



Photo by Chris Montgomery on Unsplash

# CHAOS IN MANAGING PRODUCTS



Product **Growth**  
Leaders

A person is rappelling down a large, textured rock face. The person is silhouetted against a clear blue sky. Ropes are attached to the rock and the person's harness. The overall scene is monochromatic with a blue tint.

# CHAOS IN MANAGING PRODUCTS

## Chaos in managing products

### **95% of new products fail.**

- That's according to Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen.
- Over 30,000 new products are introduced every year and 95 percent fail.
- They fail because they haven't solved a pervasive problem for a market full of buyers.
- How can things go so wrong?
- We believe it's simple: failing products are victims of these two phrases:
- "I talked to a guy."
- "If we build it, they will come."

### **80% of features in the typical software product are rarely or never used.**

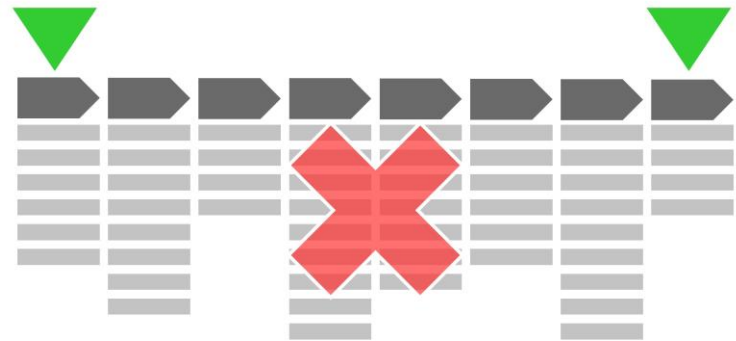
Perhaps that is the reason that 80% of features in the typical software product are rarely or never used, according to research by Pendo, the software analytics firm.

### **25% of iPhone apps in the app store have never been downloaded** as reported by PhoneArena.

47%

report that **process** is the **biggest challenge** for products in their company.

Learning is at the core, not just the beginning and the end.



Optimize your process using the Quartz Open Framework.

Today, the ideal process isn't a line; it's a wheel.

**DEFINE** problems and **COMMIT** to solve them

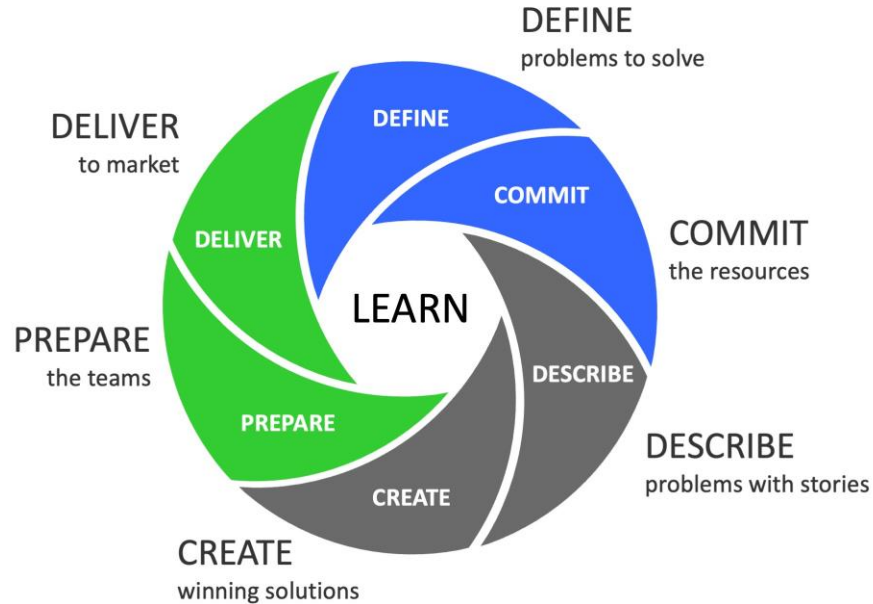
**DESCRIBE** and **CREATE** winning solutions

