

— A must have
For Entry
Level

Product Sense Guide

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Halimah Balogun is a Product Manager with experience in building products within the Health-tech, Fintech, and E-commerce sectors. With a core background in Healthcare, and a strong foundation in customer success, Halimah's journey into Product Management was driven by her passion for creating innovative solutions in healthcare.

Over time, Halimah has proven her ability to lead cross-functional teams and manage products effectively, particularly in the ecommerce sector. When she's not working, she dedicates her time to mentoring and coaching newcomers in tech, helping them navigate their early careers.

Random Fact About Halimah: She enjoys watching Reality Tv shows, She is passionate about skin health and enjoys creating skincare/beauty content.



Hassanat Abubakar is a dedicated and results-driven Product Manager with a unique blend of creativity, analytical thinking, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. She has a deep passion for product management, business management, customer success, and product development, consistently delivering outstanding outcomes in her work.

Hassanat has successfully built products across various sectors, including Health-tech, HR-tech, Ed-tech, Prop-tech, and Government projects.

One of her greatest strengths lies in her ability to inspire and empower others. This passion led her to found Future Skills Education Varsity and the TrybebyFUSE community.

Random Facts About Hassanat: She loves reading comics, enjoys exploring content on Medium, and often fantasizes about superhero characters.



Background

In January 2024, Hassanat shared a LinkedIn post on how new Product Managers can enhance their Product Sense. The post quickly gained significant traction, sparking a wave of engagement and inquiries from newbies eager to improve in this area. Among the responses, one individual mentioned, "After reading your post, I decided to explore more resources on Product Sense. However, most of the available materials were paid and required purchase on Amazon."

This feedback highlighted a gap in accessible resources for entry-level Product Managers and ignited a conversation between Hassanat and Halimah in March 2024. They recognized the need for a free, collaborative guide that would not only support Product Managers but also address Product Sense for Product Designers and other members of entry-level Product Development teams.

Driven by this realization, Hassanat & Halimah began working on the guide, which is set to be published and made available to the community at no cost. This guide aims to empower entry levels in the field with the knowledge and tools they need to develop strong Product Sense from the outset of their careers.



Introduction

In Product development, there's no perfect answer to give rather your ability to tackle complex product problems and take the product to its success. One skill stands out as a defining factor between a successful product and one that fades into nowhere: **Product Sense**

Product sense is often described as the ability to intuitively grasp what makes a product great, valuable, user-friendly, and market-ready. Product sense is much more than how it's been described, It's a critical mindset that propels every decision in the lifecycle of a product, from initial ideation to launch and beyond.

People with strong product sense can identify problems worth solving, prioritize features that will have the most impact, and predict how small changes can affect the overall user experience. This skill is essential for product managers, designers, and anyone involved in product development. While this skill is very crucial, it's not one skill you're born with, instead it's a learned skill that can be shaped, built on, and improved over time. Having a strong product sense means you can navigate the complexities of product development with clarity and confidence and this is why a good product sense will amplify the quality and capability of your work.

In this guide, we'll explore what product sense entails, its importance in product development, why it's crucial in today's competitive landscape, and how you can build on this skill to create products that truly resonate with your audience as an entry-level.

Through real-world scenarios, examples and case studies. You'll gain a deeper understanding of how product sense can transform your approach to building products and ensure your ideas translate into success.

What is Product Sense?

Product sense is the ability to intuitively and strategically understand what makes a product valuable, user-friendly, and successful in the market. It involves a deep comprehension of customer needs, preferences, and pain points, combined with the capacity to foresee how different design choices, features, and strategies will impact the overall user experience and business outcomes.

It is the skill of translating abstract ideas and insights into tangible, market-ready products that resonate with users and stand out in a competitive landscape.

Key Components of Product Sense

1. Customer Empathy
2. Creativity and Innovation

Customer Empathy:

This is the ability to deeply understand and empathise with the target audience's needs, pain points, and desires. This involves conducting user research, gathering feedback, and constantly thinking from the user's perspective.

