

Product Craft



Q Today's Agenda

1 Introduction & Framing

2 Product Discovery

3 Product Solutioning

4 Planning & Execution

Section 1

Introduction

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Currently, Country Manager for Riot Games, India & South Asia. Previously, Director of Product for Android & Play Store at Google, and Partner Director of Product for Microsoft Teams, Microsoft 365 Platform, Sovereign Clouds, and Emerging Markets at Microsoft.

Love teaching & coaching product teams.

Q Your facilitator

Arun

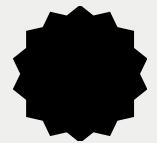


GAMES, AI, TECH

Building great products is tough



Where should
we start?!



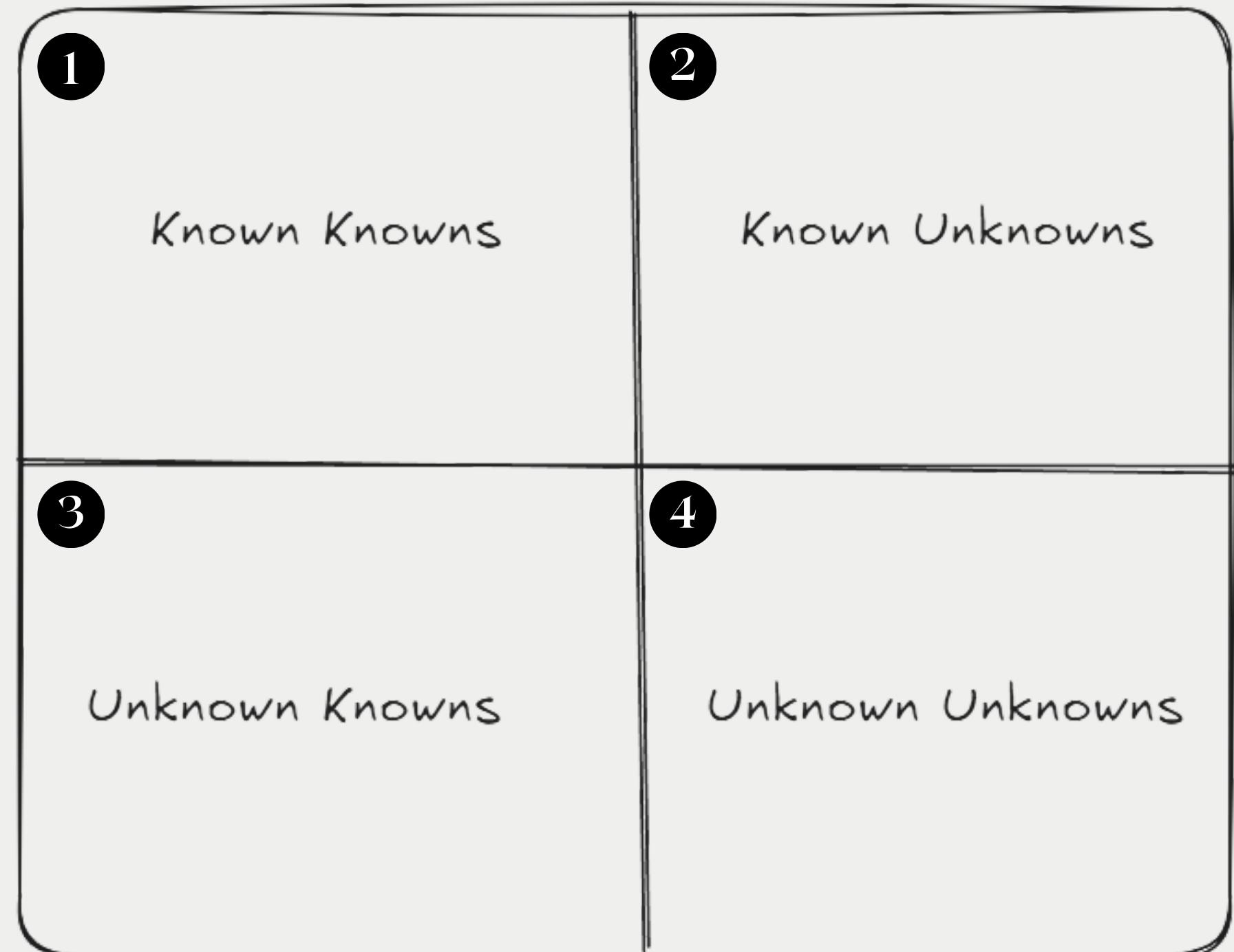
**"In the expert's mind there
are few possibilities, in the
beginner's mind there are
many"**

