

Report

Sizing Developer Productivity Teams

For the Engineering Enablement newsletter
by Abi Noda

Introduction

At DX, we're focused on helping leaders measure and improve developer productivity. This often involves working with Developer Productivity teams to implement qualitative and quantitative measures to track the impact of their efforts.

A question that regularly comes up is whether we have data on how much other companies are investing in Developer Productivity teams. While this topic has been touched on in conversations for the Engineering Enablement podcast, we've recognized the need for a more coordinated effort to get benchmarking data that leaders can use.

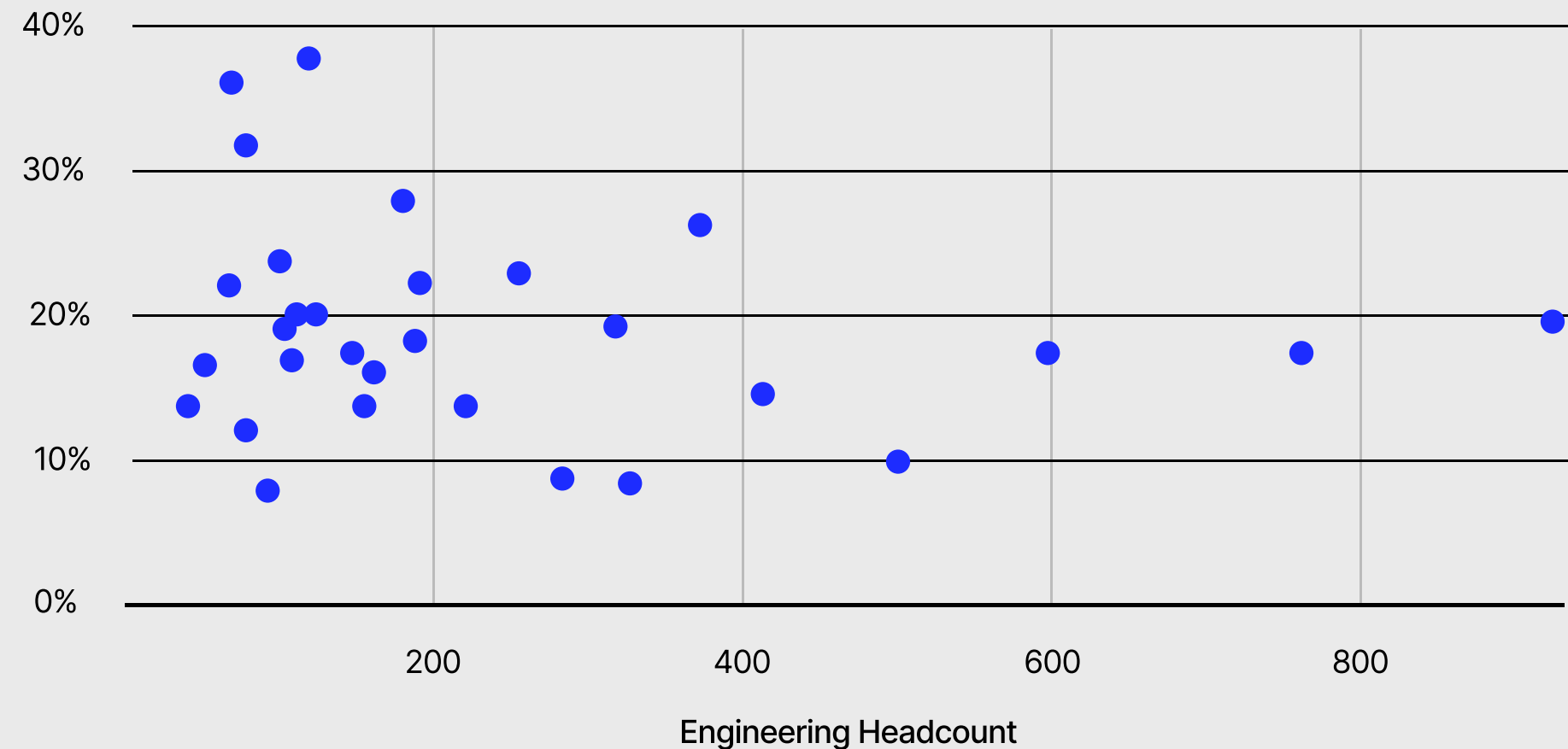
To tackle this, our team spent the past several months analyzing data from DX customers and non-customers who were willing to share information confidentially. For each company, we gathered their total engineering headcount, the headcount allocated towards centralized productivity teams, and the breakdown of what these types of teams are focused on.

