

# NAVIGATING TO SAFETY: STREAM THEORY AND THE EVOLUTION OF DATA-DRIVEN PROJECT MANAGEMENT



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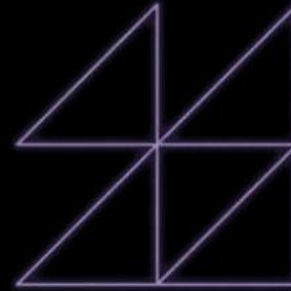
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# Navigating the Future: Stream Theory and the Evolution of Data-Driven Project Management

By: Dmitriy Neganov

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## Dmitriy Neganov

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Practice Director, M&A and Business Transformations, Vaco Cincinnati.

Author – “Stream Theory: An Employee-Centered Hybrid Management System for Achieving a Cultural Shift through Prioritizing Problems, Illustrating Solutions, and Enabling Engagement.”

# Overview

1. Understanding Stream Theory and its core components
2. Evolution of data-driven change management
3. The current landscape of tools and approaches
4. Combining theory and data into a knowledge system
5. Future trends and key obstacles
6. Q&A

# The Context

Remote, AI, Automation, Virtual – all are words we hear often

New solutions, new tools are rapidly entering the market

OpenAI has taken us to a new level of capabilities

Project management function will need to adapt, evolve

The amount of change is great and increasing

We are moving fast towards...

Does it look like we are moving in the right direction?

# What is Stream Theory?

Stream Theory is an Employee-Centered Hybrid Management System for Achieving a Cultural Shift through Prioritizing Problems, Illustrating Solutions, and Enabling Engagement

It brings together elements from:

- W. Edwards Deming's System of Profound Knowledge
- Dr. Goldratt's Theory of Constraints
- Agile Framework
- Gamification Concepts
- Psychology
- Science

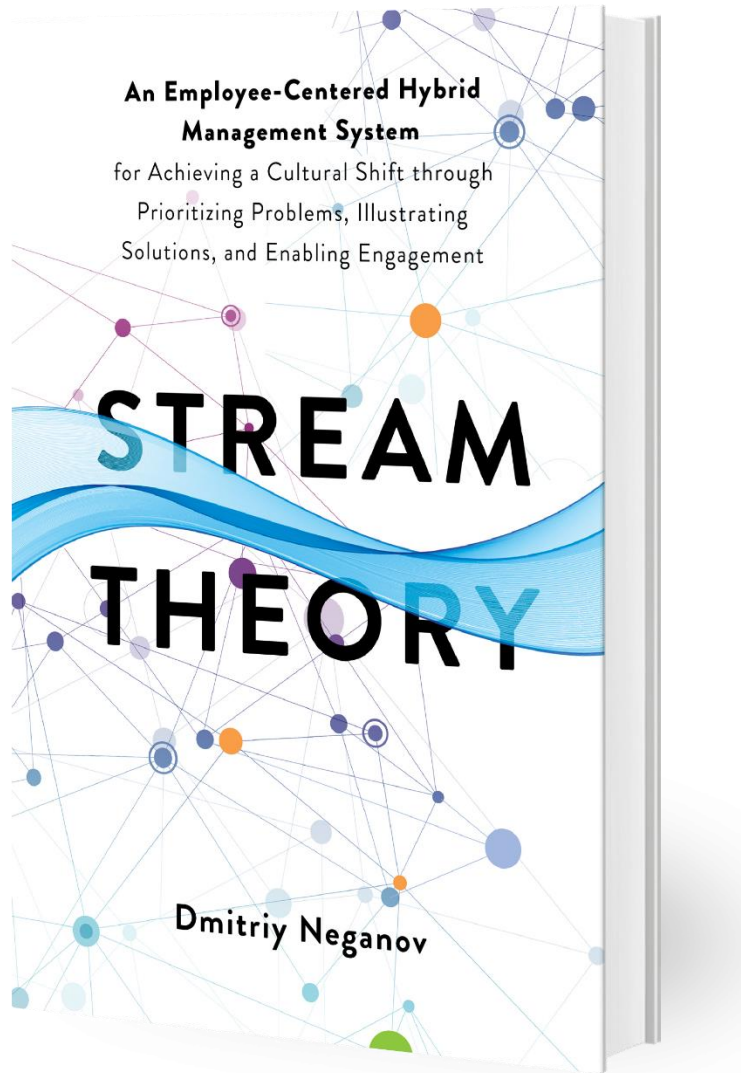
It was created to solve the problem of “ineffective management”.