Building empathy is very important in building your product sense and below are ways to develop it:

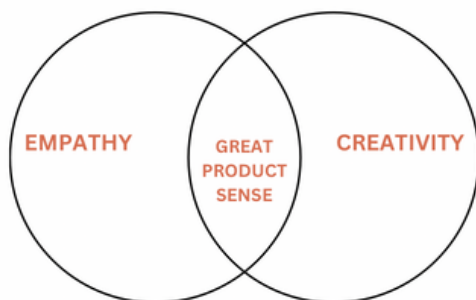
1. Observe people Interact with products
2. Measure their Reactions and Emotions
3. Ask them open ended questions
4. Deconstruct Everyday Products
5. Compare and Contrast Similar Products
6. Make it an habit to deconstruct products regularly by leveraging on product review, Product teardowns

Creativity and Innovation :

This is the ability to creatively solve problems and come up with innovative solutions that address user needs in unique ways.

This includes Challenging conventional thinking and exploring new ideas that can lead to breakthrough products or features. While building your empathy, it's also crucial to improve your creativity as they will help you come up with solutions for the user needs you've identified. Below are ways to improve your creativity:

1. Learn from great product thinkers
2. Be curious about changes in the technology as well as your domain.
3. Seek mentors who are known for their creative prowess
4. Follow creative thinkers on social media platforms like LinkedIn
5. Join communities, forums, or groups where creative product thinkers gather
6. Spend time understanding emerging trends and their potential impact.
7. Understand problems before jumping to solutions.
8. Pay attention to minor changes and updates that could provide new opportunities
9. Practice Meditation



An example of a well-known product developed with strong product sense is the **Apple iPhone**.

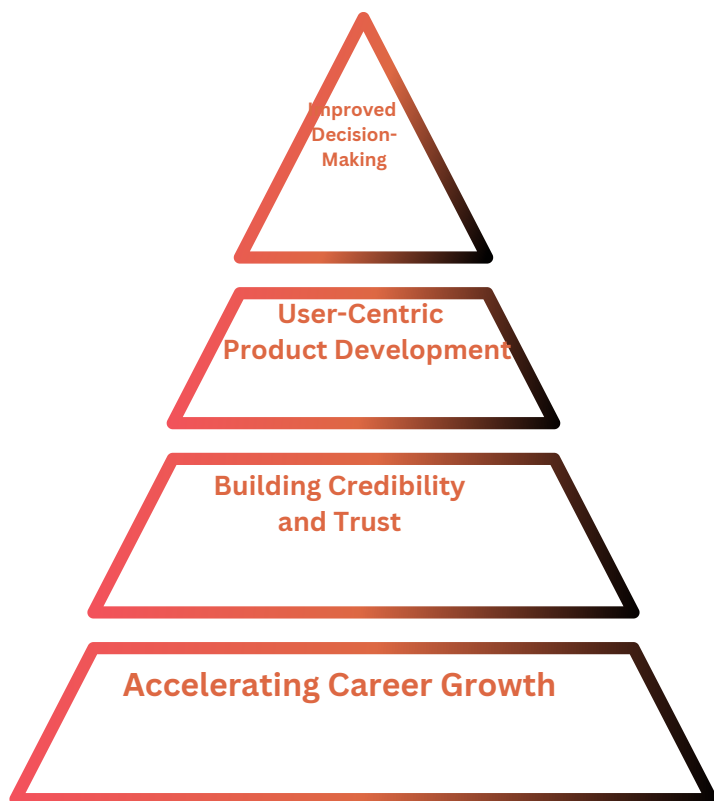
When Apple introduced the first iPhone in 2007, it revolutionized the mobile phone industry. The key to its success was Steve Jobs' and Apple's product sense—their ability to foresee that users wanted more than just a phone. They recognized that people wanted a device that combined a phone, an iPod, and an internet communicator into one sleek, easy-to-use package, had a large touch screen, and could access the internet. The iPhone's touch interface, combined with the App Store, created an entirely new ecosystem, anticipating the need for mobile applications before most people even realized they wanted them.