This report shares what we found.

Note: The charts shown in this report show the average percentage of total engineering headcount allocated towards developer productivity teams.

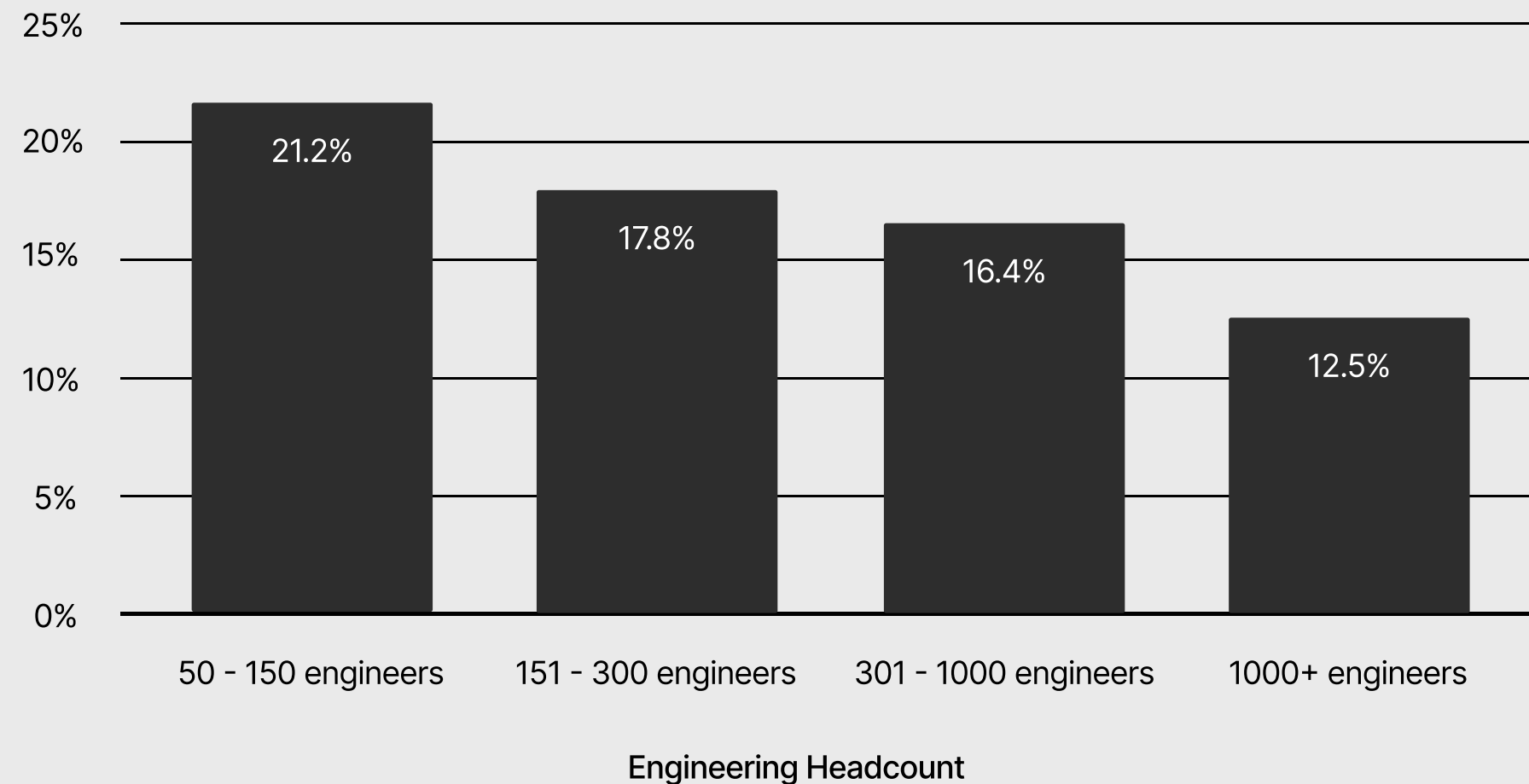
Companies with under 1,000 developers allocate an average 19% of total engineering headcount towards centralized developer productivity teams.

The median is 18.0%. Another way of looking at this: the average ratio of DevProd team members to total engineers is about 1:6.