A hybrid management framework demands more than simply combining Agile with OKRs or Waterfall – it requires a change in philosophy.

The underlying philosophy of Stream Theory is that:

1. People are good, smart, and want to contribute
2. People are not “resources”
3. Employees are the most important stakeholder





Managers' decisions and priorities can make or break a company, as shown by the collapse of industry leaders such as Circuit City and Westinghouse Electric Company. This is because managers aren't really there to manage, but to navigate. It's the navigator's job to lead the team—and by extension, the company—to success.

Many different management methodologies exist today, but even the most popular ones have limitations, especially when applied at the enterprise level. *Stream Theory* offers an innovative framework to achieve breakthrough results.

*Stream Theory* shows you the shortcomings of common methodologies such as Agile and Google's OKR framework and introduces ways to adapt them that prioritizes your company's greatest asset: employees. Dmitriy Neganov equips you with the tools and knowledge you need to optimize company purpose, direction, and engagement—all keys to leading an employee-centric organization and ensuring long-term organizational sustainability while meeting the core needs of stakeholders.



**Dmitriy Neganov, MBA**, is a management consultant and leader dedicated to helping companies plan and implement complex changes. Dmitriy specializes in guiding organizations through risky and urgent projects such as business transformations and mergers and acquisitions. He offers traditional and custom solutions to client problems and ensures they deliver measurable and lasting value.

Dmitriy designs, plans, and manages change across enterprises. He has deep knowledge of operations, finance, HR, IT, and PMO functions and has attained PMP and Agile certifications. His background includes mechanical engineering and information systems, with a career spanning more than sixty successful projects across a dozen industries.

STREAM THEORY  
Dmitriy Neganov

# Core Components

## Goal Definition

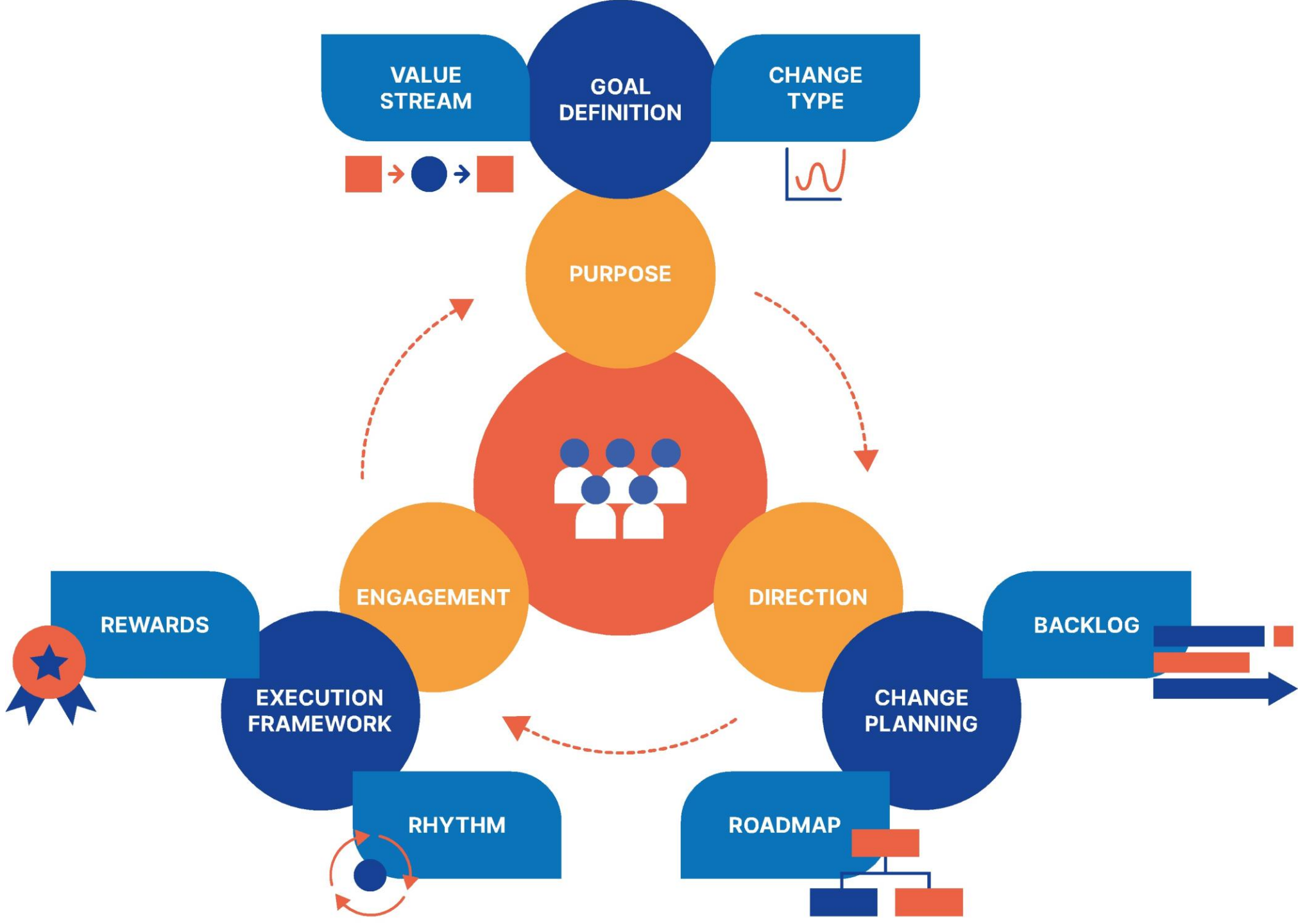
- Analyzing the current state and defining goals
- Tools and techniques: value mapping, statistical process control, constraint management, stakeholder experience mapping and a “focus wave”.