**PREPARE** and **DELIVER** to markets for customer success

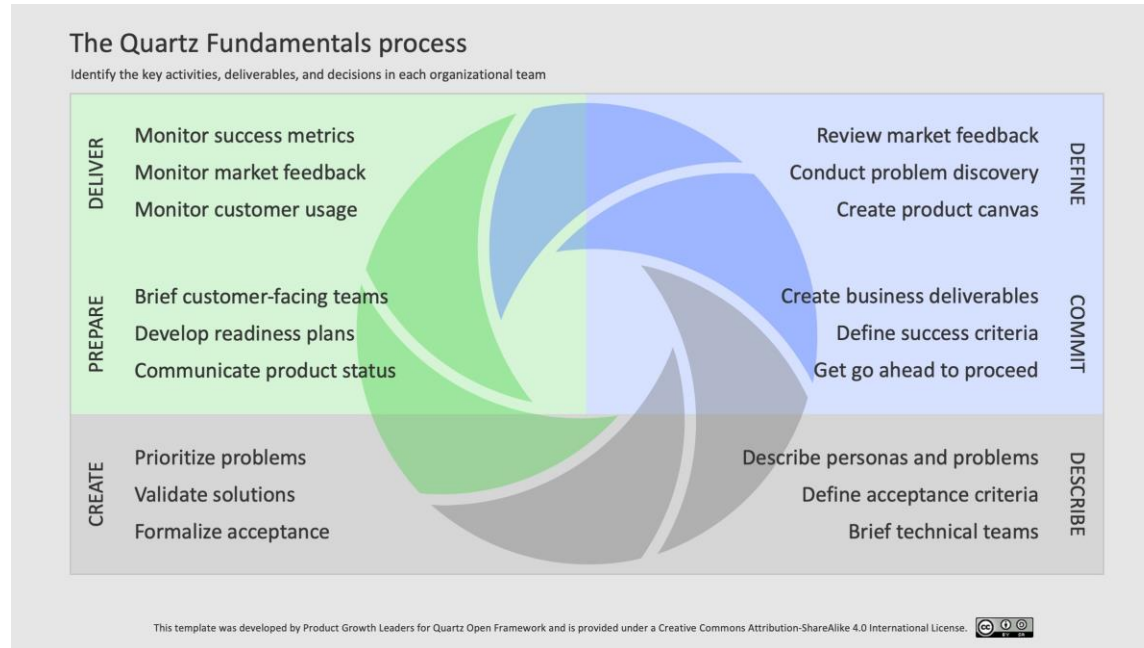
**LEARN** continually

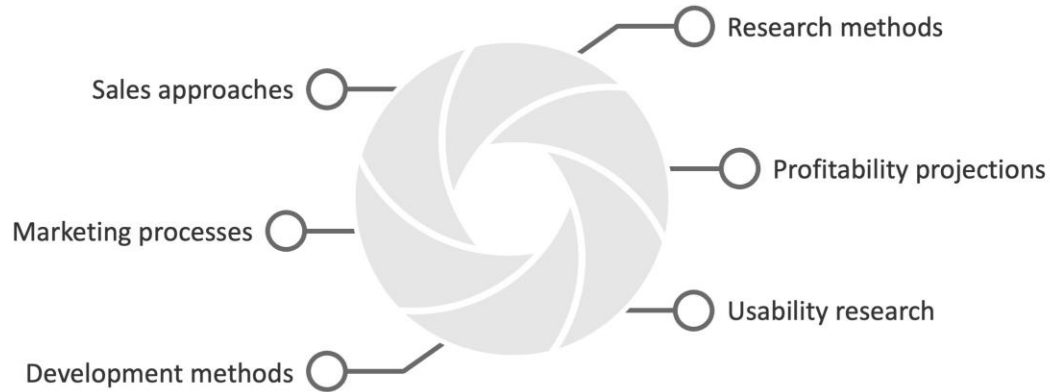


## The Quartz Open Framework for product management



## Use the Quartz Open canvas to define your process





The phases of Quartz connect to other internal processes, such as development methods, marketing processes, and sales approaches.

Think of each facet as having an interface or API from one framework to another.

## Titles are a mess!

There are many titles used to describe the roles of product management: **product manager** and **product owner** are the two most common titles.

Almost half of a product manager's time is spent in unplanned activity—such as an unscheduled sales or support meeting, or an urgent development issue that must be addressed.

The typical product manager is **overwhelmed by urgent** activities that impact their ability to **focus on important ones**.

If you could reduce unplanned activity by 20%, you would regain an entire day each week for more important activities.

Successful product managers focus on the problem.

## Understand the problem

Interview customers

Create personas

Isolate problems to be solved

## Socialize the problem

Prioritize the problems to be addressed

Provide context so creation teams can design solutions

Communicate status to stakeholders

The focus of product management should be markets, not individual customers.