Shunryu Suzuki

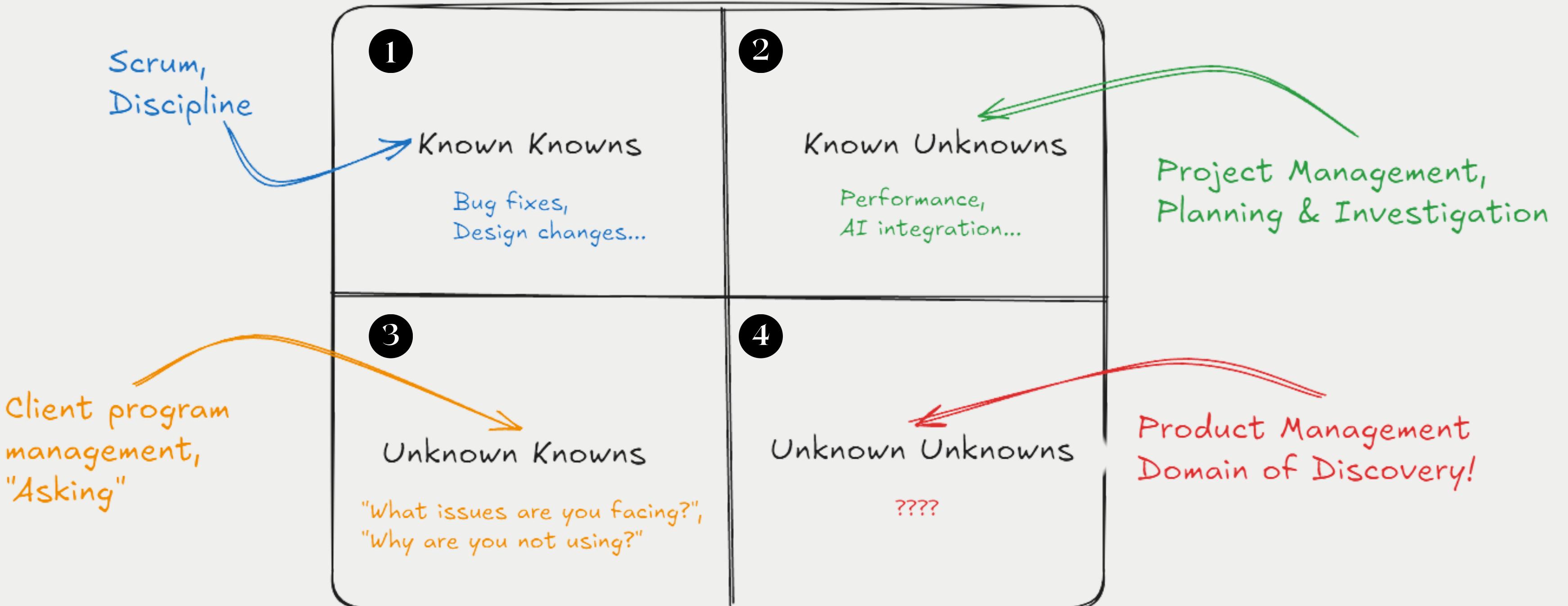
Learn-it-all, not know-it-all,
Growth mindset (Satya)

Domain of knowledge

Let us quickly examine this familiar model in the context of building products...



Welcome to the **unknown...**



Section 2

Product Discovery

The most important part of building new products is the discovery phase. This requires a mindset of inquiry & curiosity.

It requires listening to customers – and going beyond to uncovering their true & unstated needs.

1

Background of Relatedness

Understanding our enterprise users...



2

Identifying Possibilities

What do our users really need?



3

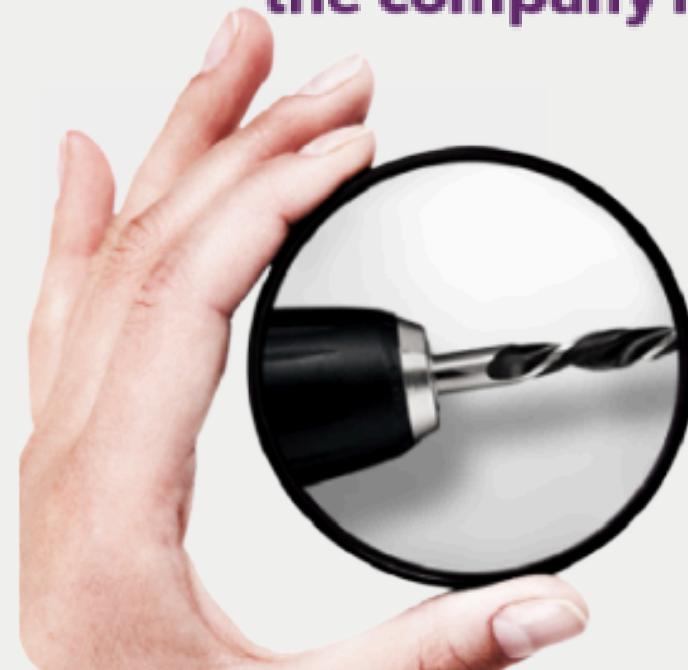
Identify a Single Opportunity: The Job

Strong user need + Business value



Jobs to be done (JTBD)

Instead of seeing the world
through the lens of **what**
the company is doing...



