

The tyranny of Product management

Bradley Scott



PRODUCT AOTEAROA

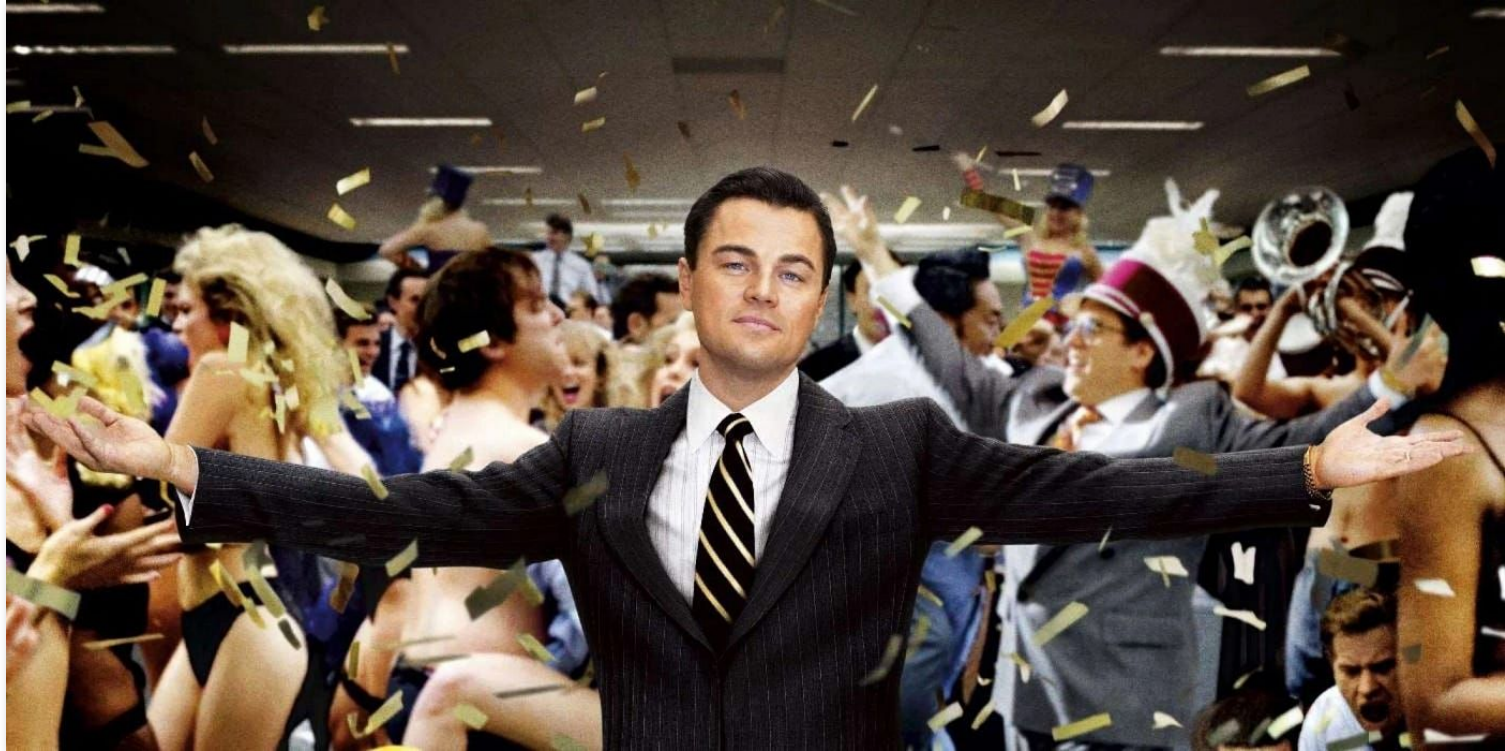


PRODUCT
CONFERENCE
2023

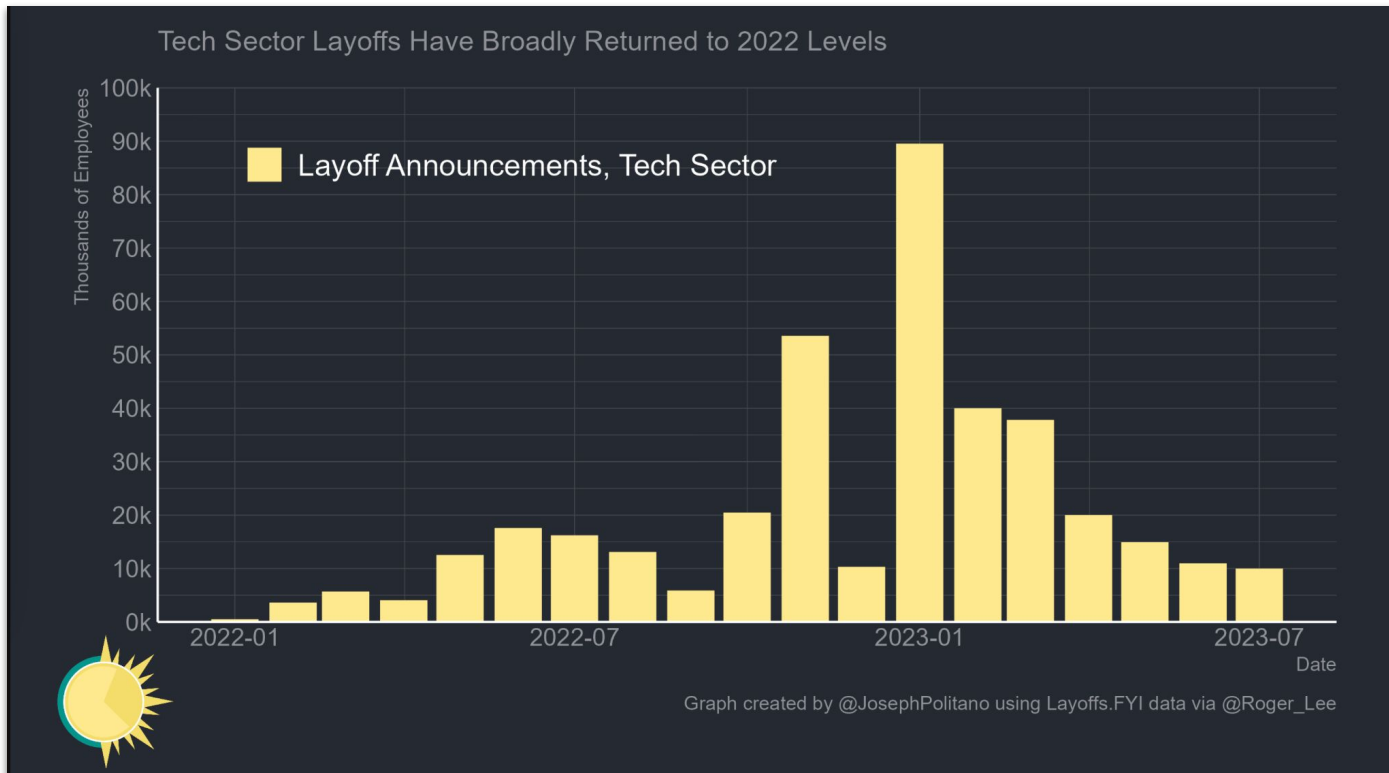
Introduction and disclaimers



Product management was the good life



And then this happened...



It hit close to home

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BUSINESS / EMPLOYMENT

Xero announces plan to cut up to 800 jobs

6:42 pm on 9 March 2023

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A photograph showing the Xero logo in large, white, three-dimensional letters mounted on a dark, textured wall. The logo is the word 'xero' in a lowercase, rounded font. The letters are slightly angled, and the background is a dark, possibly black or dark grey, wall with some horizontal lines or panels.

Some got rid of PM entirely



Kevin Gao

@kvngao



Brian Chesky just told the audience they got rid of the PM function at Airbnb. The crowd of designers erupts in applause

11:15 AM · Jun 22, 2023

11:15 AM · Jun 22, 2023

11:15 AM · Jun 22, 2023

The empowered engineer ...



“At the best companies the single most important thing is engineers who do more than just coding.

In a good product company, the engineers don't have to build what the product managers says.

If they don't agree, they don't build it”

Marty Cagan, SVPG

The empowered engineer stole your job

The death of product managers spreads as Dovetail cuts roles

Jessica Sier and Nick Bonyhady

Jul 4, 2023 - 6:00pm

Save Share

Technology companies are increasingly insisting managers do engineering or design work rather than being generalists, reversing a trend that let people without a technical background flood into the industry.

Many Australian start-ups are also removing other non-technical roles, prioritising the axing of staff in positions such as human resources instead.



Co-founders of Dovetail! Benjamin Humphrey and Bradley Ayers removed the product manager role from their business. Peter Rae

KEY POINTS

- ◆ Why it matters: Tech start-ups are reconsidering what kind of staff they need
- ◆ Product management is one of few paths that doesn't require technical education
- ◆ Dovetail removed the position in April, following a similar move from Airbnb

You are not the CEO of the product



claire vo ♥

@clairevo



OK as someone who has (I think successfully) played the CPO role under product oriented founders/CEOs, I have some advice here.