Product management is clearly defined and understood in only **21%** of organizations.  
— Product Management Festival Benchmarks Report

## Managing Products

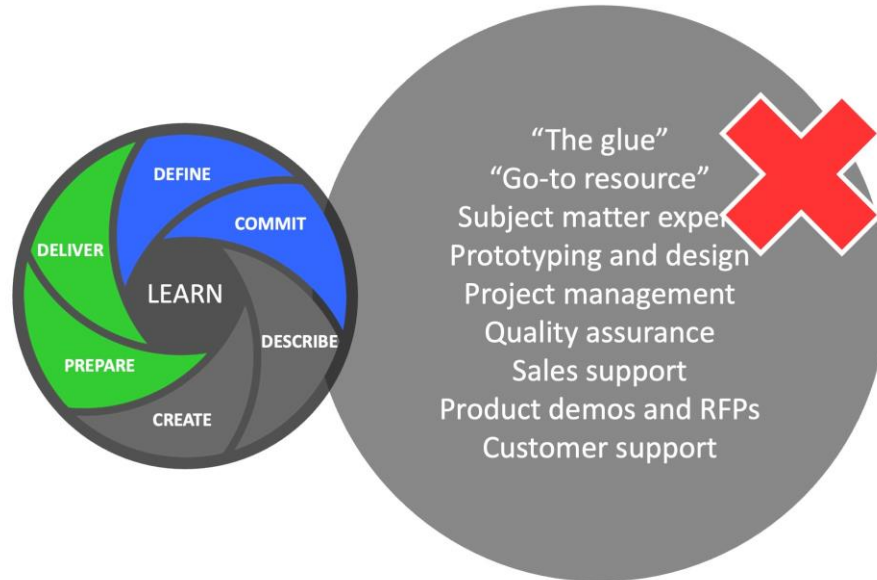
Every organization needs a consistent method for discovering, creating, and delivering products. Some have a dedicated role—usually a product manager or product owner—but many have others driving their innovation processes, including executives, engineering leads or marketing managers.

**Product management guides product success.**

The ideal mindset for managing products is:

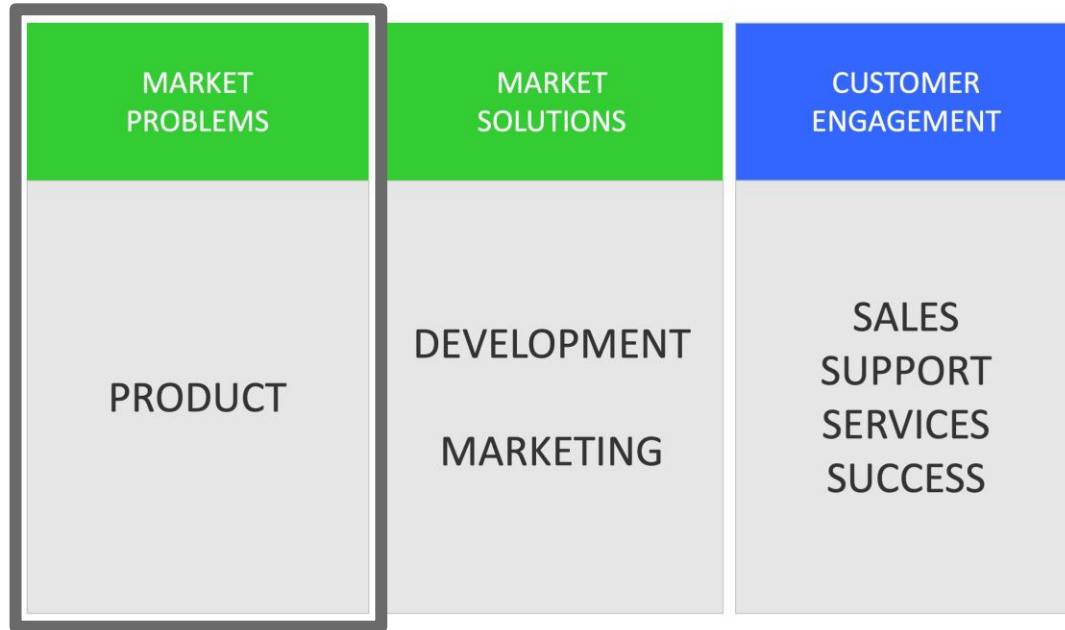
- **Market-focused**—built for all customers, not an individual customer
- **Systematic**—created and delivered using repeatable processes
- **Consistent**—using the same tools and templates across products
- **Transparent**—providing visibility with standard roadmaps, plans, and schedules
- **Validated**—by leveraging in-person market insights supported by data

