



Introducing Product Goals, North Stars & True Norths

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This tutorial will look at...

- Why use product goals – the benefits
- Goal based planning and 3 planning horizons
 - Aside: Daily planning and rapid response
 - Planning in the face of VUCA & TUNA: the *Stockdale paradox*
- Formulating goals using *Moore's template* and *Amazon Press release*
- When to create and who
 - Intermission: Goals v. Objectives
- Supporting with FAQ and Fan mail
- 6 Step example process

a product is any **object, service, or system offered** to ... satisfy a customer's need or want. Products may be tangible, ..., or **intangible**, such as **services, digital offerings** ... created through processes of design, production, and distribution,

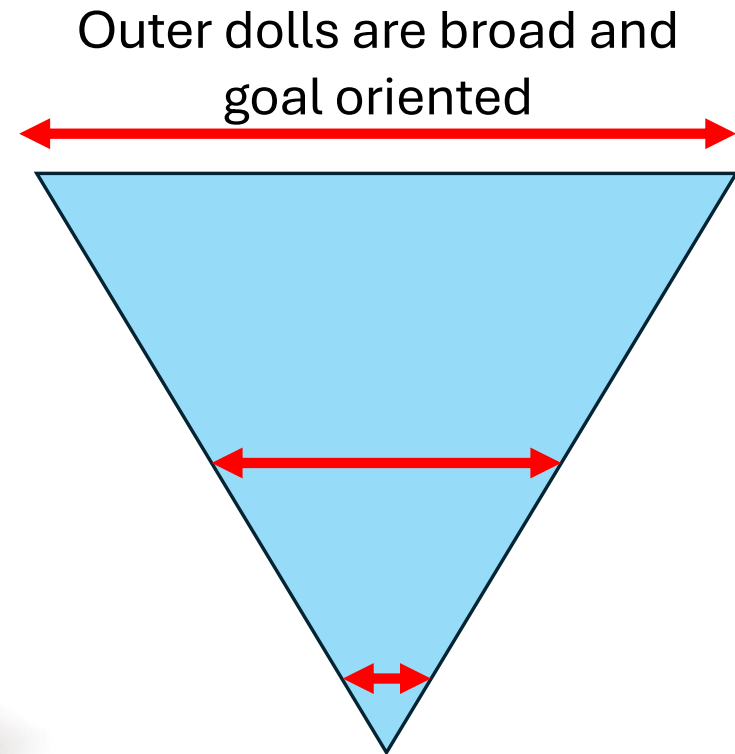
Talking product

Longevity with multiple versions

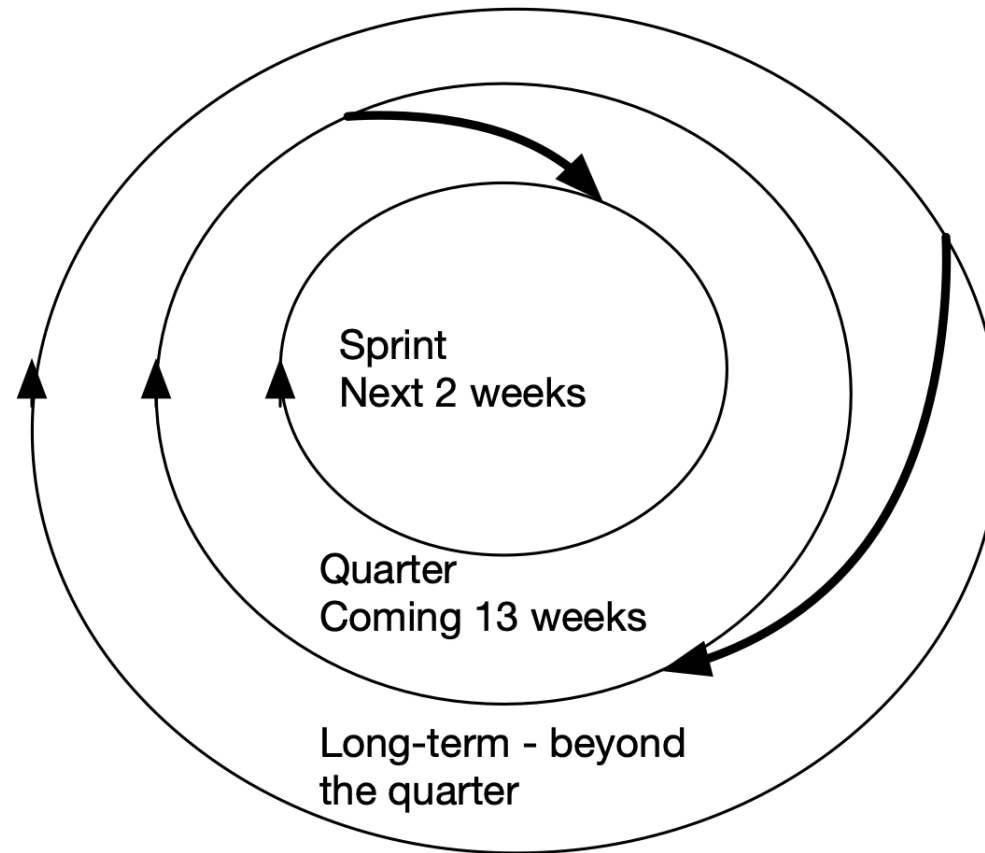
Often a business itself, or “mini-business”

Wikipedia - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Product_\(business\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Product_(business))

