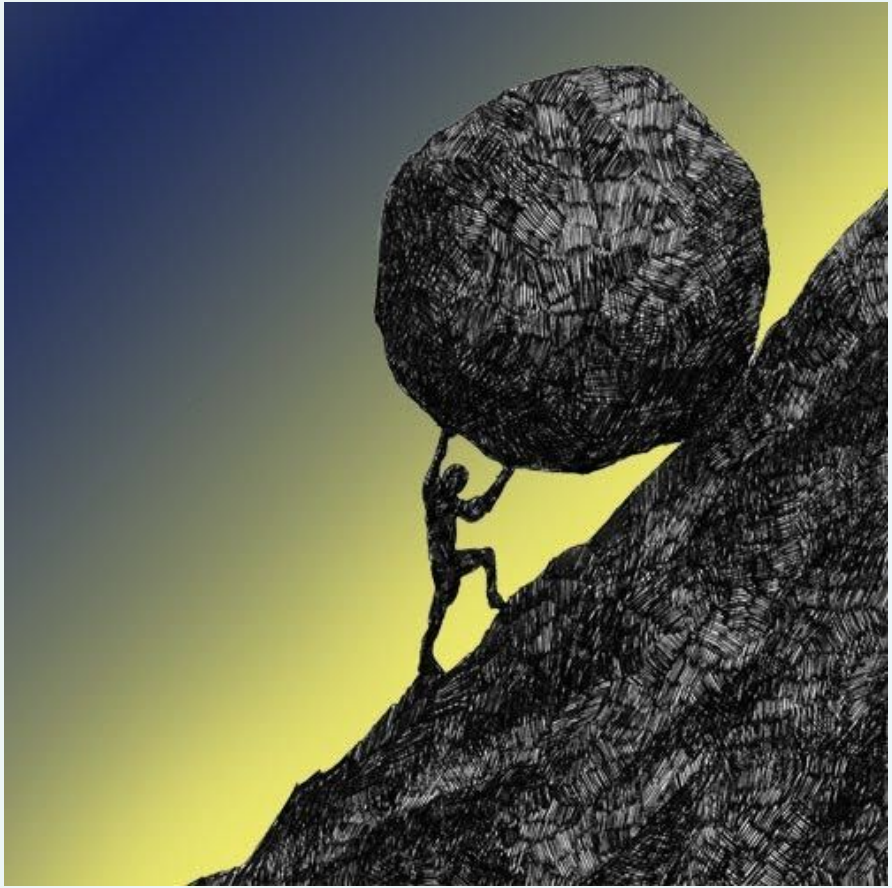
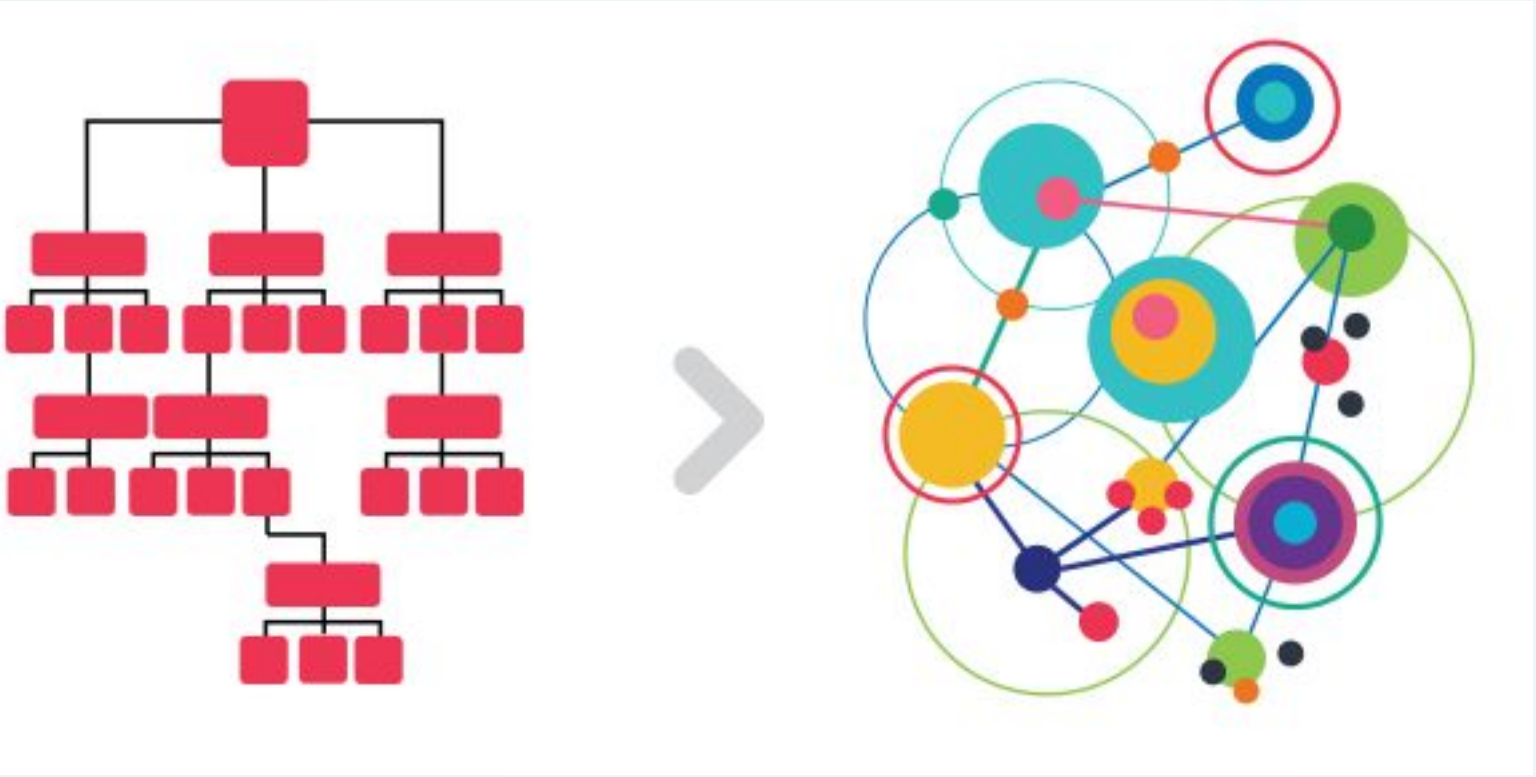
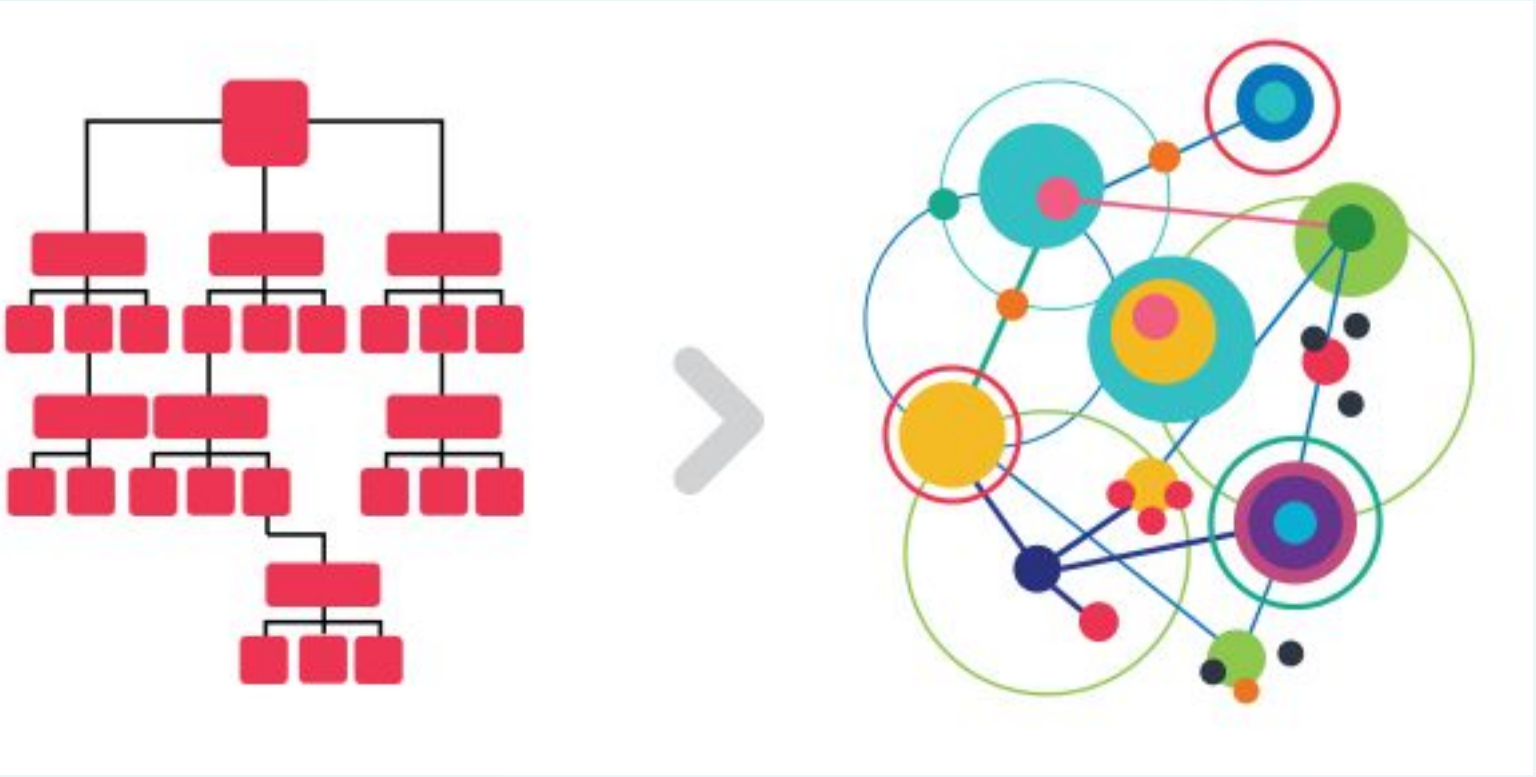
# Understanding organization structure tradeoffs

Adam Berman, Director of Product Engineering @ Semgrep







1. Conway’s law
2. Examples of team structures
3. Trade-offs
4. A practical exercise

1. Conway’s law
2. Examples of team structures
3. Trade-offs
4. A practical exercise

# Hi, I’m Adam Berman

Director of Product Engineering @ Semgrep

Previously at Meraki

Background in philosophy

1. **Conway's law**
2. Examples of team structures
3. Trade-offs
4. A practical exercise

