

Product Management and Strategy

Module 3: From What to How

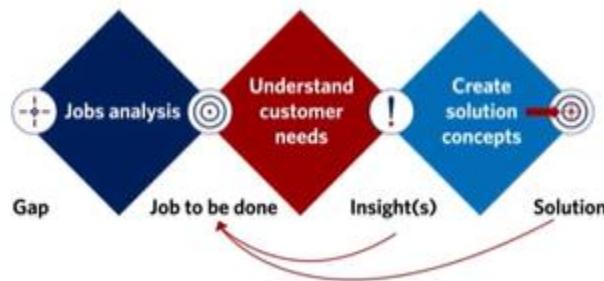
Quick Reference Guide

Learning Outcomes

1. Evaluate the importance of a solution concept.
2. Evaluate the solution concept process.
3. Apply individual and group processes to generate more and better ideas.
4. Analyze how to use selection and testing to narrow from many alternatives.
5. Utilize the ideation process to generate more and better ideas.
6. Evaluate how identifying a solution concept is derived in practical settings.

Solution Concept

The triple diamond model is a user-centered approach to design and concept development.



The first two diamonds really focus on better defining the 'what'. Who is our customer, what is the job to be done, and what needs are potentially most relevant to the customers. The third diamond focuses on how to create a great solution. The goal of the triple diamond model is to deliver a great solution concept.

The definition of a concept and the four characteristics of a great one will help you create a great solution concept for your product.

Understanding a concept

A preliminary description of how to do the job for the customer.

Four characteristics of a great concept

- Address customer needs
- Be cost-efficient
- Include a “wow” factor
- Be aesthetic and elegant

Concepts for digital and physical goods

The process of identifying a solution concept for digital goods and physical goods and services are different.

- In both physical goods and services, cost is critically important. However, for digital goods, cost is less important.
- Digital goods can often be thought of more as bundles of features than a single, distinctive solution concepts. These features can be added and subtracted incrementally over time as the product evolves.
- The development of a great concept tends to receive less attention for digital goods than it does for physical goods or services.
- Digital goods offer almost unlimited flexibility in solution approach. So, if anything, a thorough exploration of the solution landscape is even more important in digital goods than it is in physical goods.

Importance of a solution concept

As part of the discussion activity, you must have evaluated the importance of a solution concept by reviewing and reflecting on the MealPal podcast and identifying the organization's customer pain points in order to derive a compatible solution.

Concept Development

Ideas can come from anywhere and everywhere. It's a matter of keeping an open mind and iterating your ideas to get to a solution that works.

In concept generation and selection, you will generate many alternatives or solution concepts and choose the most exceptional concept from them all.

- Involves a lot of effort
- Involves obtaining ideas from many different sources
- Tends to be highly iterative

Ideation process

The divergent portion of the third diamond is all about generating a lot of alternatives. This can help you find innovative ways to solve complex problems in ways that are beyond the confines of first impressions. It helps you address customers' needs from various angles.

The human mind is good at thinking of solution concepts, especially after considering the job to be done and engaging with customers.

Techniques to stimulate thinking

- Pull from insights
 - Insights are authentic, non-obvious, and significant customer needs.
 - Insights can be used to generate distinctive solution concepts.
- Apply the decomposition principle
 - Focus on one element of the job to be done.
 - Decompose the challenge by customer needs, sequence of user actions, or sub-functions.
 - Piece together a complete solution concept.
- Consider examples of distinctive approaches
 - Take the best elements of other organizations' distinctive approaches and see how they might apply to your challenge.

- Consider analogous problem domains
 - Start lunch channels with various offerings.
- Set a numerical goal
 - Generate more ideas to find a better idea.
 - Prepare emergency stimuli to dislodge new ideas.

Harnessing the power of individuals and groups

Sometimes you will work on a project alone, but typically, you will work within a team. When you work alone, you might be able to leverage your expertise and get things done more quickly because there is a single voice. At other times, you will work within a team where everyone generates ideas together.

The strategy of employing independent parallel exploration is the best way to engage a group in concept development.

Group vs. hybrid approach

In the group approach, four people work together for thirty minutes. In the hybrid approach, those same four people work for ten minutes alone as individuals independently and in parallel, and then those four people work together for twenty minutes, exploring the ideas that they generated alone as individuals.

Hybrid approach is better than a group process.

- You need to have an individual phase for some of your exploration effort.
- It is helpful to provide a numerical target for the individual phase.

Selection and Testing

Selection methods and the concept selection matrix

The third diamond in the triple diamond model includes a convergence from many solution alternatives to a single plan for going forward. In most cases, convergence comprises two steps.

Steps of convergence

1. Internal testing – team narrows a set of 10 or more solutions to a few – two or three
 - Multi-attribute utility analysis or criteria matrix
 - This method helps you remember, codify, and communicate the logic behind the decision long after it's made.
 - This selection process identifies when elements of one concept can be combined with another or when concepts are similar to each other.
 - The criteria matrix can be modified by using a:
 - 1-5 scale
 - Percentage weighting scheme
 - Point system
2. External testing – team narrows down to the best single solution

Concept testing

The second step of convergence in the third diamond of the triple-diamond model is concept testing, an opportunity to connect with your potential customers to assess the match between their needs and what you have to offer.

There are three common types of concept tests:

- Seek informal qualitative feedback based on a schematic description of the solution concept.
- Set up a forced choice from a small set of concept alternatives.
- Ask potential consumers to indicate their purchase intent.