



**THE
RDCL TOOLKIT
FOR VISION-DRIVEN PRODUCTS**

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WHAT'S INSIDE



The Vision Worksheet

Define your product vision using a simple "fill-in-the-blanks" worksheet. You'll learn what makes a good vision, and lay the groundwork for your product strategy.



The RDCL Strategy Canvas

Build out your cross-functional product strategy by defining your "RDCL": Real Pain Points, Design, Capabilities, and Logistics. You'll learn how to evaluate trade-offs between vision fit and business sustainability, and come up with a strategy to achieve your vision.



The Integrated Roadmap

Visualize your strategic milestones across time, and assign them to the right teams and individuals. This isn't your standard product roadmap — it can also include sales, marketing, customer support, and other teams to ensure alignment across all contributors.



The Execution Model

Finally, collaborate with your managers and functional area team leaders to break down your strategic goals into concrete activities and measurable outcomes. Each metric is tied to a specific change hypothesis — no hand-waving allowed! This results in a detailed execution plan, guiding your team toward achieving the vision and building a truly radical product.

PART 1

DEFINE YOUR VISION



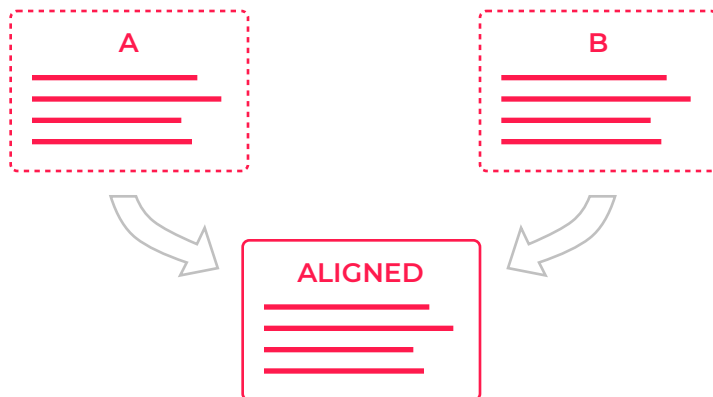


DEFINE YOUR VISION

INSTRUCTIONS

There are three **Vision Worksheets** in this section. The first two are meant to be completed by separate individuals or teams. When both individuals or teams have completed their own Vision Development Worksheets, compare notes and use the third Worksheet to capture a single “aligned” version of your vision to move forward with. Focus on big ideas over exact wording — you can always polish it later.

If you’re working alone, that’s OK too! Try to generate two separate versions of your vision on your own, then pick and choose the aspects of each that resonate most with you.



WHAT’S A “GOOD” VISION?

A “good” vision is **not about you** — it’s about the change you want to see in your corner of the world. A good vision brings your leadership, your team, and your customers into alignment. A great vision will meet all of these criteria:

It’s **PROBLEM-CENTERED**:

A good vision **starts with a problem** you want to see solved in the world. You should even be (a little bit) happy if someone else solves it!

It’s **SHARED BY CUSTOMERS**:

A good vision should be able to be **shared between your team and your customers**. “To be the world leader in...” is not a good vision, because your customers don’t care. They just want the problem to be solved!

It’s **CONCRETE**:

A good vision **visualizes a concrete end state** in which the problem is solved. Be as specific as you can about what that world looks like.



VISION WORKSHEET

TEAM A

Today, when

customer segment

want to

desirable activity/outcome

they have to

current solution(s)

This is unacceptable,
because

shortcomings of current solutions

We envision a world where

shortcomings are resolved

We're bringing this
world about through

broad technology/approach



VISION WORKSHEET

TEAM B

Today, when

customer segment

want to

desirable activity/outcome

they have to

current solution(s)

This is unacceptable,
because

shortcomings of current solutions

We envision a world where

shortcomings are resolved

We're bringing this
world about through

broad technology/approach



VISION WORKSHEET

ALIGNED VISION

Today, when

customer segment

want to

desirable activity/outcome

they have to

current solution(s)

This is unacceptable,
because

shortcomings of current solutions

We envision a world where

shortcomings are resolved

We're bringing this
world about through

broad technology/approach

PART 2

DEVELOP YOUR STRATEGY





DEVELOP YOUR STRATEGY

INSTRUCTIONS

Use the **RDCL Strategy Canvas** to guide you in identifying the “RDCL” components of your product strategy:



Real Pain Points: What validated problems will your product solve for your users or customers?



Design: What will be the most important outward-facing parts of your product? What experience and emotions will your product and brand convey?



Capabilities: How will you deliver on the promises made by your product's design? What technology, expertise, data, partnerships, or other capabilities must you develop?



Logistics: How will your product get into your customers' hands? How will you support it? How will people pay? Is there a subscription or upgrade model?

As you come up with your RDCL strategy items, position them within each section of the canvas based on:



Vision Fit: Would doing this move you closer to your vision, or further away?



