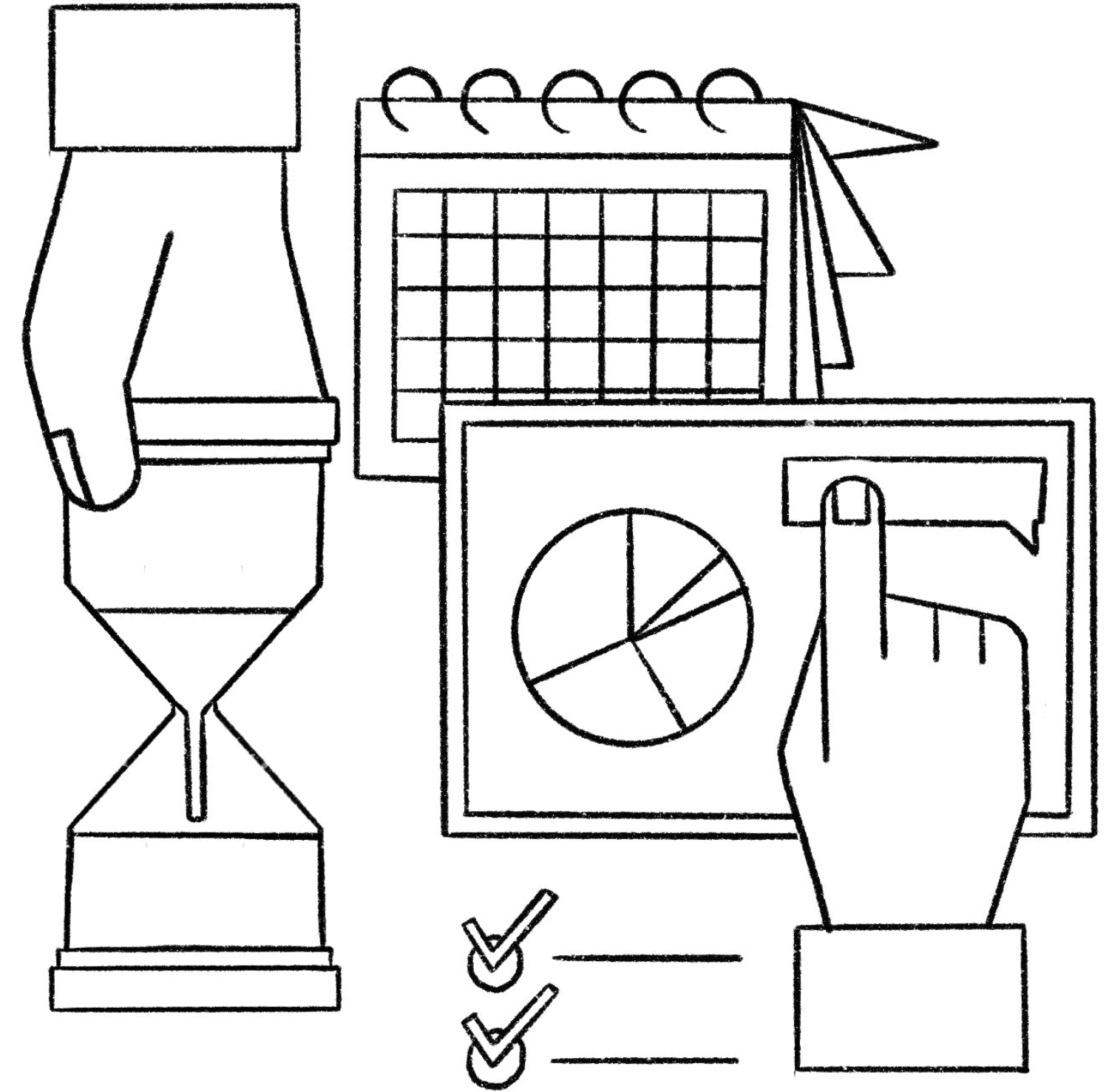


The Practice is the Product

—
From Best Practices to Adapting for Context



Have you used
or heard any of
these sentences
lately?

People feel good about doing
a practice correctly.

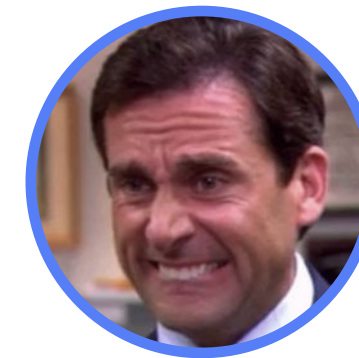




What if product management focused on everyday value instead of following a list of instructions that felt more like homework?

I was guilty of Alibi Progress myself.

Good news is, over the years that followed this former boss review, I found a way of framing work that helps you prevent this.



Former Boss

“You hid behind all the methods and tools. There was a lot of output, but the outcome was sometimes lagging.”



I always ask why they work this way.

What made them pick up this framework or methodology? While there's nothing bad with these practices per se, I have seen that there is harm in following them blindly.

Tim:

Why do you want your OKRs to contain more Outcomes?

So we can be more like Google!



Tim:

Why do you want to do more interviews?

Because that's what "the best" companies do, right?



I call this approach

Alibi Progress

[ˈæɪ.lɪ.baɪ ˈprɒʊ.gres] noun

Prioritizing **Correctness**
over Value.

So your Takeaway from this Talk

How to avoid Alibi
Progress by treating
ways of working
like a product.

“Advice is context-
dependent.
Questions are adaptable.”