*“You will ship your org chart”*

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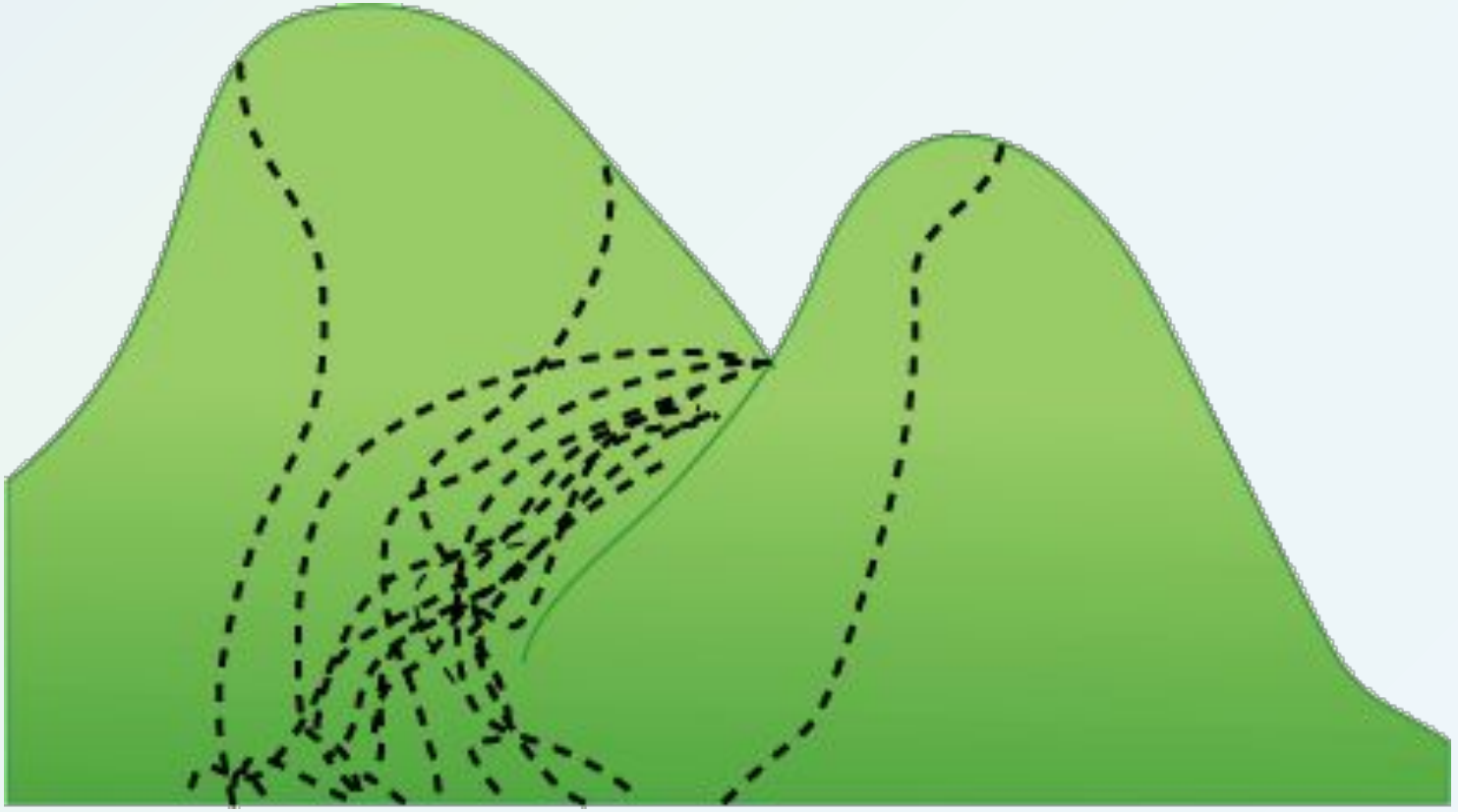
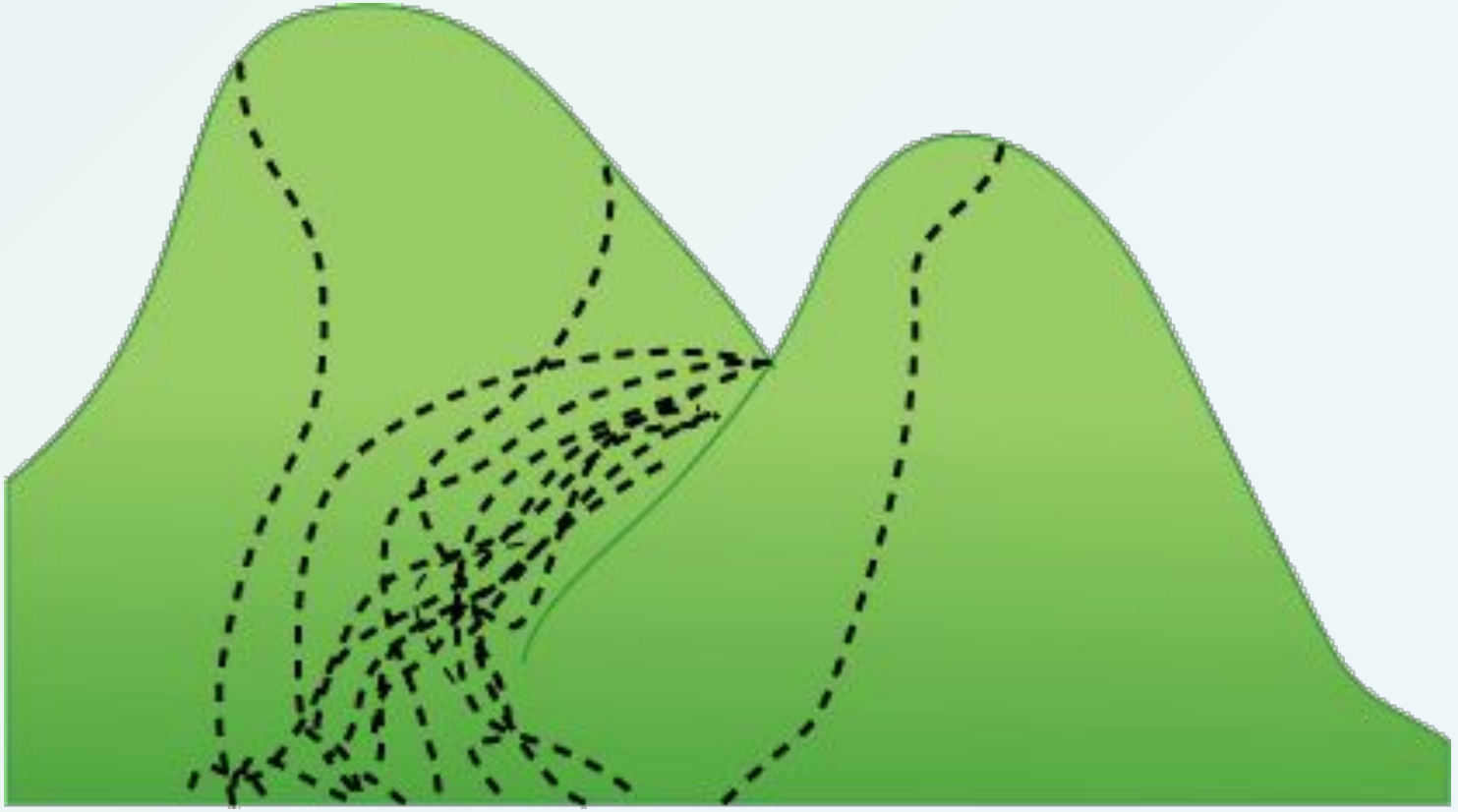
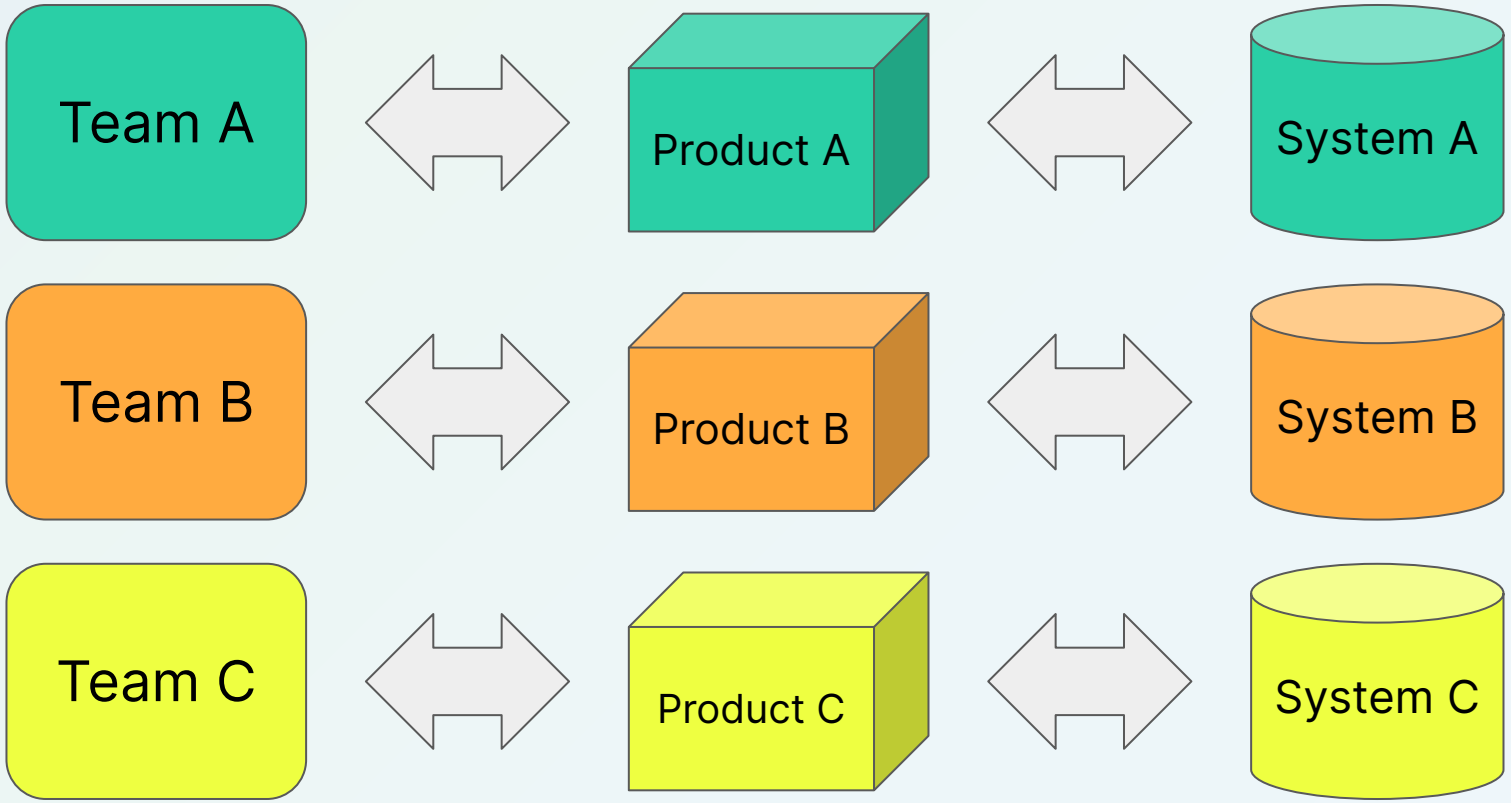
*“An organization that designs a system (defined broadly) will produce a design whose structure is a copy of the organization’s communication structure”*

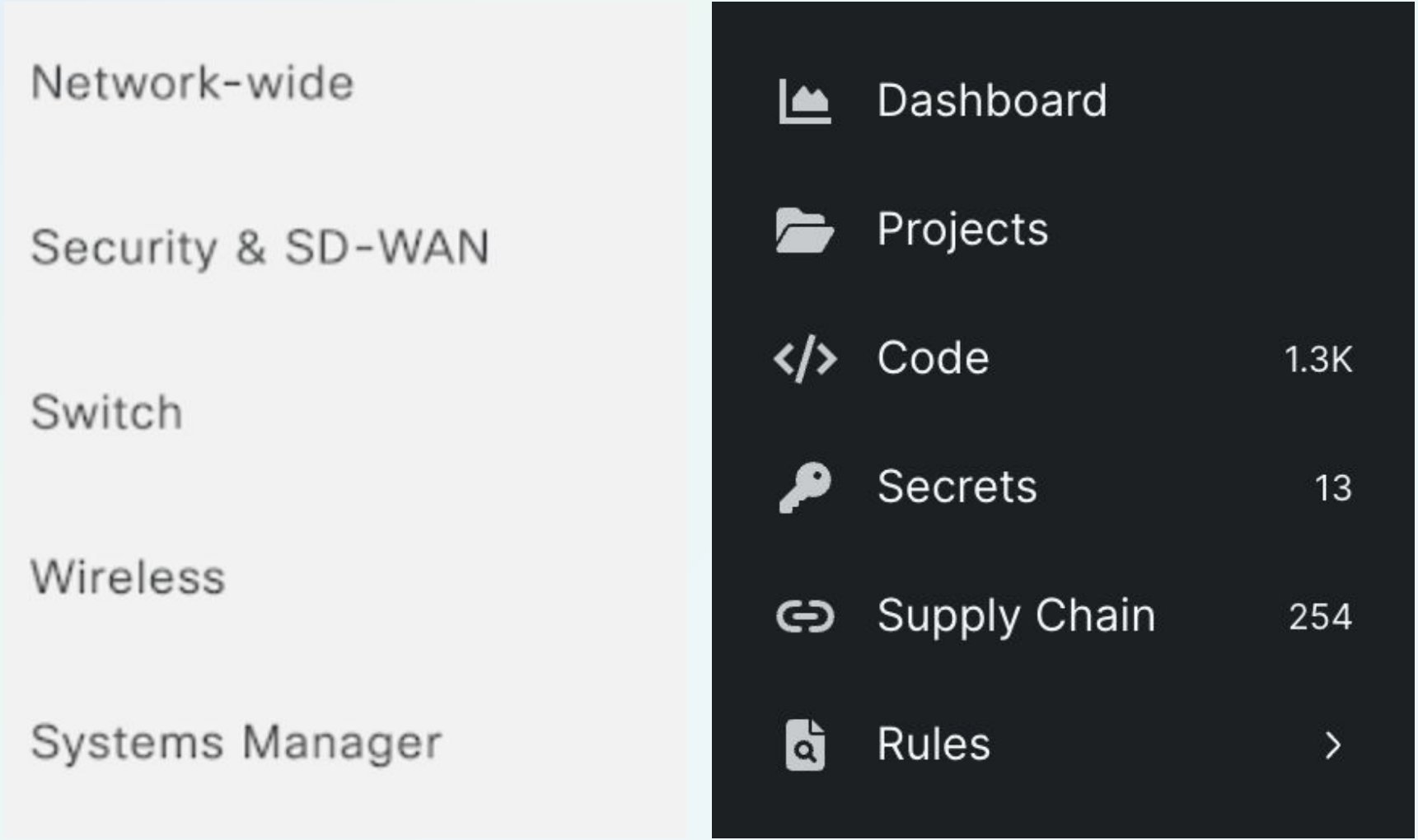
~~*“You will ship your org chart”*~~

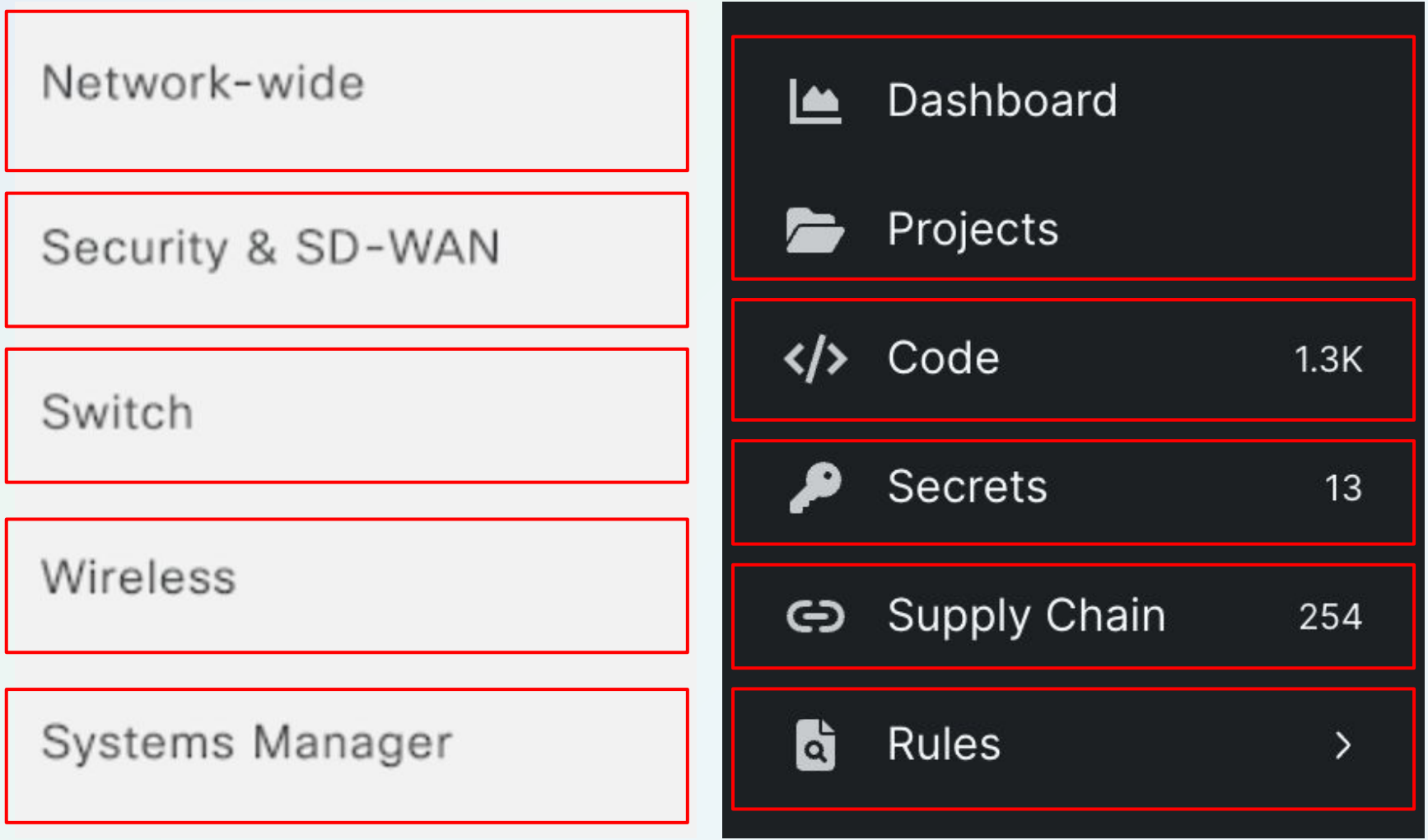
*“An organization that designs a system (defined broadly) will produce a design whose structure is a copy of the* ***organization’s communication structure****”*






Team A
Product A
System A
Team B
Product B
System B
Team C
Product C
System C


Network-wide
Security & SD-WAN
Switch
Wireless
Systems Manager
Dashboard
Projects
Code
1.3K
Secrets
13
Supply Chain
254
Rules