Sustainability: Would doing this give you more or less financial security and sustainability?

THE VISION VS. SUSTAINABILITY TEST

VISION INVESTMENT



Good vision fit, but unsustainable. Lots of items in this quadrant may mean you need to raise funding if you don't have the cash on hand.

IDEAL



Good vision fit and sustainable. If you're lucky enough to have lots of items in this quadrant, you've probably found a winning strategy.

DANGER!



Poor vision fit and unsustainable. Only accept items in this quadrant if they unlock valuable opportunities in the future.

VISION DEBT



Poor vision fit, but sustainable. Items in this quadrant represent vision debt that will eventually have to be paid back.

Once you have captured your product strategy on the Canvas, step back and take a look how many items landed in each “**vision vs. sustainability**” quadrant. Ensure that you are striking the right balance between vision fit and sustainability for your current situation. If you are cash-poor and far from raising funds, err on the side of sustainability. If you have already drifted from your vision and are at risk of losing sight of it entirely, err on the side of vision fit.



RDCL STRATEGY CANVAS



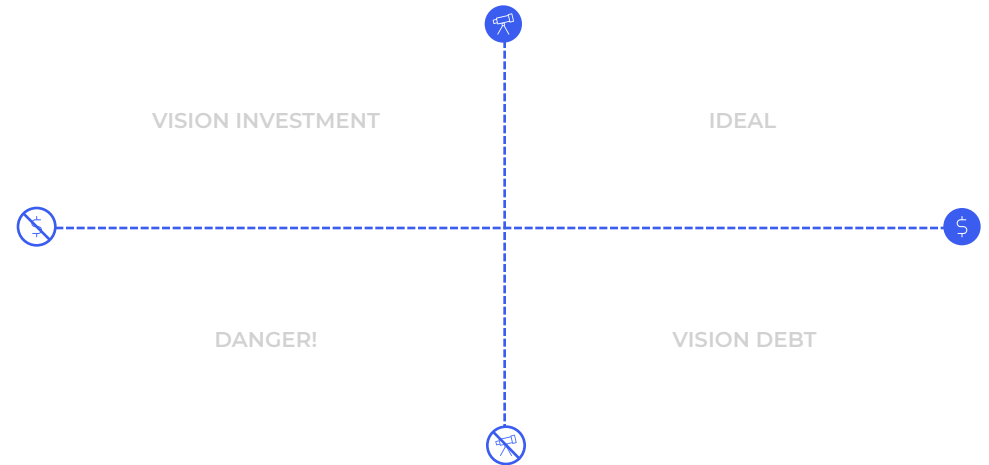
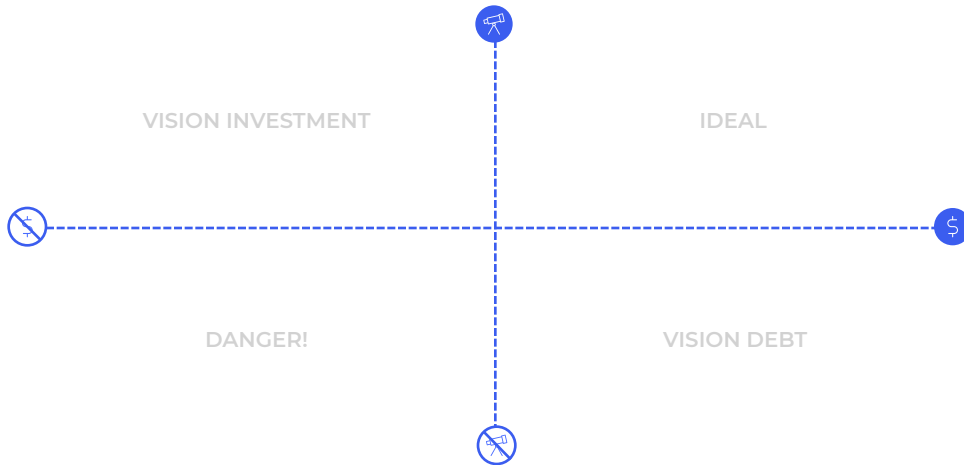
REAL PAIN POINTS