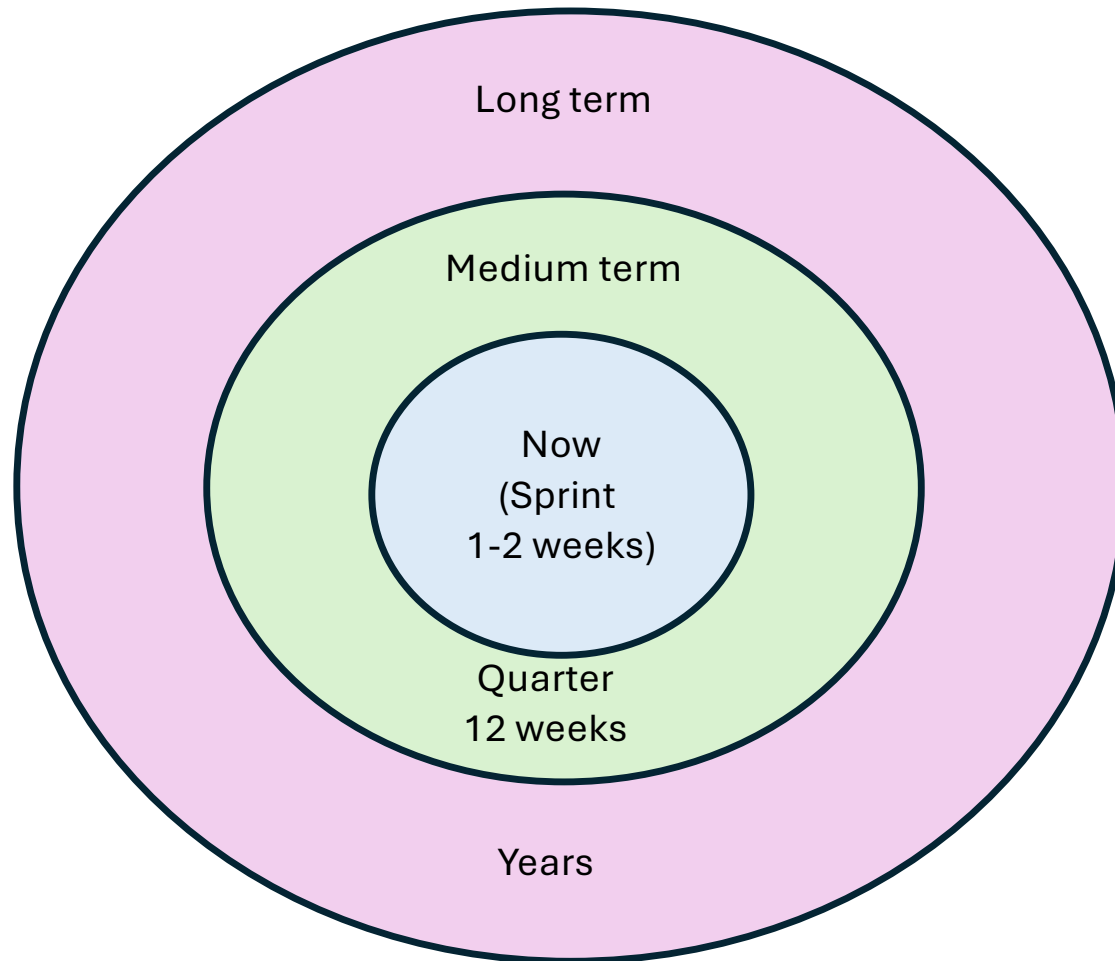
Nested goals and plans



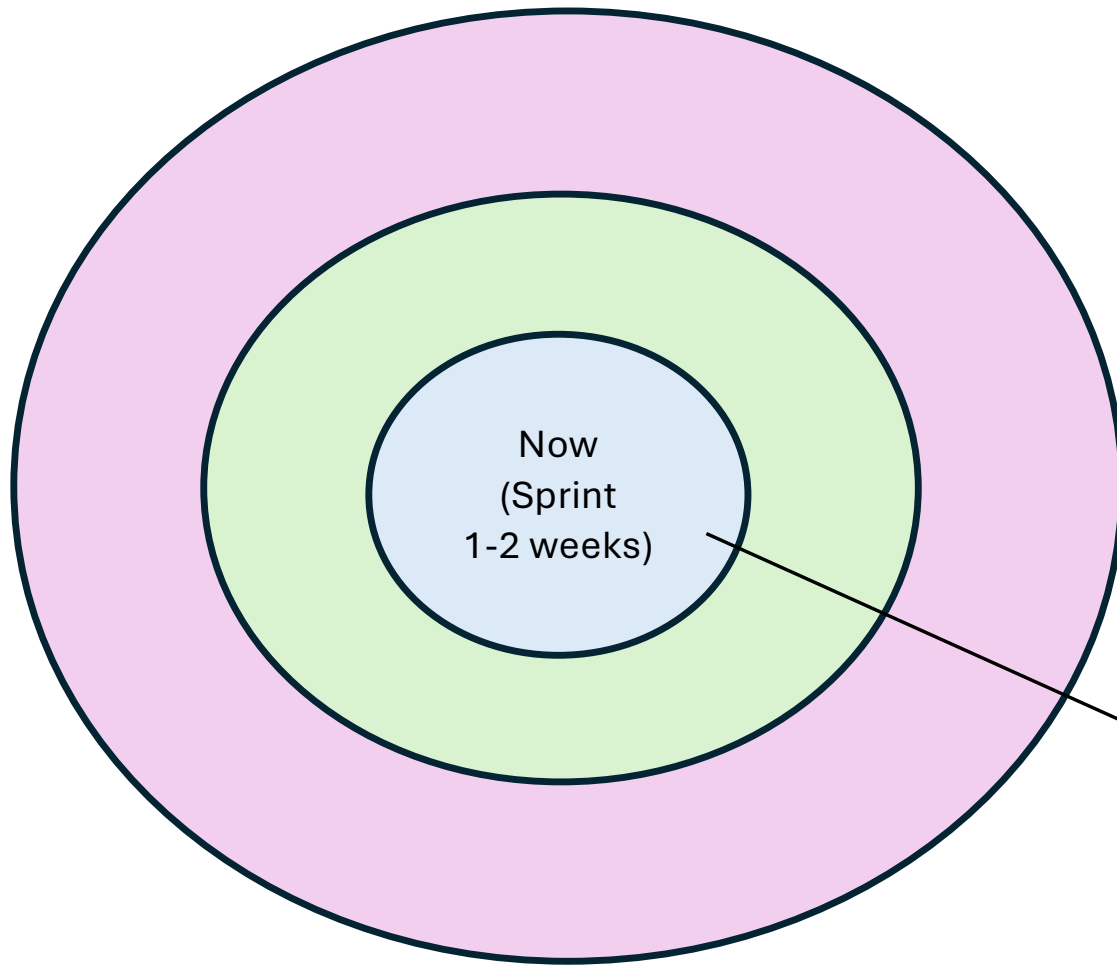
3 Planning Horizons



3 Planning horizons

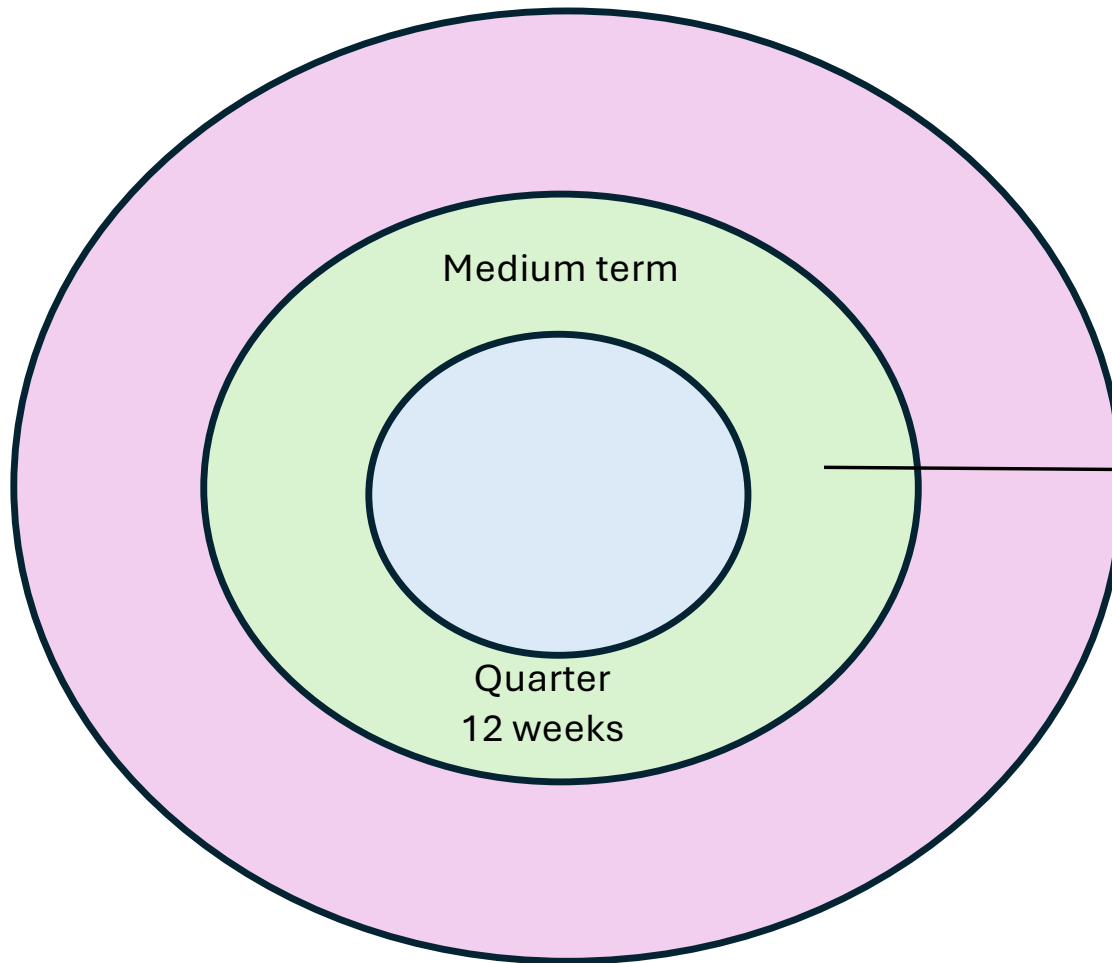


3 Planning horizons



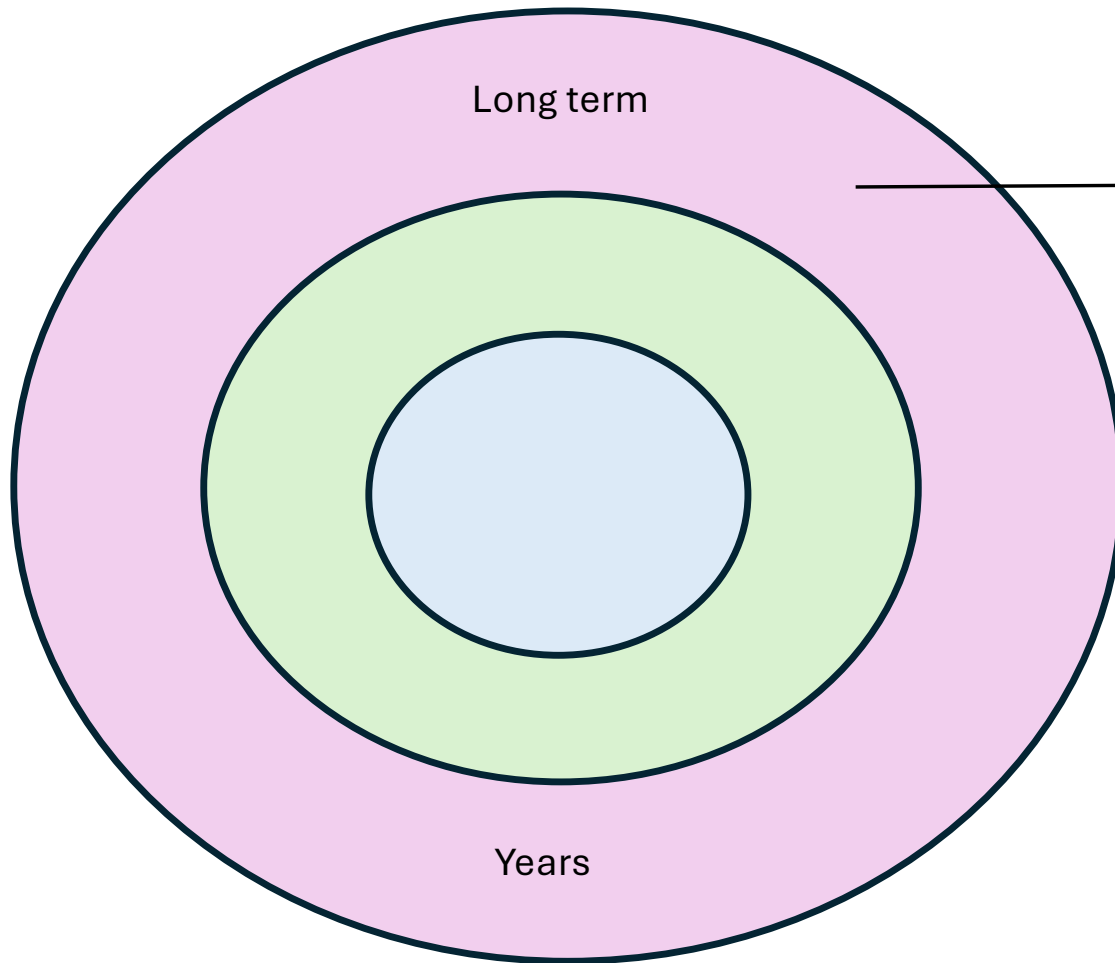
Now & 1-2 weeks hence
Highly predictable
Operational – Action oriented tasks
Plan with Sprints/Iterations, e.g. Scrum