## Change Planning

- Building a Scheduled Backlog
- Managing with a Stream Roadmap

## Execution Framework

- Leveraging Agile Framework for streamlining communication
- Gamification as an alternative measurement system



# The Current Landscape

AI in Project Management is gaining popularity.

What problem are these tools solving?

- ✓ Efficiency

Why do we need efficiency? What will we do with extra capacity?

- ✓ Quantity vs. Quality



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# Data-Driven Decision Making

“Tell me how you measure me, and I’ll tell you how I will behave.” Dr. Eliyahu Goldratt

Why do **we need data**?

Who are “we”?

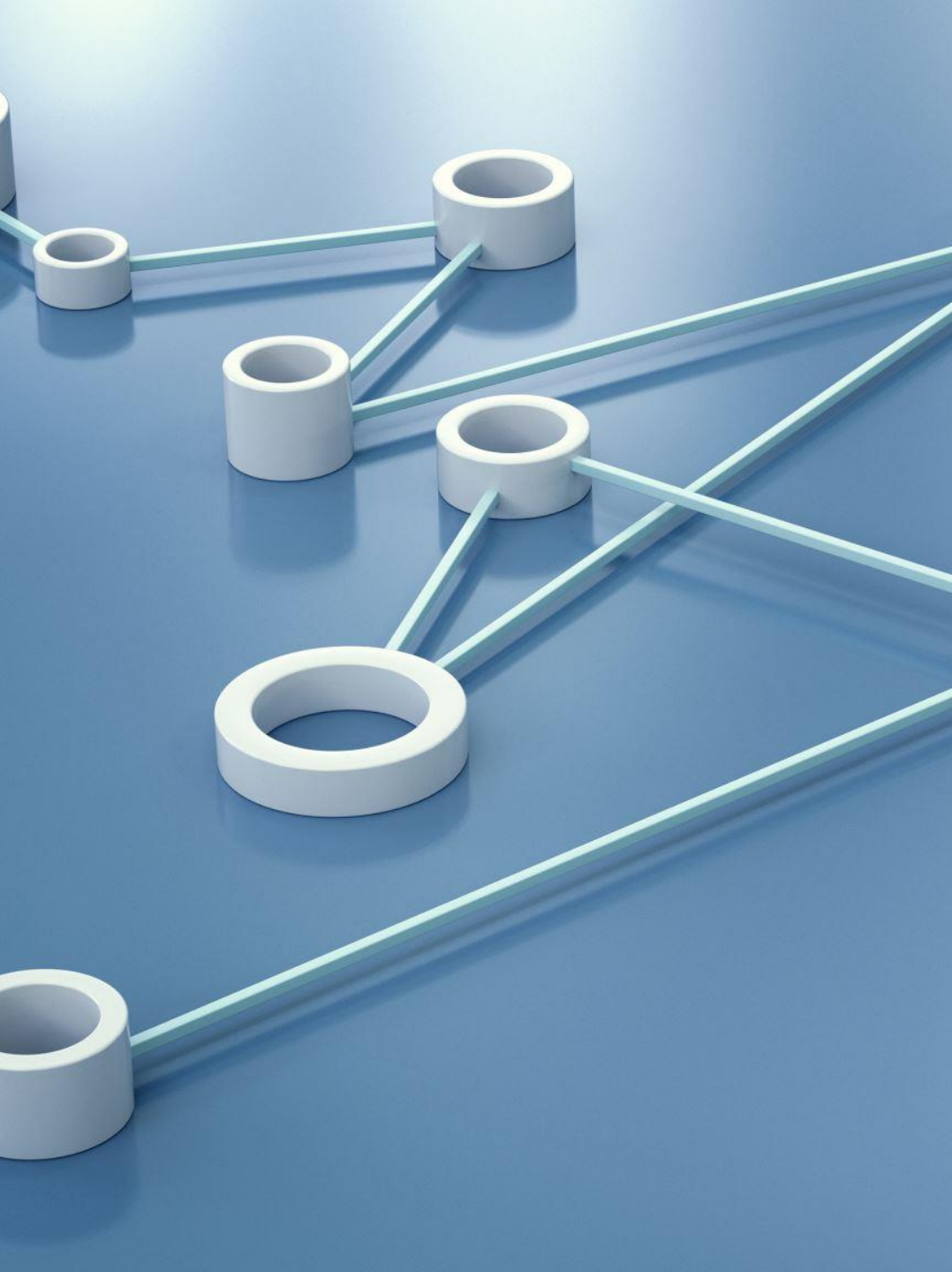
- ✓ Process vs. project managers

What data?

- ✓ Process Performance data – tells us how we are fulfilling customer needs and what problems exist along the way.
- ✓ Project Performance data – tells us how well we are solving these problems

Needs vs. Wants of data strategy – how do you differentiate?