James Clear
Author of Atomic Habits

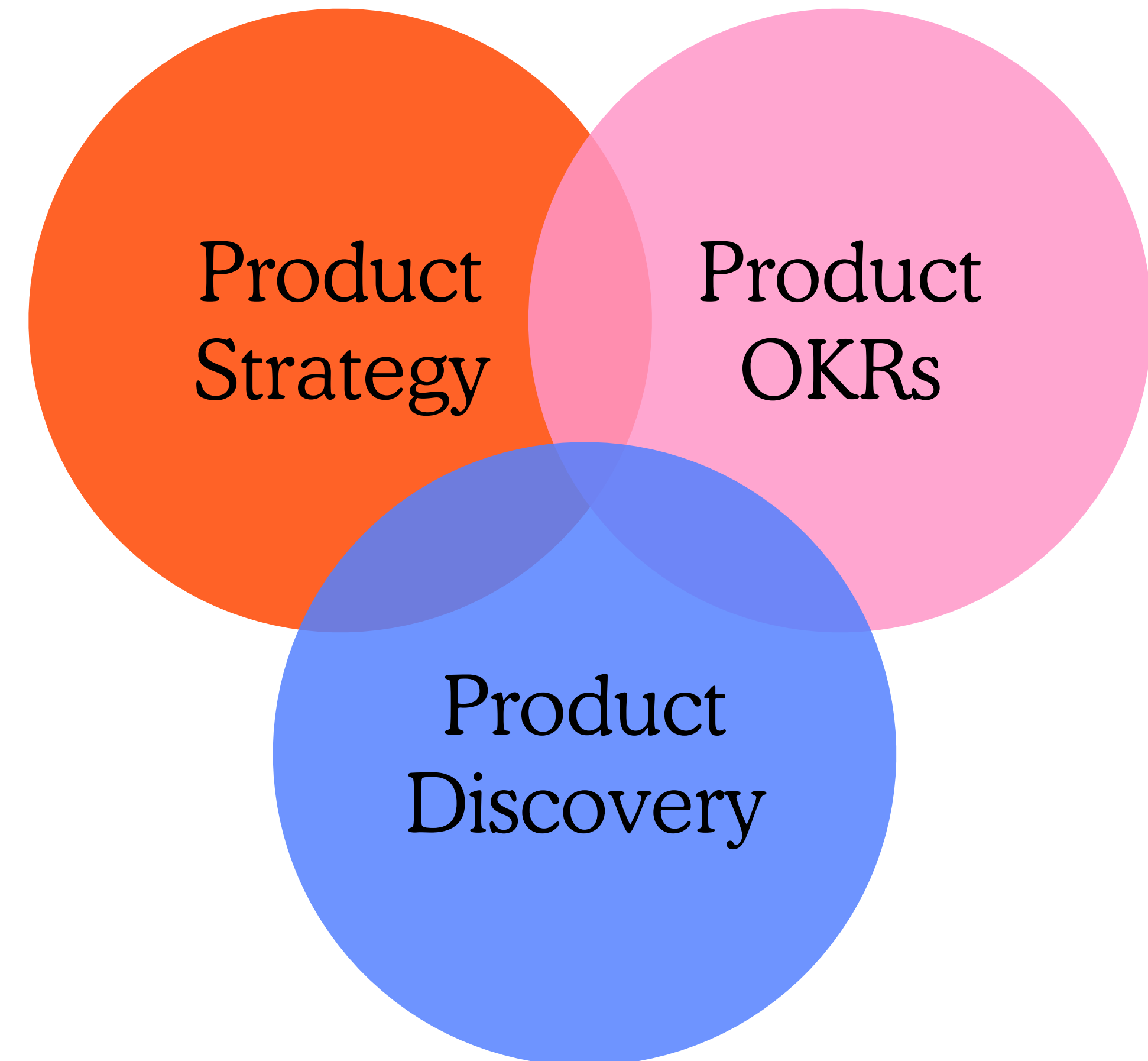


The adaptable question we're gonna use here

For whom is our way of working
Target Audience Your Product
trying to solve what problem and
Problem Worth Solving
how would we know it was solved?
Success Measures

Let's make it more tangible!

Let's look at how you would apply answering it in the context of Product Strategy, OKRs, and Product Discovery



01.

Product Strategy



Knowing where to say no, so you can say yes

That's just a
HiPPo idea
translated into
a Business
Model Canvas.



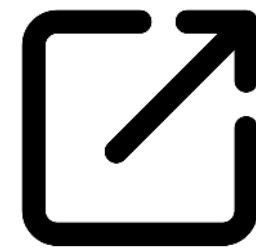


Remember!

You can avoid Alibi Progress by treating your ways of working like a product.

The first thing to figure out

For WHOM is Product Strategy



External Audiences

Those for whom Product Strategy
leads to valuable Output Creation.
Like: Users, Buyers, Champions, etc.



Internal Audiences

Those for whom Product Strategy
IS Valuable Output Like: Leadership,
Team Members, Stakeholders

Next is understanding

WHAT problem you're trying to solve

To define that, beware of:

1.

Avoid chasing opportunities just because of competitors' moves.