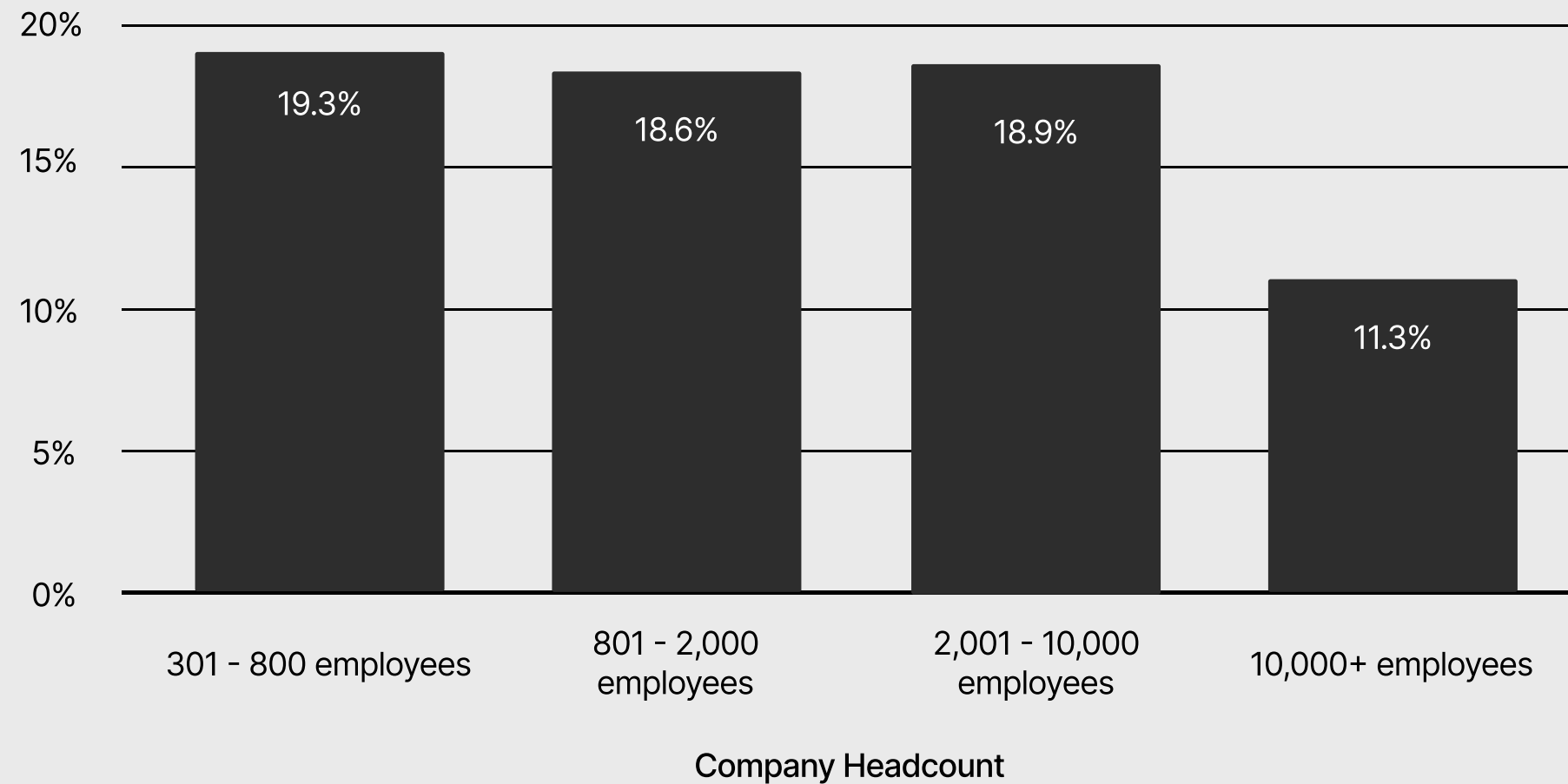
The average allocation decreases with larger engineering organizations.

There are several possible reasons for this, one of which being that as organizations grow, centralized efforts may be less effective than localized efforts to improve productivity. This report only captures the investment in *centralized* developer productivity teams, not the investment in all developer productivity work.