3 Planning horizons



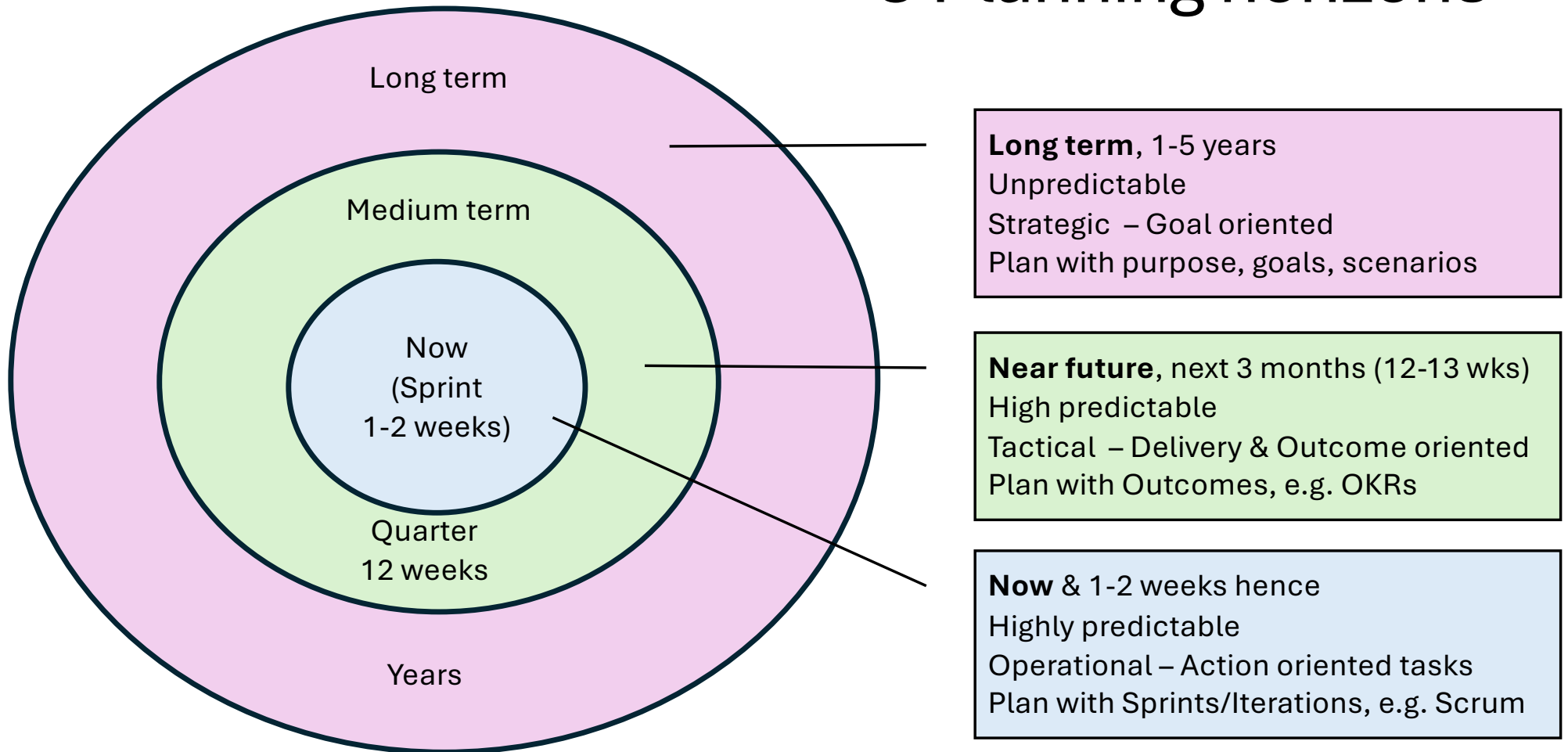
Near future, next 3 months (12-13 wks)
High predictable
Tactical – Delivery & Outcome oriented
Plan with Outcomes, e.g. OKRs

3 Planning horizons



Long term, 1-5 years
Unpredictable
Strategic – Goal oriented
Plan with purpose, goals, scenarios

3 Planning horizons



Exercise: How long are your cycles?