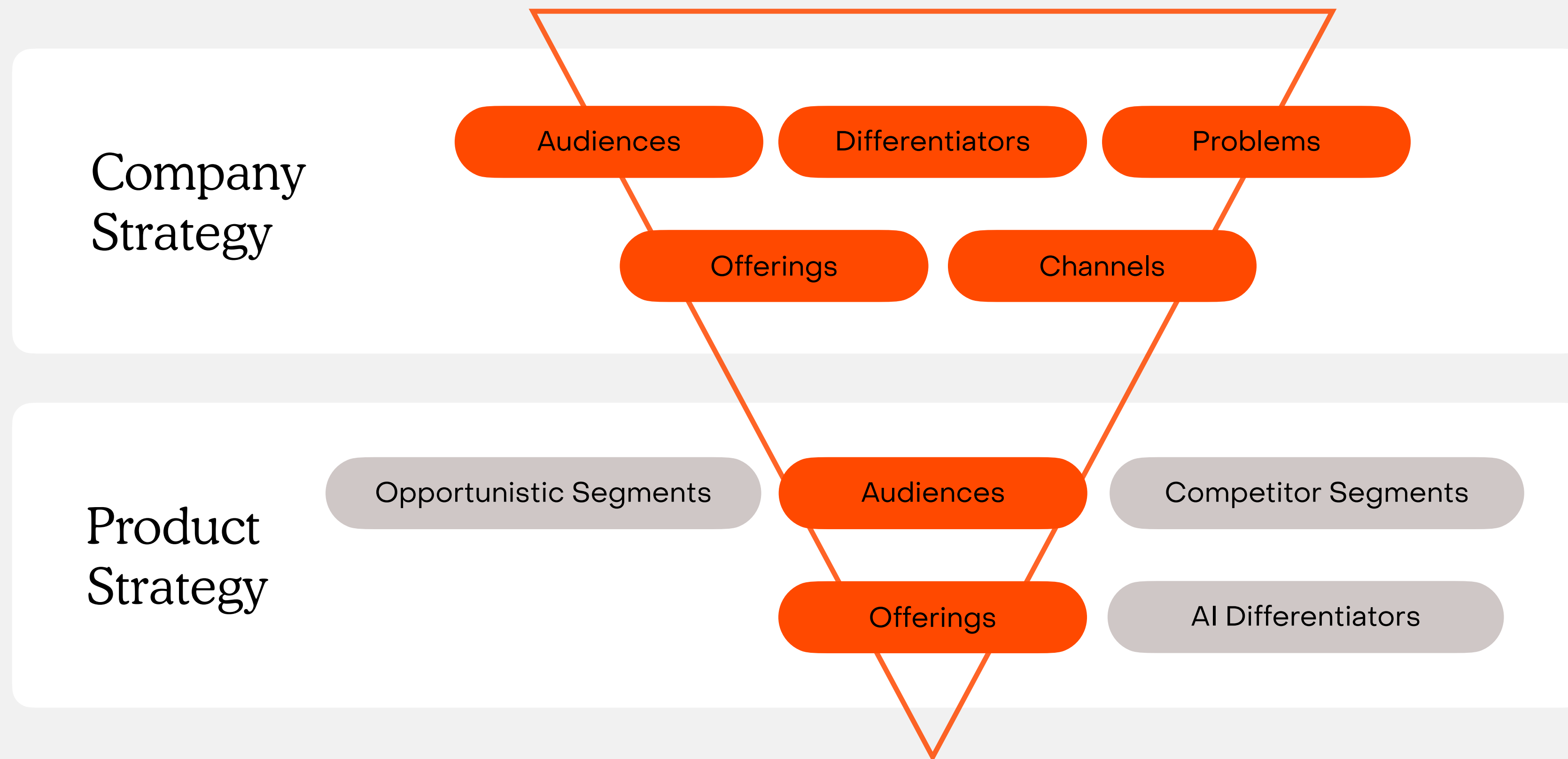
2.

Making sure you know your target audience and focus on them

And lastly define

HOW we would know it was solved

Some signs to look for would be...



Your Definition
of what
Product
Strategy should
allow you to
do differently...

...helps you to answer:

Who should work on Product Strategy?

Which format works best?

What should our Product Strategy cover?

~~You're a better PM because you filled out a Strategy template correctly.~~

You're a better PM because you said no to an opportunistic idea that doesn't fit your strategy and maintained focus for your team.

02.

Product OKRs

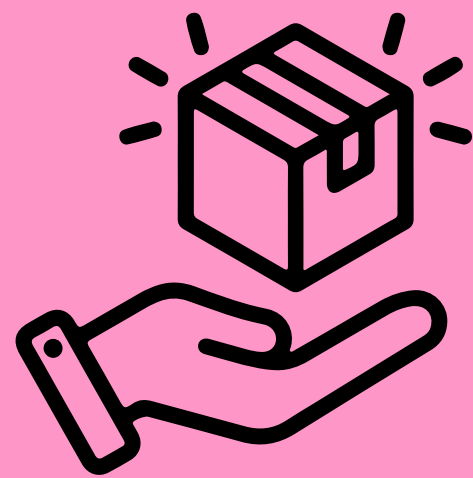


Measuring progress, not just metrics.



Do you know this feeling?

I know you do! When you're feeling good about "being done with it", that's a symptom of Alibi Progress.

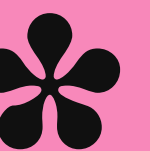


Remember!

