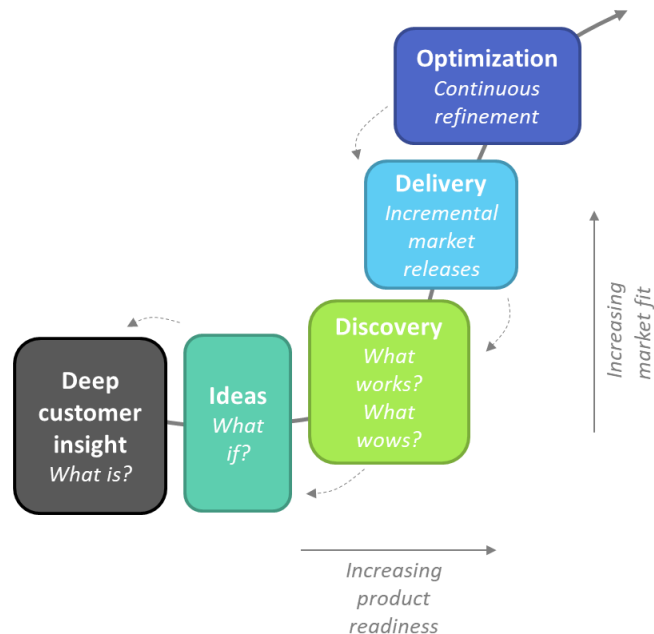


Discovery and delivery

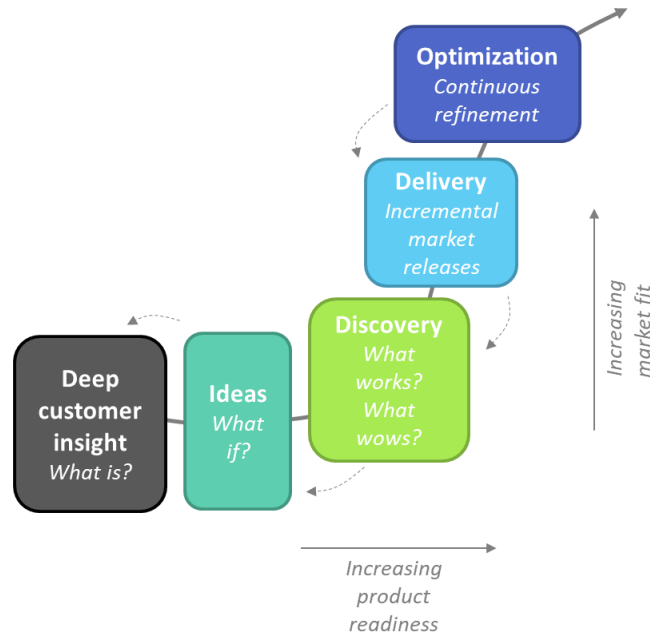


As product managers, we want to delight our customers with **innovative new products**. But...how do we do this? How can we find innovation?

Let's graph this process. On the x-axis is "increasing product readiness" (from rough to refined). On the y-axis is "increasing market fit" (from unknown to high). We can talk about this **across five steps**:

- 1 Deep customer insight** We want a deep understanding of the needs, problems, opportunities, and hopes of our customers. Talking directly to real customers is our best way to gain this insight. As the starting point of an innovation process, we crisply define these problems / opportunities. We could put this step into two words: What is?
- 2 Ideas** For the problems and opportunities we've identified, how could we answer these with our products? One of the best approaches is a "what if" ideation session with our engineers and product designers. We brainstorm a list of ideas, and then select a small set that looks most promising.

Discovery and delivery



3

Discovery We need to “discover” reality rather than predict it. We (usually) can’t know what will work in the market without testing our ideas. Humility is a prime product management virtue! In this step, we share our ideas with potential customers. What do you think of this? Does it help? Why/why not? Many of our ideas won’t test well, and we discard or backburner these. For ideas that are testing well, we use all our feedback to iterate and refine them, making them better. Initially we are trying to find “what works” in the market, but our real goal is to find something that wows.

4

Delivery When we are confident that we have something with market fit, we ask our engineering and technical teams to build this. And it’s generally better to deliver to the market incrementally—smaller and sooner is better than bigger and later. We want to get value in the hands of our customers sooner, and—if something is not working well and we need to course-correct—it’s better to find this out earlier rather than later. We want early market feedback, and we want to learn and evolve faster than our competitors.

Discovery and delivery

- 5 **Optimization** Our products are really never done. We want to use broad market feedback, experimentation, and product analytics to continuously refine our products.

This process is messy, iterative, and often non-linear. It's also an exciting and fun part of our work as product managers.

If we want innovation—and we do—a “discovery and delivery” process is one of our best bets. Grounded in real customer insight and continuous feedback—every step of the way—this approach is a powerful tool to reduce our development risk, delight our customers, and create products that sing in the market.