1. Write down the cycle lengths.
2. Next, write down what ceremonies and events you would want in each cycle.
3. Work out a more detailed schedule for the next three months.
4. Talk this through with your team, colleagues and bosses. What else would they want to include? What might you be able to remove?

Aside

Daily planning



Rapid response



“You need to plan the way a fire department plans. It cannot anticipate fires, so it has to shape a flexible organization that is capable of responding to unpredictable events.”

Andy Grove,
High Output Management



Benefits of Goals based planning

Exercise

What benefits do you see in having goals?
Any disadvantages?



	General	Quarter – 13 weeks	Year and beyond
Benefits			
Disadvantage			

Benefit of thinking ahead

Value of Product with a unifying overarching goal $> \sum$ Value of Individual features

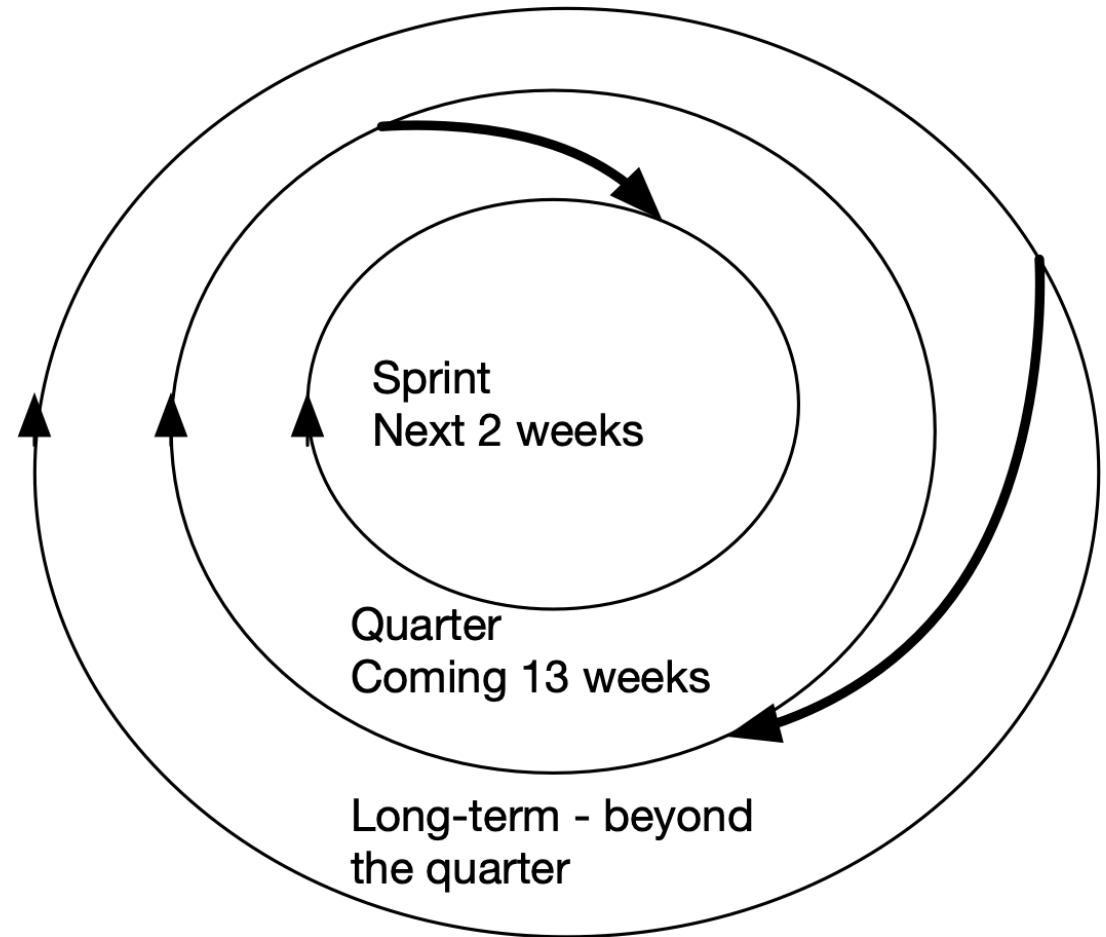
A product built to meet a common, unified, goal will be worth more than a similar product which is built as a collection of features



Goal based planning

Task based plans are fragile

Goals are stable (more)



"It's okay to spend a lot of time arguing about which route to take to San Francisco when everyone wants to end up there, but a lot of time gets wasted in such arguments if one person wants to go to San Francisco and another secretly wants to go to San Diego."

Steve Jobs

Time spent goal setting pays back through time saved in decision making and product consistency.

Involve everyone

Ultimately goal setting, and all planning, is learning.

The world is...

VUCA

Volatile

Uncertain

Complex

Ambiguous



TUNA

Turbulent

Uncertain

Novel

Ambiguous

How do you plan in such an environment?

Stockdale paradox

“You must maintain unwavering faith that you can and will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties,
AND at the same time have the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be.”

A plan would be misleading
No plan could survive in PoW camp
Plan failure would be demoralising
Have a goal and keep aiming for your goal