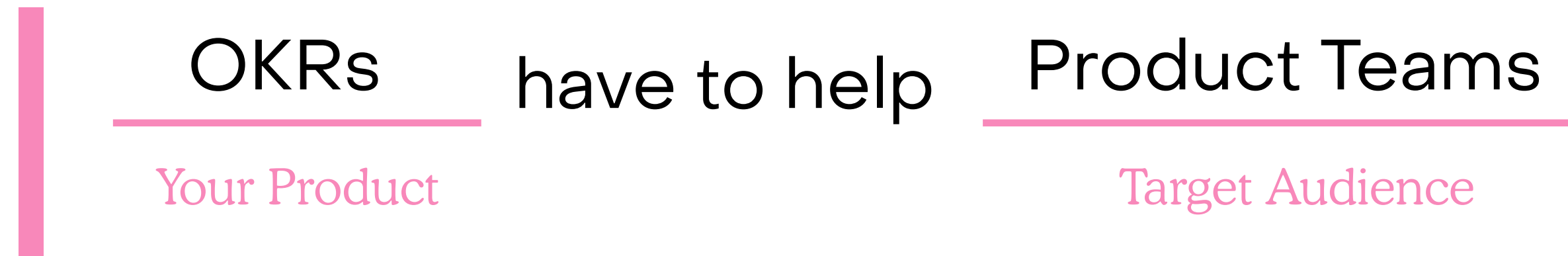
You can avoid Alibi Progress by treating your ways of working like a product.

OKRs have to help Product Teams
Your Product *Target Audience*
measure their progress towards strategic priorities
Problem Worth Solving
by responding to their everyday decisions.

We know it was effective if teams can link backlog items
& Discovery activities to strategic measures of success.
Success Measures



Your answer might look different than mine of the one from the person next to you.



Means that:

- teams should write their own OKRs
- it's your responsibility to have the inputs for OKR definitions ready.

measure their progress towards strategic priorities

Problem Worth Solving

by responding to their everyday decisions.

Means that:

- you avoid generic evergreen metrics.
- you don't chase moonshots just to never reach 100%.
- sometimes leading Outputs beat lagging Outcomes.

by responding to their everyday decisions.

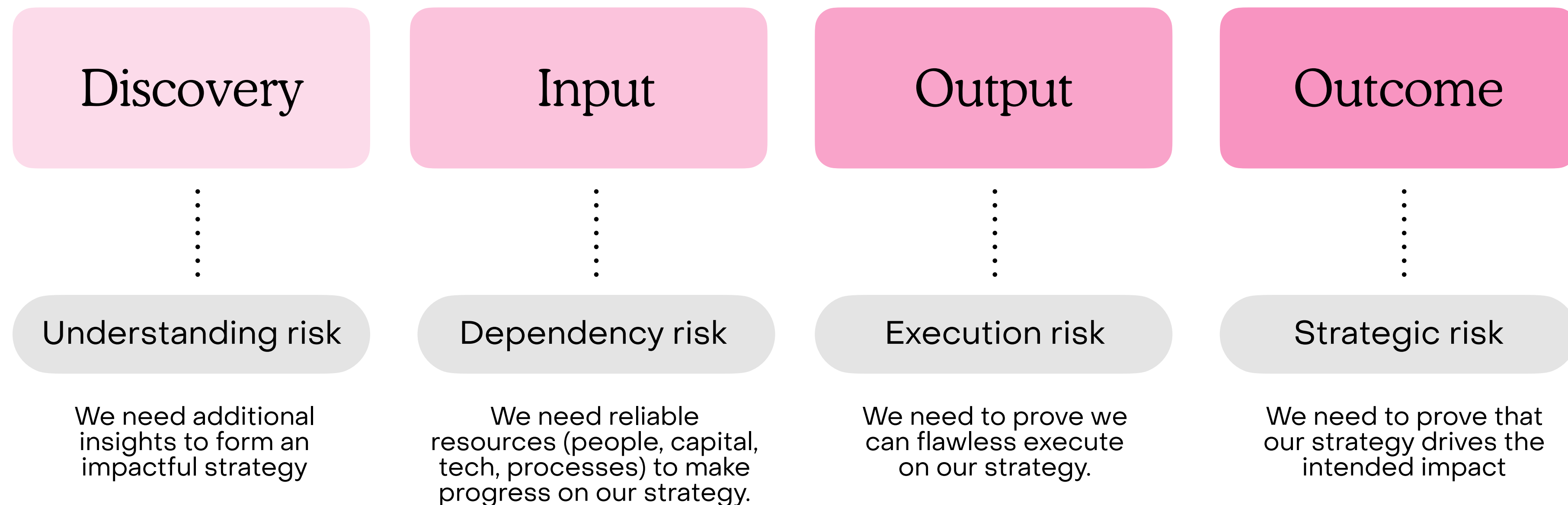
We know it was effective if teams can link backlog items
& Discovery activities to strategic measures of success.

Success Measures

Means that:

- having OKRs present and visible in decision-making moments.
- non-OKR tasks shall not eat up your capacity.
- you revisit OKRs progress more than once per quarter.

Be mindful of getting lost in dreamy outcome goals. Your goals have to match your risk.



~~You're a better PM because you
write Outcome OKRs.~~

You're a better PM because you
prioritize work that moves business
and user success metrics.

03.

Product Discovery



Reducing uncertainty over picking techniques.