And the first, most important bit of advice is this:

CPOs, get over yourself.

And then do what needs to be done to build a great product & a great...

2:29 AM · 3 Aug 2023



13



414



13



414

There are no prototypical PM roles



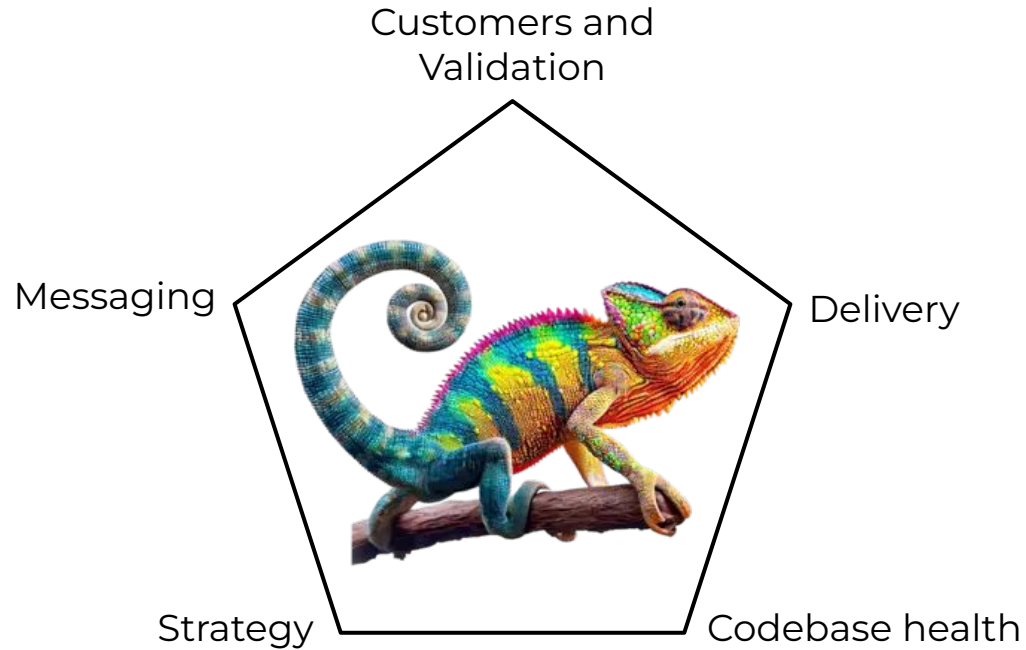
No, you can't just
put every block in
the same hole!



That goes in the
square hole.

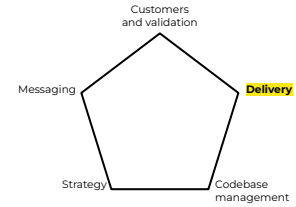


Aspire to be a chameleon



Sometimes delivery is the problem

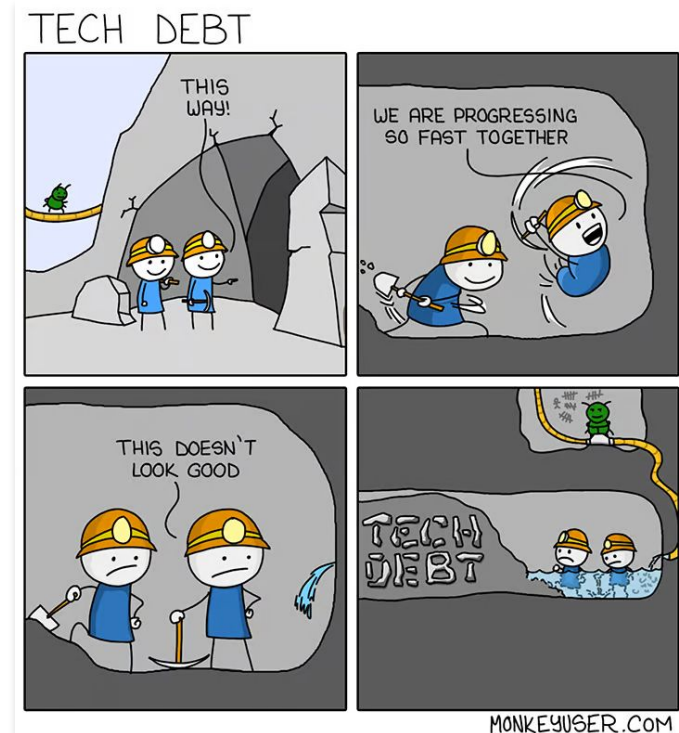
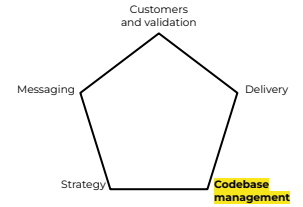
Can you recognise and diagnose a team's delivery dysfunctions?
Even better, can you help them solve it?



