Week 1: People and processes

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Product vs Project management

What's the difference?

Product

What **outcome** are we trying to achieve?

- Is it the right thing?
- Do people want it?
- Will it meet business needs?
- Is it possible?

Project

What **deliverables** have been promised?

- Is it possible?
- Can we do it on time?
- Can we do it with these resources?

What's the difference?

Product

Find connections between **user and business** needs

Connect stakeholders and team members, manage their needs

Project

Schedule work to be done, **evaluate progress** against plan

Report on progress and set expectations

What's the difference?

Product

Translate needs into what to build

Manage the product, not the team

Choose and manage risk

Project

Keep the project on-budget and on-time

Monitor team doing the work

Communicate risks

Why products fail

Products fail when . . .

Product ideation, discovery and prioritization is driven by stakeholders

Products fail when . . .

Teams are not bought-in and aligned to 'why' a product is being built. Teams are told 'how' the product should be.

Products fail when . . .

Technology is viewed as a necessary evil - a source of fear rather than inspiration - leading to vast outsourcing

Products fail when . . .

Teams obsess over roadmaps and project plans - 'Plan, finalize and execute', rather than obsessing over solving for user needs and pains

Products fail when . . .

Teams communicate sparsely - project planning and weekly meetings, rather than frequent communication to foster transparency

Products fail when . . .

Teams strictly follow chain-of-command/processes. Teams don't have much say in what they are building and how or even when it is due.

Products fail when . . .

Measures of success is generally - 'delivering a product on time and under budget'. Worst yet, there are no measures of success defined

Products fail when . . .

Teams are aligned/siloed by function and only step into the process when required

