



Vector Before Automation Thrust

Executives are investing heavily in automation across their software organizations. The promise is faster delivery, lower costs, and reduced friction. However, automation without clarity of purpose only accelerates waste.

In aviation, an autopilot doesn't define the destination, it simply maintains the vector set by the crew. If the flight plan is missing, all the automation in the world won't get the aircraft where it needs to go...and increasing thrust on the aircraft just makes the situation worse. The same principle applies to software teams.

Step 1: Define Why the Team Exists

If you're not sure why a team exists, then take a page from lean thinking to define your value.

- **What would happen if this team didn't exist?**
- **What critical outcomes disappear without them?**
- **How does this team move the organization closer to its strategic goals?**

Answering these questions surfaces the real value stream and the more time you spend defining the value, the more ROI you'll get from automation.

Step 2: Measure the Value Delivered

Once the team's value is defined, leaders must identify measurable outcomes like customer impact, time to market, revenue enablement, cost avoidance, or risk reduction. Find a way to measure it so you can quantify the value. This provides the "altimeter" that tells you whether the team is climbing, descending, or off course.

Step 3: Target Automation to Maximize Value

Only when the value and measurements are clear should automation be applied.

Automation becomes powerful when it is aimed at:

- Reducing non-value-added work (waste in Lean terms)
- Accelerating value-creating activities
- Freeing leaders and engineers to focus on strategic priorities

Otherwise, automation risks becoming little more than busy work at scale.

Conclusion & Call to Action

Automation should be the throttle instead of the flight plan. Before investing in tools or process changes, ensure your teams have a clearly defined mission and measurable outcomes. Only then can automation lift your organization higher.



At **Form100 Consulting**, we work with product and technology leaders to map value, align teams, and implement automation that truly maximizes outcomes. If you're considering automation initiatives, let's have a conversation to make sure you're heading in the right direction.