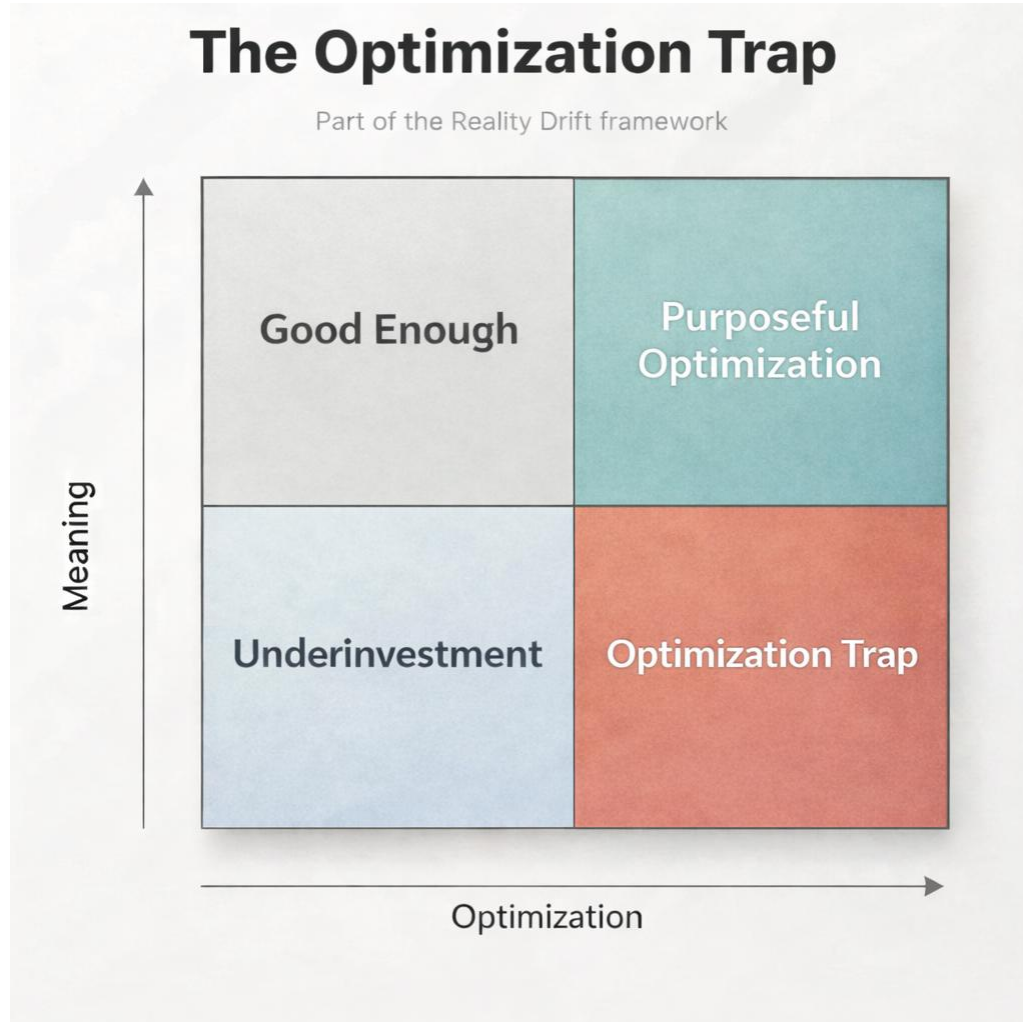


When Metrics Replace Purpose

A visual reference guide to proxy optimization, metric gaming, and Reality Drift



A useful metric is introduced to evaluate performance. Over time, the system begins organizing itself around that metric. The metric becomes easier to refine, manipulate, or improve than the underlying outcome. The proxy gradually replaces the purpose.

This is how systems become more measurable, more efficient, and more polished while becoming less meaningful, less resilient, and less connected to the reality they were built to serve.

Optimized internally. Misaligned externally.

Source: [The Optimization Trap: When Efficiency Undermines Meaning](#)

[\[YouTube\]](#) [\[Github\]](#)