

# Product Management Fundamentals

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## ⚠ Product Management in Theory

- Prescriptive frameworks & ironclad "Best Practices"
- Building Products People Love
- An intricate chess game

## ⚠ Product Management in practice

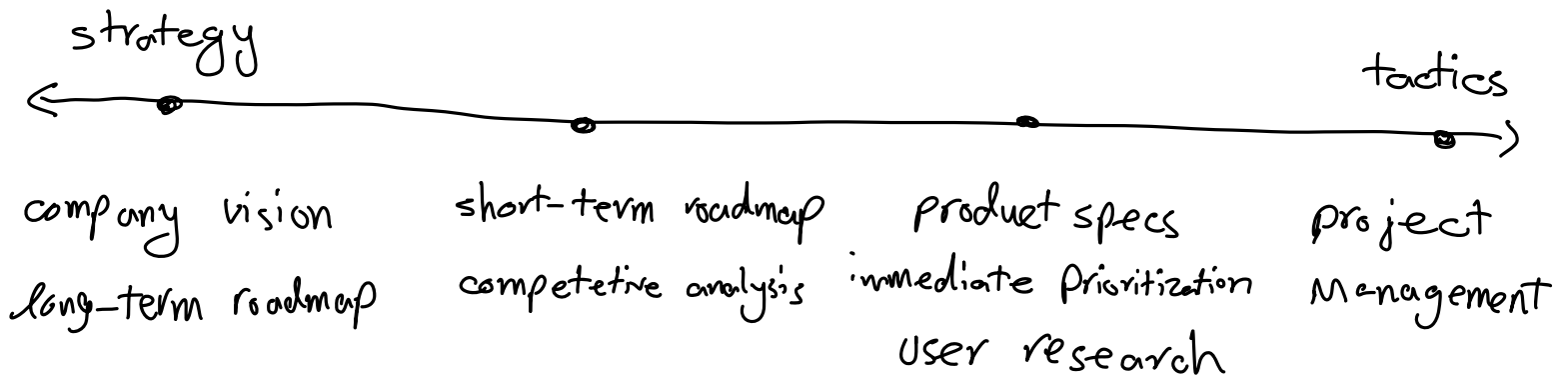
- Hard-won battles for incremental gains
- 100 simultaneous games for checkers

## ⚠ The role and day-to-day responsibilities of products management vary enormously from organization to organization

## ⚠ when you are a product manager

- you are connector and aligner
- you have lots of responsibilities, but very little authority
- Nobody is telling you exactly what you are supposed to do

△ The work of a PM tends to fall on a spectrum from strategy to tactics



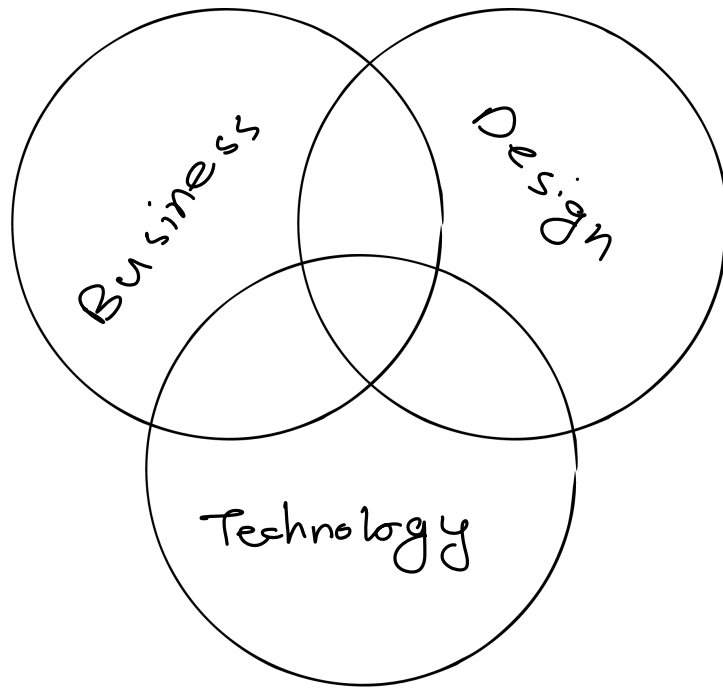
△ As a PM, you can expect to spend a lot of time talking with people