Network-wide
Security & SD-WAN
Switch
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Dashboard
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1.3K
Secrets
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Supply Chain
254
Rules

It's me

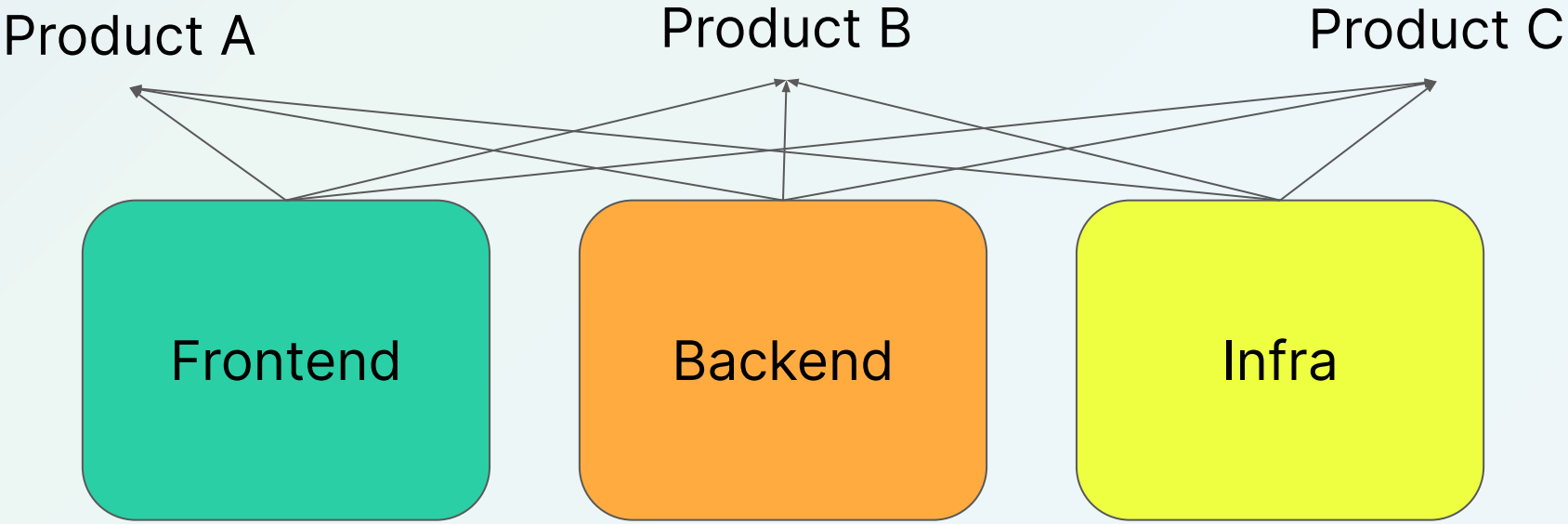
1. Conway’s law
2. **Examples of team structures**
3. Trade-offs
4. A practical exercise

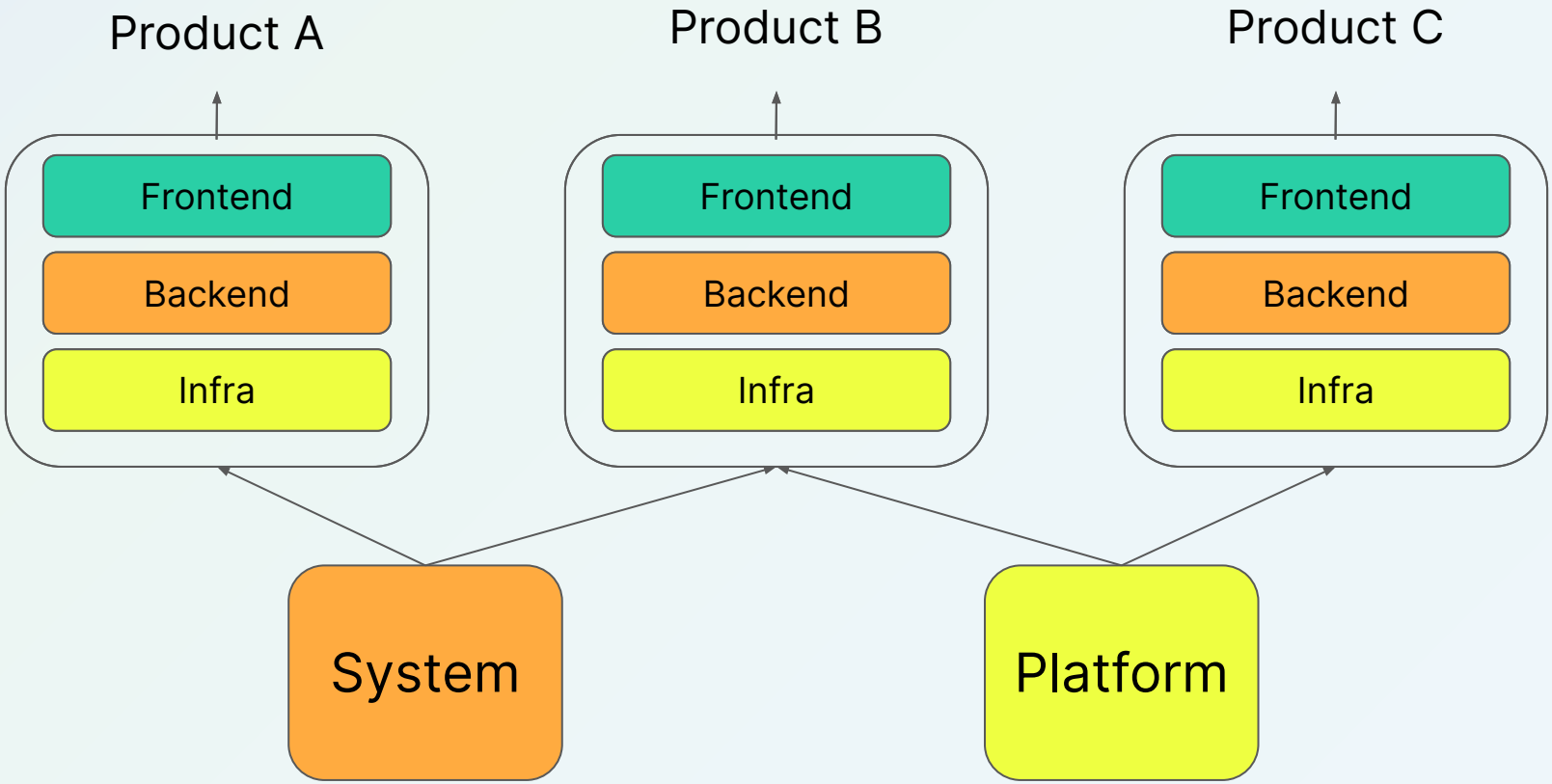
Functional

Divisional

**Functional**

Divisional


Product A
Product B
Product C
Frontend
Backend
Infra


Product A
Product B
Product C
Frontend
Backend
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Frontend
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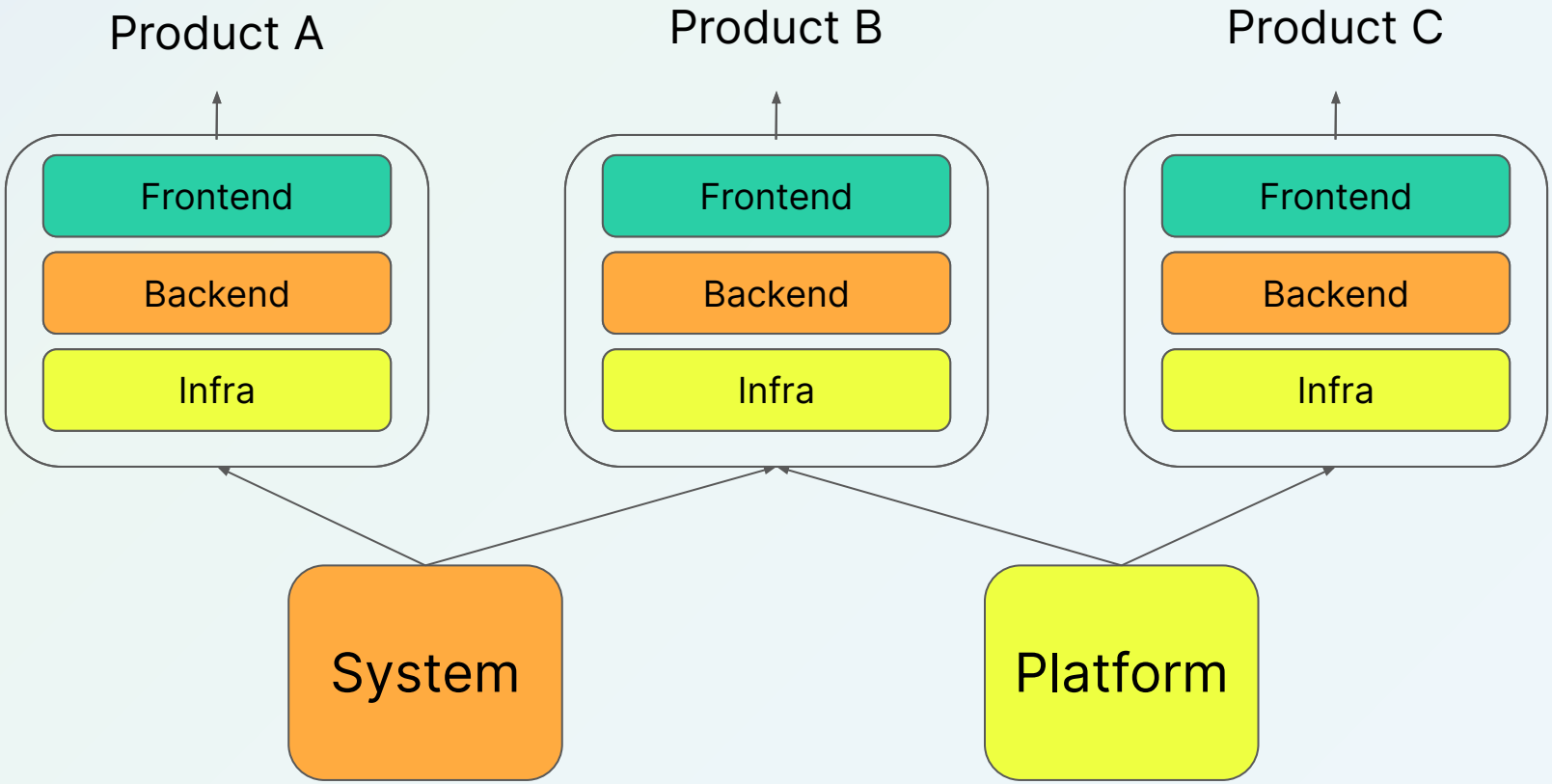
Frontend
Backend
Infra
System
Platform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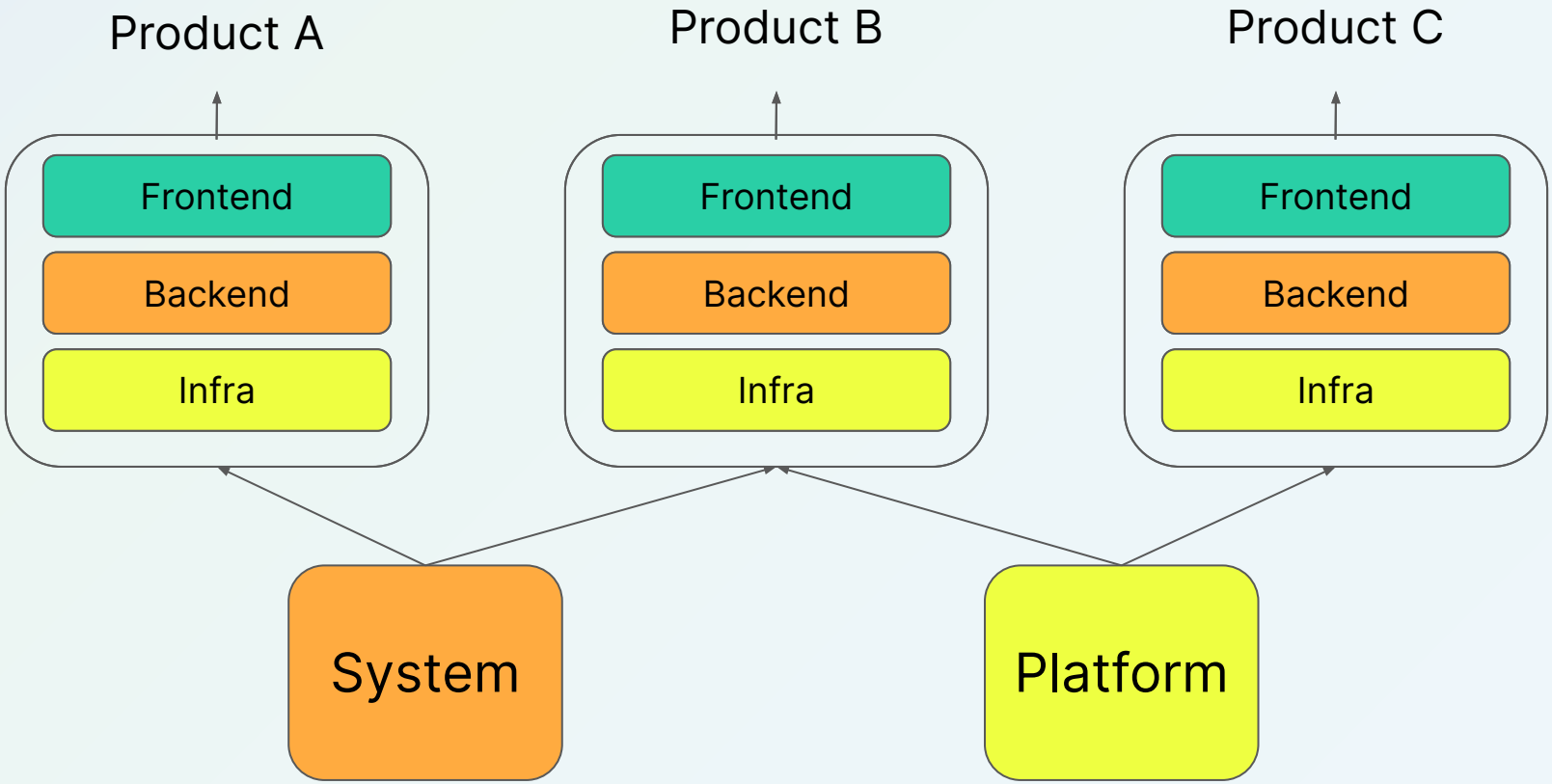
Product A
Product B
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Frontend
Backend
Infra
Frontend
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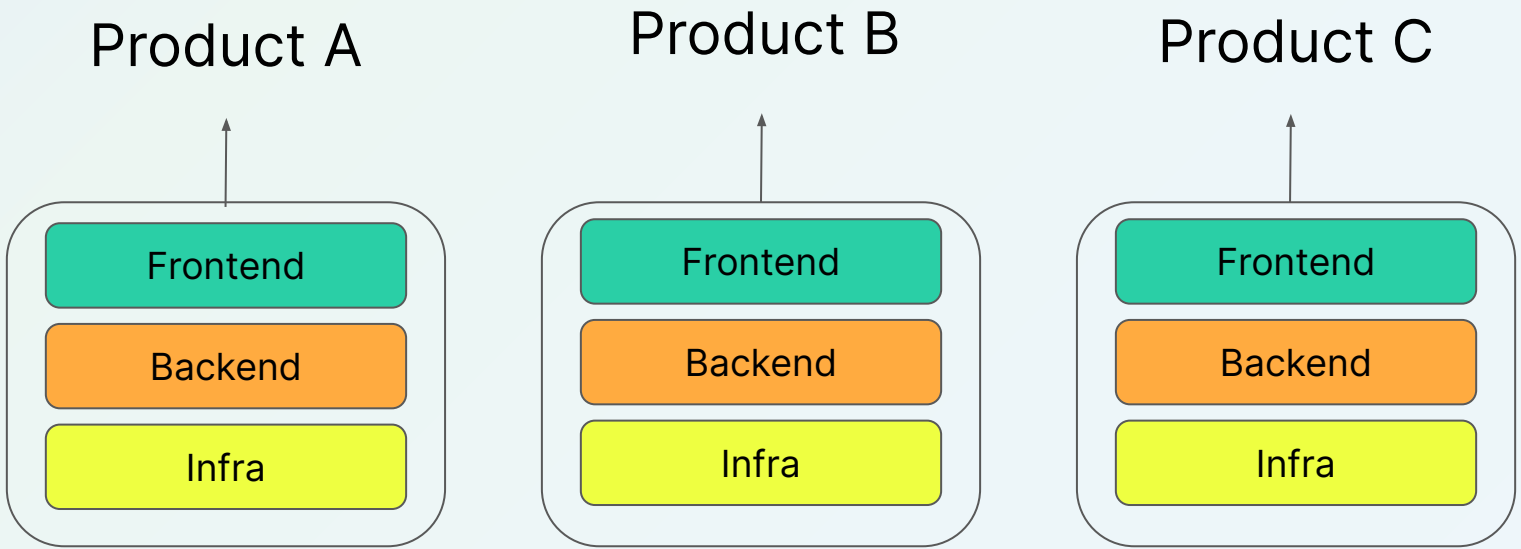
Infra
System
Platform