Alibi Progress Symptoms

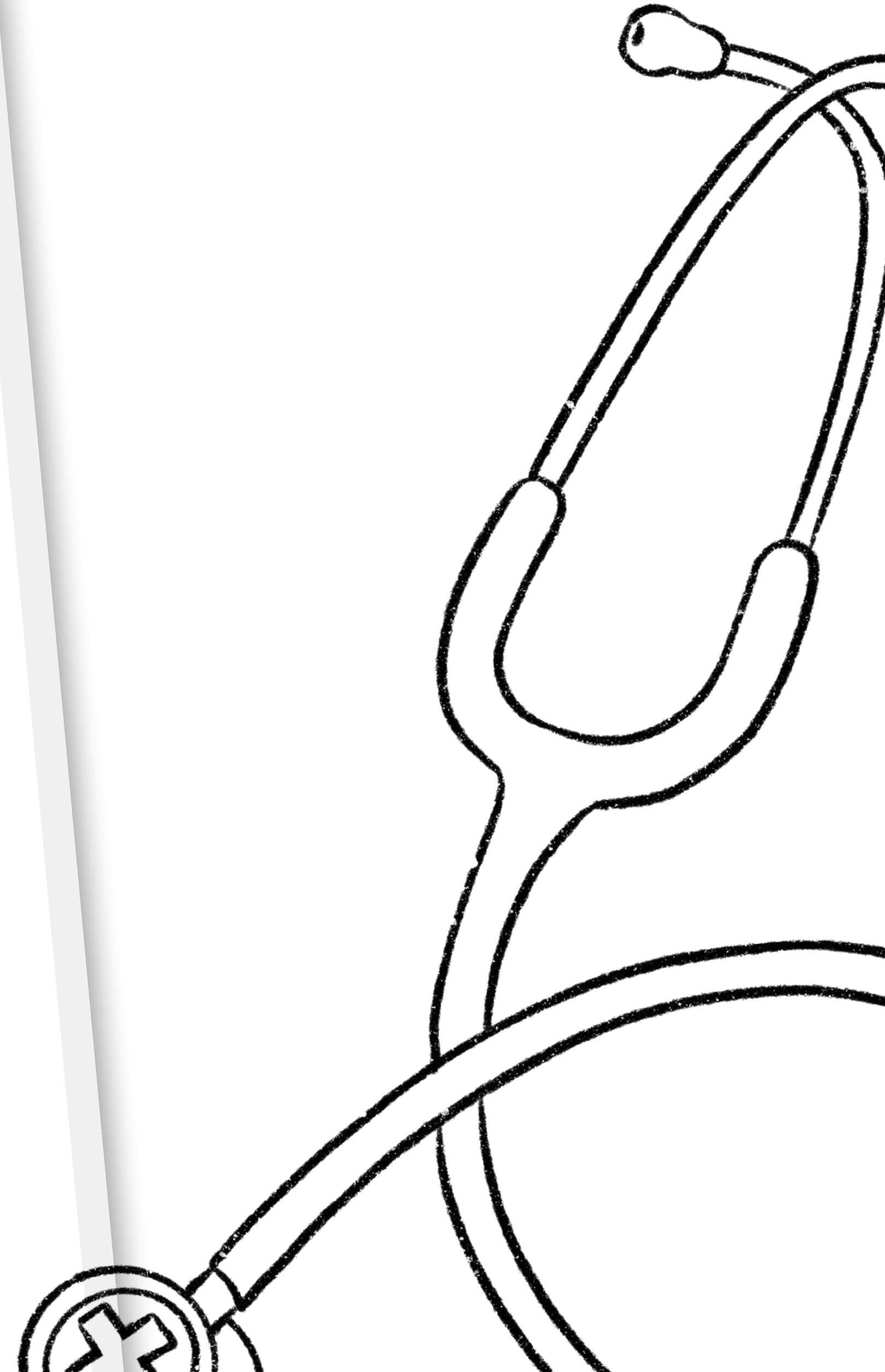
Always using the same techniques
no matter what situation.

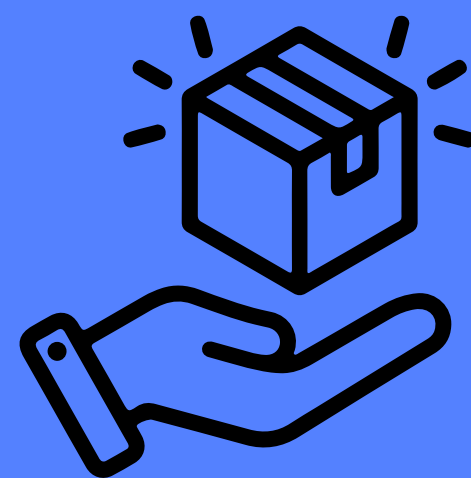


Adding a "Research Phase"
to every project timeline.



Establishing a detailed process
across all teams.





Remember!

You can avoid Alibi Progress by treating your ways of working like a product.