See the world of innovation
through the lens of **what**
the customer is trying to
get done.



Let's
begin!

Workshop activity 1

Who are the users for PlanSmart?
Where are some of the key jobs?

The image displays two screenshots of the PlanSmart software interface.

Top Screenshot: Shows the 'Target planning' screen. The title bar reads 'IMPACT ANALYTICS | PlanSmart'. The main area shows a table titled 'Plans lists' with columns: Plan system name, User plan name, Created by, Created on, Start year, Start month, End year, End month, Last updated by, and Last updated at. The table contains 10 rows, all labeled 'DECOR_SPRING_2024' under 'Plan system name' and 'Plan_01' through 'Plan_05' under 'User plan name'. All entries were created by 'John' on '05/29/2023' and span the period from '2023 March' to '2023 March'.

Plan system name	User plan name	Created by	Created on	Start year	Start month	End year	End month	Last updated by	Last updated at
DECOR_SPRING_2024	Plan_01	John	05/29/2023	2023	March	2023	March	John	05/29/2023
DECOR_SPRING_2024	Plan_02	John	05/29/2023	2023	March	2023	March	John	05/29/2023
DECOR_SPRING_2024	Plan_03	John	05/29/2023	2023	March	2023	March	John	05/29/2023
DECOR_SPRING_2024	Plan_04	John	05/29/2023	2023	March	2023	March	John	05/29/2023
DECOR_SPRING_2024	Plan_05	John	05/29/2023	2023	March	2023	March	John	05/29/2023
DECOR_SPRING_2024	Plan_05	John	05/29/2023	2023	March	2023	March	John	05/29/2023
DECOR_SPRING_2024	Plan_05	John	05/29/2023	2023	March	2023	March	John	05/29/2023
DECOR_SPRING_2024	Plan_05	John	05/29/2023	2023	March	2023	March	John	05/29/2023
DECOR_SPRING_2024	Plan_05	John	05/29/2023	2023	March	2023	March	John	05/29/2023

Bottom Screenshot: Shows the 'Preseason Planning' screen with a 'Pre-Season Dashboard'. The dashboard includes tabs for 'Active Plan' (selected) and 'Scenario Plan'. Below is a 'Active Plans List' table with columns: Plan Name, Created By, Created On, Plan Version, Department, Plan Type, and Status. The table lists several plans: 'B&M_Outdoor_Spring_2023 New' (Nischay, 25-06-2022, Working Plan, Outdoor, Top-Down, Spring), 'B&M_Bedroom_Spring_2023' (John, 14-06-2022, Scenario Plan, Bedroom, Top-Down, Spring), 'Ecom_Outdoor_Spring_2023' (Adarsh, 19-06-2022, Working Plan, Outdoor, Bottom-Up, Spring), 'B&M_Outdoor_Summer_2023' (Kathy, 05-06-2022, Working Plan, Outdoor, Top-Down, Summer), and 'Ecom_Bedroom_Summer_2023' (Nischay, 25-06-2022, Scenario Plan, Bedroom, Bottom-Up, Summer).

Plan Name	Created By	Created On	Plan Version	Department	Plan Type	Status
B&M_Outdoor_Spring_2023 New	Nischay	25-06-2022	Working Plan	Outdoor	Top-Down	Spring
B&M_Bedroom_Spring_2023	John	14-06-2022	Scenario Plan	Bedroom	Top-Down	Spring
Ecom_Outdoor_Spring_2023	Adarsh	19-06-2022	Working Plan	Outdoor	Bottom-Up	Spring
B&M_Outdoor_Summer_2023	Kathy	05-06-2022	Working Plan	Outdoor	Top-Down	Summer
Ecom_Bedroom_Summer_2023	Nischay	25-06-2022	Scenario Plan	Bedroom	Bottom-Up	Summer

A modal dialog box titled 'Create New Plan' is open on the right, containing fields for 'Year*', 'Quarter*', 'Selling Period*', 'Business Unit*', 'Group*', 'Customer*', 'Department*', 'Class*', 'Line*', 'Plan Stage*', and 'User Plan Name'. There are 'Cancel' and 'Generate Plan' buttons at the bottom of the dialog.

Enterprise SaaS Users

Understanding the different users we serve, and what they value and what is important to them is a key part of discovery.

- 1 **Executive Buyer**, e.g. CFO
“Prove ROI to the exec team”
- 2 **Internal IT**, e.g. CISO, CIO
“Is it secure? Does it integrate?”
- 3 **Champion**, e.g. Supply Chain Mgr
“Does this drive innovation? Is there real-time inventory tracking?”
- 4 **End user**: e.g. Merchandise Planner
“How do I create a plan?”,
“What does line mean? What does stage mean?”



Interviewing users to identify the jobs

1

Trigger Moment (Context)

Understand what kicked off the need
“What made you realize that your current approach wasn’t working?”

2

Motivation (Why now?)

