Pulley

Continuous Strategy

What to Automate, What to Keep Human

Marvin Guerra

Head of Engineering, Pulley

Where I'm Coming From

Executive Interviews

Talked to CEOs, VPs of Product, and CTOs at scaling companies about how they track whether their strategy is actually being executed

Real-World Testing

Used our own company's real objectives, key results, and team allocations as the test case

AI Evaluation Systems

Researched and tested AI-driven evaluation to learn what's worth automating vs. what just sounds impressive but adds no value

Drawing the Line

Had frank debates about what to automate vs. what only a human manager can do



The Meeting We've All Been In

"Do we have the right people on the right work?"

At 50 engineers or 500, the conversation plays out the same way.

SECTION 1

Why Resource Decisions Are the Hardest Management Problem

And why humans alone can't keep up

Three Things Managers Struggle With



The Staleness Trap

Decisions are outdated before the week is over.



Hierarchy Blindness

The full picture gets harder to hold as you scale.



The Evaluation Gap

How do you know if what you're building is actually working?

The Staleness Trap

Legacy code surfaces mid-sprint

Scope changes overnight

A key engineer goes on leave

Capacity shifts untracked

Board reshuffles priorities

Roadmap invalidated

The Insight

The problem isn't bad decisions. It's that information decays faster than any human can refresh it. This is a perfect automation target.

Hierarchy Blindness



Managers see their slice.
Almost nobody holds
the full picture.

We moved a staff engineer from Platform to lead our new AI team. Product depended on Platform. One move affected three teams.

The Evaluation Gap

Are we measuring the right things?

KRs that don't capture what the objective actually needs

Are projects delivering outcomes?

Milestones hit, but no measurable impact on the goal

Are teams healthy and sustainable?

No systematic way to assess workload, focus, or morale

What We Found

Researching AI evaluation across real orgs surfaced gaps nobody expected.

SECTION 2

The Three Currencies Framework

What you're actually investing, and what's hardest to get back

Every Organization Invests Three Currencies

They are not equally renewable.



Capital

Most Flexible

Money, budget. Can raise more, cut costs, or reallocate. Your finance team owns the tracking. Most companies manage this well.



Time

Somewhat Flexible

Deadlines and milestones. Project management tools track this, but poorly connected to strategic outcomes.



People

Scarcest

Attention, capacity, expertise. You can't create more senior engineers by next quarter. Misallocation costs are irreversible. And nobody owns the tracking.

SECTION 3

The Continuous Strategy Loop

Four phases for protecting your scarcest currency

Four Phases of Continuous Strategy



Structure

Make the full strategy visible: objectives, key results, projects, and people.



Monitor

Track workload, alignment, and risk signals continuously instead of periodically.



Synthesize

Turn raw signals into decision-ready briefs. Stop collecting status.



Adjust

Make resource moves and track cascading effects. Document the why.

1 Structure Your Strategy Explicitly

Objectives → **Key Results** → **Projects** → **People**

WHAT WE AUTOMATED

Connected OKRs, Linear, and capacity plans into one centralized doc via MCPs. Ran an AI review that caught misaligned projects and capacity allocation.

WHAT WE KEPT HUMAN

Deciding what actually matters. No algorithm should set your strategy. You have to bring the clarity.

2 Monitor Continuously, Not Periodically

Capacity Risk	3+ projects. Velocity declining 2+ sprints. Context-switching across 4+ codebases.
Focus Alignment	Majority of team effort on low-priority objectives. Primary workstreams not tied to top-3 goals.
Delivery Risk	Scope creeping without timeline adjustment. Dependencies unresolved for 2+ weeks.

WHAT WE AUTOMATED

Connected project tracker, calendar, and code repo signals to surface delays, workload, and alignment issues.

WHAT WE KEPT HUMAN

Interpreting context behind the signals. A flag isn't a diagnosis. Only a manager knows the story behind the number.

3 Synthesize, Don't Collect Status

BEFORE

Everyone writes their update.
The manager reads them all.
The meeting clarifies what was written rather than deciding what to do.

AFTER

The system synthesizes signals:
What changed?
What's at risk?
What decisions need to be made?

The meeting becomes about action.

WHAT WE AUTOMATED

Turned raw signals into a weekly decision brief: 3 things that changed, 2 risks to watch, 1 decision needed now.

WHAT WE KEPT HUMAN

The meeting itself. Decide what to act on.

Even without AI: ask "What changed since last week?" rather than "What did you work on?"