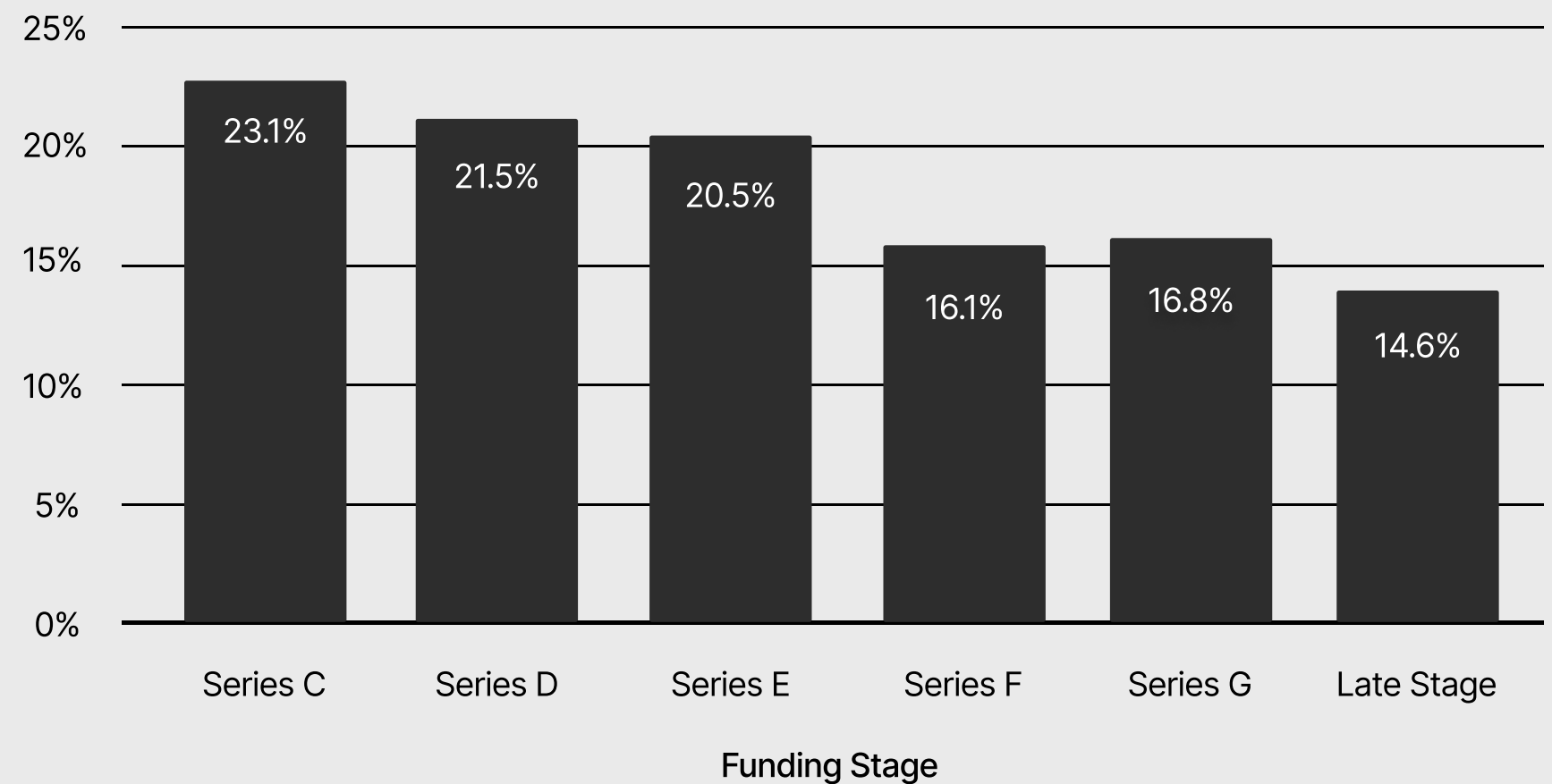


The average allocation appears to be more steady when comparing the data by company size. Larger companies invest a lower percentage.

Medians for this dataset: 301-800 employees = 17.8%.
801 - 2000 employees = 16.9%. 2001 - 10000 employees = 17.4%. 10k+ employees = 12%.



Series C - E companies allocate 21.7% of engineering headcount towards DevProd teams. Series F and after allocate an average 15.8%.