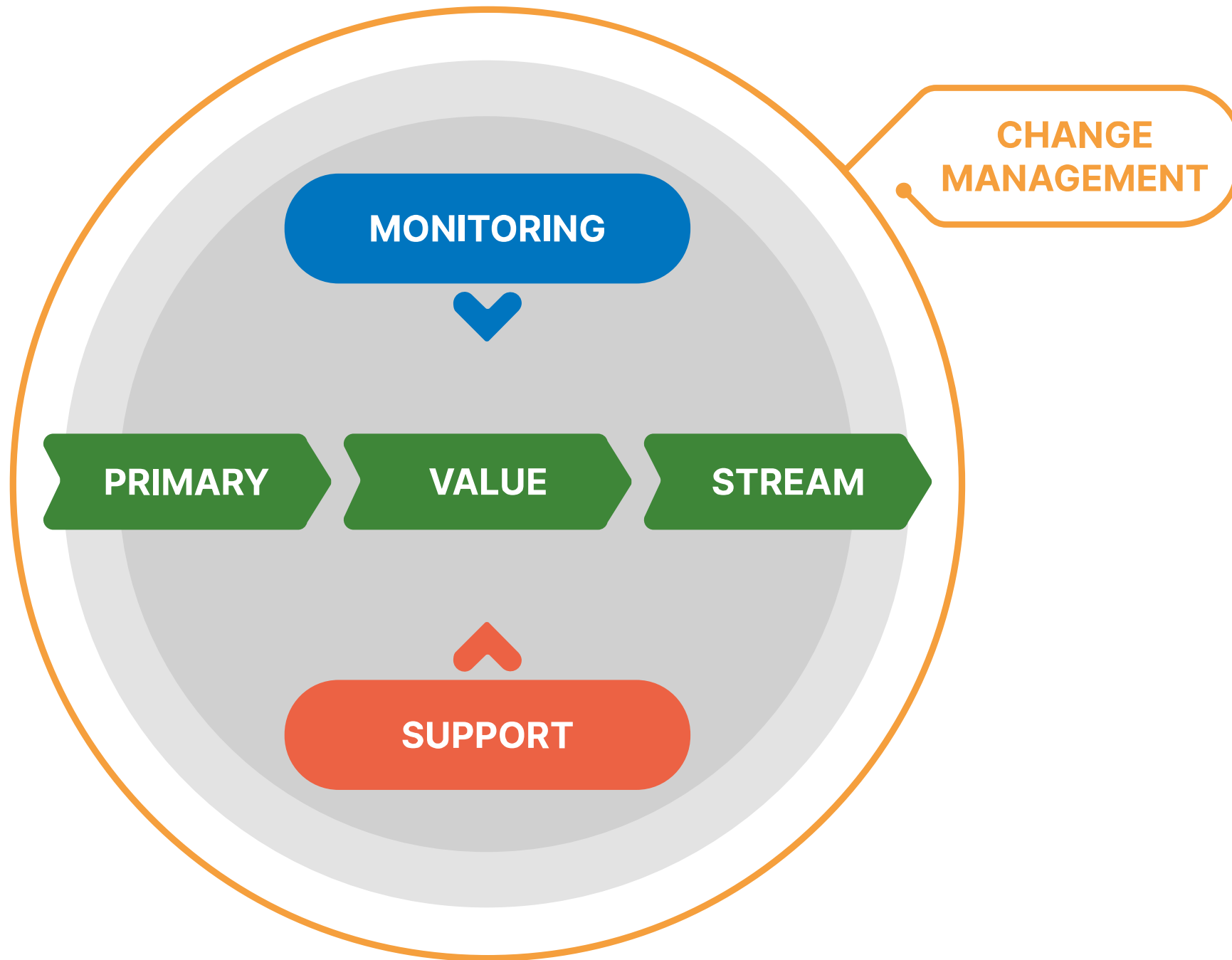


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## Data Organization

Every organization can be divided into four value streams, each supplying data:

- Primary – from suppliers to customers, how do we solve customer needs and make money doing it?
- Support – from facilities to information technology, how can we support the primary value stream?
- Monitoring & Control – how can we make sure that the system is safe, stable, and meets all legal and regulatory requirements?