Functional

**Divisional**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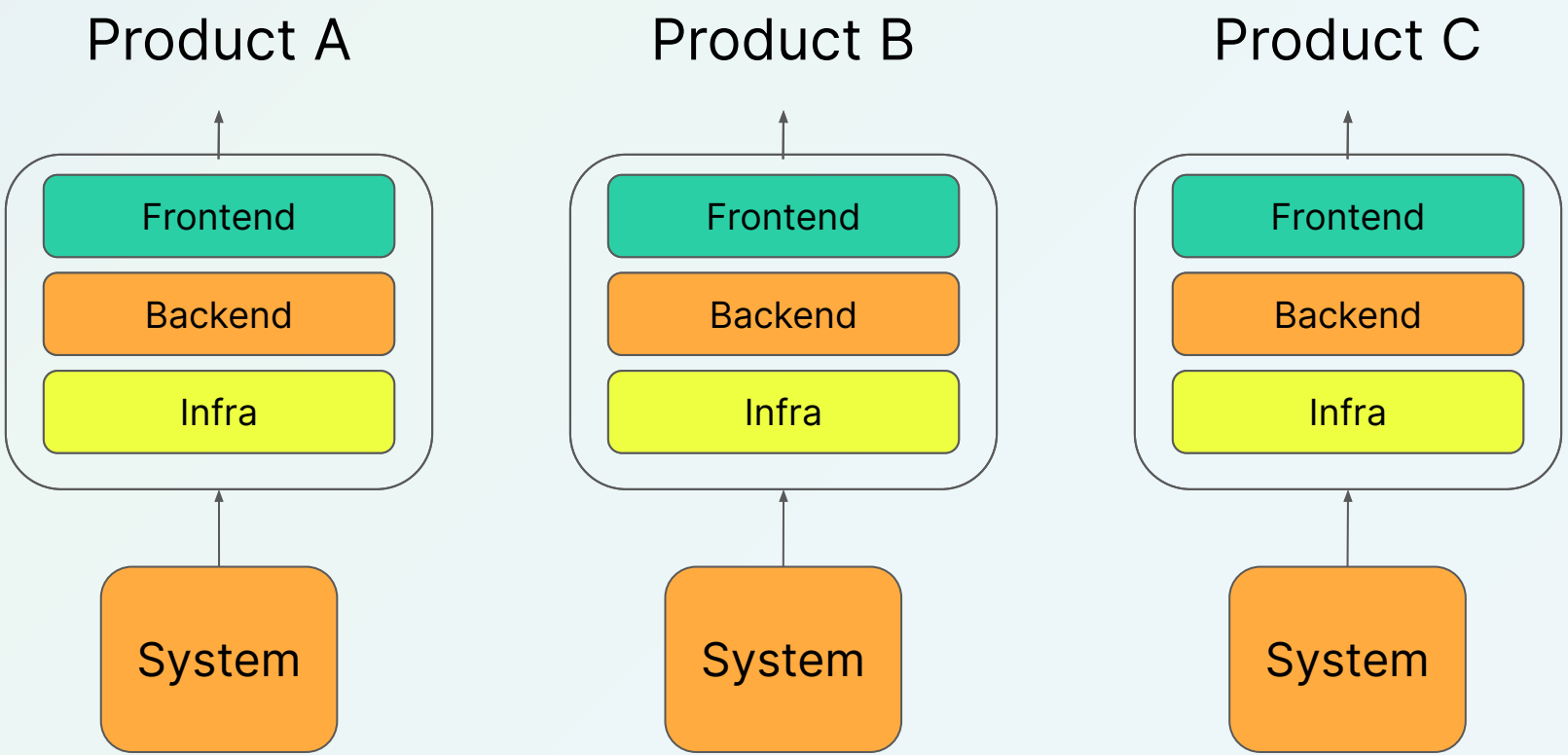
Product C
Frontend
Backend
Infra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Backend
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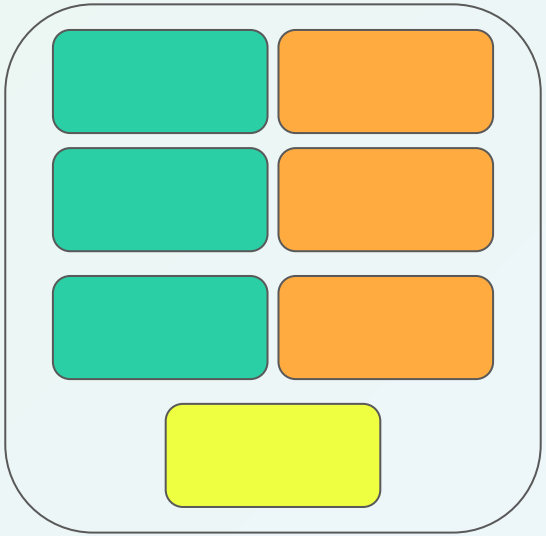
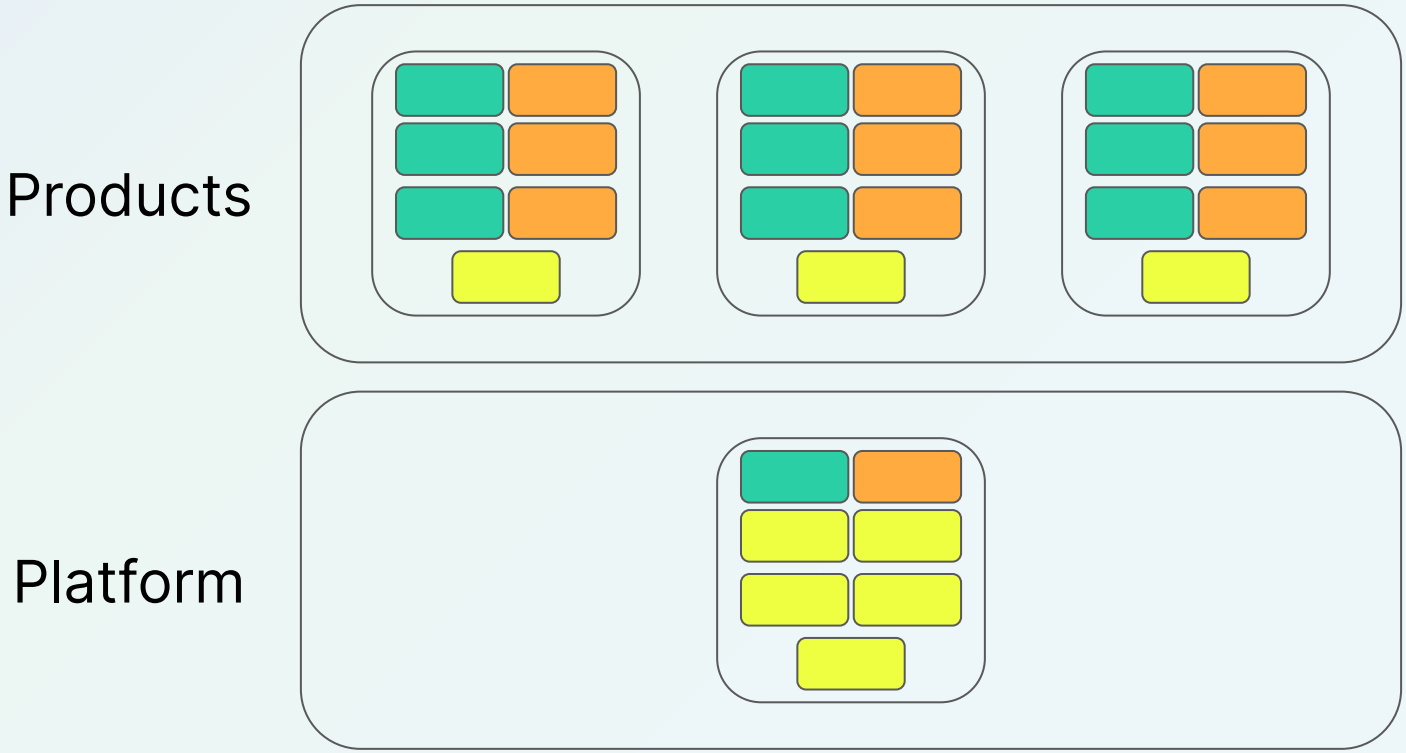
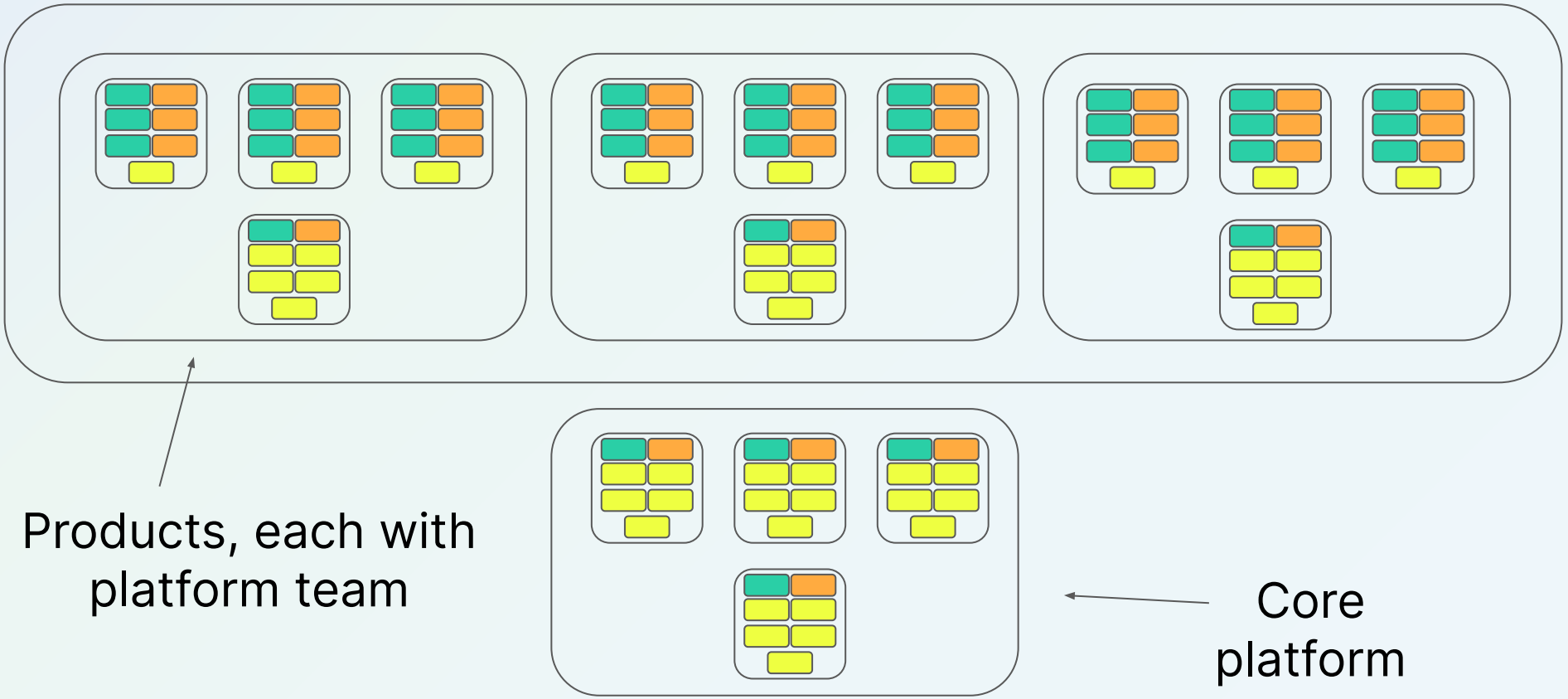
System