Understand urgency & intent
“What are you hoping will happen if you solve this?”

3

Actions Taken (Struggles & Solution)

See how they looked for solutions
“What did you try first? What did you like or dislike about it?”

4

Desired Outcome (What is success?)

Both functional and emotional
“What does success look like to you? How will you feel once it is solved?”

Example for PlanSmart

“Can you walk me through the last time you had to create a seasonal merchandise plan? What tools did you use, and what made that process challenging?”

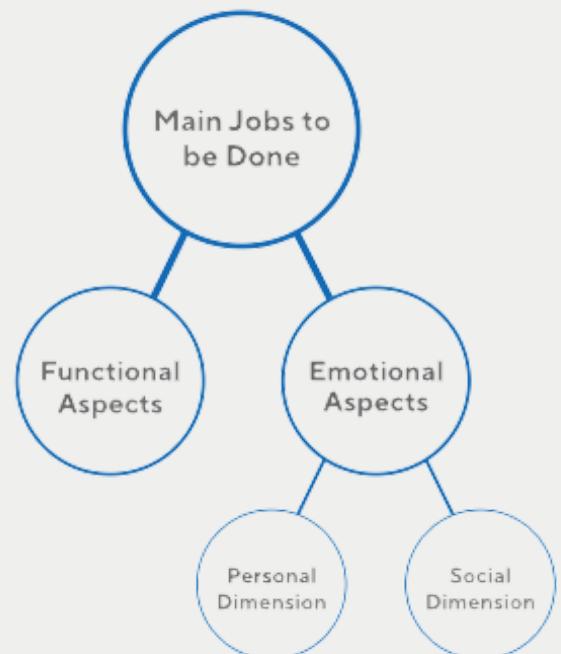
Dont ask
“What do you want?”
...Too client focused

Do ask...
“Tell me about the last time...” (reveals context)
Also, go deep on emotion

Follow the path
Trigger → Struggle → Search → Solution → Outcome

A template for jobs

Use either of these templates to capture the main and related jobs for your users



JTBD template 1

“When I [situation],
I want to [motivation],
so I can [expected outcome].”

Example

When I'm setting quarterly budgets for merchandise,
I want to adjust forecasts based on real-time trends,
so I can reduce markdowns and hit sales targets.

JTBD template 2

Action verb → Object of action → Clarifier

Example

Align merchandise financial plans with sales forecasts and
company targets across departments

Workshop activity 2

Let us discuss... What are some of the key jobs that you see for Impact Analytics customers...

Q Job 1

Type your thought here.

Type your thought here.

Type your thought here.

Q Job 2

Type your thought here.

Type your thought here.

Type your thought here.

Q Job 3

Type your thought here.

Type your thought here.

Type your thought here.

Q Job 4

Type your thought here.

Type your thought here.

Type your thought here.

Job laddering

Finding the right level of job can be tough, and requires skill...

"I really like the song"

"Curious about what song that is"

"Identify the music that is playing in the background" (Spotify)

"Maybe I can search for it with audio?"

"There should be a search button in Spotify"



More abstract, by asking "Why? Why?"



Right level!



More specific, by asking "How? How?"



Section 3

Product Solutioning

Solutioning is fun! It requires translating the job “opportunity” into a real-world solution for users. This is a collaborative, cross-functional effort, which concludes with a prototype of the solution that users and other stakeholders can approve...

1

User Journey Mapping

What is the user journey for the job



2

“How might we?”

Brainstorming on solutioning...



3

Prioritize a solution & Figma prototype

This is the “golden path”!



Journey map

An example journey map for a Spotify user... for the job, "Identify the music playing in the background"

Stage	Action	Thought	Emotion	Pain Point	Spotify opportunity
Discovery	Listens to a new song in a cafe	"Oh, what is that song?"	Curious	Dont know what the song is...	Song discovery like Shazam or Google
Search	Opens Spotify and clicks "Find" icon	"Will this find the song...?"	Eager	Not sure the first time	One-click search and find; freemium for Spotify
Listen	Plays the song on Spotify	"Finally, I can listen to this!"	Satisfied	May not find the right version	Catalog depth
Favorite	Adds to liked songs	"I can hear this whenever!"	Happy	Managing playlists	Make it easier to manage liked songs...

Workshop activity 3

What is the user journey map for a key job for PlanSmart (or for your product?)

Stage	Action	Thought	Emotion	Pain Point	Impact Analytics opportunity

Brainstorming solutions



Brainstorm area

"How might we?"
Brainstorming on solutioning...

Solution ideas...
"Can we try..."

Our favorite ideas

How might we help the user find a song they want?

How might we create the right search algorithm for the user to find the song?

How might we help the user manage their favourited songs?

How might we enable this functionality with minimum work?

Can we have partnerships with Shazam to enable this functionality?

Can we try semantic voice based search algorithms?

Can we implement a playlists feature...

How might we enable this functionality with minimum work?

Can we have partnerships with Shazam to enable this functionality?