Common types of teams focused on developer productivity

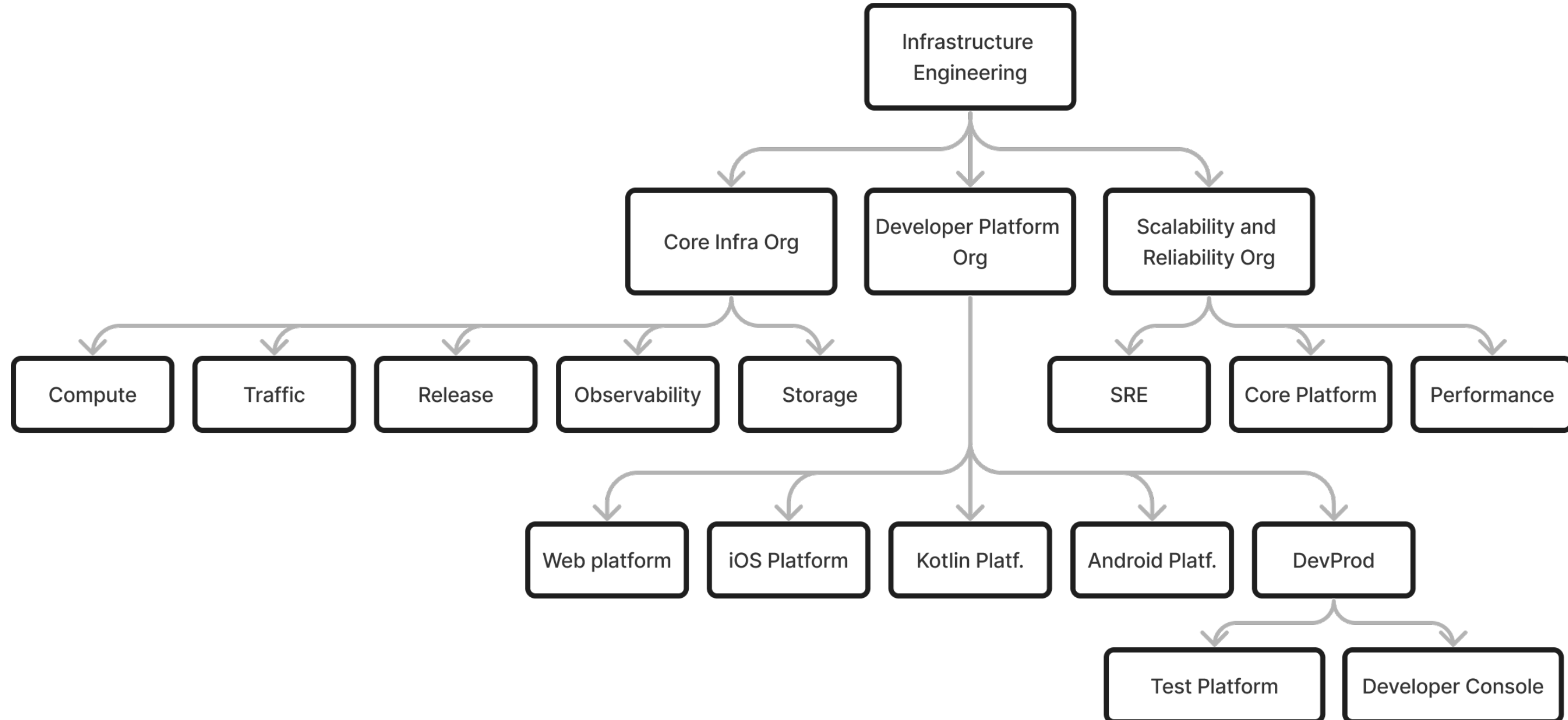
Category	Focus	Example team names
Developer Tools	Build/test/deploy tools	Developer Infrastructure, Developer Productivity, Developer Experience, Development Tools, Platform
Enablement	Codifying and supporting teams with continuous improvement	Broad focus: Developer Enablement, Developer Delivery Enablement, L&D
Frontend Platform	UI components, web frameworks, search	Frontend Platform, Frontend Tech
Backend Platform	Authentication, web gateway, APIs	
Infrastructure	Terraform, logging, Kubernetes, observability, cloud services	Infrastructure Services, Developer Services, Cloud Platform
Reliability	Incident management, SRE	SRE, Reliability, Resiliency, Incident Operations
Data	Data engineering, warehousing, access	DataOps, Data Platform

