Exploring Research Metadata Governance
with Design Thinking

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WEST ARÊTE

Who is West Arete?

- For almost 20 years, West Arete has built highly specialized software for higher education.
- We're not a typical for-profit company. We're a benefit corporation and certified as a "B Corp".
- This means that we emphasize a number of factors like community, people, and environment more heavily than most companies.
- Think of us as a hybrid between a for-profit and a non-profit.

Certified B Corporation

1% FOR THE PLANET

What does West Arete do?

- We created a leading implementation of a centralized RIMS system at a large R1.
- We are currently shepherding multiple other institutions through this process.
- We connect and deduplicate your institution's grant data with the publication data, with the faculty activity data, with the equipment and facilities data, even sources like news feeds.
- It's all merged into one unified source (that your institution owns), leveraging fine-grained security and data governance, that stays up to date as new information is available.

Proof of the importance of data governance

A genie comes out of the bottle and grants you only one of two wishes:

1. You could bestow upon all of higher education the funds to purchase licenses for every RIMS software product that exists. But the way the organization works stays the same.

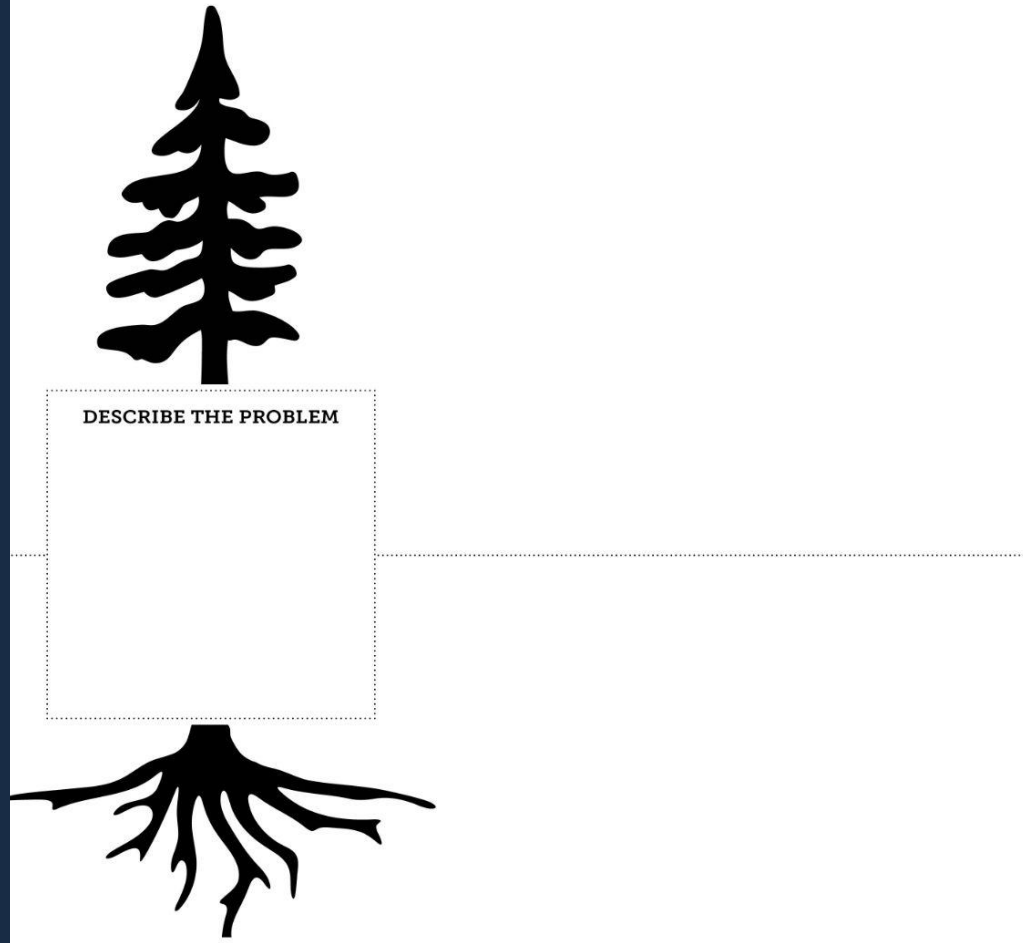
2. You could completely revolutionize the way that university silos and departments share, secure, and manage data, so that it's all seamless But afterward you could only use Excel to analyze it.