Golden path

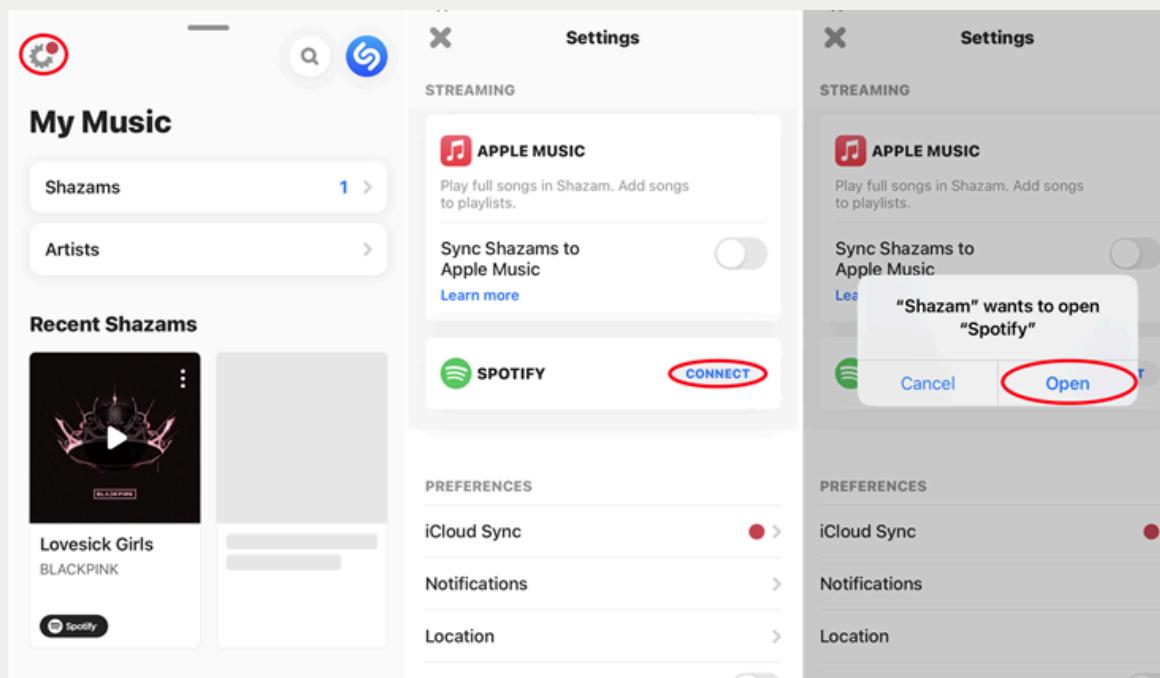
How might we enable this functionality with minimum work?

Can we have partnerships with Shazam to enable this functionality?

1. Based on the brainstorming, we came up with many solutions
2. We prioritized the solution of partnership with Shazam to enable this job
3. Based on this solution (“golden path”), we sketched out the Figma prototype