Admiral James Stockdale,
1923-2005

Prisoner of War
1965-1973

Good to Great, Jim Collins, 1994

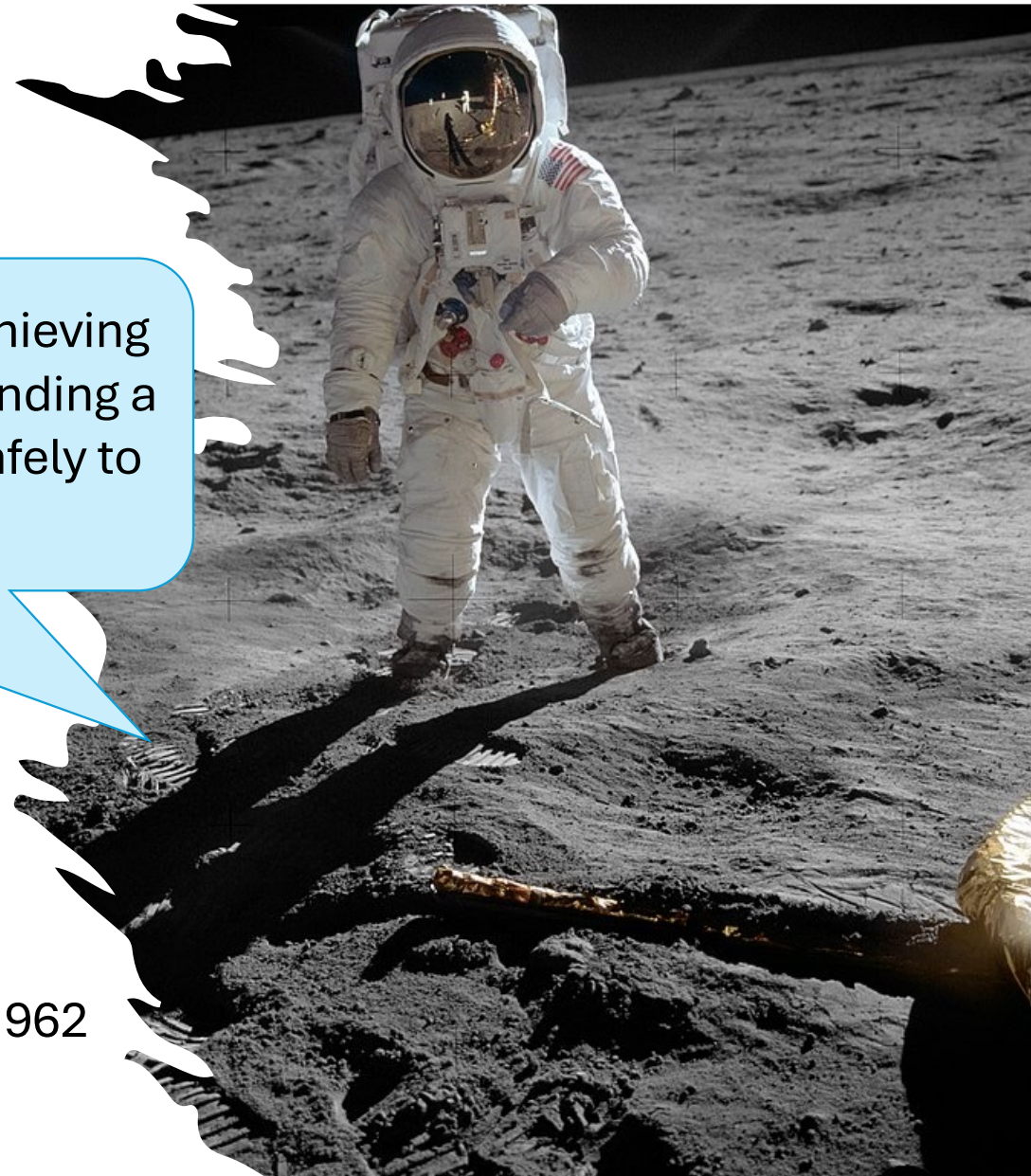
Start with goal

“this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before the decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth.” John F. Kennedy, 1961

NASA didn't have a rocket big enough

- Didn't know how to land on the moon
- Didn't have life support capsule
- Or lander to do the job

Lunar Orbit Rendezvous only agreed in 1962



How do you plan in the face of uncertainty?

Plan with goals / objectives

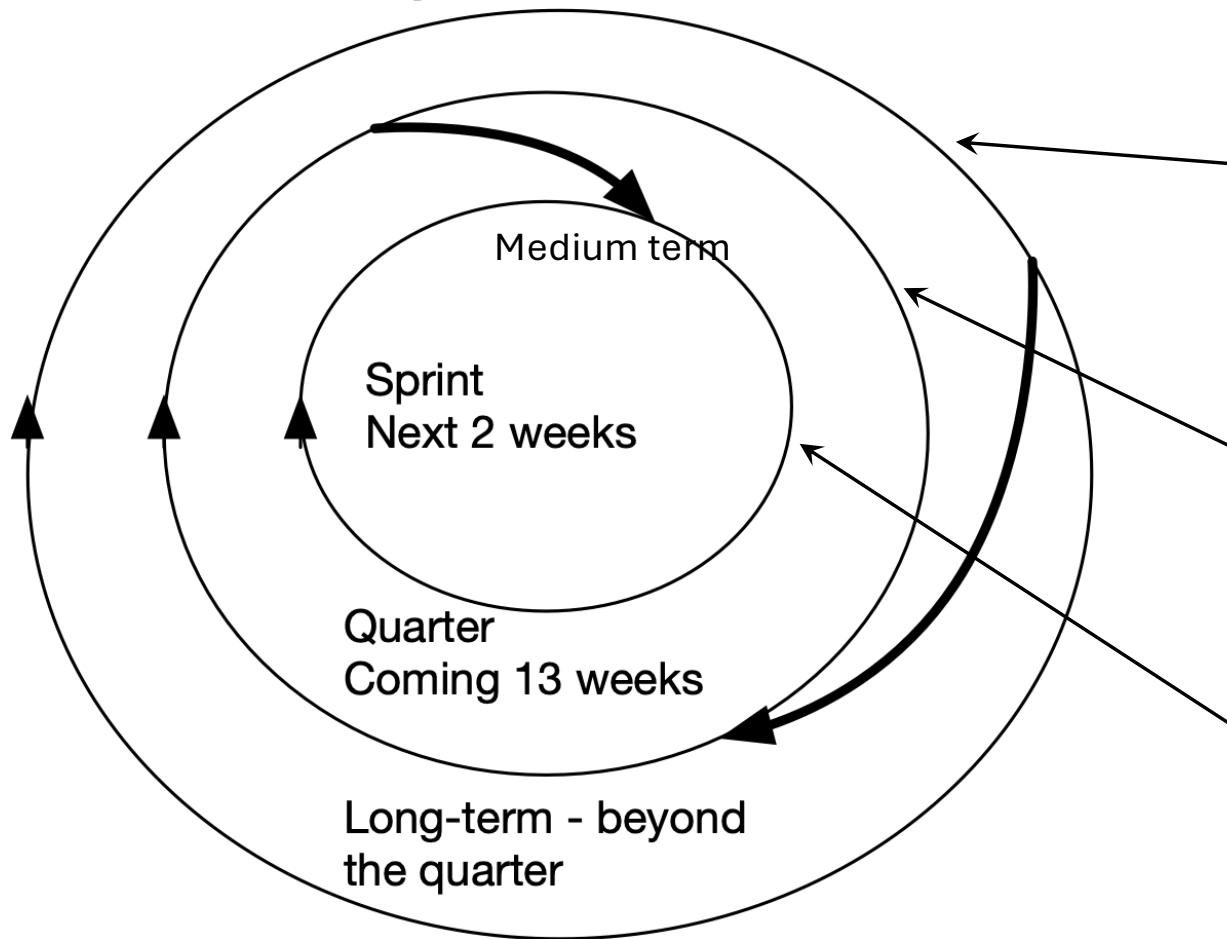
Outcomes you wish to bring about

Postpone the details & tasks

Details just in time

Keep returning to your goal and asking: *what now?*

Planning by time horizon



Long term, 1-5 years
Unpredictable
Strategic – Goal oriented
Product collaborating with Leadership & Team

Near future, *The Quarter*
Next 3 months (12-13 wks)
Bridging with Objectives
Product Manager lead with team

Now – 2 weeks, *The Sprint (Xanpan)*
Action based task planning

Long term goals

- Agree common goal
- Create common mindset
- Inform & align decision making for coherent decision
- Start with the end in mind and **then** plan backwards

Value of Product with a unifying overarching goal $>$ \sum Value of Individual features