Which would you pick?

Let's get to work!

Problem Tree Analysis

This methodology is used when you know you have an existing problem, and you want to explore more about the effects it has.



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3 Steps:

1. First, select the **problem statement.**

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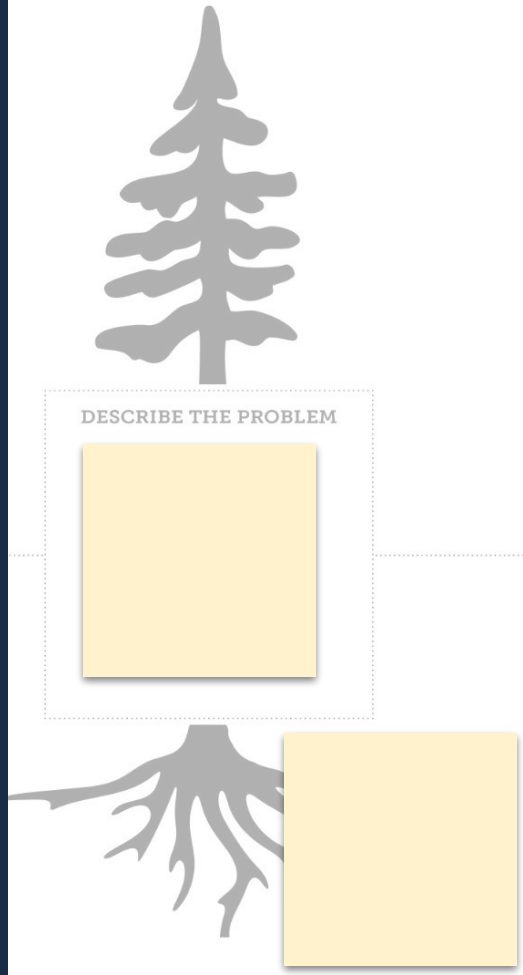

3 Steps:

1. First, select the **problem statement**.
2. Next, explore the root causes of this problem. (**the roots**)

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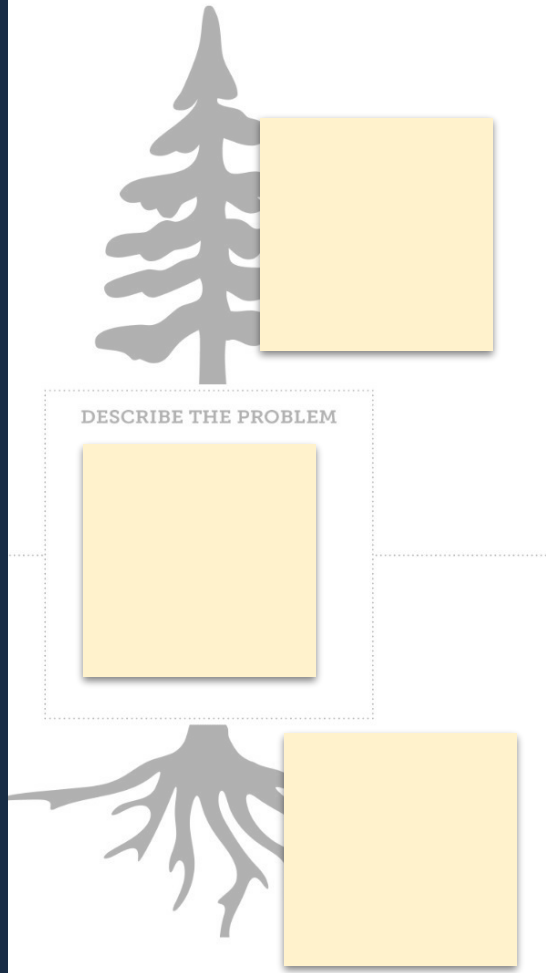