Importance of Product Sense in Product Development

Here are four key reasons why product sense is important for entry-level product team:

- 1. Improved Decision-Making:** Product sense enables you to make informed decisions, even with limited experience. By understanding user needs, market dynamics, and product viability, having product sense will help you prioritize features, allocate resources, and make trade-offs that align with both user satisfaction and business goals leading to more effective product strategies and a high chance of building products that resonate with the user.
- 2. User-Centric Product Development:** A strong product sense helps you keep the user at the center of every decision. This ensures that the products you develop are not only functional but also meet real user needs and provide a seamless, enjoyable experience which will in turn increase customer satisfaction, reduces churn, and helps build a loyal customer base.
- 3. Building Credibility and Trust:** As an entry-level product person, when you demonstrate a very strong product sense, it helps you build credibility with your cross-functional teams, including management, engineering, design, and marketing. By consistently making thoughtful, user-centric decisions, you gain the trust and respect of your colleagues and stakeholders enabling smoother execution and greater influence in the organization.

4. Accelerating Career Growth: Product sense is a distinctive factor that can set you as an entry-level apart from your peers. By consistently applying product sense to your work, you will be able to demonstrate strategic thinking, user empathy, and the ability to deliver value—a combination that is highly valued in the field. which will lead to faster career advancement, with opportunities for greater responsibility and leadership roles as you prove your ability to contribute meaningfully to the product's success.



Understanding the Market

In order to develop a successful valuable product, you first need to understand the market where your product will serve in. This involves gathering insights about your target audience, recognizing their needs and pain points, and analyzing the competitive landscape. Having a deep understanding of the market is the foundation upon where successful product are built.

Methods to Identify your Target Market

1) Conduct Market Research: Market research is the systemic process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting information about a specific market, including the consumers, competitors, market size, market dynamics and industry trends. Market research can be categorised into primary and secondary:

a) Primary Research: This involves collecting data directly from the target audience through Surveys and Interviews which can help you gather firsthand data on customer preferences, behaviors, and pain points. Also observing how your potential users interact with existing products or solutions can reveal unmet needs or areas for improvement that users might not articulate in surveys or interviews.

b) Secondary Research: This depends on existing data from different reliable sources including Industry Reports(Existing reports and studies published by research firms, industry associations, or government agencies) and online data sources(Online databases, news articles, and academic journals to gather additional information about your market). Also websites like Statista, Nielsen serves as sources for a number of data that can inform your product decisions.

2) Identifying User Needs and Pain Points : The ability of a product being able to solve real problems for its user is what makes it a successful product. Identifying user needs and pain points is essential to creating a product that resonates with your target audience. Identifying can be done through:

a) User Personas: By creating detailed user personas that represent your target audience segments. Your user personas should include demographic information, behaviors, goals, and challenges. These Personas will help you keep the user's viewpoint at the fore of your product development process. To guide decision making throughout your product lifecycle, these personas will always come in handy. For example, if a persona prioritizes convenience, you should focus on features that simplify the user experience.

b) Problem Interviews: Another way to identify pain points and needs is by engaging with potential users in problem interviews to delve deeper into their challenges and frustrations. The goal is to discover the causes of their pain points and understand the context in which these problems arise. You don't just stop at conducting these interviews as you need to analyze the feedback from these interviews to identify common patterns and this will provide valuable insights into what users really need and what features will have most impact

c) Customer Journey Mapping: You can identify your users pain points by creating a visual representation of the steps your users take when interacting with your product or a similar one. This map should show key touchpoints, emotions, and potential pain points along the way. Using this customer journey map will help you identify moments of frustration or difficulties a user can have, so you can make your product address it by designing solutions that will directly alleviate the users pain point.



User Personas

Problem Interviews

**Customer Journey
Mapping**

Deeply understanding your target users' needs and pain points will help you create products that offer real value, solve critical problems, and eventually win customer loyalty.

3) Competitive analysis: This involves examining the strengths and weaknesses of your competitors to identify opportunities and threats in the market. By understanding what your competitors are doing and assessing their strengths and weaknesses, you can learn how to differentiate your product and position your product more effectively. Some of the tools and techniques you can adopt while carrying out a competitive analysis include:

a) SWOT Analysis:

- 1. Strengths and Weaknesses:** Identify the strengths and weaknesses of your competitors' products. This includes evaluating their feature sets, user experience, pricing, and customer support. Understanding these aspects helps you identify areas where your product can excel.
- 2. Opportunities and Threats:** Analyze the broader market to identify external opportunities and threats that could impact your product. For example, emerging technologies might present new opportunities, while regulatory changes could pose threats.