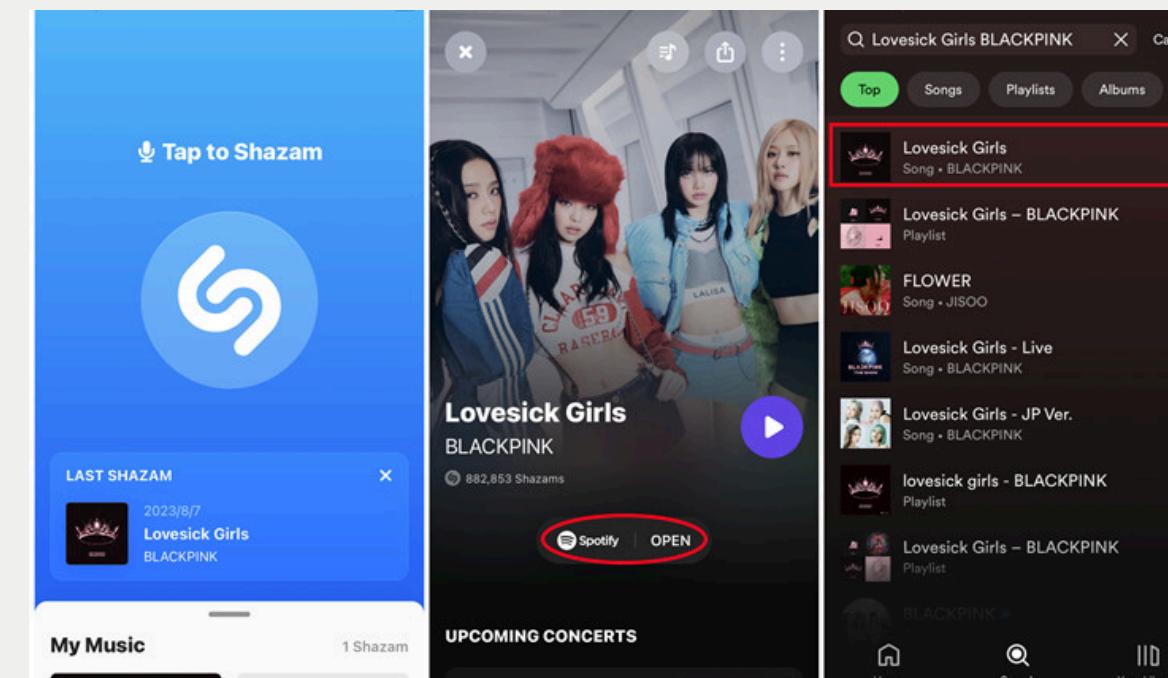
1

Connect from Shazam to Spotify



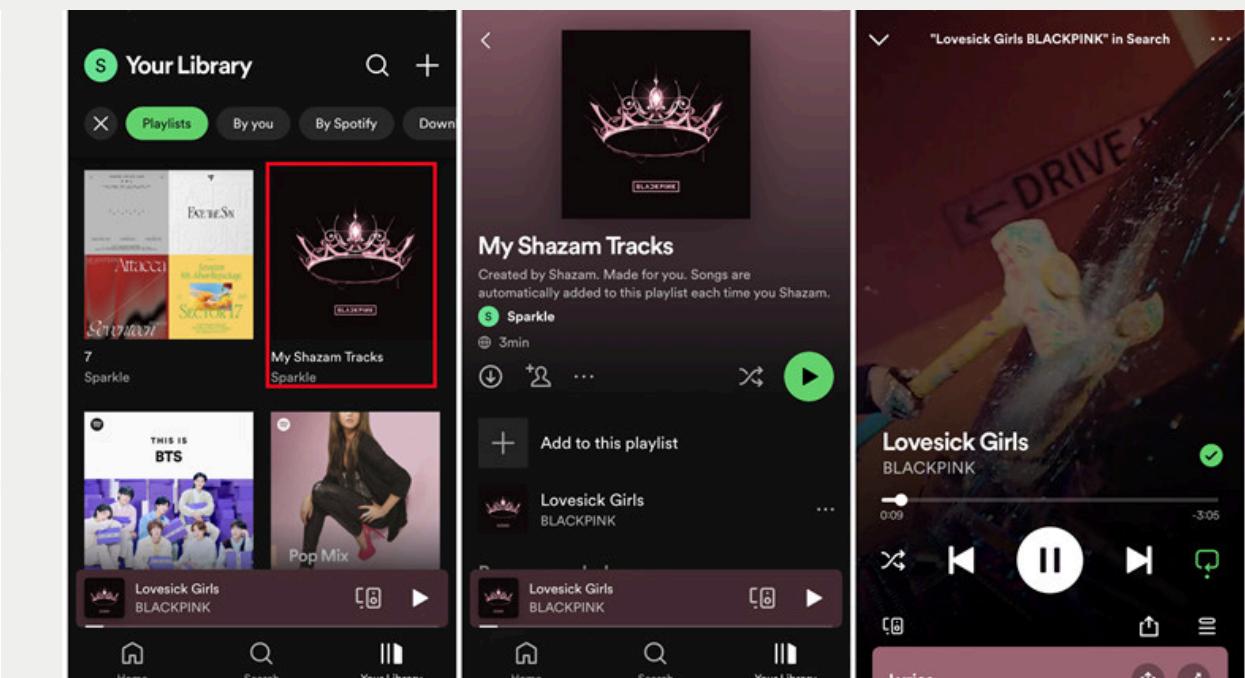
2

Add from Shazam to Spotify



3

Find Shazam tracks in Spotify & play



Before section 4

Check your solution! Does the user journey you have prototyped...

- Meet the needs of the user?
- Solve the job requirement?

Will the user hire your solution for their job?

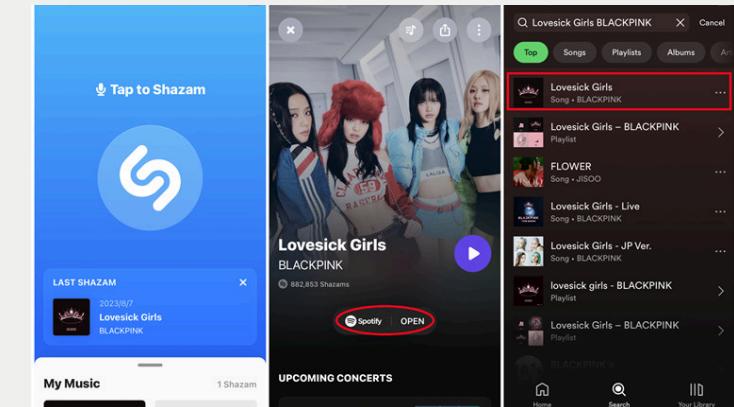
And, from the business side...

- Does it make business sense?
- Do we have the right metrics in place?
- Can it be implemented?

1

Demo & review the golden path...

