
CHAPTER

1

Behind Every Great Product

It is my strong belief, and the central concept driving this book, that behind every great product there is someone—usually someone behind the scenes, working tirelessly—who led the product team to combine technology and design to solve real customer problems in a way that met the needs of the business.

These people usually have the title *product manager*, but they might be a startup co-founder or CEO, or they might be someone in another role on the team who stepped up because they saw the need.

Further, this product management role is very distinct from the design, engineering, marketing, or project manager roles.

This book is intended for these people.

Within modern technology product teams, the product manager has some very specific and very challenging responsibilities. It's a tremendously difficult job, and anyone who tries to tell you otherwise is not doing you any favors.

The product manager role is usually very much a full-time assignment. I don't personally know many who are able to do what they need to do in less than 60 hours a week.

It's great if you're a designer or an engineer who also wants to serve as a product manager—there are some real advantages to that. But you'll find out pretty quickly that you're taking on an immense amount of work. If you're up for that, however, the results can be impressive.

A product team is comprised of at least a product manager and usually somewhere between 2 and 10 engineers. If you're creating a user-facing product, you would expect to have a product designer on your team as well.

In this book, we explore the situation wherein you might have to use engineers or designers in a different location or from an agency or outsourcing firm. But regardless of how you assemble your team, this job and this book assume you have a team assigned to work with you to design, to build, and to deliver a product.

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