b) Competitor Product Teardowns: This is done by dissecting competitors products to understand their design, functionality, and technology stack. This analysis can reveal insights into what works well and what doesn't, informing your product development strategy.



c) Monitoring Competitors Activity: Social listening tool like Hootsuite, Mention, Brandwatch can help you monitor your product, industry and even your competitors' social media activity. This can provide insights into how they engage with customers, what content resonates, how they respond to feedback and potential product opportunities.

d) Use Data Analytics Tools: Leverage data analytics tools such as google analytics, Tableau, Mixpanel to gather and analyze data on market trends, customer behavior, and competitor performance. These tools can help you make data-driven decisions and identify patterns and trends that can impact your products. You can also leverage competitive intelligence tools such as SEMrush, Ahrefs, SimilarWeb and App Annie



Product Discovery

Product Discovery is the very first and critical stage of the product development journey where teams explore, validate, and prioritize ideas before committing to building a product or feature.

It is the process of closely understanding what your users' problems and needs are, then validating your ideas for solutions before starting development.

The goal of product discovery is to ensure that you are solving the right problem for the right audience with the right solution. By thoroughly understanding the problem space and validating potential solutions, product teams can minimize risks, avoid costly mistakes, and ultimately create products that resonate with users and succeed in the market.

Marty Cagan identifies four big risks that product discovery helps mitigate early in the process.

- **Value risk:** whether customer will buy the product
- **Usability risk:** whether the user will be able to use the product
- **Feasibility risk:** whether the team will build it within available timeframe and skillset
- **Business Viability risk:** whether the product fits with go-to-market strategies / works for the various aspects of the business – sales, marketing, finance, legal, etc



Image Source: Maze

Importance of Product Discovery

Product discovery is essential because it:

1. **Reduces Risk:** Validating ideas early will help you avoid investing time and resources in building products that don't meet user needs or align with business goals.
2. **Enhances User-Centricity:** Product Discovery ensures that the development process is leveled in a deep understanding of users' needs, pain points, and behaviors.
3. **Facilitates Innovation:** Product discovery fosters creativity and helps teams identify new opportunities for differentiation and value creation.

Who should be involved in product discovery?

The best product discovery doesn't happen in a vacuum. Your aim should be to involve the entire product team and key stakeholders from your organisation in product discovery efforts from the very beginning.

Tim Herbig recommends breaking your product discovery team into three groups:

- **Permanent collaborators:** Product managers, UX designers, user researchers, and engineering leads
- **Temporary collaborators:** Developers, product leadership, customer support stat, sales
- **Supporters:** Executives, other product teams, infrastructure teams

Permanent collaborators

- **Product Manager:** The product manager typically leads the product discovery process. They are responsible for defining the problem, setting goals, coordinating the team, and making key decisions based on the findings. Their task is to balance user needs, business and technology in order to create the best possible product. PMs define the product vision, prioritize features, and make strategic decisions.
- **User Experience(UX)Researcher:** focus on understanding user behaviors, needs, and pain points through research, conduct user interviews, surveys, usability testing and design thinking methodologies. They are mostly involved throughout the product development lifecycle to help measure the success of product changes and identify areas for improvement.
- **Product Designers:** They create personas, map customer journeys, and design prototypes, mockups, and user interfaces that ensure the product's design aligns with user needs and usability. Their insights are crucial for ensuring the product is user-centric.
- **Developers/Engineers:** provide technical insights during product discovery. They assess the feasibility of proposed solutions, identify potential technical challenges, and suggest innovative approaches.

Temporary collaborators

- **Sales Team:** The sales team provides direct feedback from customers and prospects, offering insights into customer pain points, objections, and desires. Their frontline experience is valuable for identifying real-world challenges and opportunities that the product needs to address.
- **Customer Support:** interact with users daily, understanding their issues, needs, and feedback. They bring a deep understanding of current customer pain points and frequently requested features, which can inform the discovery process.
- **Marketing Team:** offer insights into market positioning, customer acquisition strategies, and competitive analysis. They help define the product's value proposition, target audience, and messaging strategy, ensuring that the product aligns with market demand.