Demo the Figma prototype before you start coding: with users, with stakeholders, with execs.



2

Define success metrics

Metrics for the golden path are important

BUSINESS METRICS

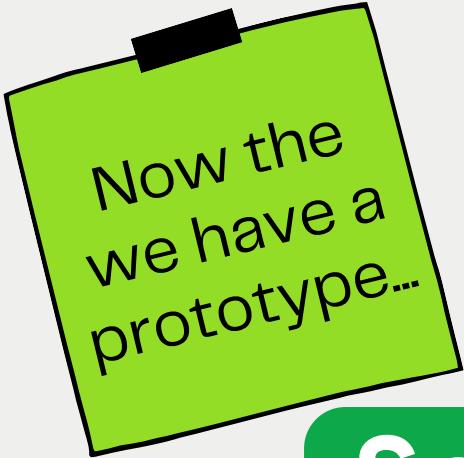
Usage metrics *quality metrics*

3

Write a service, integration & data blueprint...

Partner with engineering & data science





Section 4

Planning & Execution

Now, it is time to build... but wait!

- 1.Create a PRD to align stakeholders before starting;
- 2.Create epics & user stories to build in phases;
- 3.Add these to a backlog and prioritize!

1

Summarize the design in a PRD

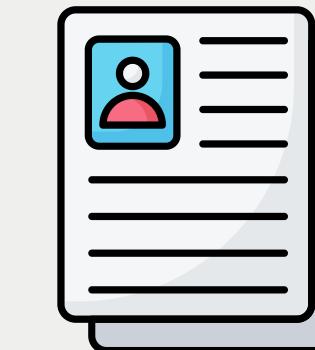
Big picture, Goal, Metrics, "Why, what, who"



2

Create epics & user stories

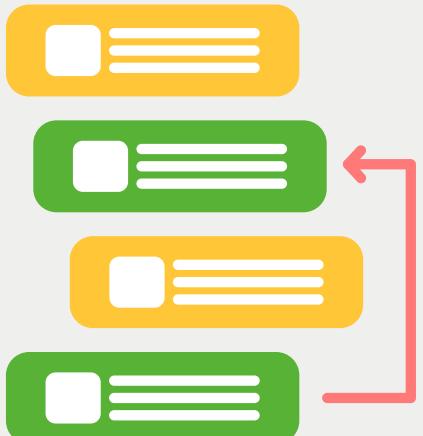
Break the job into "chunks" for execution



3

Create a backlog & prioritize...

Add the stories to a backlog, and "groom" the backlog through a prioritization framework...



PRD Template

A good PRD creates clarity, and aligns all internal stakeholders.

It captures what problems we are solving, why now, what success looks like for the user and the business, shows metrics to measure.

It motivates why this problem is important to the user with the JTBD;

Shows the ideal solution through user journeys;

And showcases this through Figma Prototypes.

It also captures key dependencies, risks, and has a timeline for when this can be delivered by.