Goal v. Objective

Goals & Objectives: The same, bit different

Both goals and objective are desired outcomes

Goal, long term, details yet to be decided

Objective, sooner, months, details tightly defined, e.g. OKR

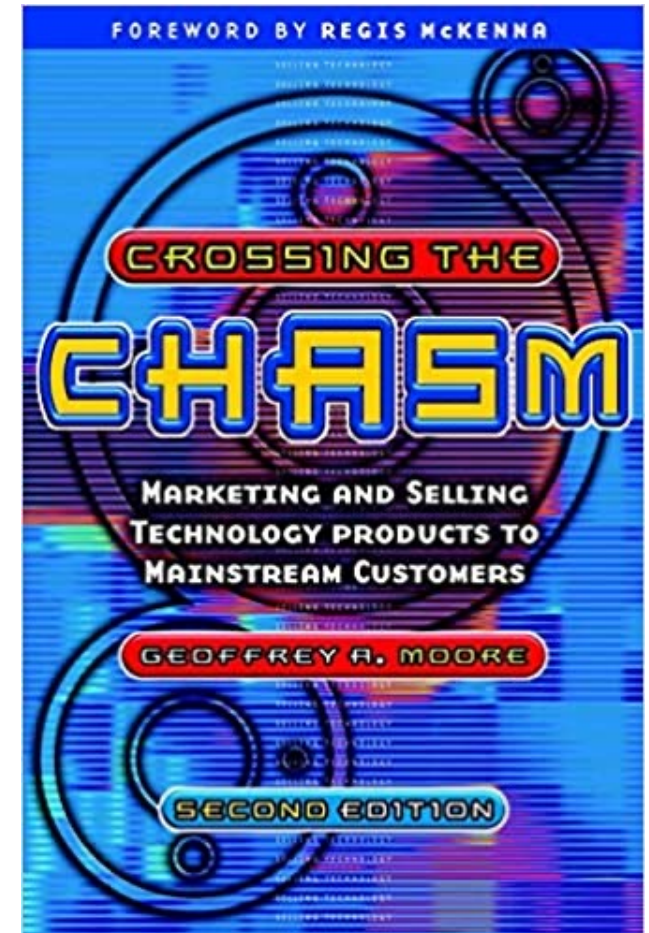
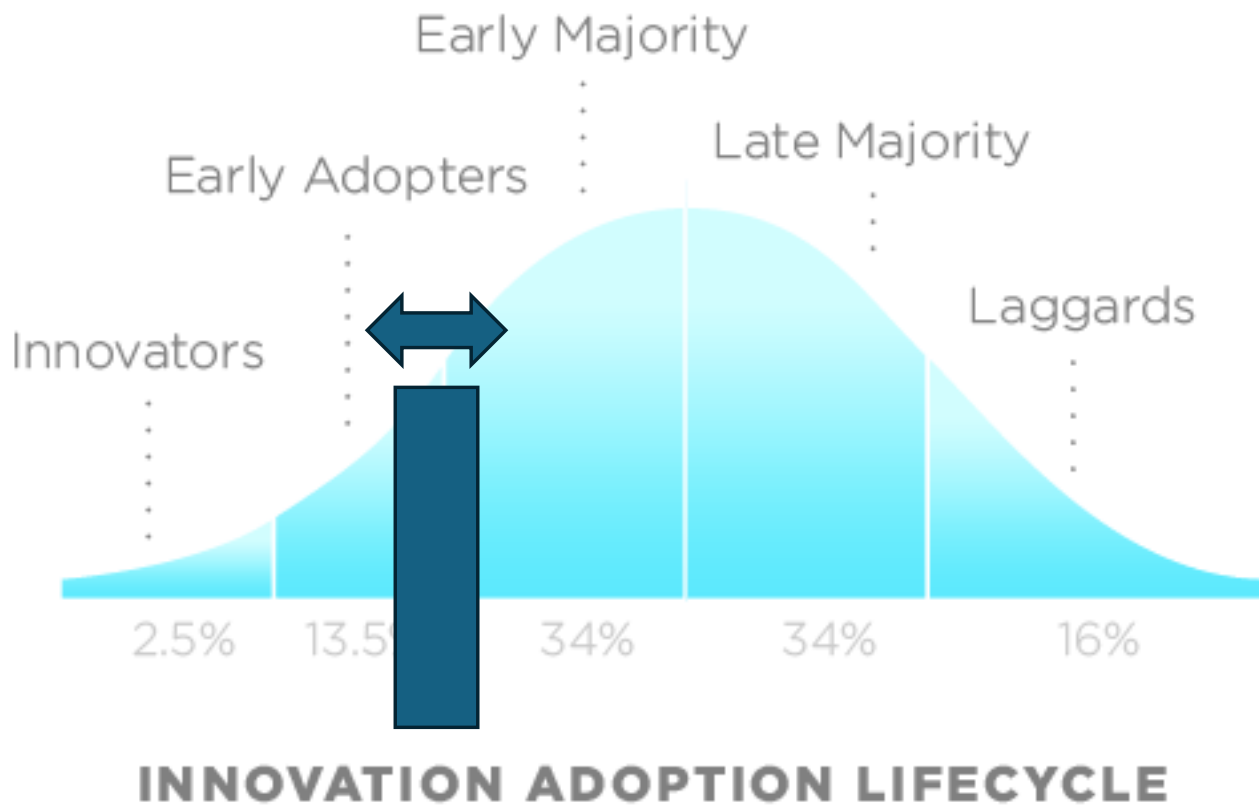
Goals & Objectives: The same, bit different

"To help clarify this distinction it is helpful to use the word 'goal' to express overall values and desires and to use the word 'objective' to denote specific operational targets."

Richard Rumelt
Good Strategy/Bad Strategy 2011

Formulation

Moore's product vision template



Geoffrey A. Moore, *Crossing the Chasm*

Moore's Template

For

target customer

Who

have the following problem

Our product is a

describe the product or solution

That Provides

cite the breakthrough capability

Unlike

reference competition

Our product/ solution

*describe the key point of competitive
differentiation*

Palm pilot example...

(1990s)



For busy technology executives on the move

Who need rapid access to an up-to-date calendar and address book

Our product is an affordable pocket sized electronic organizer

That Provides up to date calendar and address book through simple synchronisation with desktop systems

Palm pilot example (continued)

Unlike Psion our product works with existing PC (DOS & Windows)



Unlike HP 95LX & Poquet it is uncluttered by desktop apps; is simpler to use, and not compromised by needing to run DOS applications (does not appear under powered)



Palm pilot example...



Our product provides a complete solution to for those needing an up to date (synchronised) calendar and address book while on the move and is affordable to individuals rather than requiring corporate spend authorisation.

Moore's Template exercise



For	<i>target customer</i>
Who	<i>have the following problem</i>
Our product is a	<i>describe the product or solution</i>
That Provides	<i>cite the breakthrough capability</i>
Unlike	<i>reference competition</i>
Our product/ solution	<i>describe the key point of competitive differentiation</i>

Exercise: Complete the template for your product

Amazon style press release

Press release template

Headline	<i>product name</i>
Customer	<i>target customer</i>
Summary	<i>short, might be the furthest read</i>
Problem statement	<i>customer's problem that you solve</i>
Solution	<i>how your product solves the problem</i>
Your executive quote	<i>product quote from your side</i>
How to start	<i>what does reader need to do?</i>
Customer quote	<i>what might a customer say?</i>
Call to action	<i>next action for the customer</i>

Revolutionary Palm Pilot electronic diary

Palm Inc. today announced a game changer for busy tech executives who are always on the go. The pocket-sized Palm Pilot combines always up-to-date electronic diary and address book with seamless integration to all standard office tools.

In today's rapidly changing world executives struggle with diaries and address books fragmented across paper Filofax, secretary's PC and a stack of Post-It notes.



Revolutionary Palm Pilot

The easy to update Palm Pilot simply removes paper while two-way synchronises eliminates discrepancies between PC and on-the-go Pilot.



Palm Inc. CEO Jeff Hawkins said "I built the Palm Pilot to solve the problems that successful CEOs like me have knowing what they are doing next and eliminate the stack of paper with different phone numbers for the same people. The Pilot has changed my life."

Revolutionary Palm Pilot

Palm Pilots are available exclusively from *Best Buy* with fresh supplies arriving daily.

Marketing executive and beta tester Jane Smith said "I never leave home without my Pilot, not only does it streamline my office life but it sorts out my home and social life. I can't imagine going back to paper."

To experience the Palm Pilot today get down to your local Best Buy. Give them the code "PR1234" to get a 10% discount this week.



Key elements

All present

Revolutionary Palm Pilot electronic diary

Product name

Customer

Summary

Customer

Palm Inc. today announced a game changer for busy tech executives who are always on the go. The pocket-sized Palm Pilot combines always up-to-date electronic diary and address book with seamless integration to all standard office tools.

Problem

In today's rapidly changing world executives struggle with diaries and address books fragmented across paper, Filofax, secretary's PC and a stack of Post-It notes.



Revolutionary Palm Pilot

Solution

The easy to update Palm Pilot simply removes paper while two-way synchronises eliminates discrepancies between PC and on-the-go Pilot.



Your quote

Announcing the Palm Inc. CEO Jeff Hawkins said "I built the Palm Pilot to solve the problems that successful CEOs like me have knowing what they are doing next and eliminate the stack of paper with different phone numbers for the same people. The Pilot has changed my life."

Revolutionary Palm Pilot

Get started

Palm Pilots are available exclusively from *Best Buy* with fresh supplies arriving daily.

Customer quote

Marketing executive and beta tester Jane Smith said "I never leave home without my Pilot, not only does it streamline my office life but it sorts out my home and social life. I can't imagine going back to paper."

Call to action

To experience the Palm Pilot today get down to your local Best Buy. Give them the code "PR1234" to get a 10% discount this week.