Supporters

- **Executive Stakeholders:** ensure that the product discovery aligns with the company's overall vision, strategy, and financial goals. They provide high-level guidance, set priorities, and allocate resources. Their buy-in is crucial for moving from discovery to development.
- **Legal and Compliance Team :** ensures that the product adheres to relevant laws, regulations, and industry standards. Their input is crucial for identifying potential legal risks and ensuring that the product complies with necessary guidelines, especially in regulated industries.

Permanent collaborators play a key role in continuous discovery, while temporary collaborators and supporters are more engaged in specific tasks. Engaging diverse individuals from different parts of the organization in product discovery can uncover valuable insights, enabling the core product team to connect with customers and resources essential for idea validation.

Product Discovery Process

The stages of the product discovery process might be named differently, but the overall framework follows a similar trajectory that product teams at most startups use. This process can be broken down into several key stages including:

1. **Identifying and Framing the Problem:** The first step in product discovery is to identify and clearly define the problem you aim to solve. This involves:
 - a. **Understanding the Context:** Gather information about the broader context in which the problem exists. This could involve understanding industry trends, user behaviors, and technological advancements.
 - b. **User Research:** Engage with your target audience through surveys, interviews, and observations to identify common pain points and unmet needs.
 - c. **Problem Statement:** Once the problem is identified, enunciate it in a clear and concise problem statement. This statement should define what the problem is, who the problem affects, and why it's important to solve.
 - d. **Challenge Assumptions:** Examine any assumptions you have about the problem. Ensure that the problem is framed in a way that is user-centric and focused on the underlying need.

2. Generating and Validating Ideas: After the problem has been well-defined, the next step is to generate potential solutions and validate them. This process involves:

a. **Ideate:** Conduct brainstorming sessions with your cross-functional teams to generate a broad range of ideas. Encourage creativity and out-of-the-box thinking. Other forms of generating ideas with the team includes Crazy 8's, How might We questions, storyboarding, etc. Leverage focus groups to involve users in the ideation process. This helps ensure that the ideas generated are aligned with user needs.

b. **Prioritize:** Use tools like the Impact vs. Effort Matrix to prioritize ideas based on their potential impact on users and the business, versus the effort required to implement them. This will help the team to eliminate unjustified concepts and prioritize potential solutions they think could work.

c. **Prototype:** Create low-fidelity prototypes or mockups of your ideas. These can include simple sketches, wireframes, or clickable models that allow users to interact with the concept. These prototypes allow your team to demonstrate their ideas and bring these ideas to life.

d. **Test:** Conduct user testing with your prototypes to gather feedback on the usability, desirability, and feasibility of the proposed solutions. Use popular techniques like A/B testing, customer interviews, usability testing, and concept testing.

3. Learning and Iteration:

- a. **Quantitative Data:** Use analytics tools to gather quantitative data on how users interact with the product. Metrics like click-through rates, conversion rates, and time on task can provide valuable insights
- b. **Qualitative Data:** Collect qualitative data through interviews, surveys, and user feedback. This helps you understand the “why” behind the numbers and uncover deeper insights.
- c. **Iterate:** Based on your findings, iterate on your solution. This might involve refining your prototype, adjusting your product strategy, or even revisiting the problem statement.

4. **Building Alignment:** Before moving into the product development phase, it's crucial to ensure that all stakeholders are aligned and supportive of the direction:

- a. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Regularly communicate your findings, insights, and decisions to key stakeholders, including executives, engineering, design, and marketing teams.
- b. **Documentation:** Document the entire discovery process in a comprehensive report. This should include the problem statement, research findings, validated ideas, and the final recommendations.

Challenges in Product Discovery

While product discovery is a crucial step, it comes with its own set of challenges:

a) **Bias and Assumptions:** Teams may move into the discovery process with preconceived hypotheses about the problem or the solution. Similarly, if you ask the users biased questions, it can enforce them unintentionally and confirm your thoughts and opinions instead of providing the users' own perspectives. It's important to remain objective and let the data guide decisions.

b) **Time and Resource Constraints:** Teams may feel pressure to rush through to start building especially because discovery can be time-consuming. Balancing thorough discovery with timely delivery is key.

c) **Stakeholder Alignment:** Gaining Buy-in from all stakeholders can be challenging, especially if there are varying opinions about the problem or solution. Also when decisions are made with a lack of buy-in, teams can experience pushback and disagreement on the roadmap.