Product A


Products
Platform


Products, each with platform team
Core platform

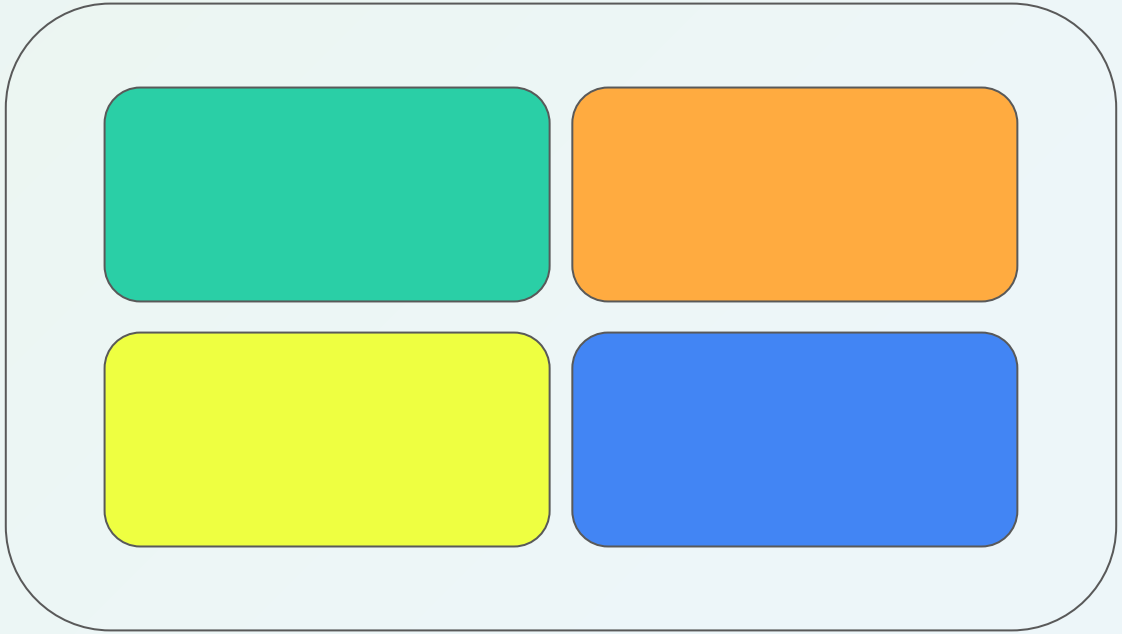
1. Conway’s law
2. Examples of team structures
3. **Trade-offs**
4. A practical exercise

