

Importance of breaking from the daily grind

Jan 24, 2013 - Product Anonymous

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How today's talk came about...

- Product Anonymous Xmas drinks



- Chris to Liz: "I'm leaving Nitro in December, and taking a few months off".
- Liz to Chris: "Sweet, since you have all this spare time how about you do the January @prod_anon session?!"

Role of the Product Manager

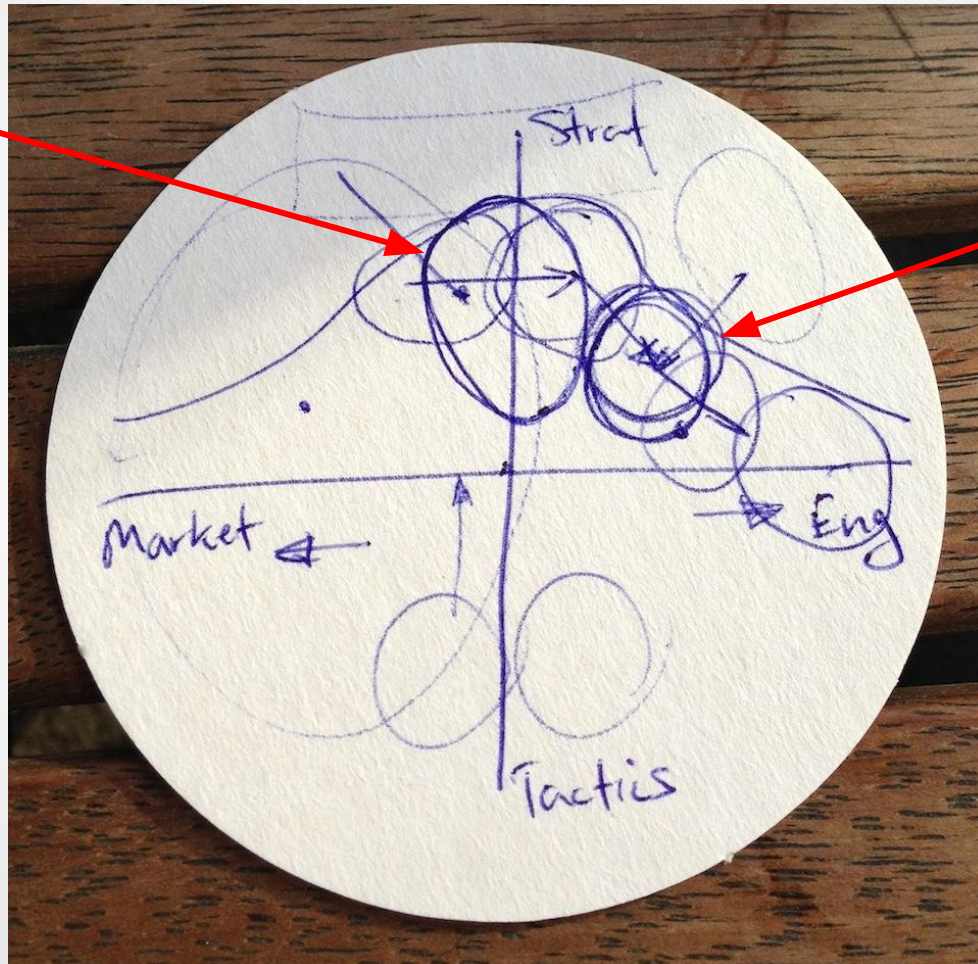
- The most critical role of a Product Manager is the strategic role.

Strategic	Tactical
Understanding the market problem, and educating others	Writing website collateral
Looking for the next problem/opportunity/growth.	Product specifications
Understanding your competitors path	Massaging bug prioritization
Position the product effectively according to your target market	Sitting on endless sales calls

"Strategy is about making choices, trade-offs; it's about deliberately choosing to be different." - Michael Porter

Role of the Product Manager

PM should be 'around' here



TPM

*A beer coaster diagram, thanks to
@nickcoster*

Distractions & problems

- E-mail overload and inefficient use of e-mail.
- Grey definition of team members responsibilities and tasks (needs to be black & white).
- Too many meetings.
- Wearing multiple hats (small team size).
- Resistance to delegate.
- That feeling of Groundhog Day. What's changed/improved?

All this (and many others) can build up to contribute towards feeling stressed, overworked or like that there's no end in sight.

The result?

- You're not navigating the ship
- Your competition could fly right by
- Frustration can build up and you burn out
- You lose key people from your team

**So what can we do to
avoid this?**



If you're swimming in e-mails

- Open e-mail only at certain times of the day
- On certain days of the week
- Delete e-mails that you don't need to action
- Remove yourself from as many distribution lists as humanly possible

Increase transparency

- Document the key outcomes each employee is responsible for in a quarter
- Share this with everyone in the company
- Will increase accountability and remove grey areas (needs to be black and white)
- *90-day contract example*



Reduce mayhem

- If you're wearing many different hats, try to establish some sanity
- Form healthy habits (rather than 'whatever')
- For example, different location for each 'hat'.
Certain times of the day where your desk is open.
- *Product Planning Room*



Quarterly open reviews

- Off site team session every quarter
- What's working, what's not
- No titles, no rank
- *Assists with decompressing (avoids build up -> burnout)*

	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Solving customer issues quickly* PM team's forward looking roadmaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Too many customer issues are being reported* Sales and Marketing aren't getting the roadmap info soon enough* Upper management doesn't seem to know what is in the pipe



Suitcase
for really
short
holiday.