- Change – how can we make sure that the changes made across an organization complement each other, moving each part of the system in the same direction?





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## Purpose of Data

It starts with customer needs – part of the Primary Value Stream.

Do we know the customers?

There is a lot of customer data already being collected, but for what purpose? To “help” or to “sell”?

Projects are solutions – we already measure solutions (budget, Burndown, EAC, etc.)

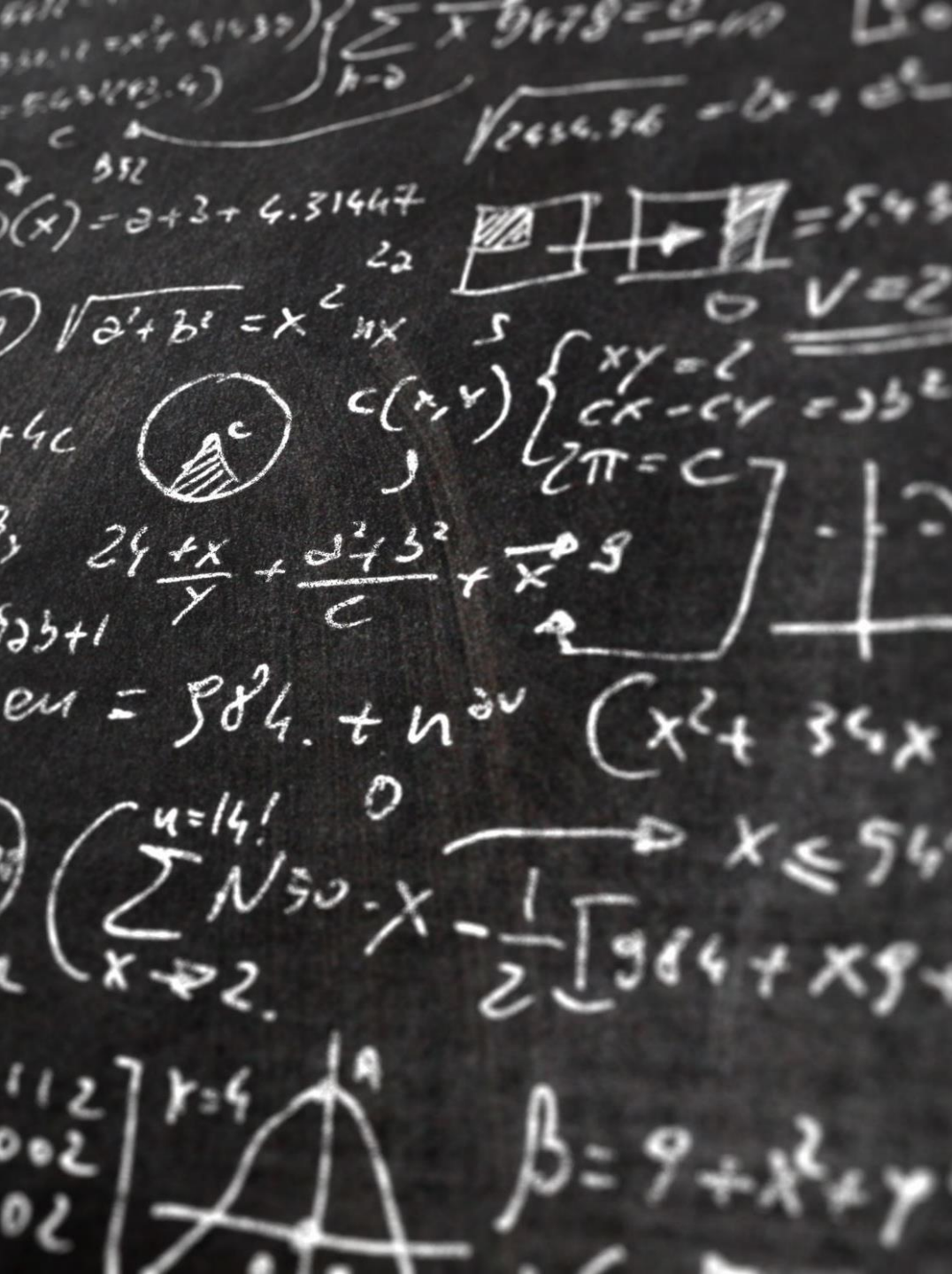
How do we collect and measure customer problems? Can we?