Platform Engineering Team Structures

Examples from 5 companies

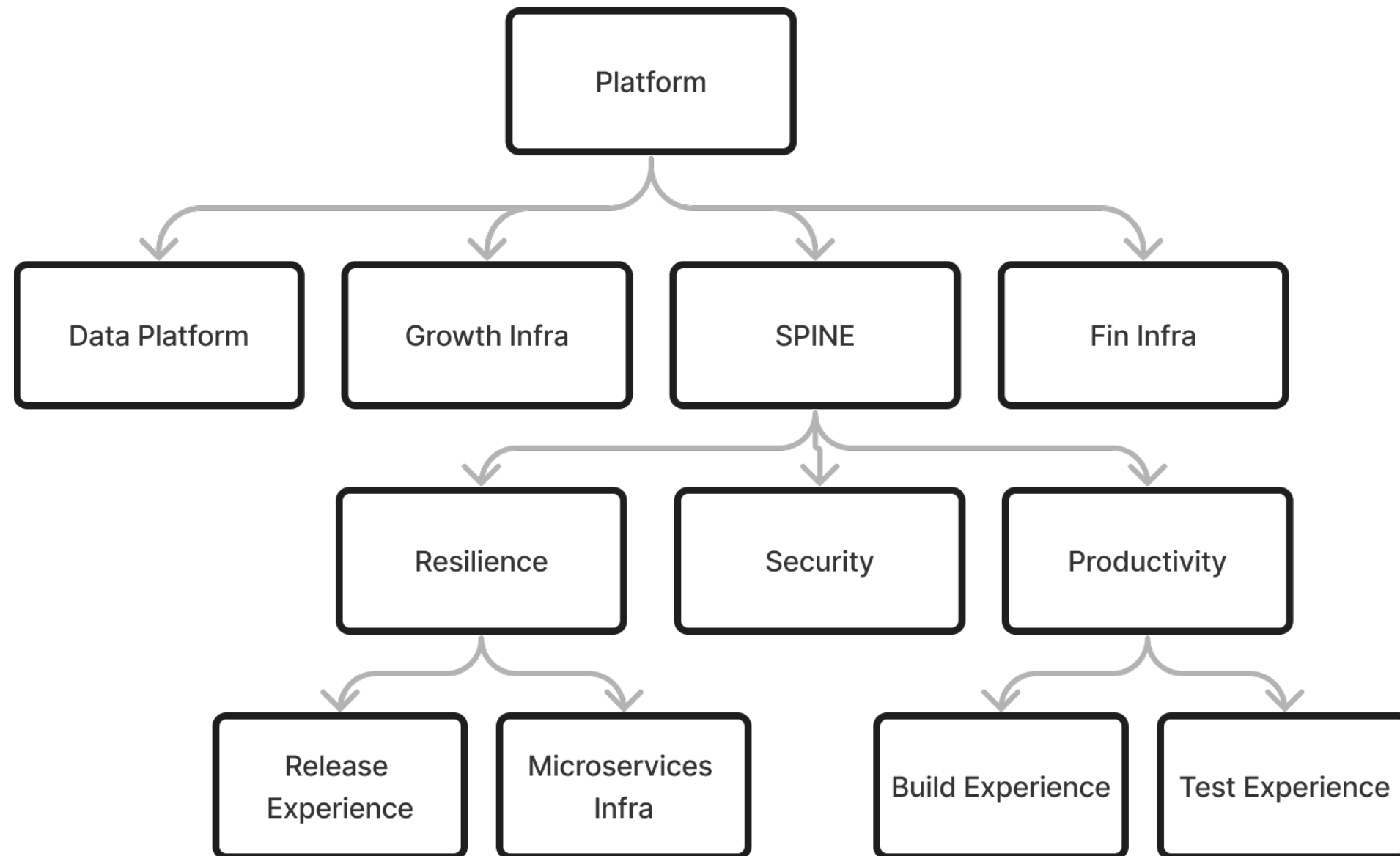
Infrastructure Engineering at DoorDash

~2,000 people in engineering



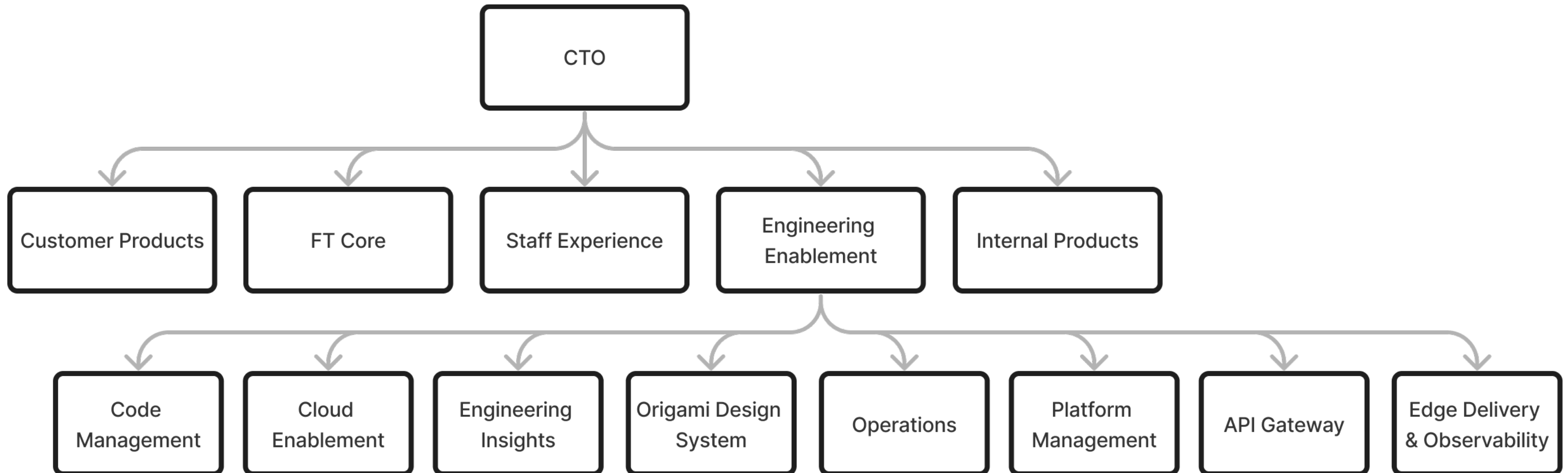
Platform Engineering at Razorpay