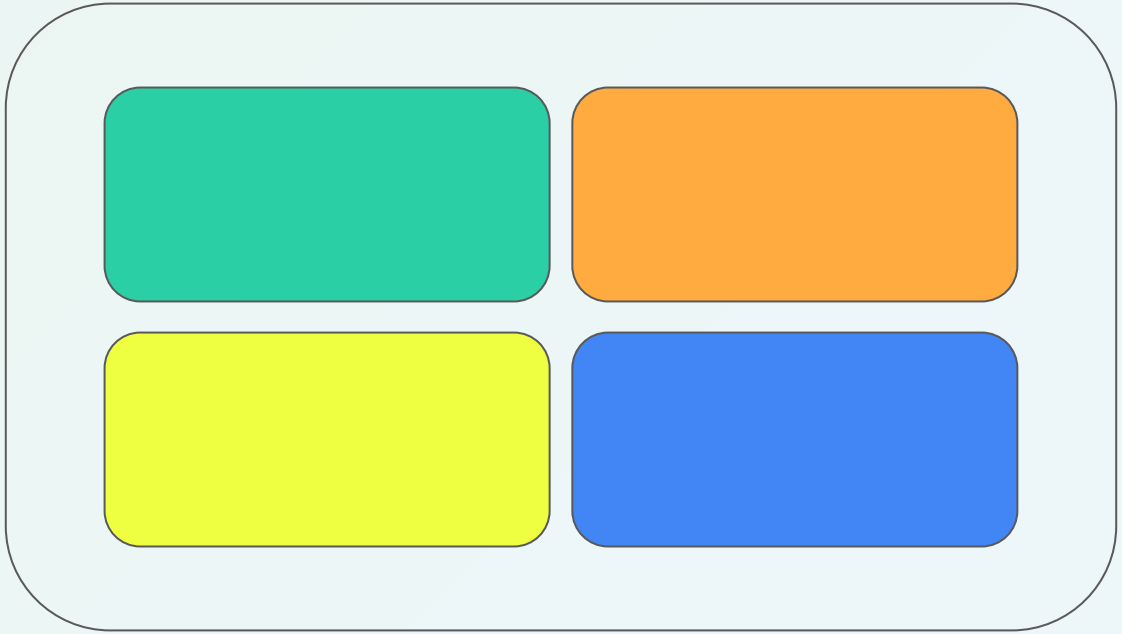
# Cognitive load

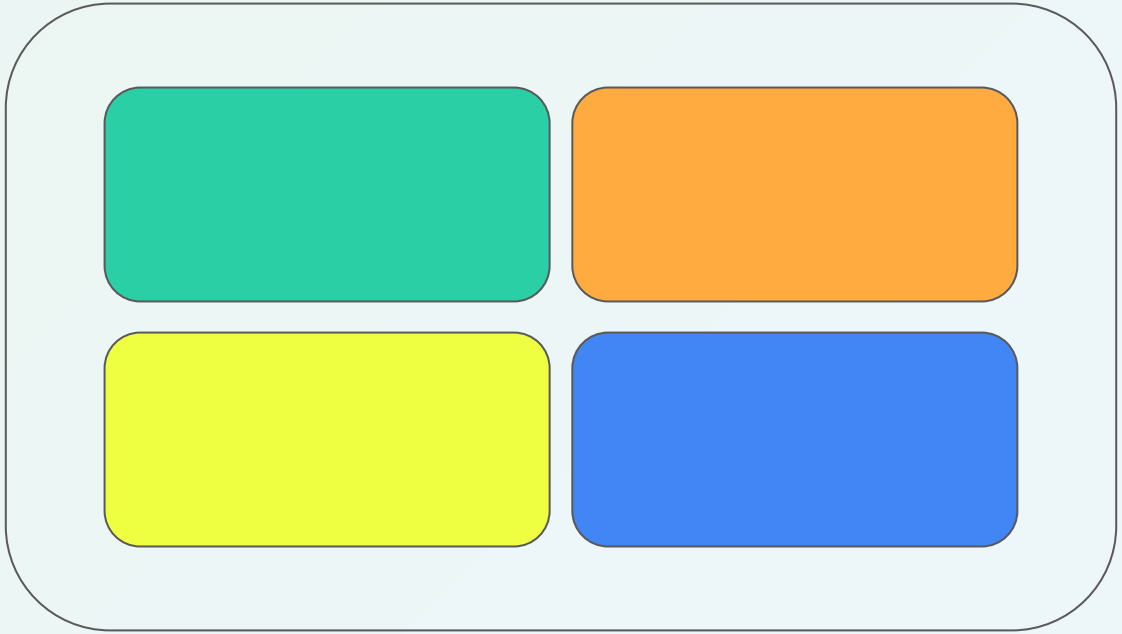
# Structure

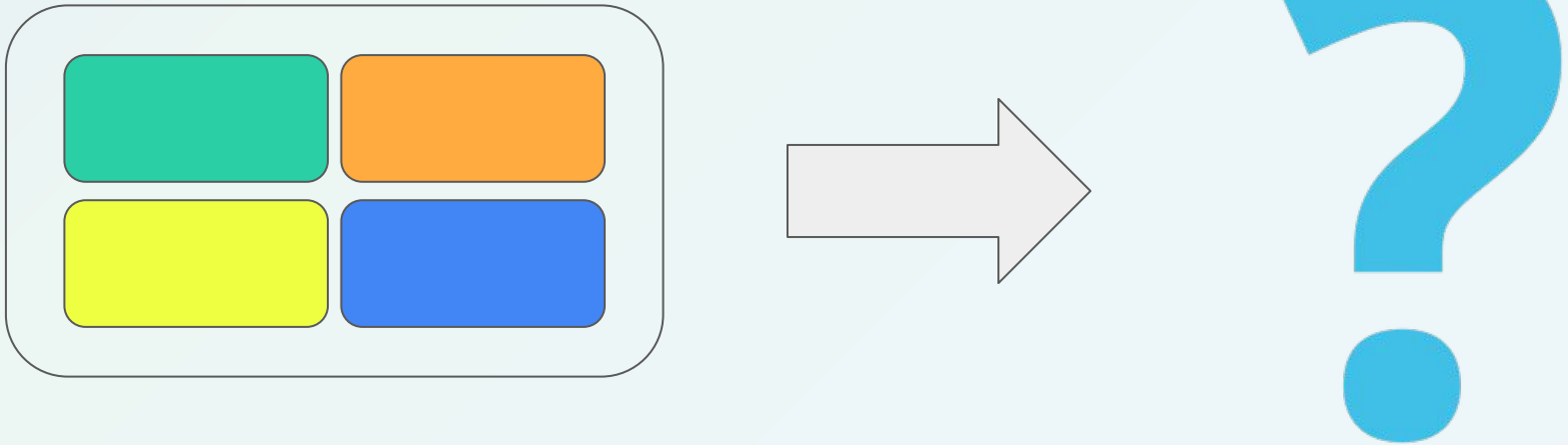
# Cognitive load

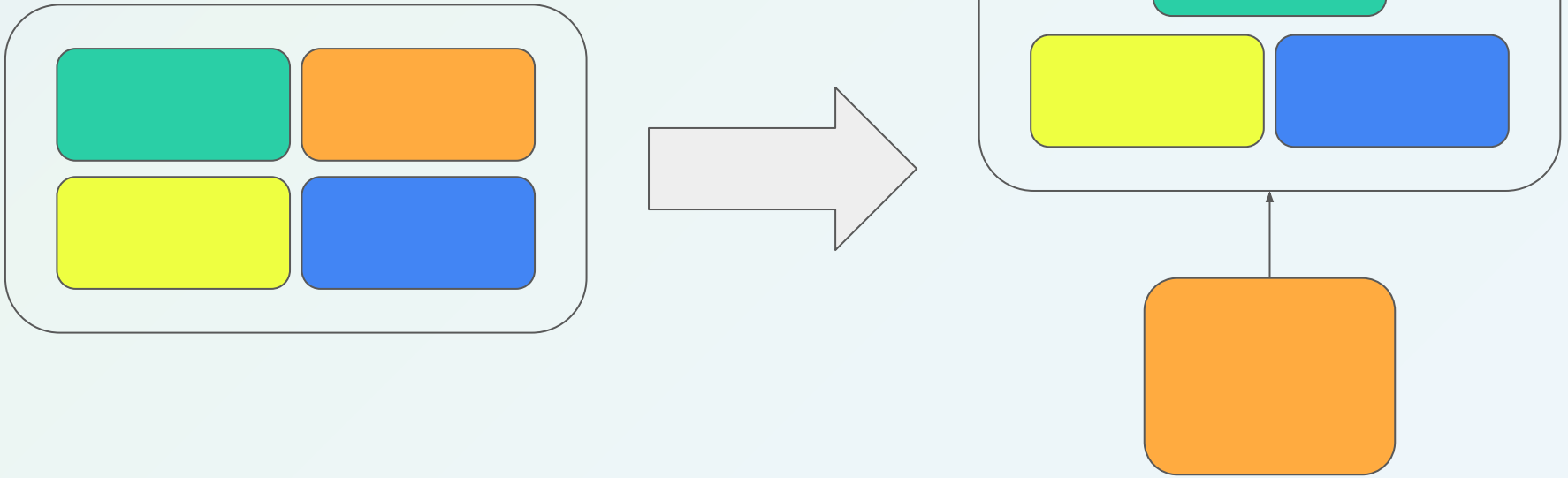
Structure

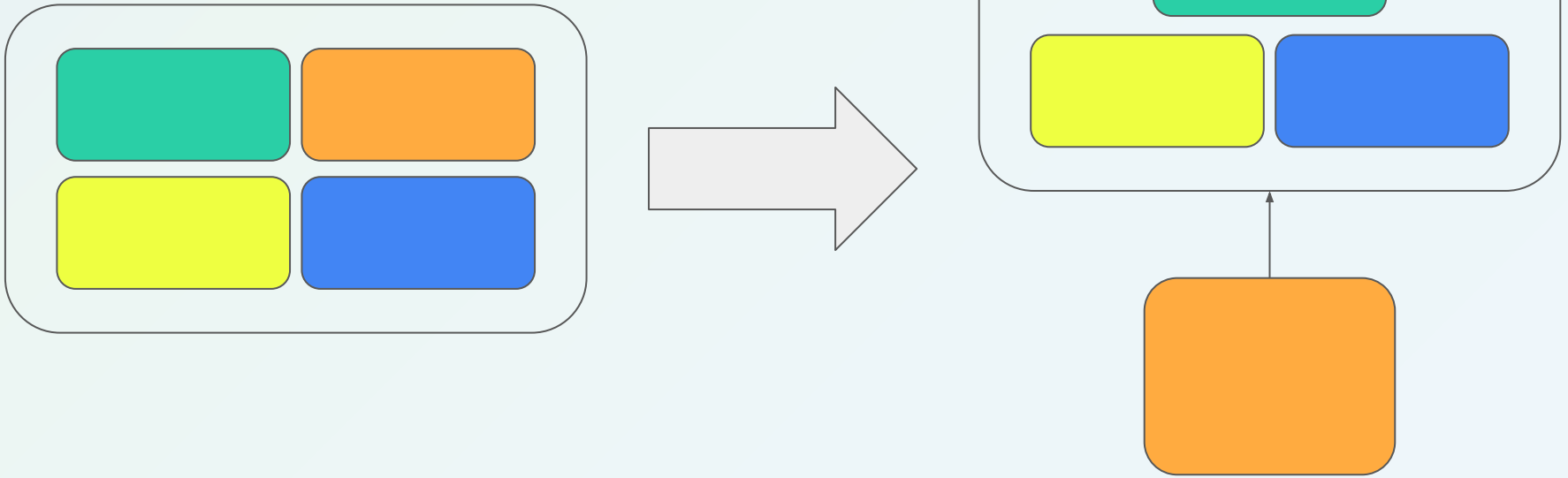


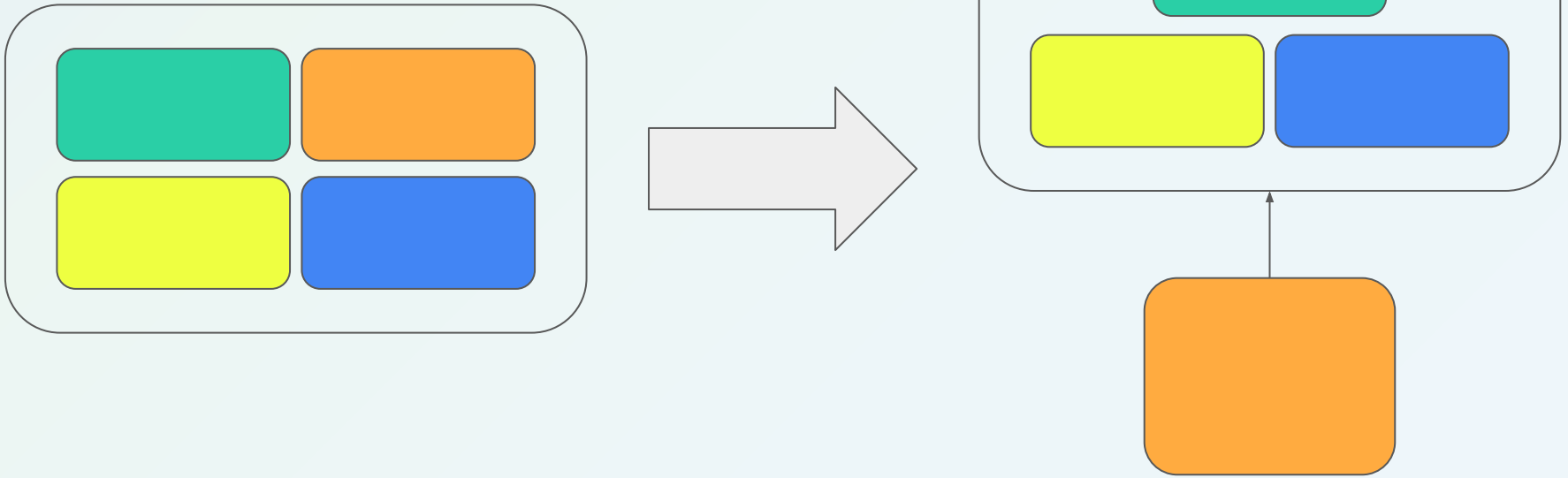






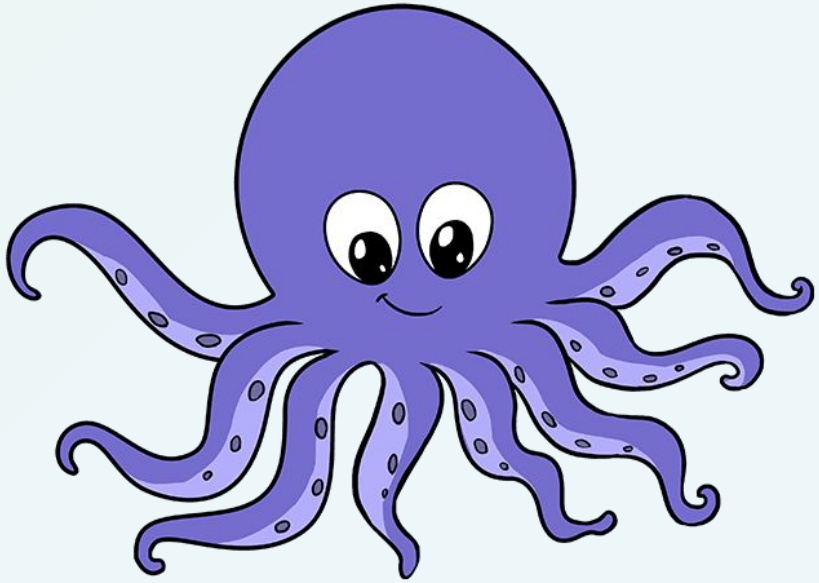


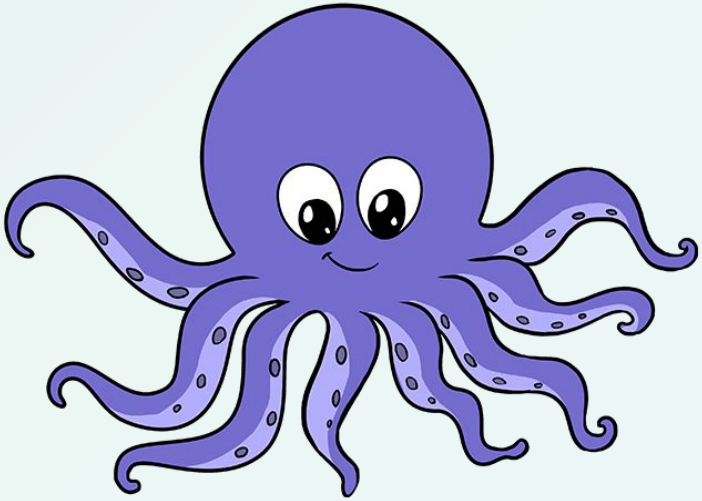


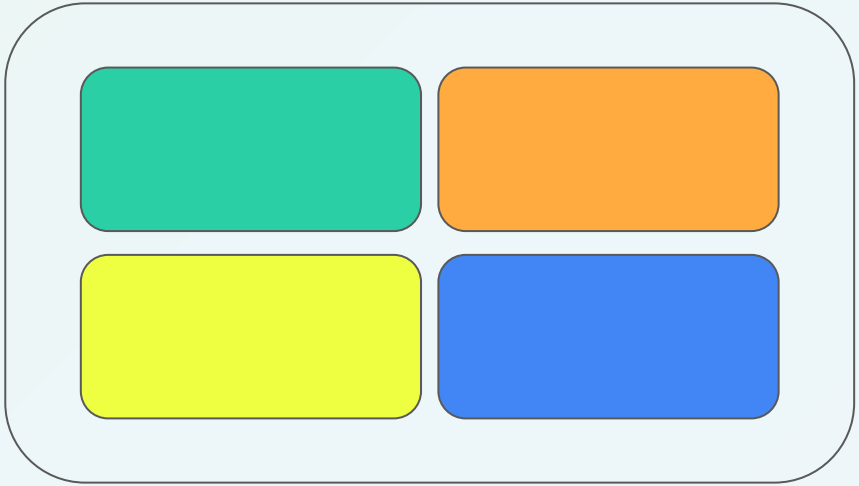


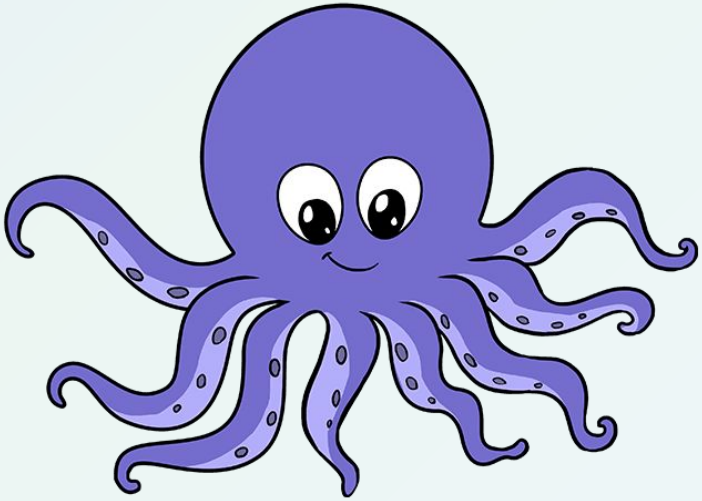
Cognitive load

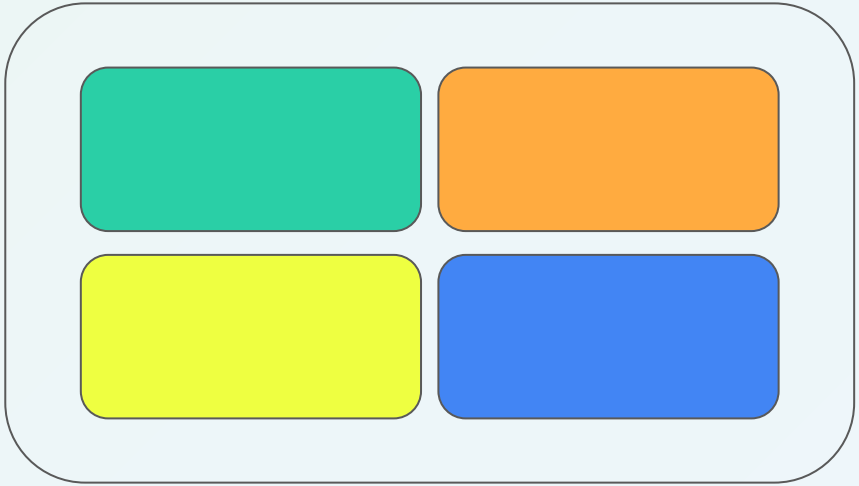
**Structure**

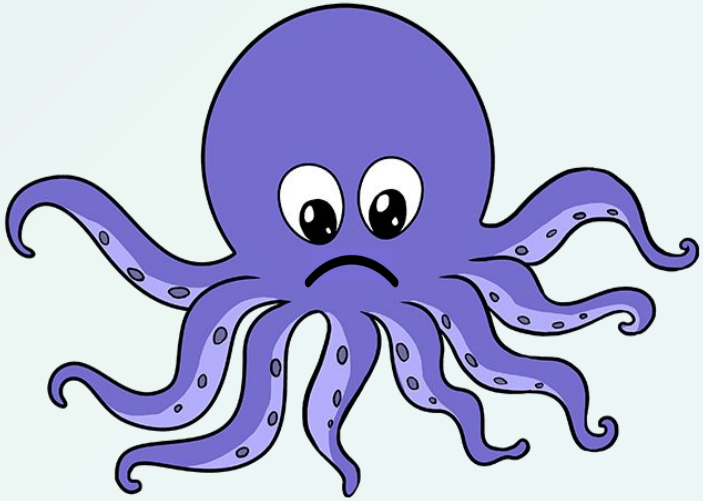


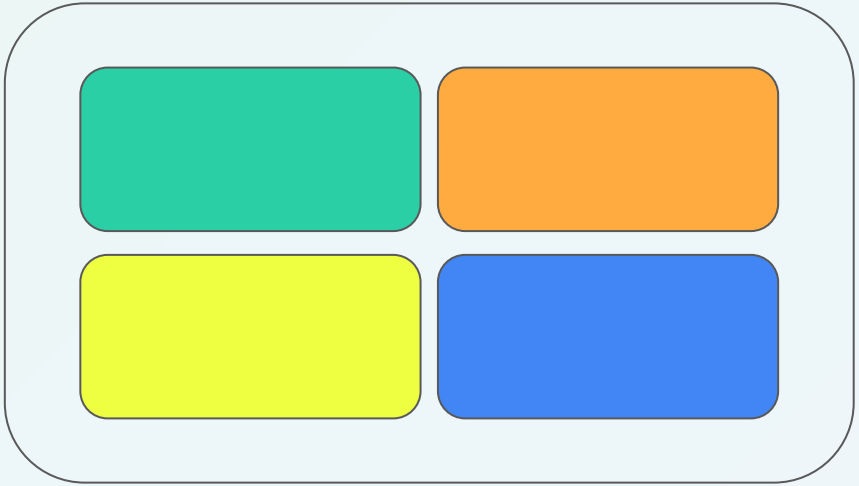


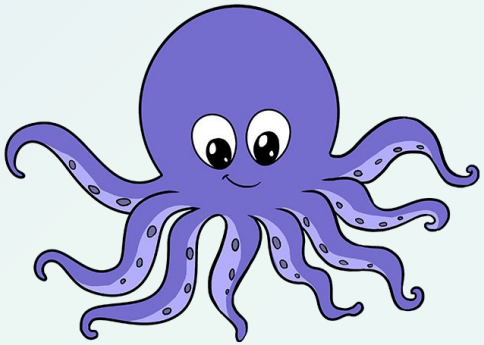


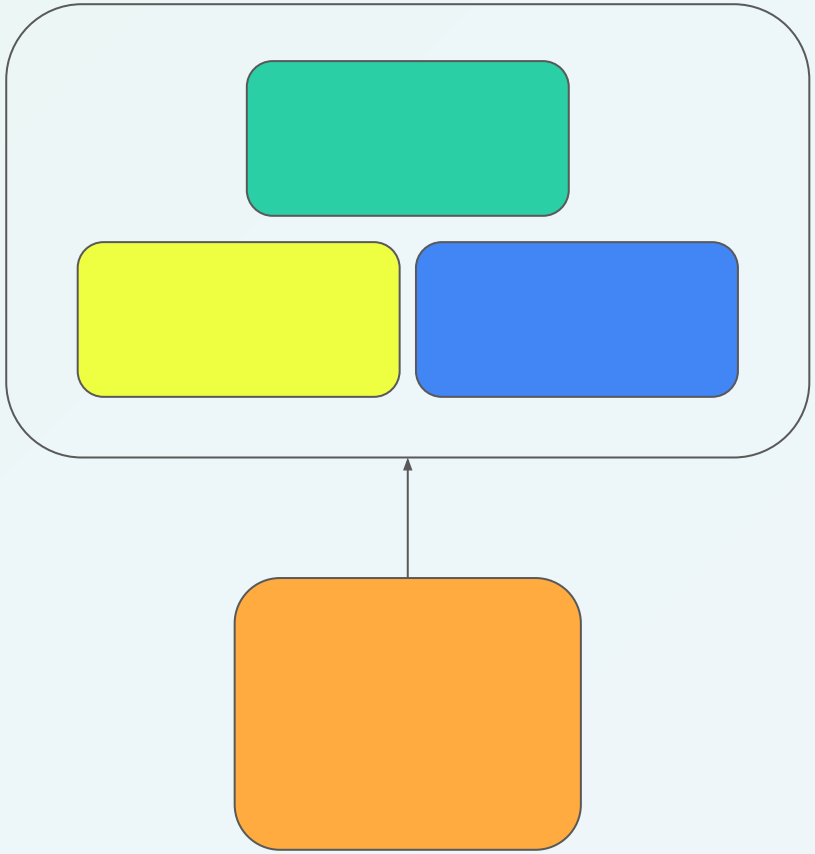


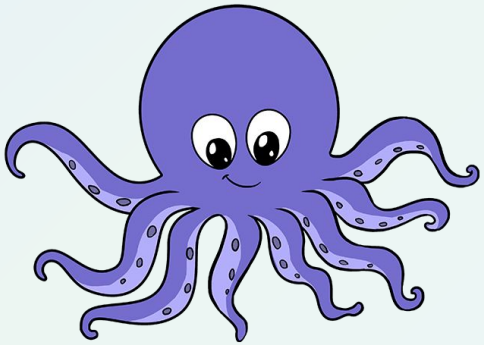


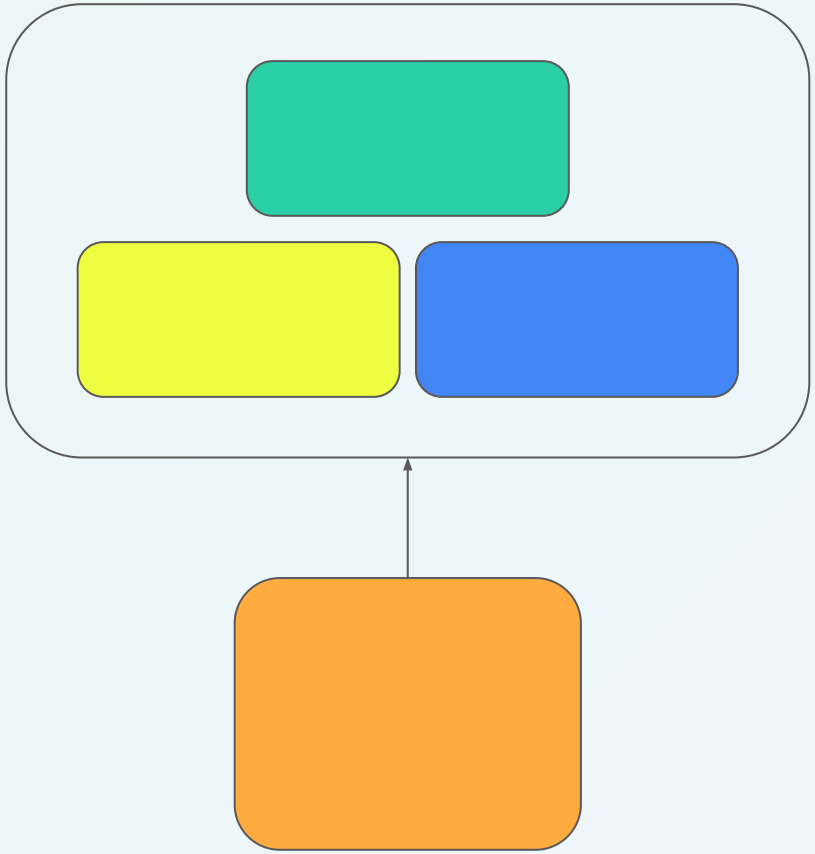


