



Date: Saturday, 01-24-2009

Session Title: Why is Everyone Mad at Me? (A product manager good stuff to know discussion)

Presenter: Joshua Duncan

What should I take away from the session? (Summary):

Notes (key points, book suggestions, website suggestions, etc)

Product manager has to manage a lot of forces

Within the company - sales, engineering, finance, IT, etc.

Outside of the company – Customer, Competitors, Market Forces

Customer Research – Do as much as possible, as often as possible

Not something that you do periodically, it should be going on continually

Most people don't know what they want until they see it in context*

*Predictably Irrational

Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known*

*Carl Sagan

50% of a company's innovation should come from a consumer input and designers*

*Patricia Seybold (CEO for Seybold Group)

7 out of 12 syndrome

Seven people want this feature out of 12

Camel is a horse designed by committee

Not all channels are equal

Sales channel is a "little" biased

Excel spread sheet with stakeholders and then asked them to rank features. Able to illustrate to Sr. Management that priorities are all over the board. Now from a Sr. mgmt POV, where did they want to take the product?

What has been done in an organization before?

How has the research been done in the past and what is its reputation (win/loss)

[segue] Time to Innovate?

Given the economy and everything... "Now is the time to innovate!"

[JD] When is it not time to innovate? This is something that needs to be continually happening. Be sure to take time out of your day to not be tactical.

The Game Changer by Lafley good book on P&G case study

How are you tracking the market?

www.itfacts.biz, www.trendwatching.com

No one in the room has anyone tasked to watch trends. Actual discussions about markets and trends, etc.

May not be a direct competitor

Gartner evaluations are available at UT for free. Have to visit campus to view, but possibly still worth it.

Use industry luminaries and track their reading list

The greatest problem in communication is the illusion that it has been accomplished*

*George Bernard Shaw

[segue] Twitter usage

Initially wasn't sure about its usage and its value but took the time to understand and it is now sold on its value

Need to be honest, if you are not, [@webhorn] "you will die"

Pick any two: Good, Fast, or Cheap

Be sure everyone understands where you are coming from and why you are making decisions in a certain way.

Is or Is not page

What is the product?

What the product is not?

Useful for internal selling to inform other people about customer within your own company

Create a flexibility matrix about product features and determine up front what is the most flexible and least and ensure there is buy-in

Create a product charter and update it on a periodic basis

Explain that unless you see it in the product charter, it is not going to happen

Everyone has the executive VP that wants all three

Be prepared to push back with why, and what the costs will be to get all three

e.g. Double staff

Why?

The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said."

Peter F. Drucker

Product Management is Inherently Political*

*Art of Product Management, Mironov

Understand the corporate culture?

Managing internal conflict

Budgets?

If there is not enough budget to visit or talk with the customers but there is money for beer and pizza on Fridays – indicates an engineering mind set vs. customer driven

Passionately Detached

When you want to sell something so hard you begin to over promise.

You do need to be the cheerleader and promoter, but have to step back and keep a certain reality about the process. Don't want to be so excited that you become irrational.

Build, buy, or partner decision

Not invented here predisposition is not a good one to have

What is the worst thing that can happen from this decision?

I can get fired – are you okay with that? If so, it is very freeing to speak your mind.