

Identify Issues & get Buy-in

Improve System

Measure Results



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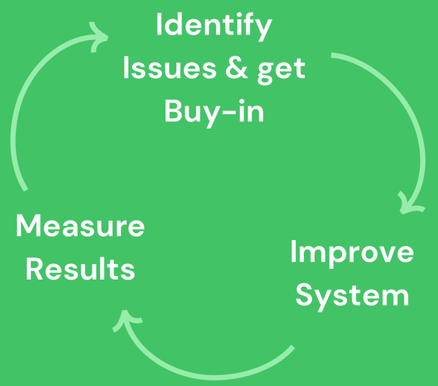

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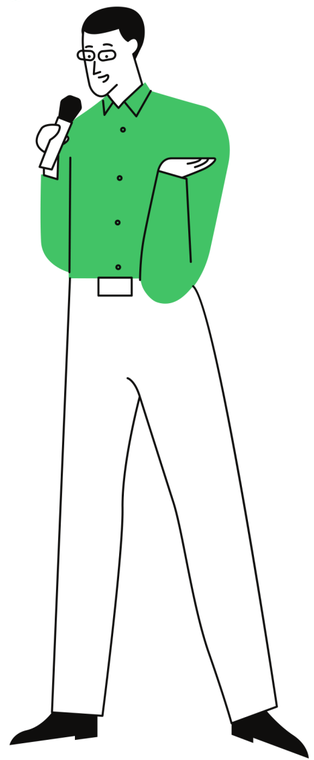
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