The same can be said about other stakeholders – how well do we know our employees, suppliers?

We are living in a world where we are moving faster and faster, embracing change as it comes. Maybe it is time to stop and see where we are running?

Data becomes information, becomes knowledge only when put into context. The context tells us the problems. It gives us purpose.





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# Knowledge System - Integrating Data & Theory

“Experience by itself teaches nothing. Without theory, experience has no meaning. Without theory, one has no questions to ask. Hence, without theory, there is no learning.” W. Edwards Deming

Leveraging Stream Theory to complement the data being collected will reduce waste and increase system throughput.

- Value Stream mapping helps create the overall context – what is being done, by whom, in what sequence, how stable it is, and so on.
- Stakeholder Experience mapping identifies the pain points of the stakeholders: suppliers, employees, customers, market community, and shareholders.
- Constraint management ensures focused throughput generation
- A Scheduled Backlog helps organize project information in a way that is transparent and commonly understood
- A Stream Roadmap provides additional visual information that helps consume the right information faster
- Agile Framework provides a common rhythm, creating a foundation for the work breakdown structure
- Gamification allows to create a “parallel measurement system” for a more effective management

# Project Manager Evolution

What is the purpose of a Project Manager?

Manage? What? Who? How?

Ultimately it comes down to coordination – enabling effective and efficient information exchange between project stakeholders.

With proper organization, management is not necessary, and coordination is nearly automated.

A project manager, in essence, is a change architect – designing, planning, implementing, and adjusting how people work.

With Stream Theory, project managers can breathe new life into their careers.



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## A Time for Change

Where are we heading?

What role will we play in the age of AI?

We do not lack data, we do not lack processing capacity, we lack purpose. Shareholder value cannot and should not be the purpose of our work!

Project Managers, as change leaders, can influence why, how, and when we undergo change, but that requires a transformation from an “admin” to an “architect”.

It is time not to follow trends, but to create new ones!

Rather than aiming for efficiency, it is time to aim for quality.

Do NOT embrace all change but understand it and shape it.



# Key Takeaways

In order to maximize the benefits of such tools as AI, we first have to understand the context within which such tools are to be used.

We no longer have the luxury of getting what we want – it is time to start choosing. Less has to become more!

Stream Theory algorithm provides a prioritization framework with the primary stakeholder being the employee, rather than a shareholder.

Tools used for Goal Definition, Change Planning, and Execution Framework will complement existing methods, gradually changing the mindset and culture within an organization.

To learn more about Stream Theory visit [www.streamtheory.org](http://www.streamtheory.org)

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Q&A

Thank you



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