

Make it count: A no-nonsense guide to engineering metrics for the busy leader

Ulrich Reinhardt
Leadership & Executive Coach, Facilitator

LeadingEng Berlin, November 2024

What metrics should I use?

Metrics Ecosystem

Metrics are useful for:

- **Creating + shifting culture**
- **Reporting**
- **Maintaining a big-picture view, informing decisions**
- **Developing leaders around you**
- **A great tool to complement your leadership toolkit**

Great stuff!

Metrics are useful for:

- **Creating + shifting culture**
- **Reporting**
- **Maintaining a big-picture view, informing decisions**
- **Developing leaders around you**
- **A great tool to complement your leadership toolkit**

Great stuff!

Making metrics not a mess: **Using a powerful tool wisely**

**Metrics create incentives.
Incentives create
behaviours.
Behaviours create culture.**

Your metrics have more impact than you may realise.

**Just because it's not
easily quantifiable
doesn't mean it doesn't
matter.**

If it's not quantifiable (yet), start by just talking about it.

**What (and how) you measure
will send an important signal
about
the kind of leader you are.**

Make it a message that aligns with the leader you are & want to be.

**If trust in your organisation
is broken, metrics aren't
going to fix it.**

Tread lightly.

It doesn't matter if you use DORA, SPACE, DevEx, Flow, or \$framework/\$metrics

if

1. they don't measure what matters to your business
2. you don't have your teams on board
3. you and your teams don't use them to inform your decisions

***ADDRESS CULTURAL, STRUCTURAL, AND
PROCEDURAL ISSUES THAT METRICS
WON'T SINGLE-HANDEDLY SOLVE!***

Metrics aren't going to save you.

Social problems need more than dashboards.

The right metrics for your org are the metrics that are shared, understood, used, and updated as needed.

Piece of cake!

What metrics should I use, like, actually?

Getting started (for real!)

Be able to confidently create a narrative about

- **Money**
- **Time**
- **People**
- **Risks**

Pre-Getting started:
If (almost) nothing is in place, but you need to start reporting

Reporting: An imperfect/incomplete solution is better than no solution.

Don't wait until you have it all figured out.

Don't wait until you have the perfect dashboards in place. Start with narratives.

- Money
- Time
- People
- Risks

bit.ly/pushing-information

How To Push Information To Your Boss (With A Free Template!)

Middle Management - Line Management - Guide - Communication - Executive Leadership

Jun 2, 2022 - Written By Lena Reinhard

One of the best things you can do to manage up and actively manage your boss is to push information to them. Instead of relying on your boss “pulling” information from you, you provide regular updates to them: you “push” information and take ownership of giving them context.

I found that providing regular updates to your boss is an incredibly powerful tool. It gives your boss context, helps them make decisions, helps shape their impressions and perception of your work, and, over time, builds trust. In addition, it helps you manage expectations, and provides visibility into your and your teams' work. It also means that you're taking ownership, signals that you're on top of things, and is a really powerful tool for managing alignment.

In this post, I provide considerations for managing up through status updates, and provide a template that you can use to get started with sharing information more regularly with your boss.

Consider This For Getting Started:

- **Optimise for higher-frequency and quick iterations, over extensive and irregular updates.** I regularly hear from leaders who struggle with sharing regular updates because there's so much that they want to say, and so little time. I understand that! Resist the urge to share *all the things*, and instead focus on sharing a few things more regularly.
- **Know your audience and tailor what you share to their interests.** What do they care about? What motivates them? What are their pain points? You can ask your boss, or just test some things out.

Ask your reports to give you updates every week.

Money
Time
Goal achievement
Teams
(+ their priorities)

Make it count: A no-nonsense guide to engineering metrics for the busy leader

bit.ly/manage-your-manager

Managing Up: The Most Important Skill For Anyone Who Has A Manager

Managing up is one of the most powerful skill sets that any leader or employee can develop. It's also an often-overlooked skill, but can make a huge difference in how you experience your work and how your work is perceived by the leaders around you. Whether you're just starting your career or you're a seasoned leader, this guide is designed to help you navigate your relationship with your manager in a way that benefits both parties. This guide is for anyone who has a manager or boss—and if you're a leader yourself, it's also for you! Ready to get started?

In this article, you'll find a full guide to

- what managing up means,
- why it's important,
- signs that you should spend more time on it,
- how to get better at it, as well as
- common challenges and how to address them.

I Just Want To Get Started Now!