Product Development

Product development is the process of releasing a new product to market or enhancing an existing product to meet evolving customer needs and business objectives. This includes identifying market needs, conceptualizing the product, building a product roadmap, launching a product, and collecting feedback. Product development requires cross-functional collaboration, creativity, and a deep understanding of both market demands and technical feasibility.

Who are involved in Product development Process?

Whether it's a startup or a well-established corporation, product development brings together every department including design, engineering, manufacturing, product marketing, UI/UX, and more. Each team within the product development process plays a crucial role in defining, designing, building, testing, and delivering the product. The complexities inherent in the product development lifecycle make effective product management all the more essential.

However, the Product managers play a central role in the product development process. They are responsible for defining the product vision, aligning it with business goals, and creating a roadmap to achieve it.

Importance of Product Development

Product development is essential for several reasons including :

1. **Innovation:** It drives innovation by transforming new ideas into tangible products that meet customer needs and create value for the business.
2. **Market Relevance:** Continuous product development ensures that a company's offerings remain relevant and competitive in a rapidly changing market.
3. **Revenue Growth:** Successful product development open new revenue streams, attract new customers, and increase market share.
4. **Customer Satisfaction:** By focusing on solving customer problems and improving their experience, product development enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Product Development Process

Although the product development process will look different at each organization, there are standard stages that nearly all teams cycle through from identifying market need to iteration, they include:

- Research
- Ideation
- Concept development and Testing
- Marketing Strategy and business analysis
- Product Development
- Test and Marketing
- Product Launch
- Ongoing iteration based on user feedback and strategic goals.

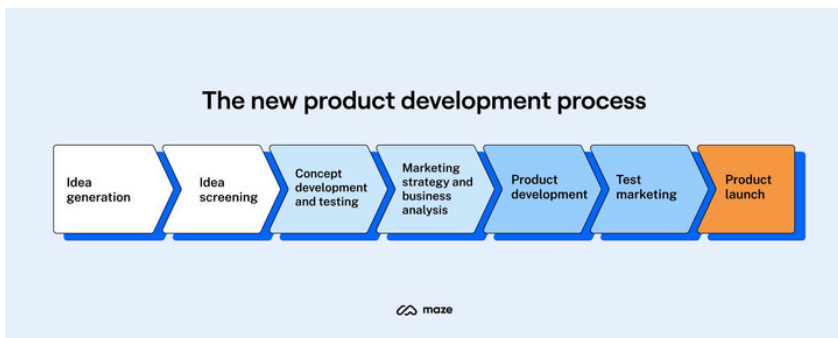


Image Source: Maze

Key Considerations in Product Development

Product development is complex and requires careful planning and execution. Here are some key considerations:

a. Cross-Functional Collaboration

Cross-functional teams ensure all aspects of the product, from technical feasibility to market viability, are addressed. Effective product development requires collaboration across various departments, including design, engineering, marketing, sales, and customer support.

b. Agile Product Development

Product development can follow different methodologies with Agile being one of the most common:

Agile is an iterative, flexible approach that involves continuous development, testing, and feedback. It allows teams to adapt to changes quickly and is well-suited for projects with evolving requirements. The advantage of the agile framework is that it enables an organization to accelerate the process from brainstorming to product launch. By intentionally releasing versions of the product starting with an early-stage MVP more rapidly, the product team can introduce updates and improvements with each iteration. This approach also allows the team to gather feedback from real users, leading to incremental enhancements in the product.

c. User-Centered Design

One important process of product development is keeping the end user at the centre of the development. User-centered design ensures that the product solves problems, provides a great user experience, and meets customer expectations. This involves continuous user testing, feedback, and iteration throughout the development process.

d. Risk Management

Product development involves risks including technical challenges, market changes, and unexpected costs. Identifying potential risks early, developing mitigation strategies, and being prepared to pivot if necessary are effective risk management to be put in place.