Discovery Your Product has to help Product Teams Target Audience

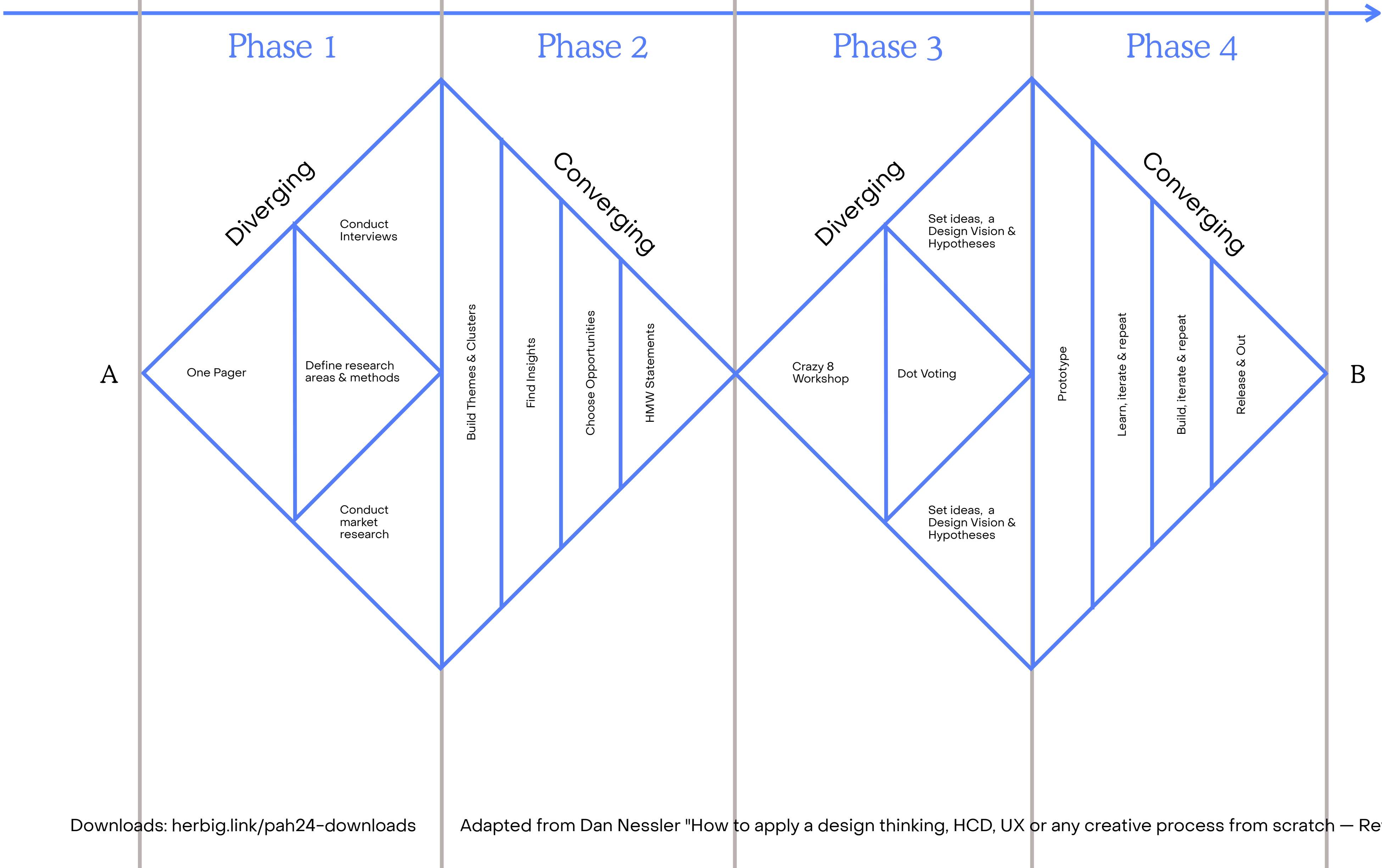
reduce uncertainty Problem Worth Solving around problems

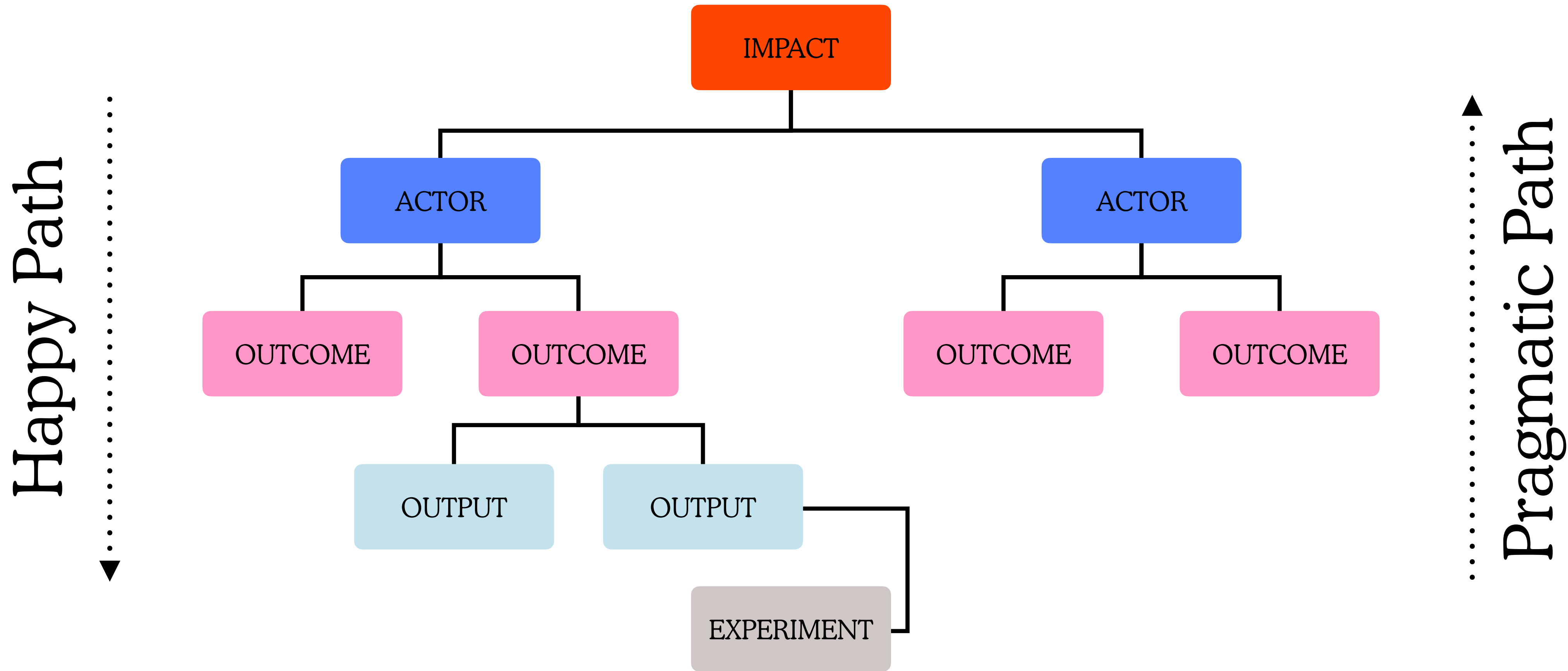
and solutions by collecting reliable evidence.

