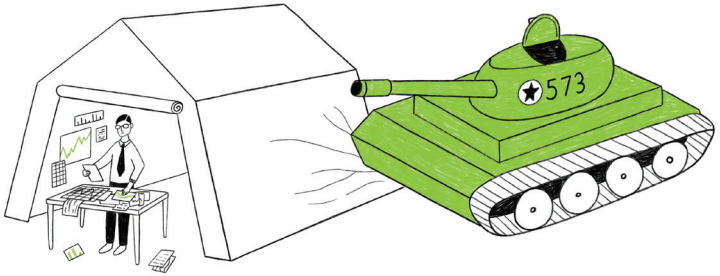


# MCNAMARA FALLACY



*Relying solely on metrics in complex situations can cause you to lose sight of the bigger picture.*



Named after Robert McNamara, the U.S. Secretary of Defense (1961-1968), who believed truth could only be found in data and statistical rigor. The fallacy refers to his approach of taking enemy body count as the measure of success in the Vietnam War. Obsessing over it meant that other relevant insights like U.S. body count, territorial gains, and the shifting mood of the general public were ignored. When analyzing complex phenomena, we're often forced to use a metric as proxy for success. However, dogmatically optimizing for this number and ignoring all other information is risky.



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