3 Steps:

1. First, select the **problem statement.**
2. Next, explore the root causes of this problem. (**the roots**)
3. Then, explore the effects of this problem. (**the branches**)

Choose your problem statement:

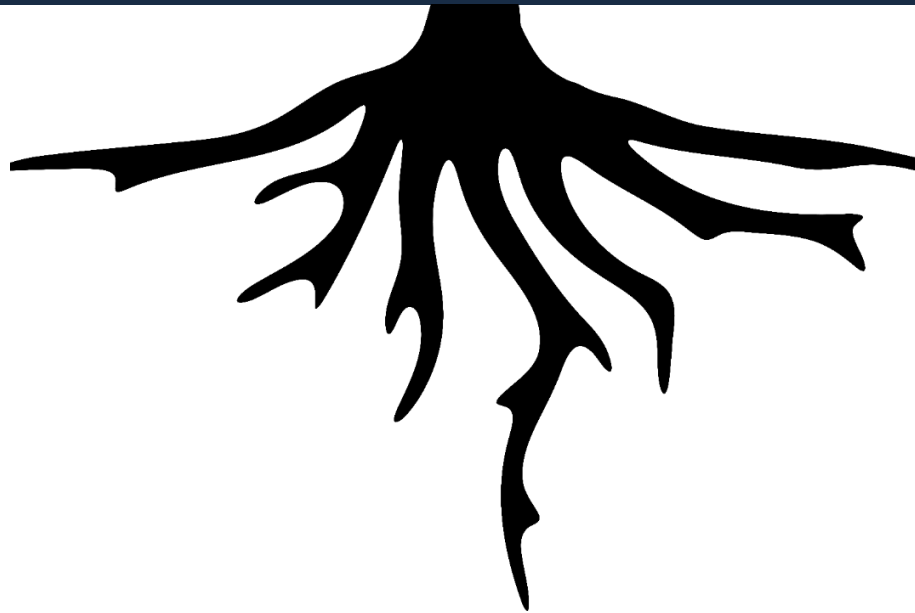
#1 I don’t have access to the data I need.

#2 The data I get is not clean/reliable enough.

#3 The data that I need lives in incompatible silos.

ROOT CAUSES

5 MINUTES



Try to answer the question:

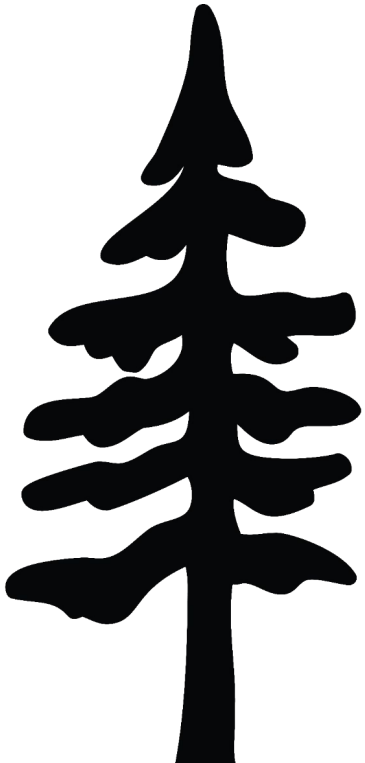
What are the root causes, or why is it this way?

EFFECTS

5 MINUTES

Try to answer the question:

What are these effects / implications / ramifications of this problem?



Let’s share!

Anything that this exercise uncovered for you that you hadn’t seen before?

Where do you go from here?

- **Explore the world of Design Thinking and Human-Centric Design.** There are many books, resources, and certifications on the subject, and we believe these techniques are a superpower for data governance.
- These techniques are even more powerful when a team participates in them together. West Arete can facilitate these conversations at your institution and help guide your team to stronger data governance.
- **Reach out to us!** We take a “community first” approach to our outreach, so don’t hesitate to share successes that you’ve had, questions that you have, or problems that you’re not sure how to solve.
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Thank you for joining us today at the 2024 Research Analytics Summit

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