We know it is effective if we increase adoption
of new features and decrease investment in
Success Measures
features nobody uses.



Your answer might
look different than
mine of the one
from the person
next to you.





“Meet people
where they are.”

Teresa Torres
Author, speaker and coach



From the Happy Path to the Pragmatic Path

Instead of artificially forcing people into a stage of a process where they're not, **start with what you have** and work your way through the biggest areas of uncertainty from there.



LIVE

BREAKING NEWS

Users don't care about Discovery Methods

(and neither do your stakeholders)

Your Work sits at the Intersection



Instead of asking...
What method should
we use next?

...rather ask!
If we only had 1 week to
reduce uncertainty as much as
possible, what would we do?
(and why aren't we doing it?)

~~You're a better PM because you talk
to customers every week.~~

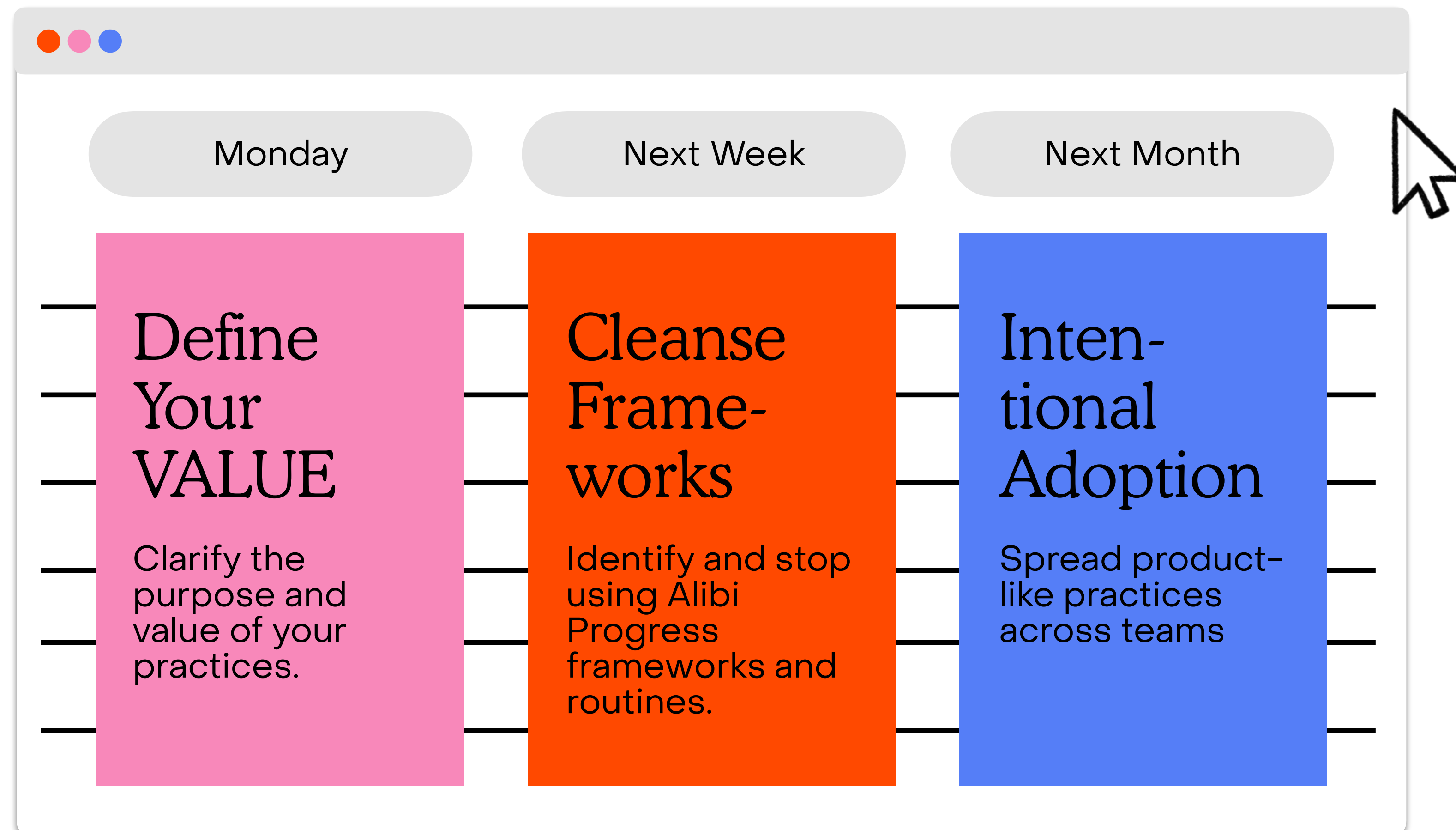
You're a better PM because you use
reliable, first-hand insights to
reduce uncertainty.