How To Improve Product Sense as an Entry Level

Improving product sense is a crucial step for any entry-level professional aiming to excel in product management, design, or development. Product sense is the ability to intuitively understand what makes a product valuable, how it meets users' needs, and how it can be refined or innovated. Here are key strategies to develop and enhance your product sense:

1. Engage Deeply with Products

- **Analyze Existing Products:** Regularly use and critically evaluate existing products, especially those within your industry. Pay attention to design choices, user flows, feature sets, and how they align with the target market's needs. Ask yourself why certain decisions were made and how they contribute to the product's success or shortcomings.
- **Become a Power User:** Go beyond surface-level usage of tools or apps you admire. Understand every feature, and identify areas where the product excels or could improve. This hands-on experience will help you grasp what works and what doesn't.

2. Stay Informed About Market Trends

- **Follow Industry News and Blogs:** Keep up with the latest trends, challenges, and innovations in your field by reading industry blogs, newsletters, and articles. Understanding the broader market context will sharpen your ability to anticipate shifts in user needs and preferences.

3. Develop Empathy for Users

- **Conduct User Research:** Involve yourself in user research activities such as interviews, surveys, and usability testing. Directly interacting with users will help you understand their pain points, preferences, and behaviors, which is essential for developing a user-centric mindset.
- **Create User Personas:** Practice creating detailed user personas based on real data. This exercise will help you internalize the different user needs and scenarios that your product must address.

4. Practice Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

- **Work on Side Projects:** Develop your own projects, whether it's a mock product or a real one. The process of ideation, development, and iteration will sharpen your problem-solving skills and product intuition.
- **Solve Case Studies:** Engage in case studies where you analyze a product's performance or create strategies for product improvements. This will challenge you to think critically and apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations.

5. Learn from Failures and Feedback

- **Analyze Failed Products:** Study products that failed to succeed in the market. Understand the reasons behind their failure—whether it was a poor market fit, bad timing, or flawed execution. Learning from others' mistakes can prevent you from making the same ones.
- **Embrace Constructive Criticism:** Actively seek feedback from peers, users, and mentors on your ideas and work. Use this feedback to iterate and improve your product sense continually.

Case Studies to Test Product Sense Knowledge or Real-World Scenarios

Applying product sense in real-world scenarios is critical for solidifying your understanding and improving your decision-making skills. Here are some case studies and scenarios that can help you practice and test your product sense:

Case Study 1

Improving User Engagement for a Mobile App

Scenario: You are a product Manager for a mobile app that provides daily fitness tips. The app has a decent number of downloads, but user engagement is low—most users do not return after their first session.

Challenge:

- Analyze why user engagement might be low.
- Propose three actionable strategies to increase engagement.
- Identify which success metrics you would track to measure the effectiveness of your strategies.

Expected Focus: Understanding user behavior, creating a habit-forming experience, and tracking relevant engagement metrics like DAU (Daily Active Users), session length, and retention rate.

Case Study 2

Responding to Negative User Feedback

Scenario: A new feature was recently rolled out in your product, but the response from users has been overwhelmingly negative. Users find the feature confusing and not valuable.

Challenge:

- Analyze the situation to determine why the feature failed to meet user expectations.
- Propose a plan to address the feedback, which might include feature revisions, additional user research, or improved onboarding.
- Decide how you would communicate changes to your users.

Expected Focus: User empathy, adaptability, and effective communication in handling product failures.

Case Study 3

Pivoting a Product Strategy

Scenario: Your Creator hub startup launched a product aimed at freelancers, but after six months, it's clear that the product is not gaining traction in that market. However, you've noticed interest from small businesses.

Challenge:

- Determine whether you should pivot your product strategy to target small businesses instead of freelancers.
- If you decide to pivot, outline the changes you would make to the product, marketing, and sales strategies.
- Identify risks and how you would mitigate them.

Expected Focus: Strategic decision-making, understanding market fit, and handling product pivots.

Case Study 4

Debugging and Optimizing a Slow-Performing Application

Scenario: Users have reported that your application is running slowly, particularly during peak usage times. This performance issue is impacting user satisfaction and engagement.

Challenge:

- Diagnose the root cause of the performance issues by analyzing logs, profiling the application, and identifying bottlenecks.
- Optimize the application by implementing performance improvements, such as code refactoring, optimizing queries, or improving caching strategies.
- Measure the impact of your optimizations and ensure that the changes enhance the overall user experience without introducing new issues.