Waterfall - Traditional way of building software

Planning

Requirement
Gathering

System
Design

Development

Testing

Deployment
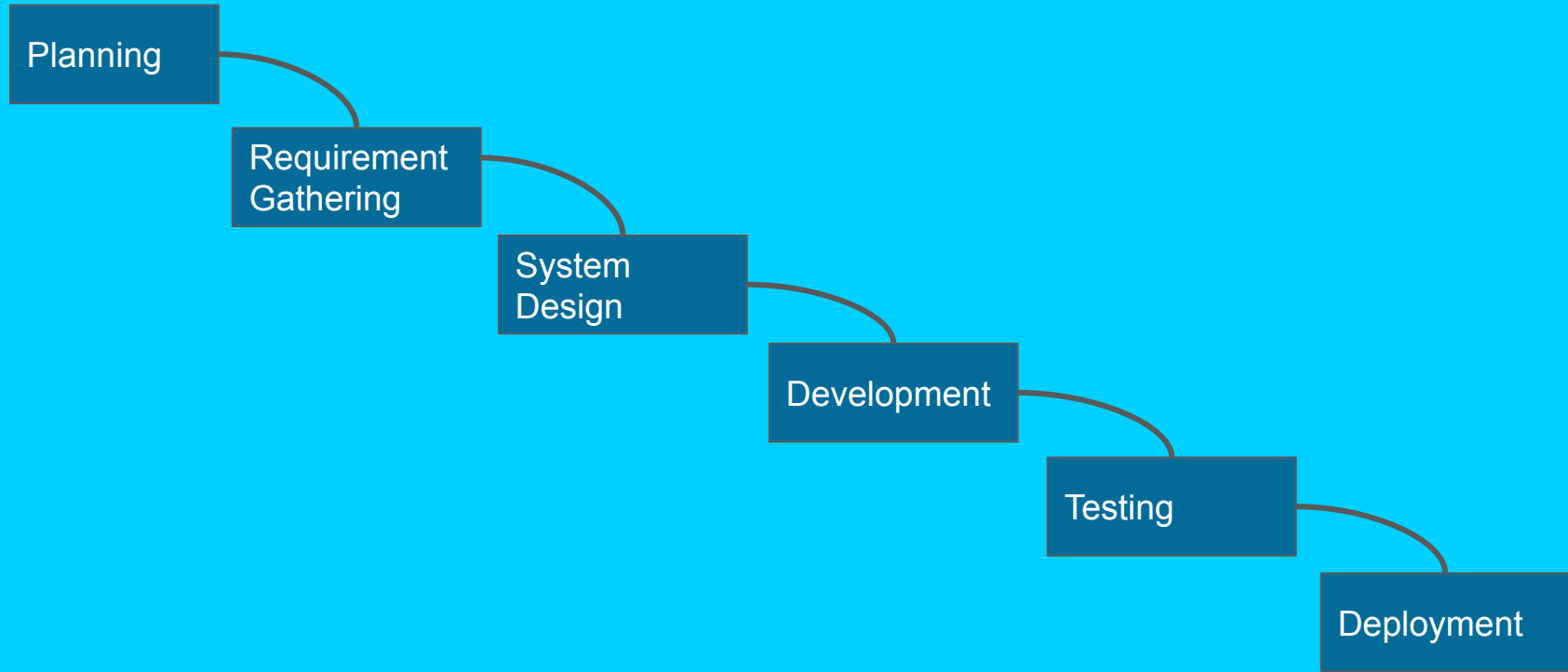
High performing teams

Traits of high performing product teams

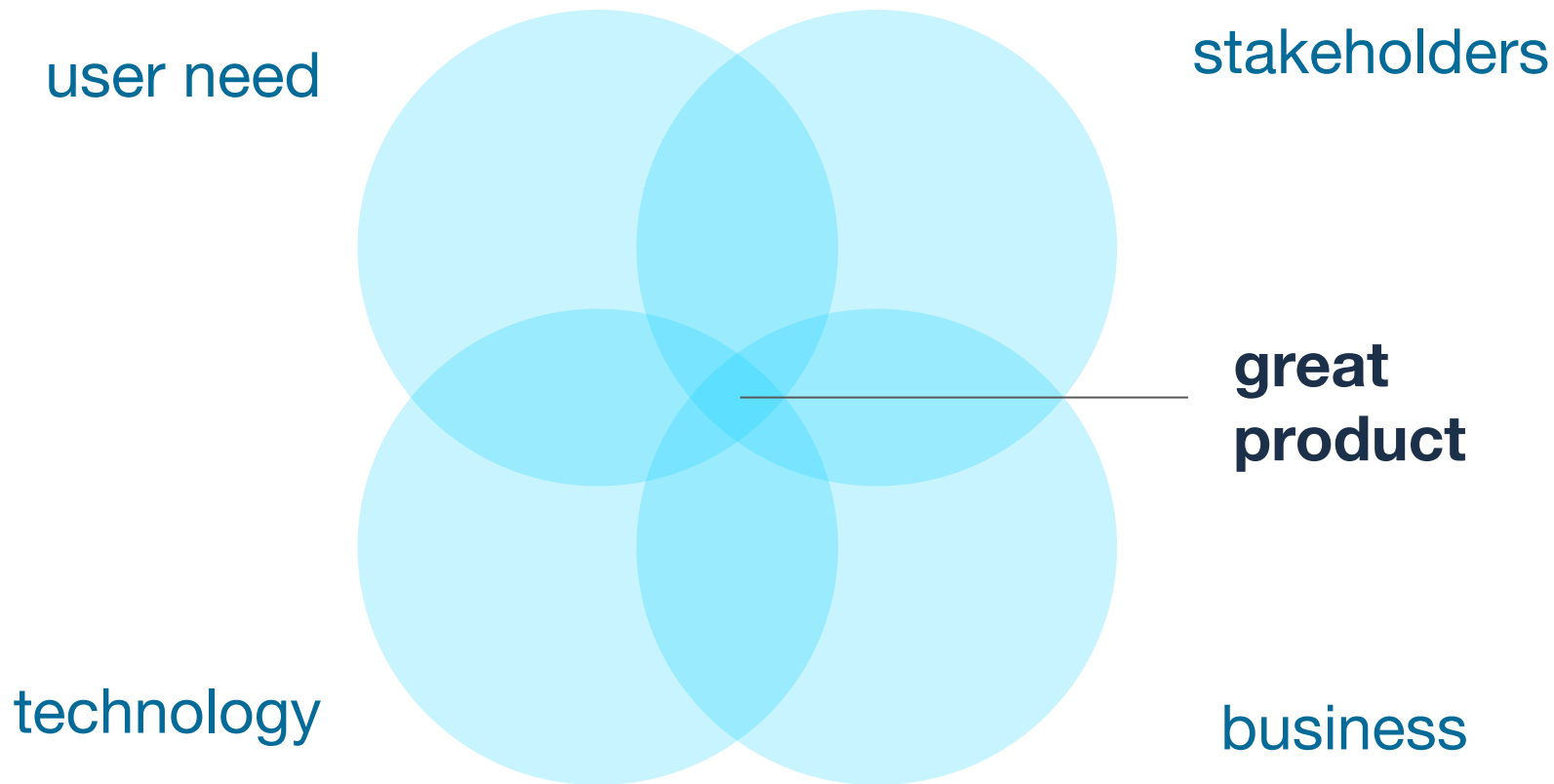| **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
User Centered	Transparent	Empowered	Shared Vision and Mission	Foster Open Communication