Validated problems that your product will solve



DESIGN

Key product features, branding, voice & tone



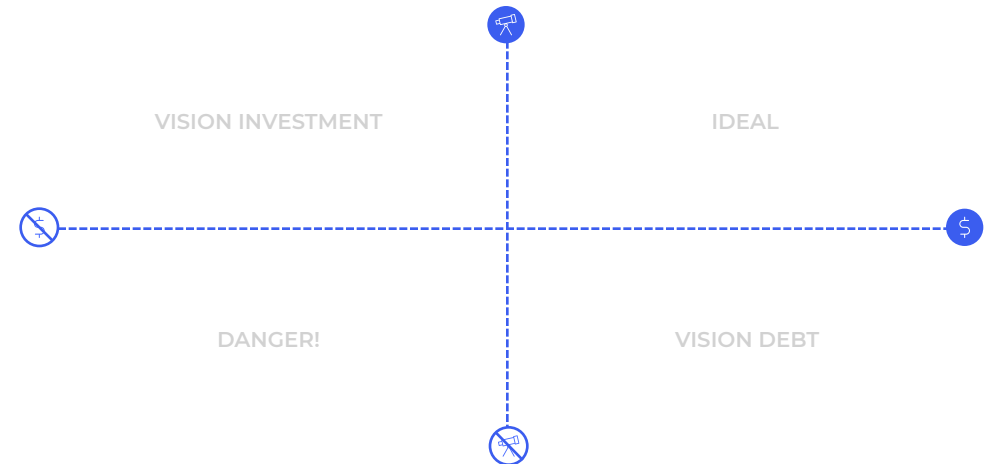
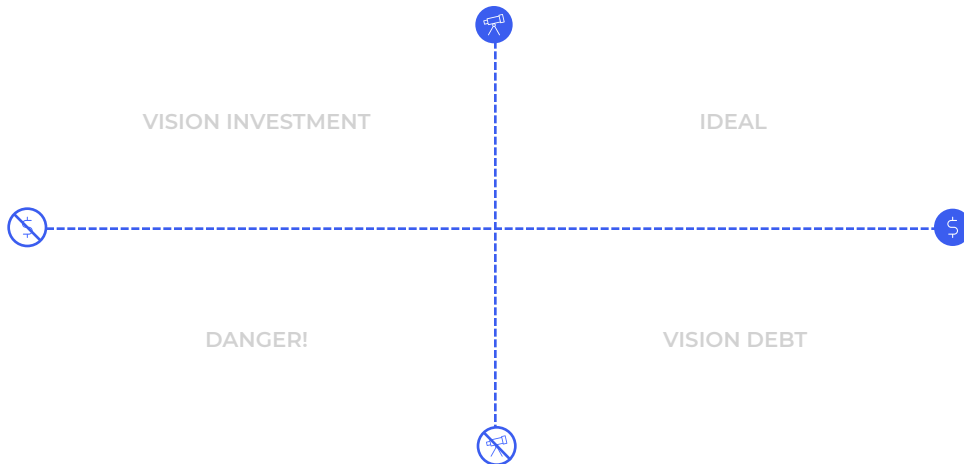
CAPABILITIES

Enabling technologies, patents, data, relationships



LOGISTICS

Pricing, delivery, installation, support



PART 3

CREATE YOUR ROADMAP





CREATE YOUR ROADMAP

INSTRUCTIONS

Group together items in your RDCL Strategy Canvas into “**Initiatives**” and assign them to specific responsible individuals and teams. Some examples of common Initiatives and their usual associated teams are:

Initiative	Team
Pricing Strategy	VP Marketing + CFO
Customer Outreach	Head of UX + Head of Sales
Technology Development	Engineering
Product Design	Design + Engineering
Branding	Marketing + Copywriter

Once your Initiatives have been assigned, identify key milestones for each. A milestone represents a concrete step toward achieving the Initiative as a whole. Use the past tense to help visualize the milestone as a concrete moment in time, such as: “Initial product launched to 100 pre-sales customers.”

Use the **Now**, **Next**, and **Later** columns to capture your future milestones over the appropriate timeline. In a large enterprise with long development cycles, “Now” may represent the next several quarters. For a smaller startup, “Now” may be a matter of a few months, or even weeks.

As you evaluate your Integrated Roadmap, ensure that the timelines make sense across all Initiatives and responsible teams. This is your opportunity to align and coordinate different teams to help them execute most effectively on your RDCL strategy.

WHAT IF I'M NOT SURE WHAT MILESTONES WE SHOULD SET?


That's OK! Your Integrated Roadmap is a high-level view of the expected milestones needed to achieve your strategic goals **based on your knowledge at the time**. As you go about achieving these milestones, you are likely to learn new things, run into unexpected roadblocks, and develop a deeper understanding of the issues.

While your vision should never fundamentally change, and your strategy should evolve only with great deliberation, your roadmap needs to respond to changing conditions. **You should plan to revisit the Integrated Roadmap on a regular basis.**

We recommend revisiting your Integrated Roadmap once every two or three months — or even more often, if there are major uncertainties in your planned milestones.



INTEGRATED ROADMAP

INITIATIVES (FROM RDCL CANVAS)	RESPONSIBLE TEAMS & INDIVIDUALS	MILESTONES		
		 Now _____ TIMELINE	 Next _____ TIMELINE	 Later _____ TIMELINE

PART 4

EXECUTE AND MEASURE





EXECUTION MODEL

INITIATIVE: _____

RESPONSIBLE TEAM / INDIVIDUAL: _____

ROADMAP MILESTONES	ACTIVITIES	HYPOTHESES	KEY METRICS
	What do we need to do?	How do these activities move us forward?	How will we know we are on track?
 Now			
 Next			
 Later			