Exercise: Polish

- This press release is NOT perfect
 - In fact, it hasn't been polished
- Your exercise:
 - Download the press release
 - Polish it, improve it, make it better



Exercise Press release



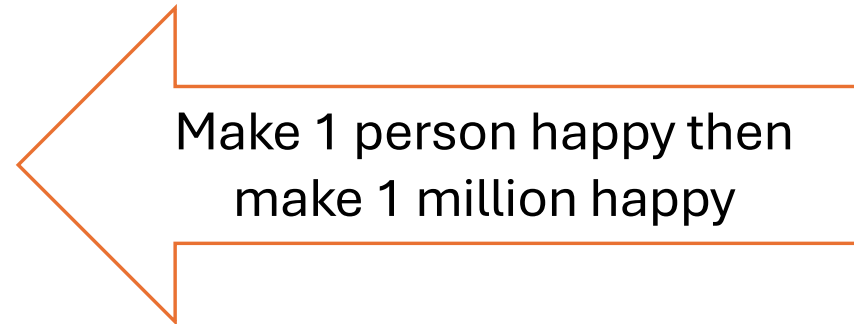
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Exercise: Complete the template for your product

Intermission: Creation process

Common elements

- Customer
- Problem & Solution
- Benefits
- Write from a customer perspective
- Avoid features & technology



Imaginative but grounded

Draft with placeholders
for work to be done

Laundry App

For

Who

Our product is a

That Provides

Unlike

Our product/solution

TODO: research ideal customer

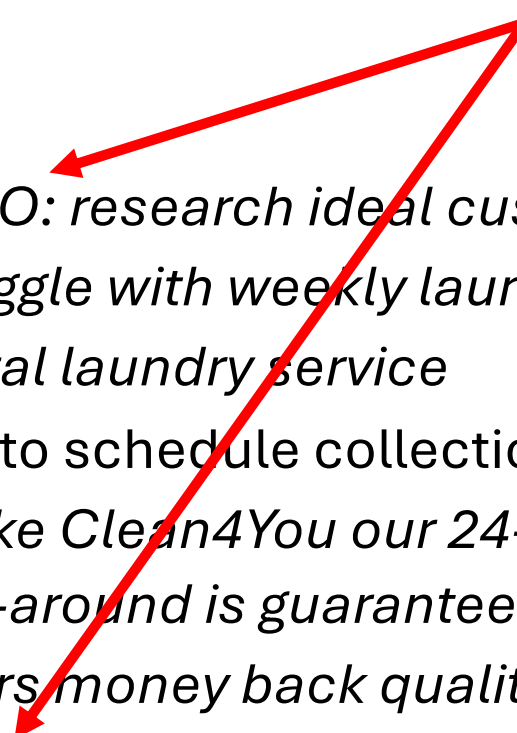
Struggle with weekly laundry

Digital laundry service

App to schedule collection & delivery

*Unlike Clean4You our 24-hour
turn-around is guaranteed*

*Offers money back quality guarantee
(TODO: hypothesis will this sell?)*



Questions

When is the best time to create a product goal?

Who should create the product goal?



When is the best time to create a product goal?

Best time: at the start

Second best time: now

The sooner you have on the better
Half complete is better than none
Iterative

Who should create the product goal?

Product Manager (Owner), Founder, Strategist

Or

The person who notices this the goal is missing

Don't wait for someone else to do it, ask "Shouldn't have a goal?"

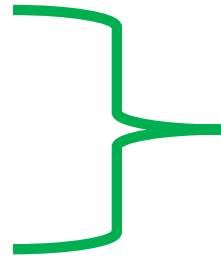
Or

Just start

2 More techniques

FAQ

Fan mail



Complements to Moore's template
and Press Release

Frequently Asked Questions

Internal FAQ

Q: Will it be available in yellow?

A: Product will only be available in corporate colours

Q: What is the profit margin?

A: The target price is \$499 with an initial profit margin of \$25.

With time we expect this to increase to \$100.

External FAQ

Q: What is the retail price?

A: Retail price will be decided closer to launch. We are committed to making it affordable.

Exercise

- Start your FAQ(s)
- Look at previous statements and notes



Fan mail

Dear Laundry App team,

I simply must write and tell you how your service has changed my life. As a busy exec I never have enough time, but that is no excuse with clients, I need to be well dressed at all times.

Before your app entered my life I'd tried other services but everything was flawed. The laundry shop was only open when I was in the office. The collection service called when I was out. Our apartment cleaning service didn't starch the shirts properly. And my life partner was busy with our children.

Since I...

Opening lines

- Your product is the best ever because ...
- My children are in love with your product ...
- It is not often I write in appreciation but on this occasion ...
- I am in awe ...
- I wonder how I lived before I discovered ...
- I did not think it was possible ...
- Once in a lifetime ...
- I have never been so impressed as I am with ...