~~Alibi~~ Real Progress

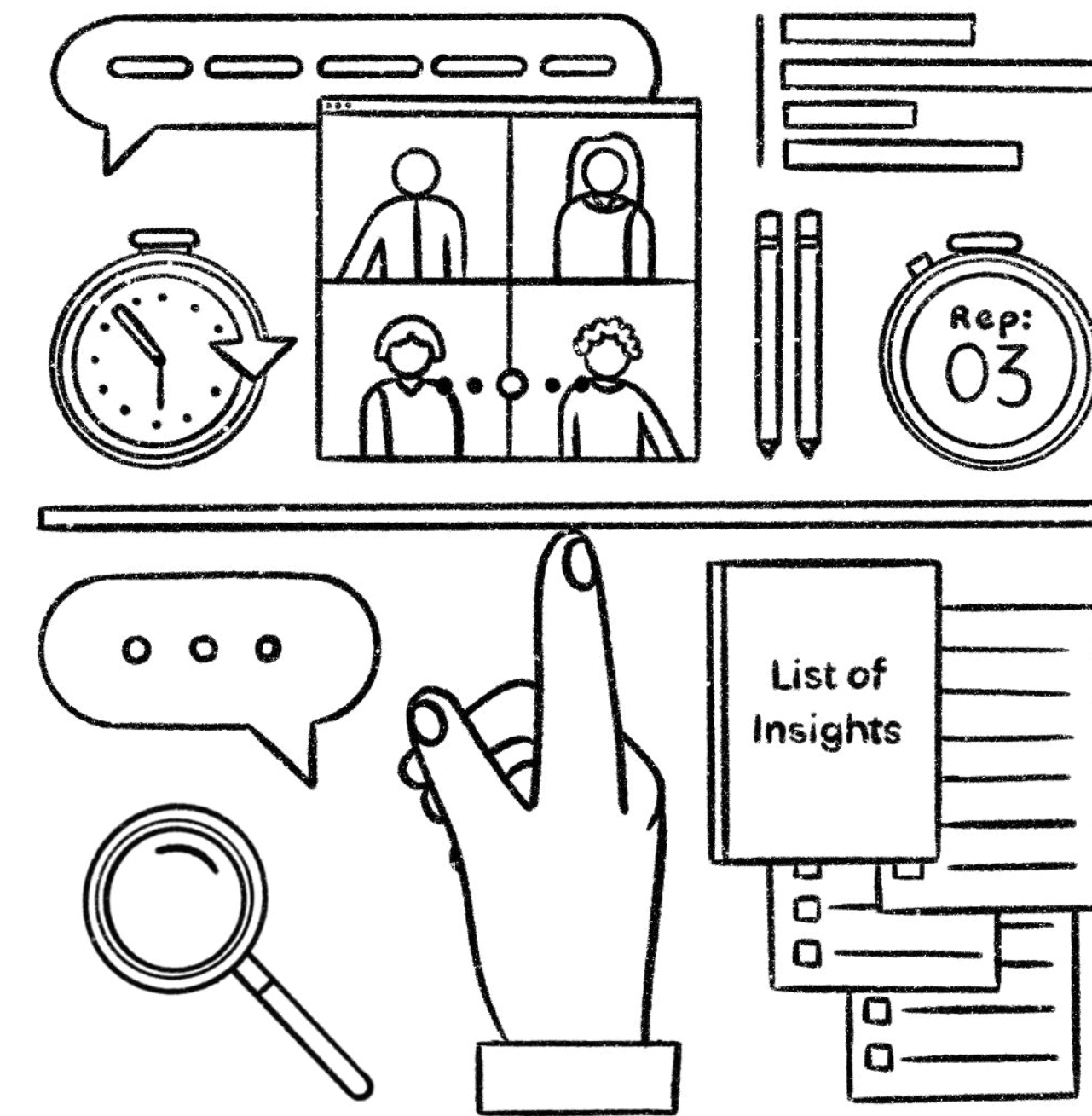
- Measuring the solving of the right customer problems...
- ...that drive prioritized business goals through evidence-informed decisions...
- ...while continuously improving practices based on their value!

Let's get practical!

These are things you can implement straight away



Process can quickly
become the enemy
of Progress.



Don't forget to download my free worksheet!

herbig.link/pah24-downloads



Practice as a Product Worksheet

CONTEXT	MEASURES	TACTICS
<div>For whom...</div> <div>...is what way of working...</div> <div>...solving what problem?</div>	<div>How can you measure that you solved the problem?</div>	<div>Which changes to your way of working help you solve the problem?</div>
<div>For digital Product Teams...</div> <div>...Team OKRs need to help them...</div> <div>measure their progress towards strategic priorities</div>	<div>Share of Backlog Items linked to Key Results</div> <div>Number of OKR check-ins with changed metrics</div>	<div>Teams write own OKRs</div> <div>OKRs in Sprint Planning</div> <div>JIRA OKR Plug-in</div>