4 Adjust and Track the Why

Project slows down → KR becomes at-risk → Objective may need re-scoping

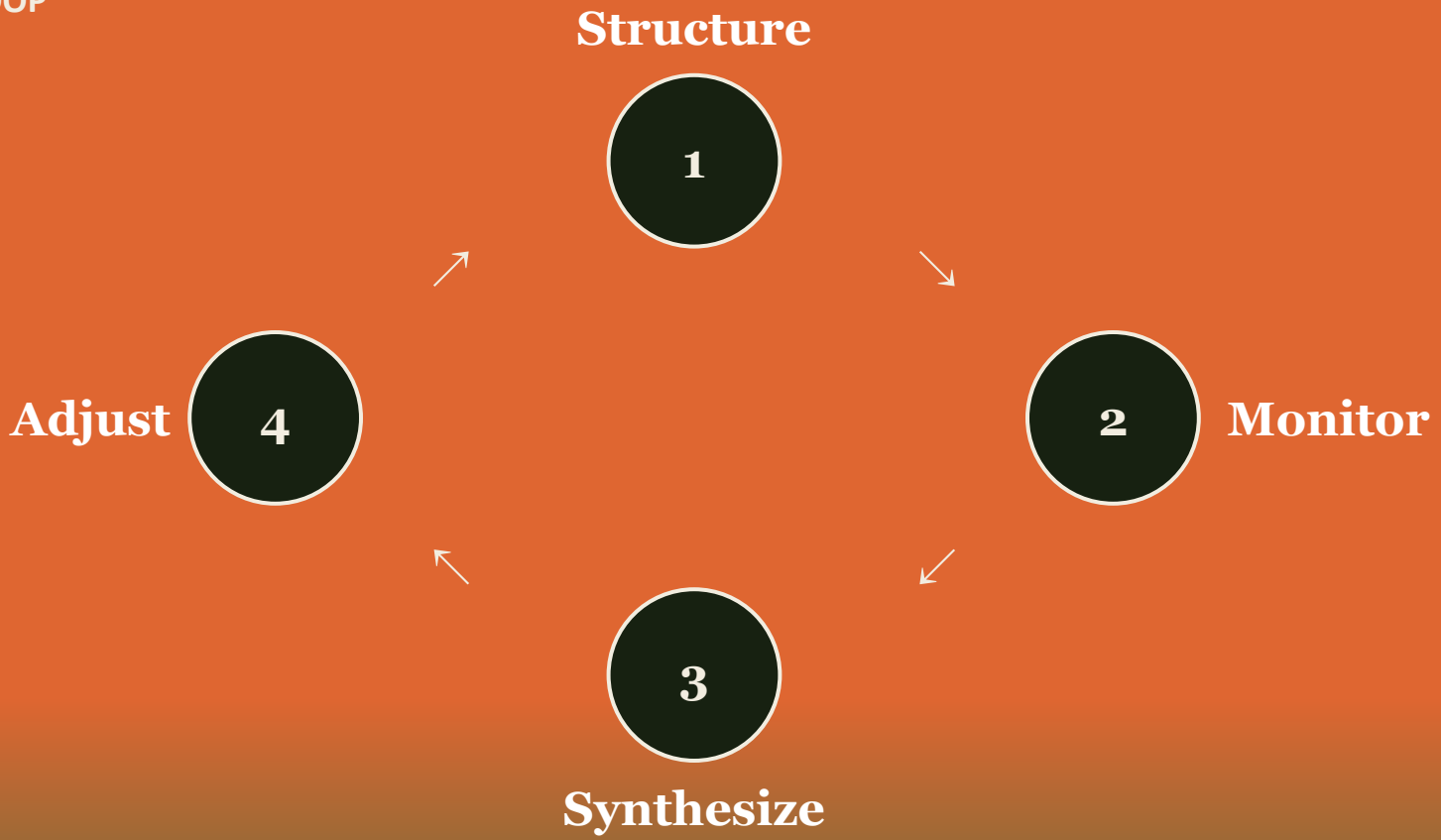
WHAT WE AUTOMATED

Modeled cascading effects before making moves. Documented every change with the reasoning behind it, so future decisions had real context.

WHAT WE KEPT HUMAN

The trade-off call.
Sitting across from the person
being moved and explaining the why.

THE LOOP



Making In-Person Time Count

Once you automate the data work, here's what your time together should focus on:

	**1:1s**	"What are you working on?"	→ **"What's blocking your best work?"**
	**Team Meetings**	Collecting status updates	→ **Making decisions from the brief**
	**Planning Sessions**	Debating who's busy	→ **Starting from shared data, debating trade-offs**
	**Check-ins**	Monitoring progress	→ **Coaching and unblocking**

Automation doesn't replace your time together. It makes that time worth showing up for.

What I'd Tell Myself Six Months Ago

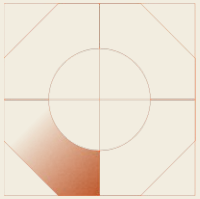
The hard part wasn't the automation.

Automate the grunt work.

Protect the judgment calls.

That's continuous strategy.

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Thank You

Marvin Guerra

Head of Engineering, Pulley

Let's talk about how you're tackling this.

Connect with me: /in/marvinguerra