~3,000 employees, ~850 in engineering



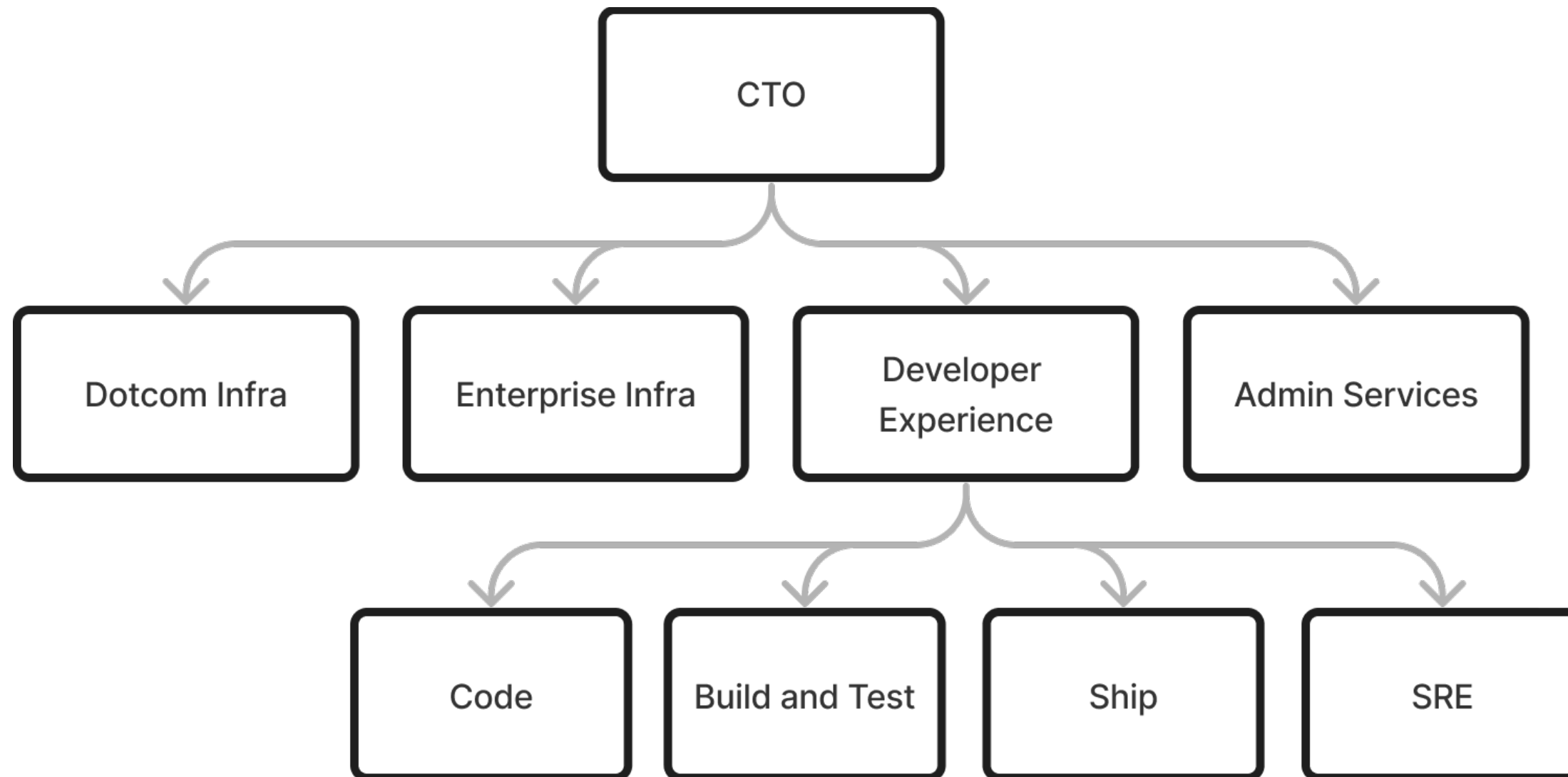
Engineering at Financial Times

~7,000 employees



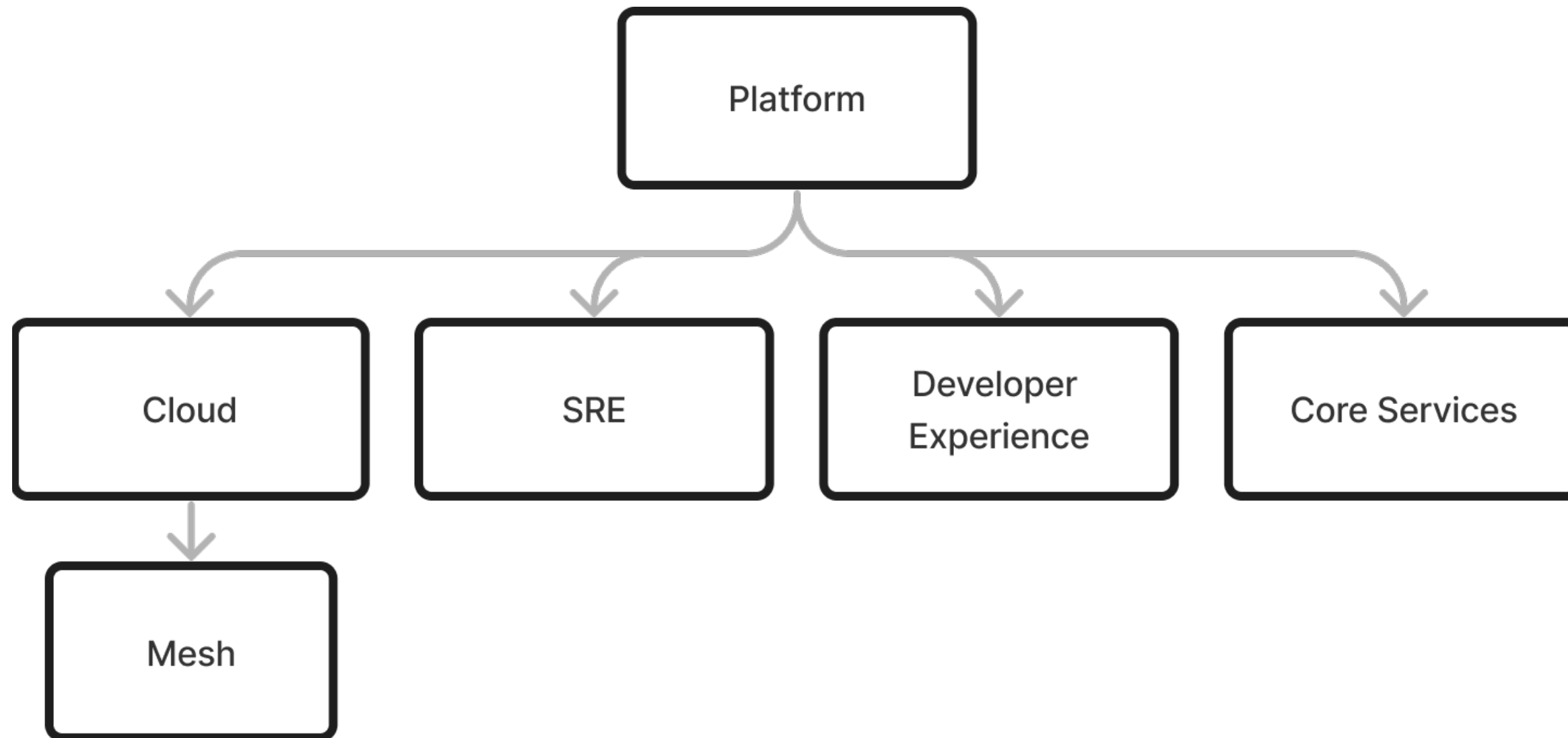
Platform Engineering at GitHub

~5,000 employees, ~2,000 in engineering



Platform Engineering at DAZN

~2,800 employees, ~500 in engineering



Resources

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2. How to use benchmarking data by Will Larson: <https://lethain.com/benchmarking/>