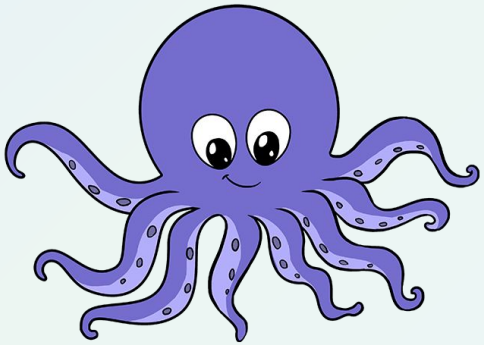


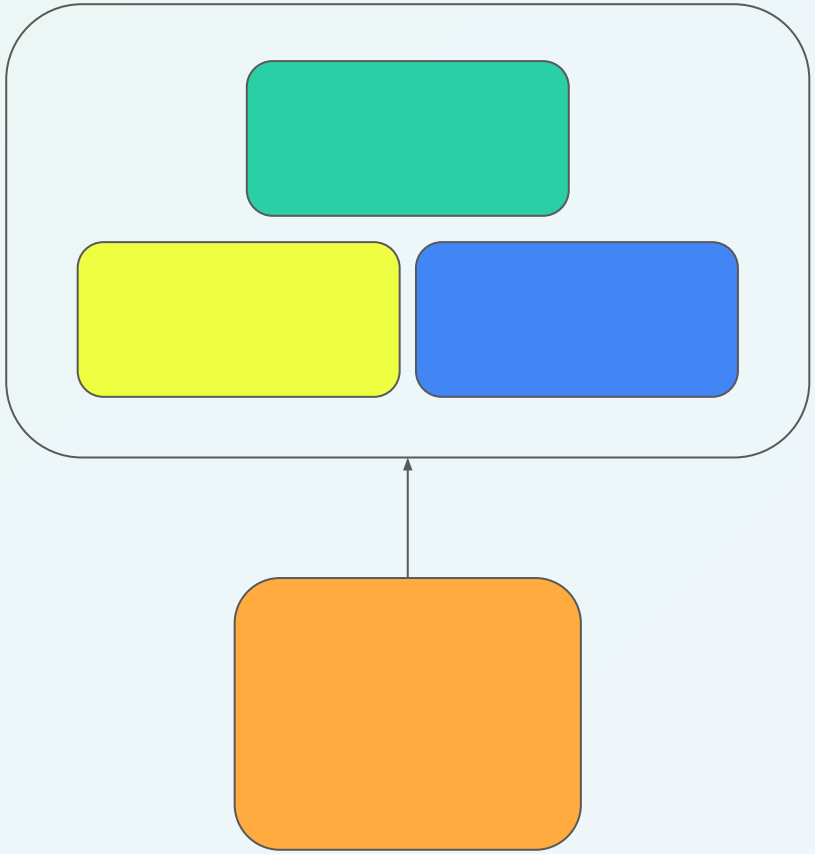












1. Conway’s law
2. Examples of team structures
3. Trade-offs
4. **A practical exercise**

Identify problems

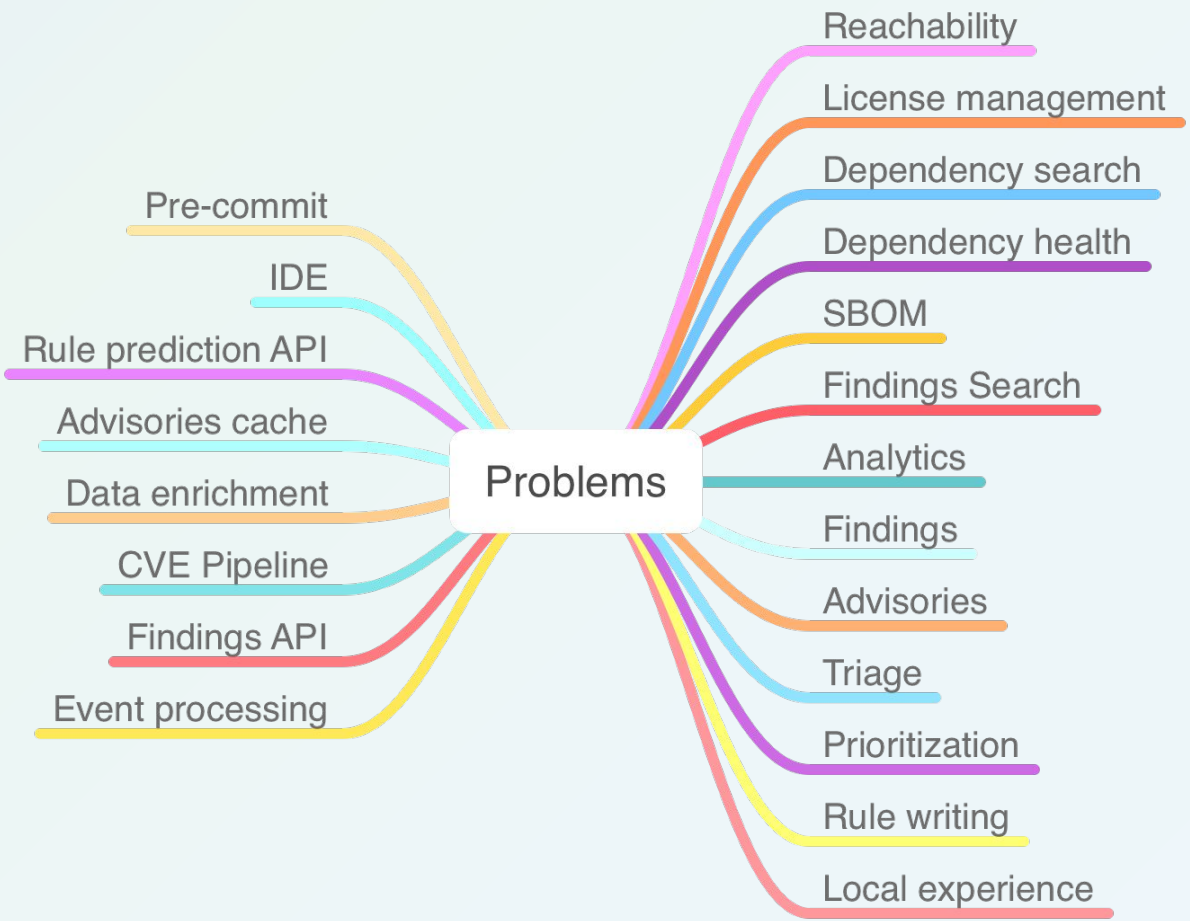
Map problems to teams

Map roles to teams

**Identify problems**

Map problems to teams

Map roles to teams


Problems
Reachability
License management
Dependency search
Dependency health
SBOM
Findings Search
Analytics
Findings
Advisories
Triage
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Pre-commit
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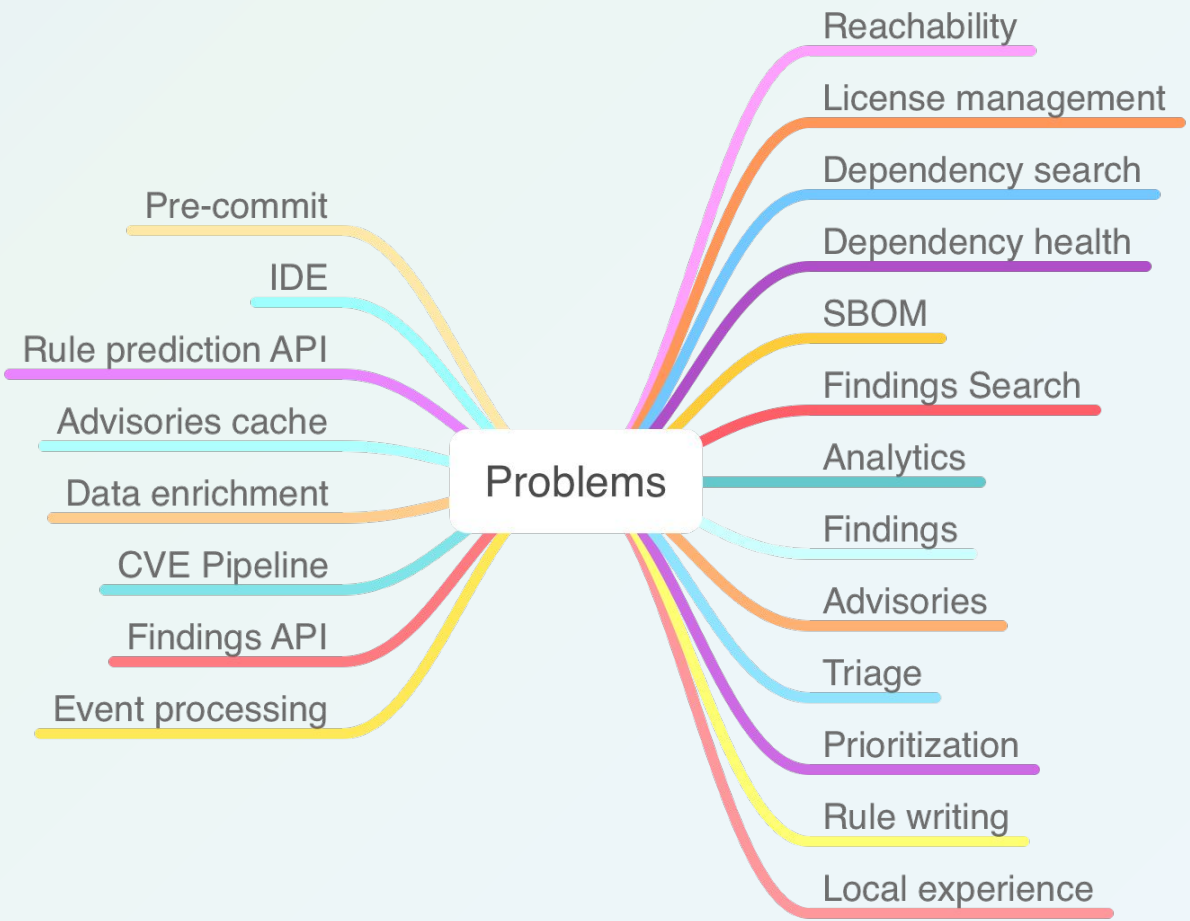
Advisories cache
Data enrichment
CVE Pipeline
Findings API
Event processing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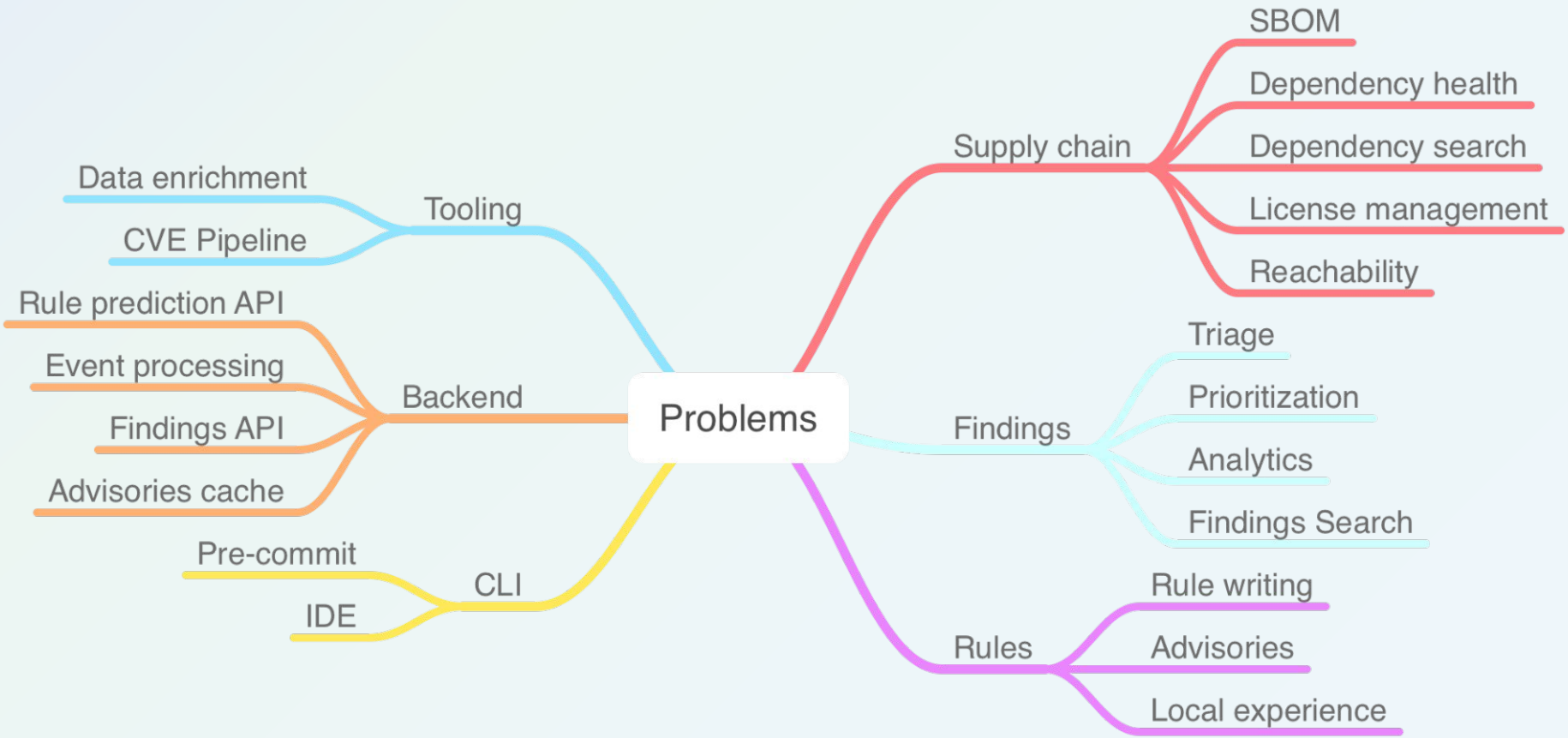
Identify problems