Product teams focus on balancing needs and delivering value

user need

stakeholders
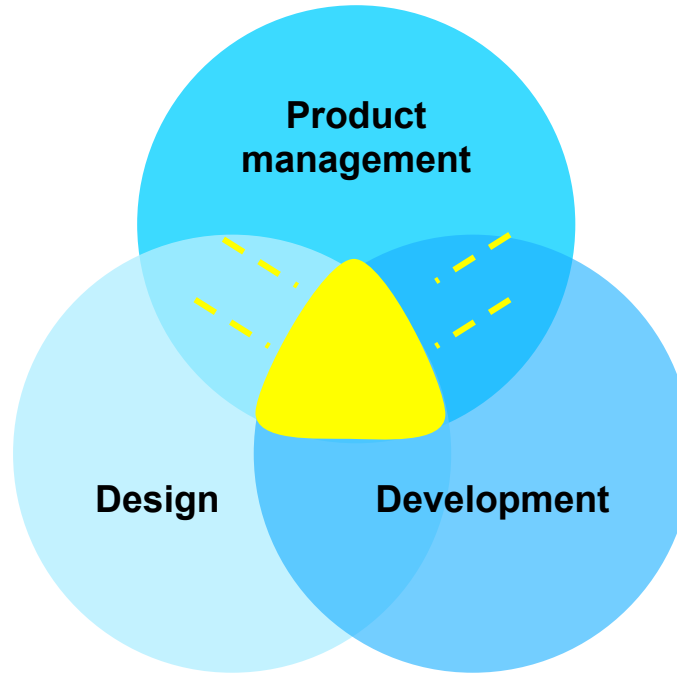
great product

technology

business

The Product Team is comprised of cross functional subject matter experts that help the Product Owner prioritize, and plan.

Integrated product team

Product management

- Requirement gathering
- High level communication
- Roadmapping
- Prioritization of tasks and issues
- Backlog management
- Stakeholder management

Design

- User experience (UX)
- Research
- Interaction design
- Visual design
- Content design
- Usability testing

Product management

Design

Development

Development

- Development
- Security
- Platform decisions
- Constraints
- Testing
- Devops

Product team is selected based on the skills needed to action based on the initiatives defined.

Product team and stakeholders collaborate on creating a shared vision.

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The Product team needs to have a deep understanding of the product goals, so they can work towards optimizing value delivery through process management

They self-organize, to get the work done for each sprint.

Product teams are empowered by their leadership to make decisions and deliver the best results both to their users and to the organization.

Product Owner

The Product Owner holds the vision, communicates it internally and externally, and directs the priorities of the Product Team.

Product owners are responsible for the strategy, roadmap, and feature definition of a product or product line.

Product owners are always focused on delivering the right solution (bought or built) for the right market/needs

Product owners actively access, manage and mitigate risks quickly so the team can progress in achieving the vision

Product owners can't afford to lose the big picture. They are the anchor to the mission, so that nobody gets lost in the details.

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2. What will our impact be?
3. **How are we doing it?**

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1. What is the problem we're solving? (and why does it matter)
2. What will our impact be?
3. How are we doing it?
4. Is our solution good?

Product teams have to be able to provide good answers to all these questions. When the answer is "we don't know", they need to have a good plan to get to an answer.

Product owners are not:

Project managers

Scrum masters

Agile coaches

Engagement managers

Designers

Researchers

Strategists

Coffee getters

Note takers

Developers

Data scientists

Security experts

Infrastructure experts

Marketers

PR people

Salespeople

The team's psychologist

The team's parent

Product owners are not project managers. Product owners focus on the vision, strategy and roadmap to achieve goals.

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Product owners are not project managers. Product owners focus on the vision, strategy and roadmap to achieve goals. **Project managers focus on logistics, planning, task and budget allocations.**

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Thank you!

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Appendix

Discuss

- Why do you think products fail?
- What would you say are a few reasons for products to not be adopted by users?

Discuss

- Why do you think the waterfall model is inefficient? What types of wastes are incurred in this method?
- If you could look back at past waterfall projects, what stood out as inefficiencies for your teams with this methodology?
- Where do ideas for new products or features come from in your teams?
- Which projects are a good fit for waterfall approach? When would waterfall development not be work well?

Discuss

- What changes do you need to bring about amongst your teams to foster product thinking?
- How will you ensure that your vendor is involved in delivering valuable products?

Suggested Reading/Viewing

- Good Product Manager/ Bad Product Manager
  https://a16z.com/2012/06/15/good-product-managerbad-product-manager/
- Product Ownership in a nutshell https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=502ILHjX9EE
- Product Management vs Project Management -
  https://www.toptal.com/insights/future-of-work/product-manager-vs-project-manager-understanding-core-similarities-and-differences