△ Beyond that, your day-to-day responsibilities will vary a lot based on what your organization needs at the moment

△ Great PMs are people who have learned how to

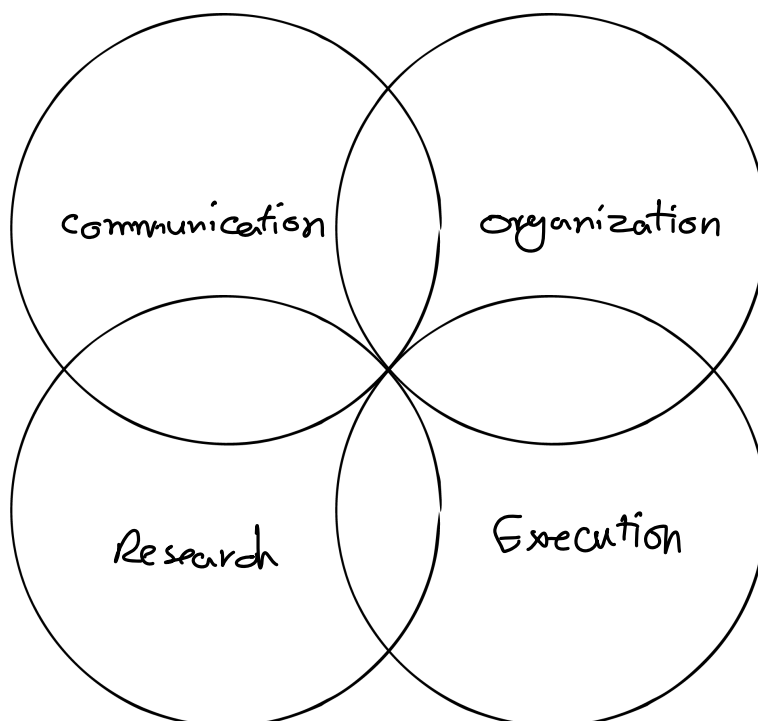
- Make Connections
- challenge assumptions
- Be curious about new things

⚠ Product Management venn diagram in theory



⚠ Those skills are required to connect and align between developers & designers

⚠ Product management venn diagram in practice



⚠ The first core skill of a PM is communication

⚠ Communication: Clarity over comfort

⚠ Good PMs err on the side of clarity vs. explaining the obvious. Bad PMs never explain the obvious

⚠ Communication means reaching out to people before you need something from them

⚠ Organization: change the rules, don't break the rules

⚠ Research: just another name for critical thinking

⚠ If you're making decisions based entirely on internal politics, then you're not living in your customer's reality

doesn't mean { you can insulate your team from organizational politics  
it means { you need to use insights about your customer to resolve political disagreements

⚠ Focusing on "best practices" can lead to an incurious mindset

⚠️ "Best Practices" often focus on operational stories, not stories of customer value

⚠️ Magical thinking around "best practices" inevitably leads to sadness and disappointment

⚠️ The Best Thing about "Best Practices"

↳ Because so many "best practices" have the halo of a well-respected organization around them, it's often easier to get people to at least try them

⚠️ Agile Manifesto

↳ individuals & interactions over processes and tools  
↳ working software over comprehensive documentation  
↳ customer collaboration over contract negotiation  
↳ responding to change over following a plan

⚠️ For every Agile practice, you must know

↳ what's the goal of this practice?  
↳ what are potential downsides?  
↳ How do you know if this practice is achieving its intended goals?

⚠ The product manager ~~controls~~ the roadmap  
might manage and influence

⚠ 1 step to managing roadmaps

↳ Make sure everybody in your organization understands & agrees about how roadmaps are being used

⚠ 1 step to influencing roadmaps

↳ let other people have all the good ideas

⚠ Prioritization tends to be a microcosm of how your organization functions generally

⚠ As a rule, the prioritization process will be as clear and straightforward as the goals you are using to prioritize

⚠ Goals need to be clearly stated, finite, actionable, and systematized

⚠ One approach, "SMART goals"



△ Another approach, OKRs

↳ High-level Qualitative Objective

↳ specific, quantitative key result  
↳ specific, quantitative key result  
↳ specific, quantitative key result

△ Part of your job as a product manager is to push relentlessly for clarity around goals

△ Who is a successful product manager?

↳ If your team is working well together, and is aligned around both the needs of your customer and the goals of your business, then you are succeeding