**Map problems to teams**

Map roles to teams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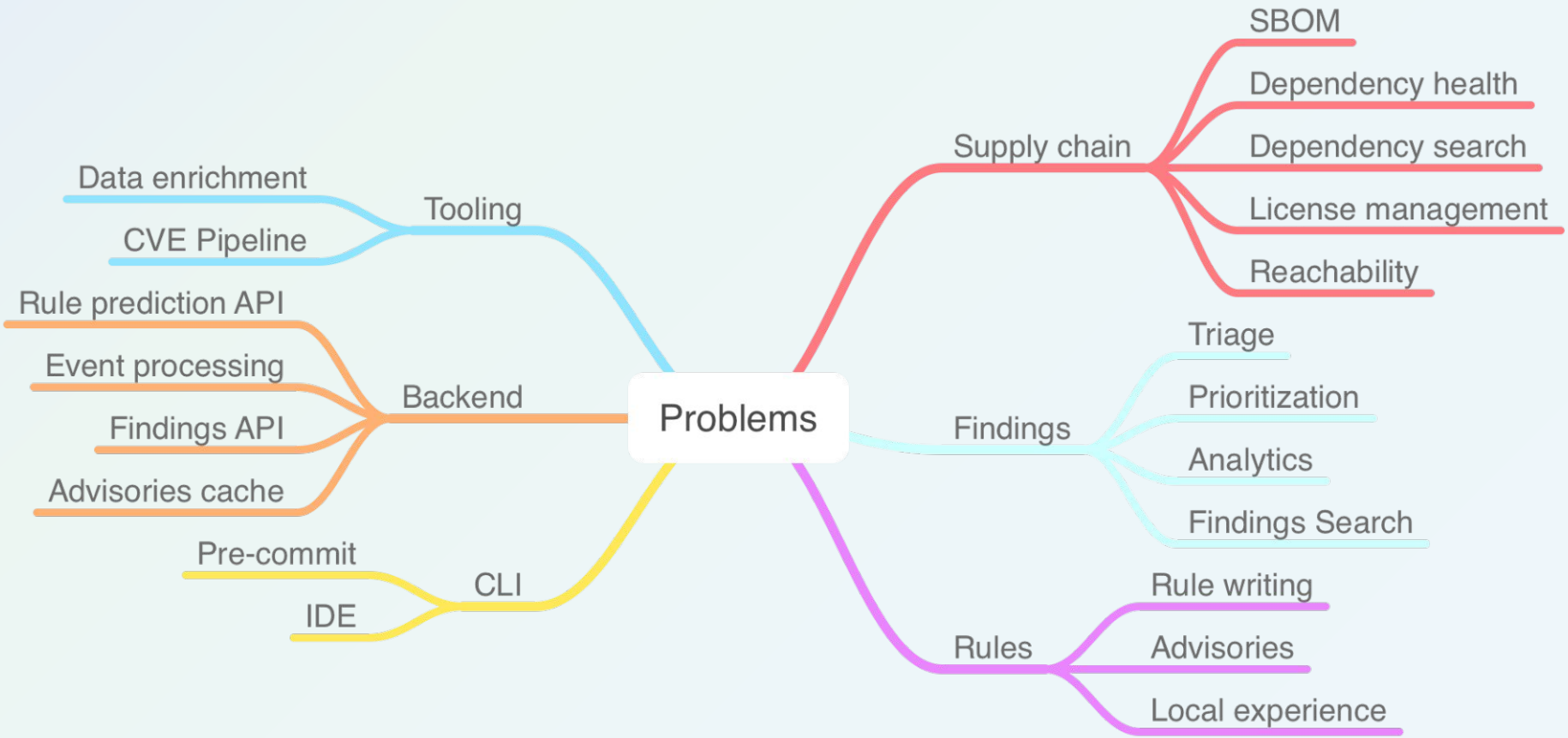
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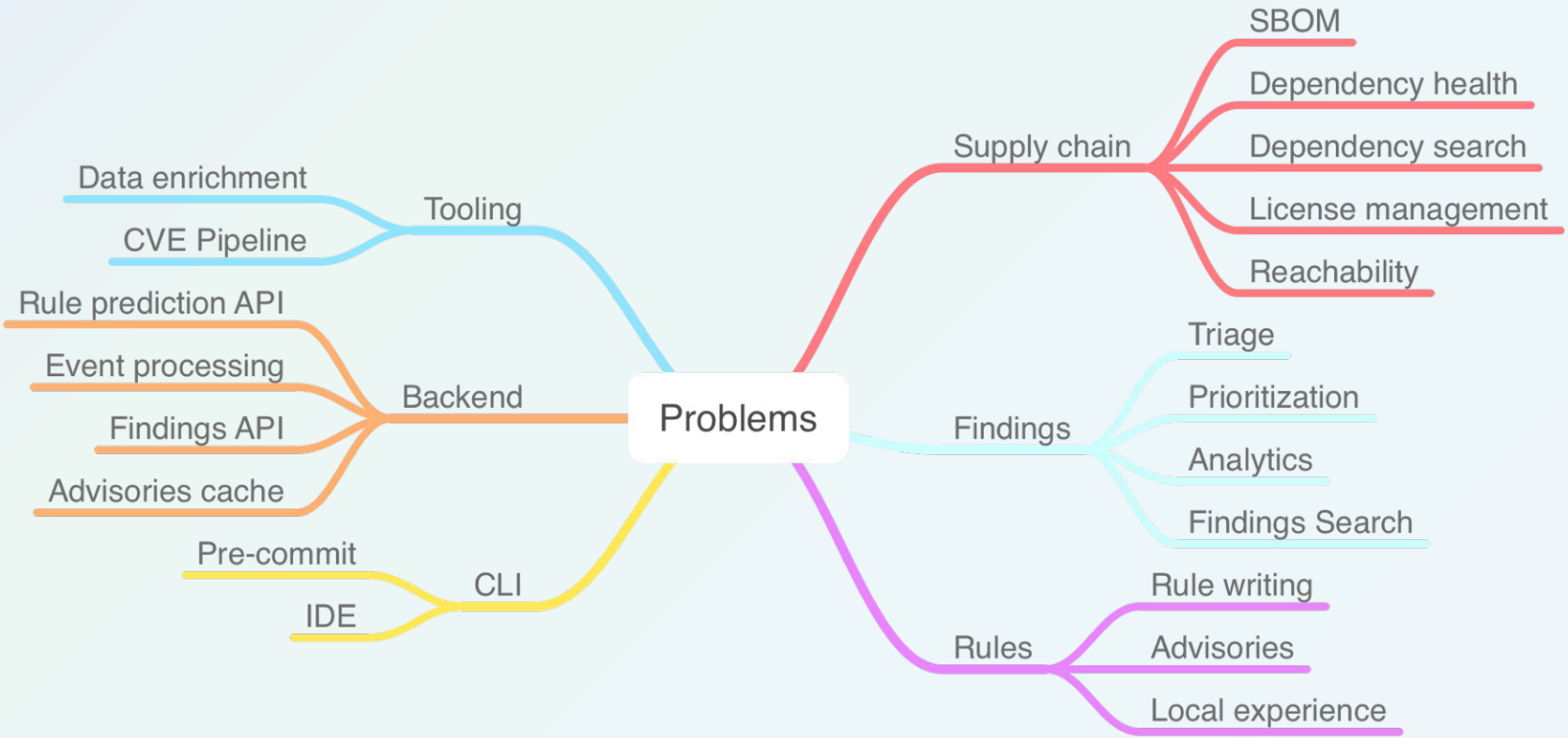
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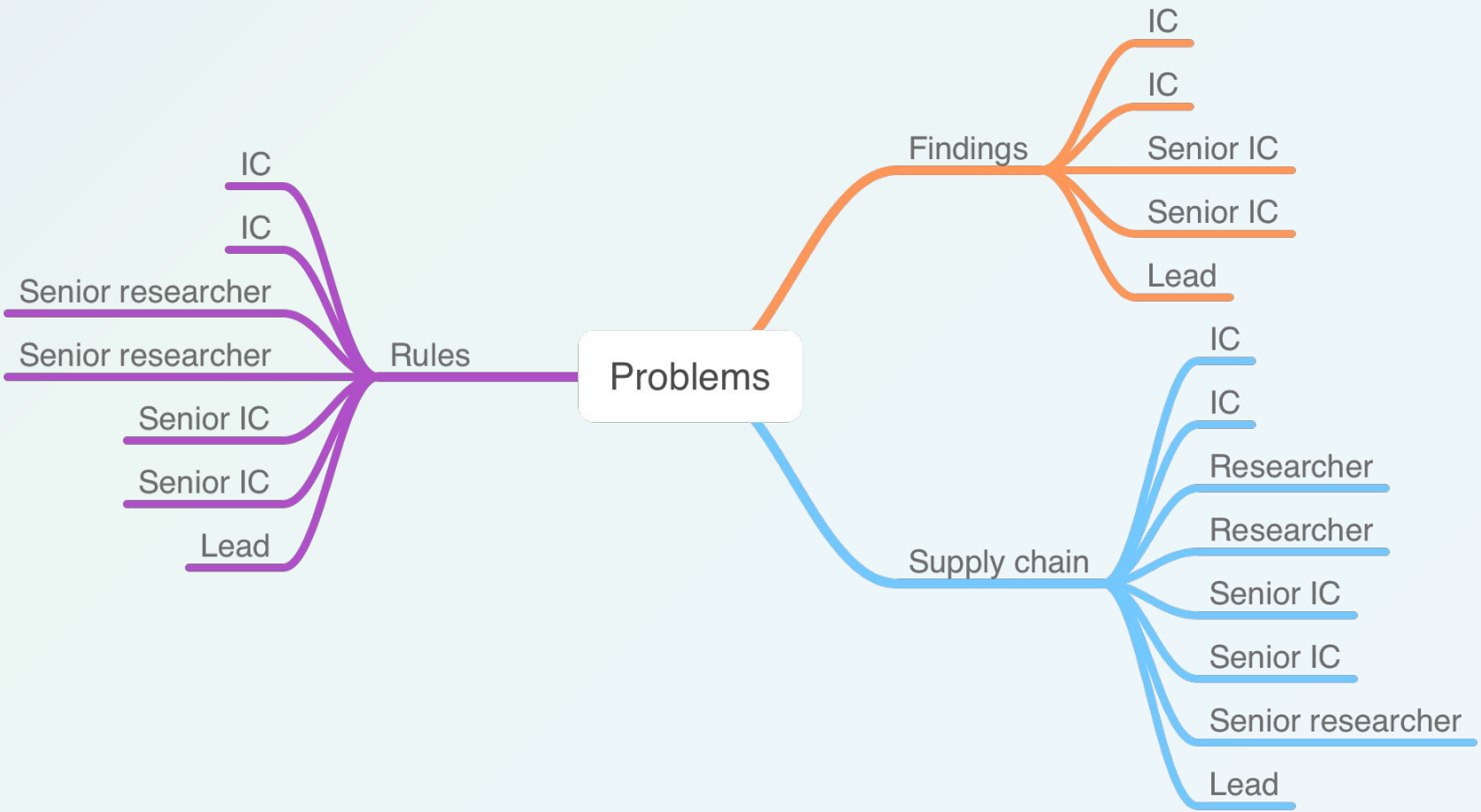
Identify problems

Map problems to teams

**Map roles to teams**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Senior IC
Lead
Supply chain
IC
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Researcher
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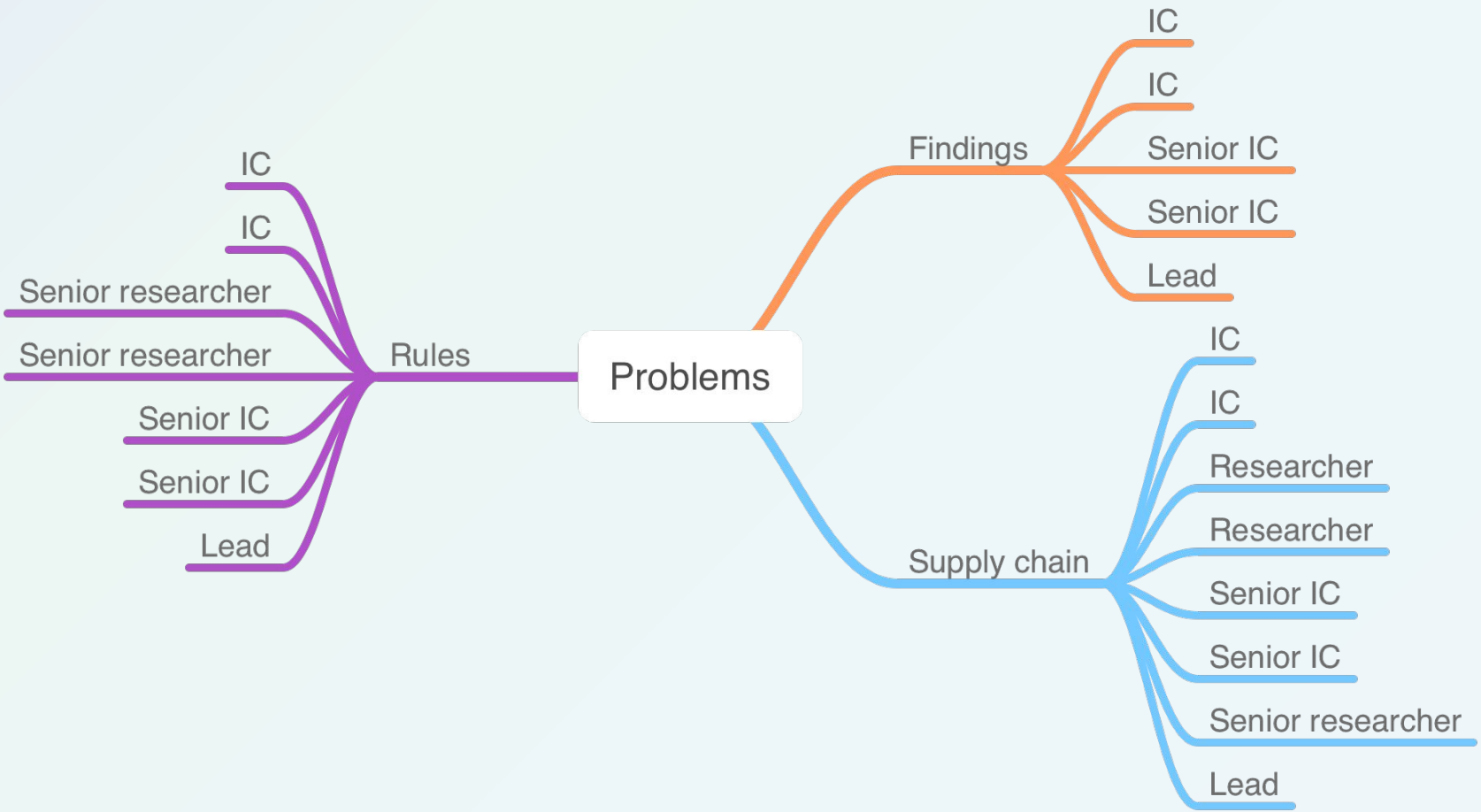
Senior researcher
Lead
Rules
IC
IC
Senior researcher
Senior researcher
Senior IC
Senior IC
Lead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Researcher
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Senior researcher
Lead
Rules
IC
IC
Senior researcher
Senior researcher
Senior IC
Senior IC
Lead

# DON'T PANIC

# Understanding organization structure tradeoffs

Adam Berman, Director of Product Engineering @ Semgrep