Write in pairs

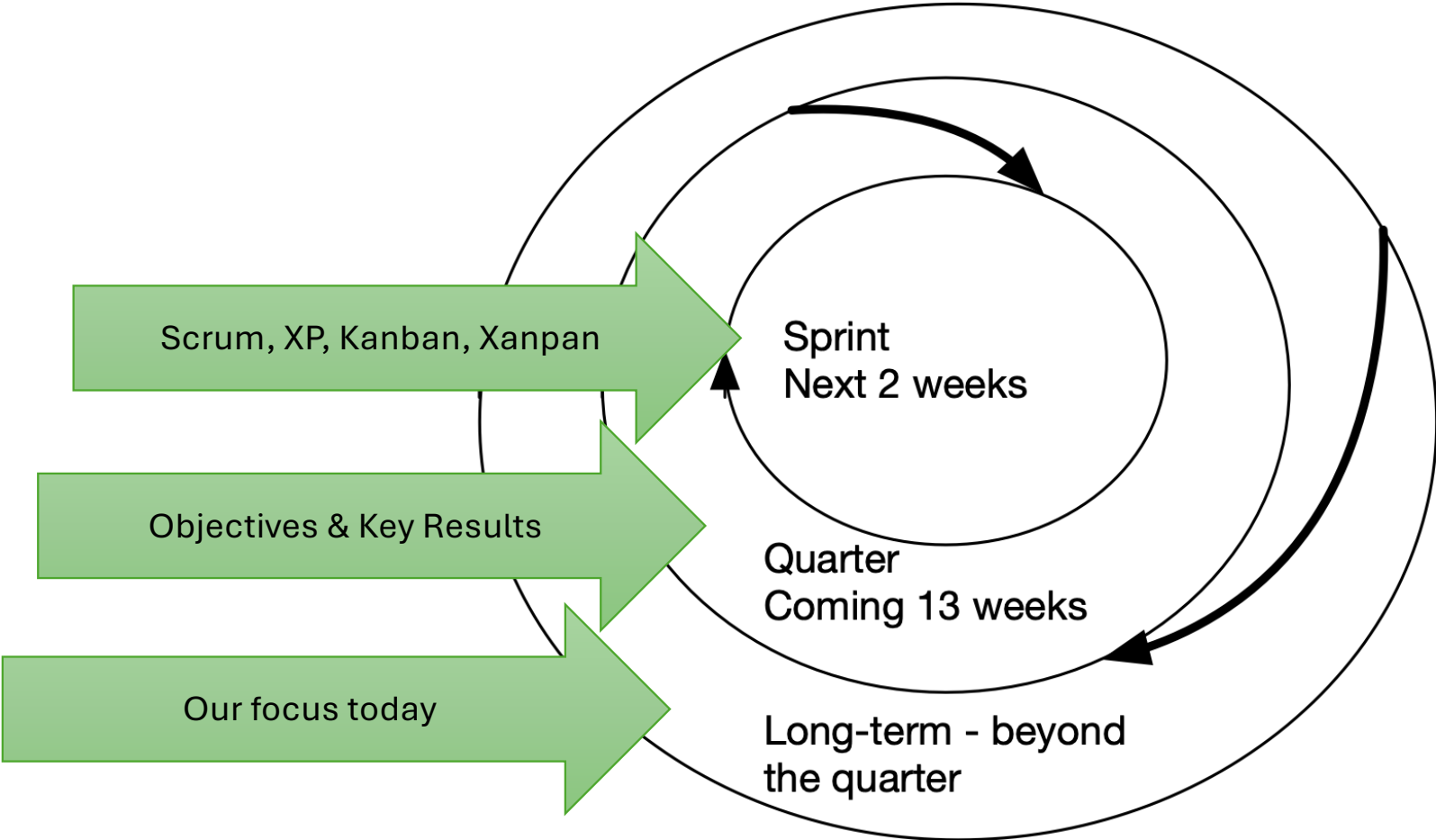


Exercise

Write your first piece of fan mail



Chapter 7: Putting it all together



Start with Moore **1**

For

TODO Research customer base

Who

TODO Interview potential customers

Our product is a

Next generation AI powered PalmPilot

That Provides

Telepathic interface

Unlike

*Apple products – **TODO Competitor research***

Our product/ solution

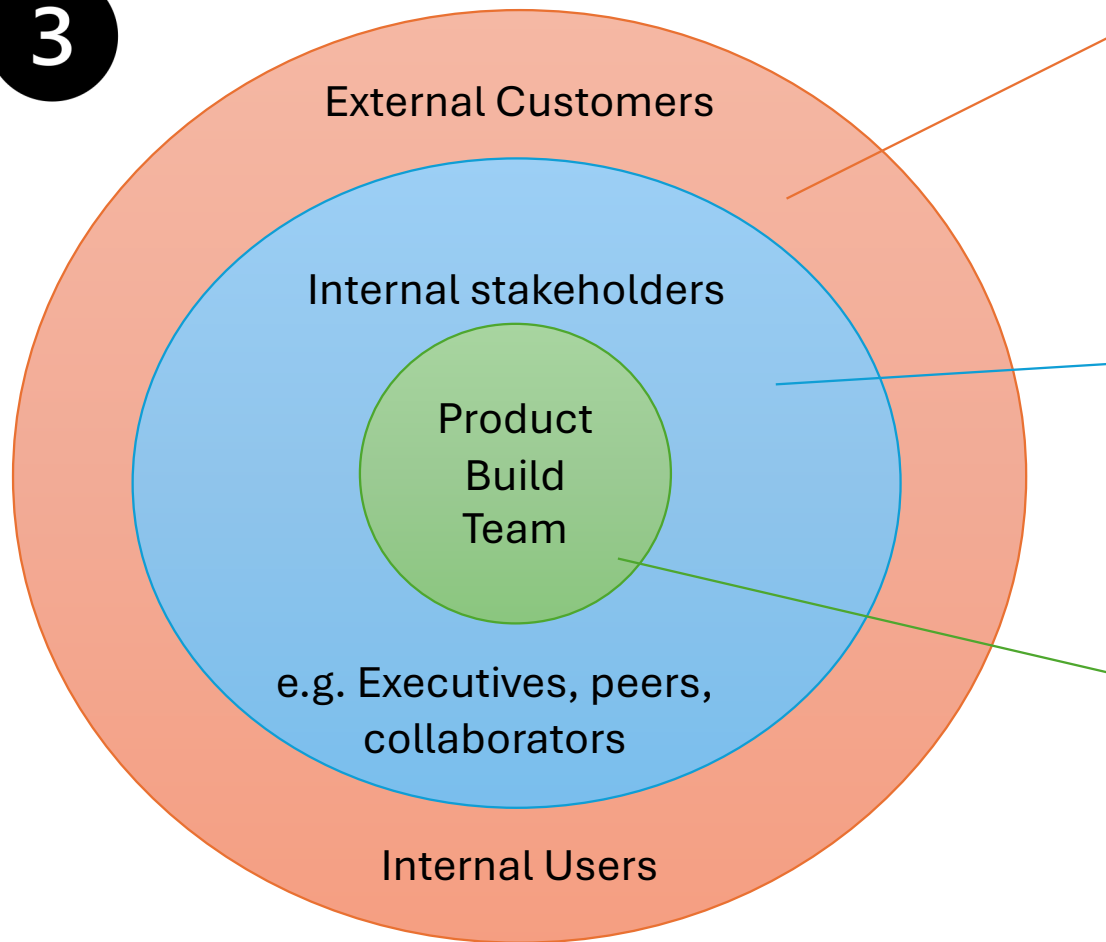
Uses a telepathic interface to turn thoughts into
actions

2

... and start your FAQ

Do your homework: consult stakeholders

3



Does it solve problems?
Does it deliver benefits?
Is it valuable?

Costs? Timelines?
Strategy?
Insights - History

Insight – History – Technology
Enrol team members
Build shared vision

Refine product goal with homework findings

4

And keep doing it

Keep seeking feedback for every more

Add to FAQ and refine goal as needed

Write your press release

5

Headline	<i>product name</i>
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Involve the build team with fan mail

- Share your product goal with the build team
- Ask team members to write fan mail
- Talk about the fan mail
- Help the team enrol in the product

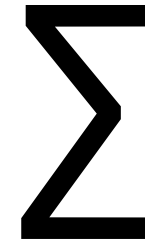
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6 steps – make them your own

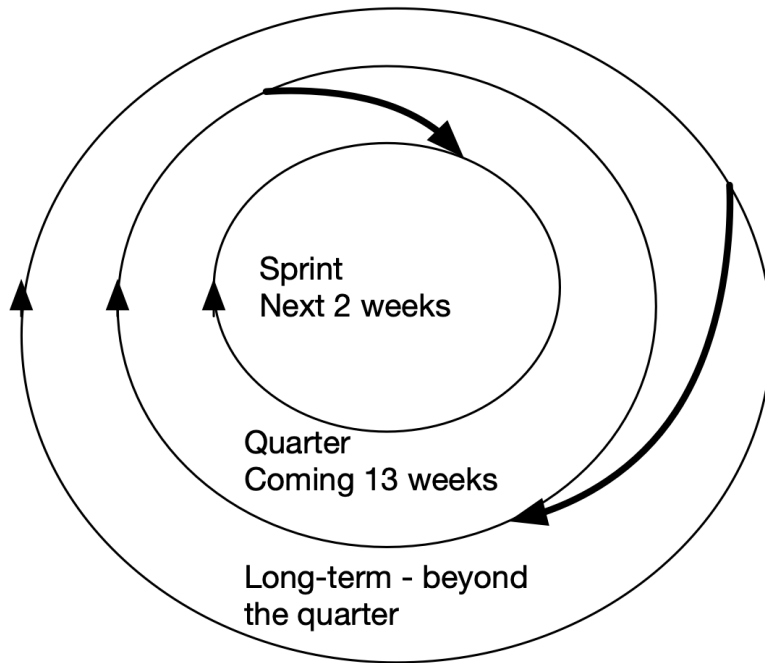
1. Moore
2. Start FAQ
3. Identify your stakeholders and customers
4. Do your homework: get feedback, answer the questions
5. Rewrite as press release
6. Share with team and write some fan mail
7. Keep going: go to 3

The end

Product with an overarching goal



Parts of a product without a unifying goal

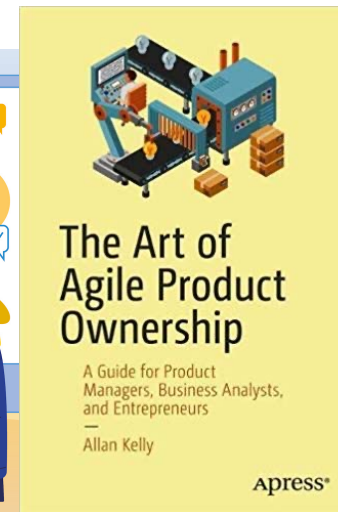


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Feedback please

<https://www.allankelly.net/productgoalfeedback>