They're the same picture.

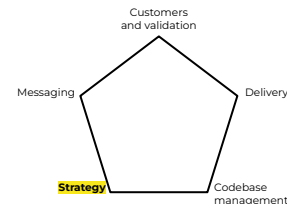
Codebase health

You should care about your codebase and its health
It is the asset which needs to keep producing value into the future



Strategy

Sometimes absence of, or poor strategy is what's holding a team back



Good strategy

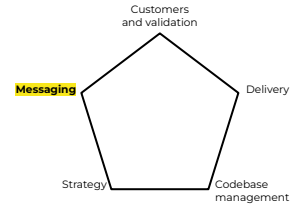
1. Is **simple** and obvious
2. Identifies the **key challenge(s)** to overcome
3. **Actions** that will be taken
not ambition, vision, values
4. **Coherent**
not a list of priorities that don't support each other
5. **Focus**
This means saying 'no' to some initiatives

Bad strategy

1. Fluffy
2. Fails to identify the challenge
3. Confuses goals with strategy
A statement of desire is not a strategy
4. Objectives that don't relate to the key challenge or are impractical to achieve

Messaging and product marketing

Your product initiation documents can pay dividends later



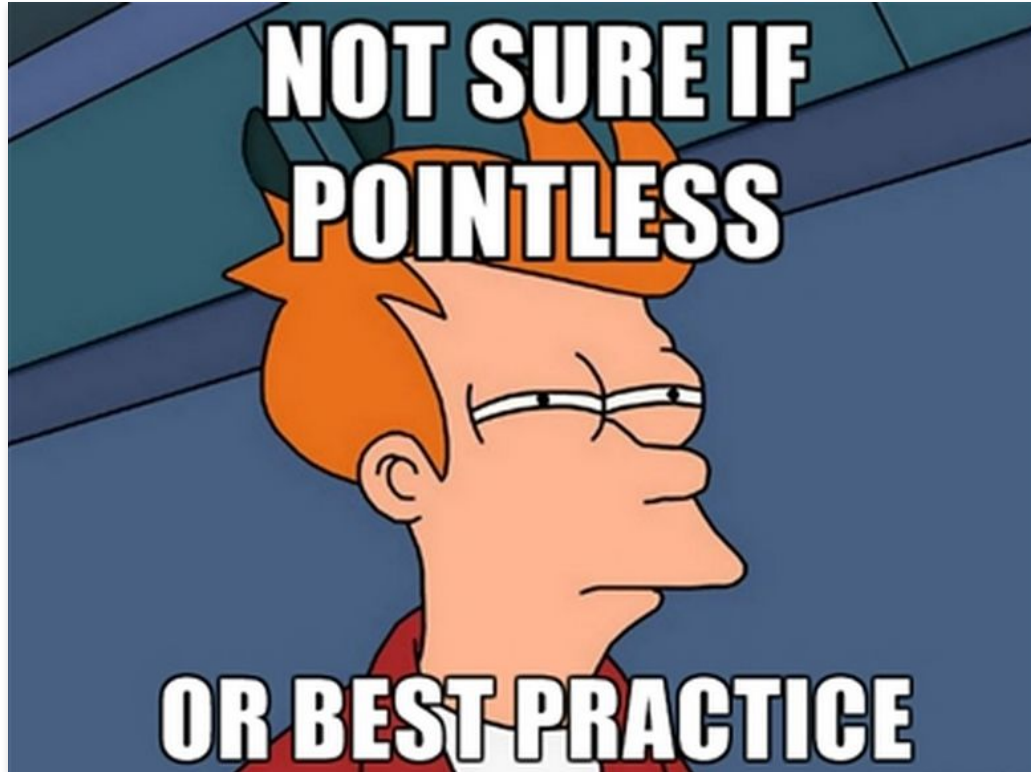
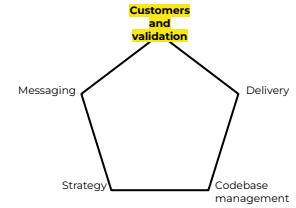
imgflip.com

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Avoid process cults

Prioritisation frameworks seem a particular trap





Thank you