Expected Focus: Performance analysis, optimization techniques, and troubleshooting

Case Study 5

Redesigning a User Onboarding Experience

Scenario: You are a product designer for a mobile app that helps users track their expenses and make better decisions when spending money. User feedback indicates that the onboarding process is confusing and leads to a high drop-off rate after the initial download.

Challenge:

- Analyze the current onboarding flow to identify pain points and areas of confusion.
- Redesign the onboarding experience to make it more intuitive and engaging.
- Create wireframes or prototypes of your redesigned onboarding process.
- Explain how these changes address user feedback and improve the onboarding experience.

Expected Focus: User research, wireframing, prototyping, and understanding user experience principles.

Case Study 6

Enhancing the Checkout Experience

Scenario: Your Product Manager discussed with you the designer about the massive dropout of customer journey on your e-commerce platform. The data showed that 86% of your customers drop out at checkout. The product manager assigns you to enhance the checkout process.

Challenge:

- Analyze the current checkout flow to identify pain points or obstacles that may cause users to abandon their carts.
- Design an improved checkout process that simplifies steps, reduces friction, and provides clear instructions.
- Create prototypes of your redesigned checkout experience and test them with users to validate effectiveness.

Expected Focus: User flow analysis, UX design, prototyping, and user testing.

Case Study 7

Integrating Third-Party APIs into an Existing Application

Scenario: Your application needs to integrate with two third-party APIs to enhance its functionality, which are; payment processing, geolocation services.

Challenge:

- Select appropriate third-party APIs that align with your application's needs and ensure they meet your security and performance standards.
- Develop the integration, including handling authentication, data exchange, and error management.
- Test the integration to ensure it works seamlessly with your application and handles various edge cases.
- Document the integration process and provide guidelines for future updates or changes.

Expected Focus: API integration, security, error handling, and documentation.

Case Study 8

Improving User Experience in a Menstrual Tracking App

Scenario: Users of your menstrual tracking app are experiencing difficulties with navigation and are not fully utilizing features like cycle predictions and symptom tracking. Feedback indicates that the app is confusing and hard to use.

Challenge:

- **Identify Usability Issues:** Conduct user research to understand pain points and gather feedback on navigation problems.
- **Redesign Onboarding:** Simplify the onboarding process to make it intuitive, using clear instructions and visual aids.
- **Enhance Navigation and Feature Visibility:** Improve the app's layout to make key features more accessible and visible.
- **Address Emotional Needs:** Incorporate empathetic design elements to create a supportive experience for users.
- **Test and Measure:** Implement the changes and evaluate their impact on user engagement and satisfaction.

Expected Focus: Usability improvement, feature discoverability, and user satisfaction.

Resources

Articles

- Product Sense: What is it, Why it's Needed, and How to Keep it Fresh - <https://medium.com/@dianas/product-sense-what-is-it-why-its-needed-and-how-to-keep-it-fresh-ead3de52460a>
- Understanding your Target Market: A Guide for Product Managers- <https://medium.com/accredian/understanding-your-target-market-a-guide-for-product-managers-21a21c3c39d6>

Books

- Inspired: "How To Create Products Customers Love" by Marty Cagan
- Hooked: How to Build Habit-Forming Products by Nir Eyal
- The Lean Startup" by Eric Ries
- Lean Product and Lean Analytics" by Ben Yoskovitz and Alistair Croil

Videos

- Product Sense Workshop - https://youtu.be/pyo50QGmH_s?si=hA8Kz1PkKWgyHfEP
- How to apilify your Product sense by Gibson - <https://youtu.be/4OeAP9XUliU?si=kSWl88B5xlhNgEgE>

Conclusion

Through this guide, our mission is to provide you with the knowledge and tools necessary to develop a strong Product Sense from the start of your career. We've covered key concepts, strategies, and real-world scenarios to help you navigate the complexities of product development. Whether you're a Product Manager, Designer, or Developer, we hope this guide serves as a valuable resource in your journey toward building products that resonate with users and succeed in the market.

Remember, Product Sense is not just a skill but an ongoing practice that evolves with experience, feedback, and continuous learning. We encourage you to take what you've learned here, apply it to your work, and share your insights with others. Together, we can foster a community of professionals who are not only skilled but also deeply attuned to the needs and desires of the users they serve.

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