If you want to try something out quickly, here's your quick-start guide to mastering the art of managing up:

Lena's Quick-Start Guide To Managing Up

I've worked on managing up with many leaders and bosses, and if you're looking for an easy way to get started and see first improvements quickly, I recommend the following steps to get going. They're marked with the rocket emoji 🚀 below in the how-to section ([click this link to jump there](#)), where you will also find more details on each:

- Don't make your boss chase information

Metrics are a tool to solve a problem; they're not the solution.

The metrics you use will only be as useful as your clarity on the problem you're trying to solve with them.

Getting started: **Define the problem**

Define the problem you're trying to solve

- *Why are we not getting as much done as I'd expect?*
- *Why is project x taking so long?*
- *Why did we just have another incident in \$area?*
- *What are we doing to fix \$problem?*
- *I'm getting questions from my fellow executives that I don't have answers to.*

ADDRESS CULTURAL, STRUCTURAL, AND PROCEDURAL ISSUES THAT METRICS WON'T SINGLE-HANDEDLY SOLVE!

Define the problem you're trying to solve

- *Why are we not getting as much done as I'd expect?*
- *Why is project x taking so long?*
- *Why did we just have another incident in \$area?*
- *What are we doing to fix \$problem?*
- *I'm getting questions from my fellow executives that I don't have answers to.*

Who needs the solution to this problem?

- *Your boss*
- *Your board/investors*
- *Your peers*
- *You*
- *Your direct reports*

Be willing to accept a metric that you find sub-optimal, especially if it buys you relationship capital or if you can balance it with other metrics.

Just because it's not perfect, doesn't mean it's not useful.

Getting started: **Scope out the solution**

Two types of metrics:

Metrics FOR Teams

Goal: Support team agency, decision-making, continuous improvement & learning, local optimisations

Examples: DORA metrics, deployment frequency, story points, goal completion %

Limits: Comparability across teams, roll-up, connectability to business goals (long chain)

→ Delegate this!

Metrics ABOUT Teams

Goal: Gain organisational insight, support your decision-making, big picture view

Examples: Investment distribution/cumulative flow chart

Limits: Meaning, usefulness at team-level

→ Make these visible!

Don't be afraid to keep multiple sets of metrics.

Not all metrics will be relevant to everyone at all times, and that's okay.

Two types of metrics: Examples

Metrics FOR Teams

Most useful: What your team cares about

- Goal achievement %, SLOs/SLAs
- How we work (DORA/SPACE)
- Customer impact (adoption rates, quality)

→ Delegate this!

Metrics ABOUT Teams

Two types of metrics: Examples

Metrics FOR Teams

Most useful: What your team cares about

- Goal achievement %, SLOs/SLAs
- How we work (DORA/SPACE)
- Customer impact (adoption rates, quality)

→ Delegate this!

Metrics ABOUT Teams

Most useful: What you + your boss care about

- Goal achievement %
- Cumulative flow chart
- How we work (Engagement surveys, SPACE)
- Customer impact (adoption rates, quality)

→ Make these visible!

No one cares about your pretty dashboards. (It's okay if you do, though.)

What does it mean?

What are the risks, and what are you doing about them?

What are the unknowns, and how are you handling them?

Don't hoard data: Metrics aren't a "gotta catch 'em all"

Only gather as many metrics as you're actually able to actively use

Rolling out & using metrics
Measuring (with) your teams

Loop in your direct reports

- **Explain it**
 - Intentions (problem to solve), goals
 - Metrics *for* vs. *about* teams
 - [Share resources]
- **Delegate it!**
 - 1-2 metrics that all teams use
 - 1-2 metrics selected by each team for themselves
 - + other investment ideas for you as a leadership team to make

!! Make budgets accessible; expect questions

Have + share a plan

Share

- Your intentions
- Context
- What you'll (not) measure
- Connect your teammates' context to yours
- Common concerns (before people say them)
- Feedback paths
- Make metrics accessible to the people who the metrics are for and about

You have beautiful metrics, but:
**Your employees
have concerns**

You have beautiful metrics, but:

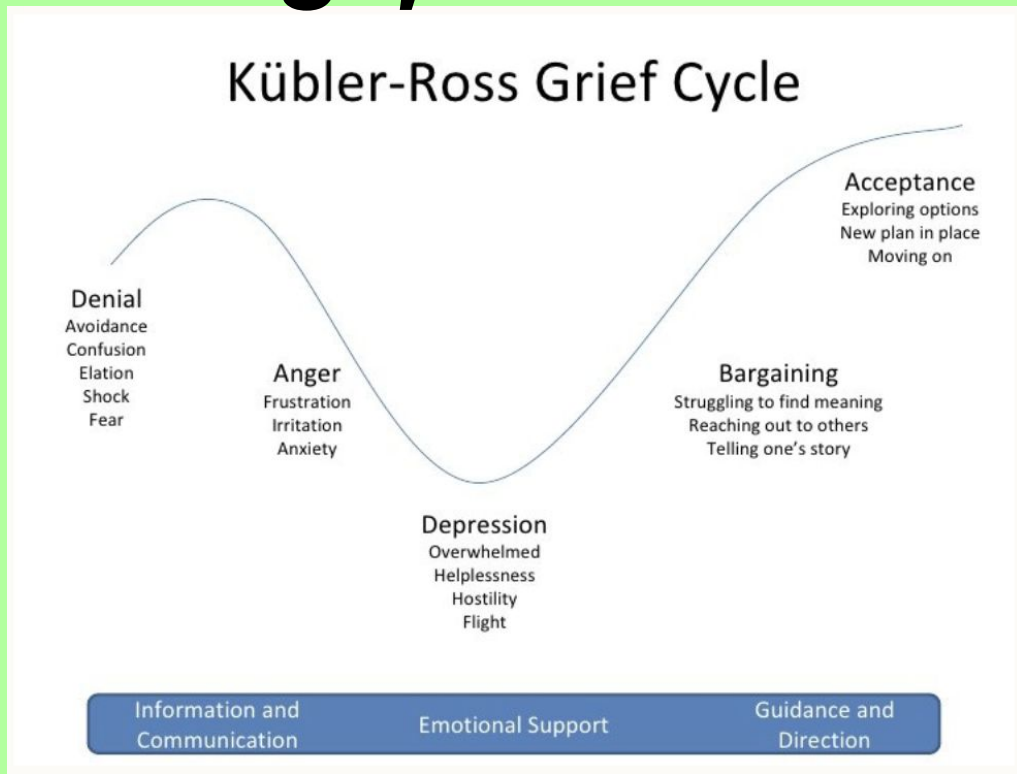
Your employees have concerns

- Reframe: People don't resist, they respond
- Understand your own reactions

People don't resist change, they respond

Change reactions are not linear.

Ambiguity is tiring and can make people anxious. In uncertainty, humans resort to what we know.



Get *really* curious

- What's your org's history?
- How do people view leadership?
- How big is the change (scale, value + culture shift)?

Get *really* curious

- What's your org's history?
- How do people view leadership?
- How big is the change (scale, value + culture shift)?

Ask:

- How do they feel about the change?
- What concerns do they have? Where are those coming from?
- What feedback do they have for you?
- What would *good* look like for them?

Make metrics work for your org

- Invest in trust
- Make it make sense
- Make it a habit: Use metrics, visibly, and make sense of them for people
- Listen to feedback, adjust
- Keep talking about this
- Add metrics to reporting from your reports

Make metrics work for your org

- Invest in trust
- Make it make sense
- Make it a habit: Use metrics, visibly, and make sense of them for people
- Listen to feedback, adjust
- Keep talking about this
- Add metrics to reporting from your reports

ADDRESS CULTURAL, STRUCTURAL, AND PROCEDURAL ISSUES THAT METRICS WON'T SINGLE-HANDEDLY SOLVE!

Metrics are useful for:

- Creating + shifting culture
- Reporting
- Maintaining a big-picture view, informing decisions
- Developing leaders around you
- A great tool to complement your leadership toolkit

Make metrics the powerful tool they can be, together with your teams.

Lena Reinhard

Leadership & executive coach
Facilitator

lenareinhard.com
bit.ly/lenaletter



Lena Reinhard
bit.ly/lenaletter

Speaker Notes Word Count per Slide:

Slide 1: 19 words

Slide 2: 25 words

Slide 3: 54 words

Slide 4: 171 words

Slide 5: 10 words

Slide 6: 156 words

Slide 7: 68 words

Slide 8: 30 words

Slide 9: 15 words

Slide 10: 38 words

Slide 11: 47 words

Slide 12: 21 words

Slide 13: 9 words

Slide 14: 14 words

Slide 15: 18 words

Slide 16: 47 words

Slide 17: 24 words

Slide 18: 34 words

Slide 19: 14 words

Slide 20: 103 words

Slide 21: 35 words

Slide 22: 36 words

Slide 23: 164 words

Slide 24: 6 words

Slide 25: 11 words

Slide 26: 65 words

Slide 27: 40 words

Slide 28: 23 words

Slide 29: 30 words

Slide 30: 90 words

Slide 31: 82 words

Slide 32: 6 words