Title

Author: Arun Rajappa, Date: 18.05.25, Status: Draft

1. Exec Summary

2. Context & Background

3. Users & Jobs to Be Done

4. Goals & Success Metrics

5. Golden path scenario

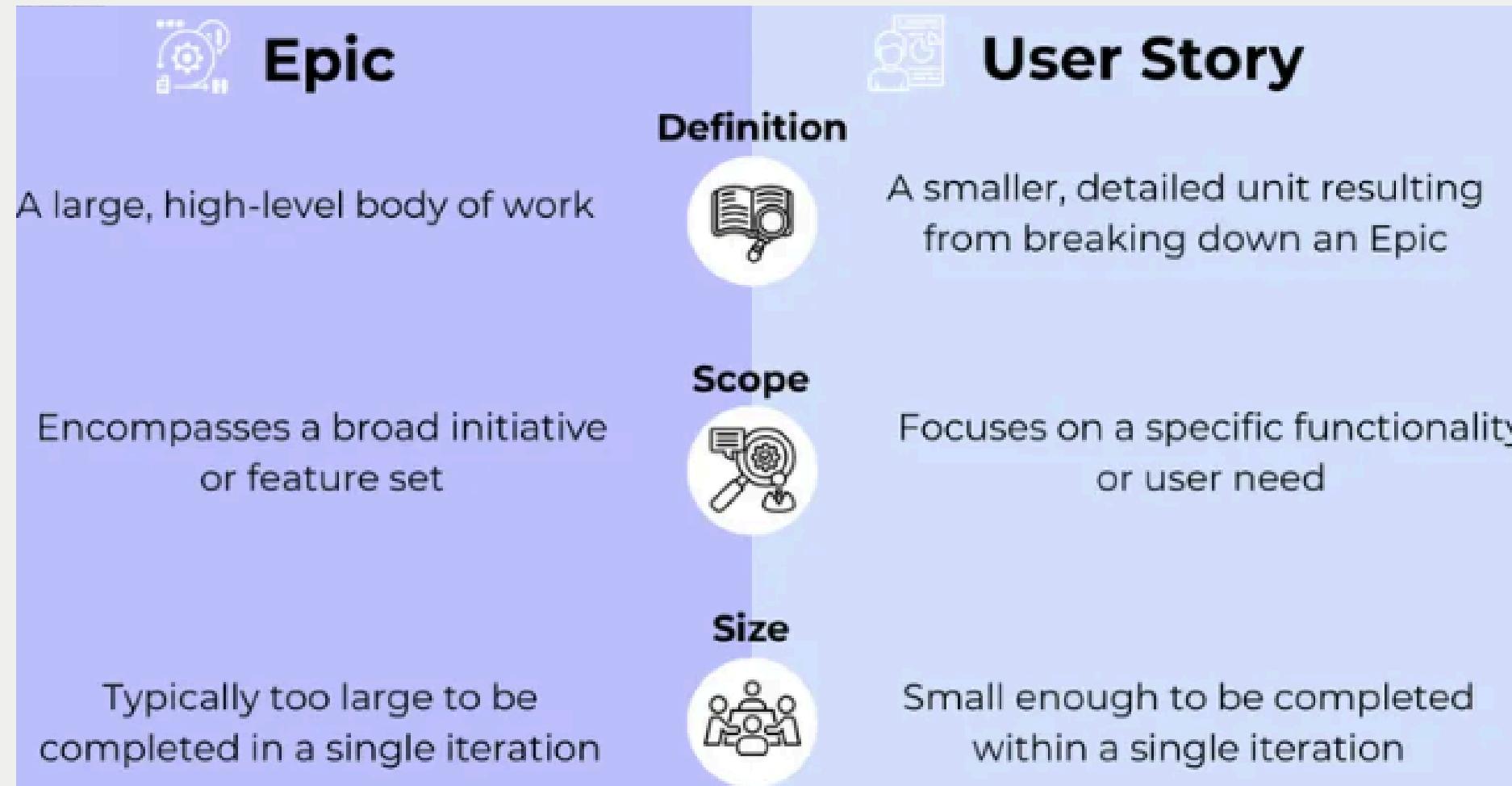
6. Figma Designs

7. Dependencies

8. Risks & Mitigations

9. Timeline

Writing epics & user stories



Epic is a large body of work
“Shazam and Spotify integration”

User story template

As a [type of user],
I want to [do something],
so that [I achieve a goal].

User story example

As a Shazam user,
I want to connect Spotify
so that I can add Shazam tracks to Spotify

The backlog

Two popular frameworks for prioritizing the backlog: RICE and MoSCoW...

Story	Reach	Impact	Confidence	Effort	RICE score (ReachxImpactxConfidence)/Effort
As a Shazam user I want to connect Spotify...	2	3	3	1	18
As a Spotify user I want to identify songs directly in Spotify	5	5	2	5	10

Must – Required in MVP

Should – Important, not critical

Could – Nice to have

Wont – Wont do now

Story	Epic	Priority	Sprint	Status
As a Shazam user I want to connect Spotify...	Shazam-Spotify integration	Must	Sprint 1	In architecture review
As a Spotify user I want to identify songs directly in Spotify	Spotify discover	Wont		

Lets now
build!

Closing thoughts

Great products...

... Can be built systematically, using a process. By adopting a “Unknown unknowns” (Discovery) mindset, we understand our users, and the jobs to be done.

With the journey mapping, we then proceed to finding solutions and prototyping the golden path solution that is validated with users and stakeholders.

We then structure the golden path into prioritized epics and user stories that can be built with high confidence...

1

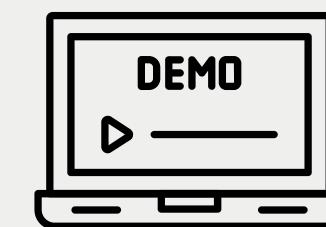
Discovery (Unknown unknowns), not **Client Solutioning** (Unknown knowns).



2

Iterate, iterate, iterate – and demo!

Iterate on the user job, the user journey map, and the golden path prototype: and keep demo’ing till everything is perfect!



3

An honest “No” is worth a 1000 “Maybes”

Radical candor – with clients, with stakeholders, with bosses – is the way to creating a product mindset (rather than a client-service mindset).

Remember, your “No” today makes the world better for all your current and future customers...



That's a **wrap!**

Thank you for
participating.

TIME FOR
some **QUESTIONS...**

Section 2

Product Discovery

The most important part of building new products is the discovery phase. This requires a mindset of inquiry & curiosity.

It requires listening to customers – and going beyond to uncovering their true & unstated needs.

0 Ground 0: The Inquiry

Setting the right question will shape your entire product outlook.

Example: "What is productivity for the mobile only user?"

1

Background of Relatedness

Understanding our enterprise users...



2

Identifying Possibilities

What do our users really need?



3

Identify a Single Opportunity: The Job

Strong user need + Business value