## What is product management?



# FUNDAMENTALS OF MANAGING PRODUCTS

Product roles are focused on market and problems



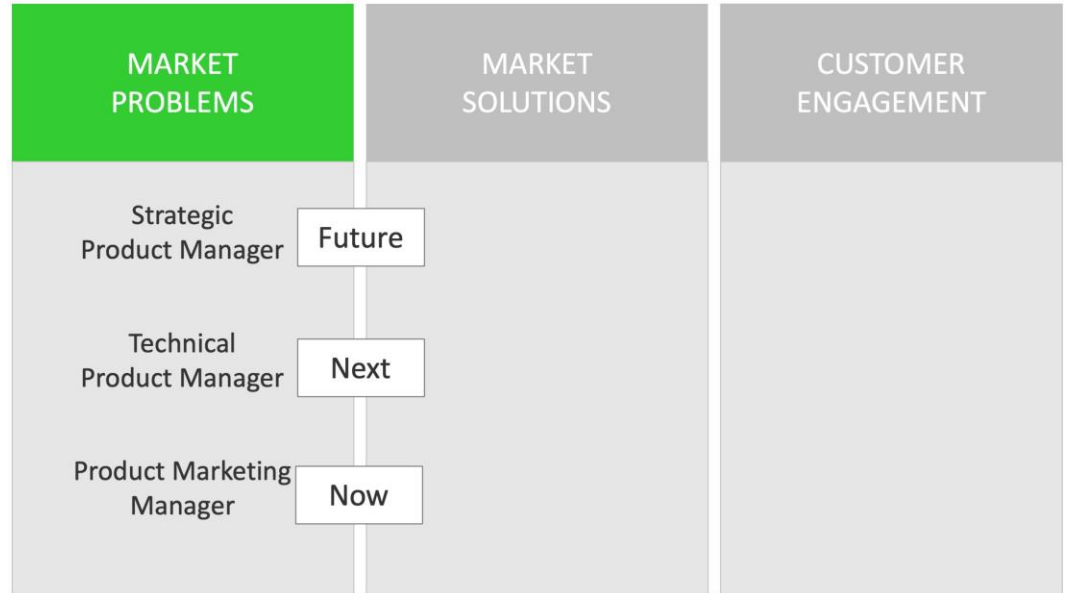
*In a well-run organization, each role has a single orientation; they either support customers or support the market.*

Markets and problems are the primary focus of those in product roles.

## Common Titles

Typical titles focused on market problems include strategic product manager, technical product manager or product owner, and product marketing or product growth manager.

These roles focus on **identifying market problems** for the products planned for the future, the releases or new versions coming next, and the solutions that are already in the market now.



*What if we found ourselves building something that nobody wanted? In that case, what did it matter if we did it on time and on budget?*

***Eric Ries, author, Lean Startup***

*I've been struggling to keep my head above water. I have too many tasks on my plate and no guidance on how to execute on them. I'm terrified I'll be fired because I don't know what I should be doing.*

***anonymous poster on Reddit***

*Products solve problems for personas.*

*Product managers are responsible for identifying and prioritizing market problems, articulating the measure of product success, and coaching the teams that turn that vision into a reality.*

*Product roles identify friction for buyers and users of our products.*

*The focus of product management should be markets, not individual customers.*

*Turn good ideas into successful products systematically.*

## ASSIGNMENT



ACTIVITY HOURS	M	T	W	Th	F
Analyzing market and product data					
Conducting customer discovery					
Describing problems with team or stakeholders					
Designing solutions with team or stakeholders					
Documenting plans and stories					
Briefing go-to-market teams					
Briefing stakeholders					
Doing non-product activities (as defined by Quartz Open Framework)					
Participating in recurring meetings					
“Think” time					

Analyze a typical week to determine where your time goes.

Based on the Quartz Open Framework, where should you spend more time?

Be prepared to share with the participants in the peer review.


## REFLECTION



Apply your learning

Which phases of the Quartz Open Framework take most of your time?

**Define your process**  
Identify the key activities, deliverables, and decisions in each organizational team

This template was developed by Product Growth Leaders for Quartz Open Framework and is provided under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. 

A person wearing a blue, textured sweater is sitting at a desk, using a laptop. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The person's hands are visible on the laptop keyboard and trackpad. The text 'NEXT STEPS' is written in white, bold, uppercase letters on a dark blue horizontal bar across the lower portion of the image.

**NEXT STEPS**

## Read the book

### Turn Ideas Into Products

The playbook that leads you step-by-step through problem discovery and market validation, agile business planning, and release and launch of technology products based on the Quartz Open Framework.



**Overcome the chaos.** Simplify the journey from idea to market using a small number of activities and deliverables. You and your team will be productive after each lesson with a playbook of ready-to-use templates for each step of the planning process.

Learn more at  
[TurnIdeasIntoProducts.info](https://TurnIdeasIntoProducts.info).



## More from Product Growth Leaders

### **Fundamentals of Managing Products**

Provide your team with a solid foundation in critical aspects of product management.

### **The AI- Empowered Product Manager**

Accelerate your product results with AI.



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