

# Product Management - Building a Product Roadmap

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## △ product roadmap

└→ a long-term development plan that gives product stakeholders the information they need to coordinate their planning

## △ why product roadmaps

└→ allow for planning & coordination of activities  
└→ provide predictability to the process

## △ product stakeholders

└→ customers  
└→ customer-facing groups  
└→ Investors, board, sponsors  
└→ architects, engineers, designers  
└→ human resources  
└→ legal

△ Having a product roadmap helps ensure that your product development efforts are aligned as closely as possible with your strategy

⚠ Product roadmap format is less important than key stakeholder support

⚠ Product backlog is prioritized queue of the next most important product development tasks

⚠ Your stakeholders are interested in knowing when milestones will be available to customers

⚠ You need a product backlog AND a product roadmap

⚠ The product roadmap only contains new functionalities

⚠ Don't plan development far into the future

⚠ How do you know if your product is mature enough to build a product roadmap

└→ your product achieved product market fit  
└→ strategy is based on market & customer knowledge

⚠ How do you know if you have PMF

└→ active and engaged customers

⚠ A product roadmap has no value if stakeholders aren't aligned in advance

## ⚠ product development purpose

- serve the business
- support overall strategy
- win customer adoption
- generate revenue

## ⚠ How to create alignment

- include stakeholders early
- ask for and address feedback
- send updates

## ⚠ Successful product roadmaps

- sound strategy
- realistic
- fully supported

## ⚠ leaders often use their intuition and persuasion to build a product roadmap

- Intuition can be faulty
- when there is no alignment, there can be a lack of support

⚠ How to handle this (↑) situation

- ↳ spend time with leaders at the beginning of the process
- ↳ ask for underlying thoughts
- ↳ explain the importance of including others
- ↳ estimate development time

⚠ Important stakeholders

- ↳ business leader (CEO, general manager, ...)
- ↳ Sales leader (VP of sale, ...)
- ↳ Product development leader (CTO, ...)
- ↳ Product leader

⚠ customer knowledge is the primary currency of a product manager

⚠ Questions need to answer to build a great RM

- ↳ what decisions do your customers need to make?
- ↳ what problems are they trying to solve?
- ↳ what other options are available to them?

## △ How to do customer research

- ↳ initiate a research group
- ↳ ask your customers yourself
- ↳ participate in sales or customer service meetings

## △ Questions to ask from Customer

- ↳ why did they decide to try your product?
- ↳ what were their other options?
- ↳ Do they plan to continue with your product?
- ↳ what changes would they make?

## △ Questions to ask to know about a product/business

- ↳ who are the client's customers?
- ↳ what are their needs?
- ↳ what features does product have currently?
- ↳ How well does product meet customer's needs?
- ↳ what are the competing products on the market?
- ↳ what functionality do they have?

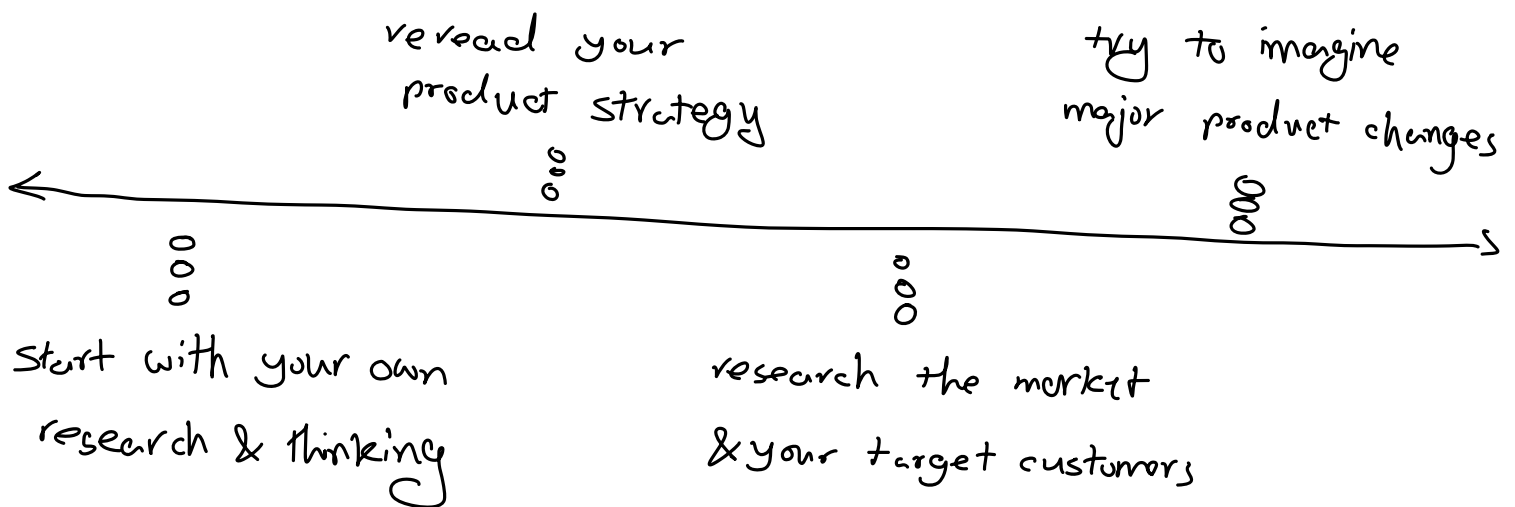
## △ Product strategy

- ↳ describes how the company will achieve its business goals with its product

## ⚠ product strategy questions

- what are your goals?
- How will you measure success?
- who are your target customers?
- what customer needs are you trying to meet?
- what benefit do you provide to customers?
- who are your competitors and what differentiates you?

## ⚠ product milestones



## ⚠ How to estimate levels of effort

- estimate the development capacity of your team
- estimate the development time for each milestone

## △ How to make first draft of product RM

- sequence your milestones
- schedule milestones

## △ product roadmap sanity check (first draft)

- Does it implement your product strategy?
- Is it feasible from a development resource perspective?

## △ Product roadmap meeting

- explain the goal
- quickly review your product strategy
- review the development capacity of your team
- walk through your product roadmap strawman
- Ask the team what they wish was different
- Modify the roadmap directly
- show the team the tradeoffs
- Think about future success
- Align the team with the decision

△ update your roadmap when you've learned something new

↳ what is new information

- ↳ customer needs or desires
- ↳ competitor information
- ↳ development time or cost