

Introduction

Product Focus is a global leader in product management and product marketing training for technology-based products.

Each year we ask product people about their role, issues, salaries, and day-to-day activities. This includes Product Managers, Product Owners, and Product Marketing Managers as the roles often overlap.

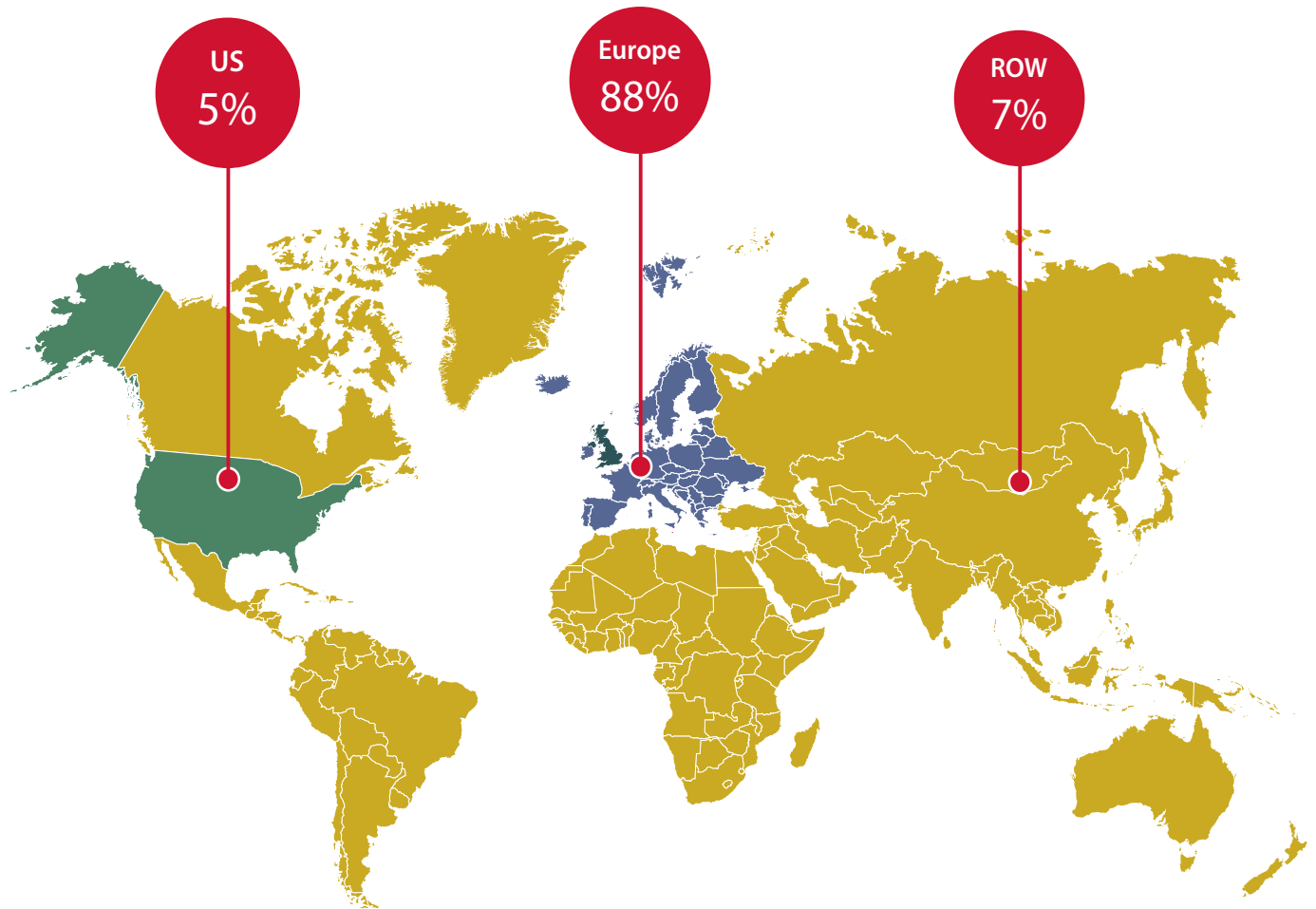
1,115 people took part in this year's survey – 50 countries and 661 companies are represented.

All the responses for this report were gathered in January 2020.

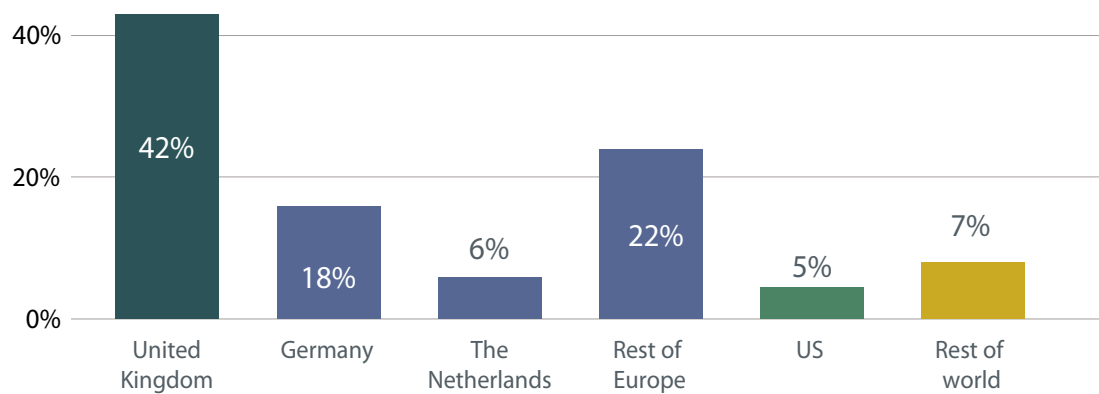
The survey results represent the industry norm – not best practice. You can find out about best practice by signing up for our [free resources](#) or attending one of our [training courses](#).

Insights from across the world

Thank you to the 1,115 people who took part in this year's survey. Most were from the UK and Europe (88%), but we had significant numbers from the US and elsewhere.

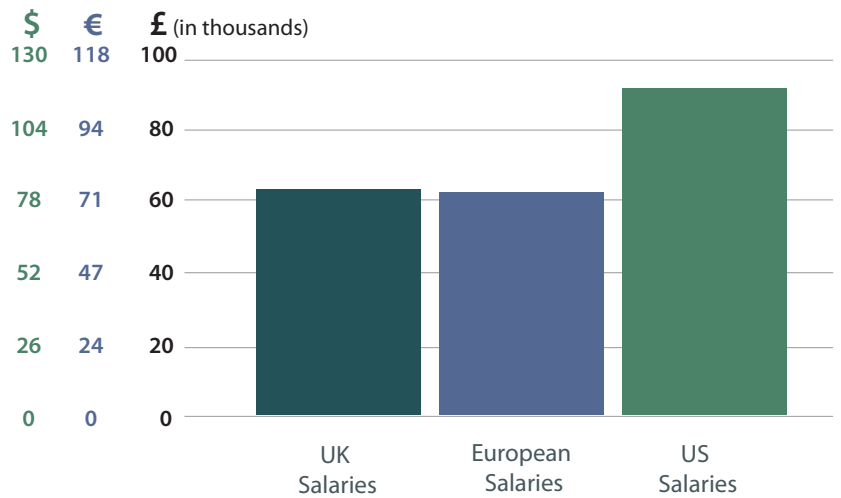


50 countries and 661 companies are represented



Salary

£62k
€72k
\$117k



The average base salary paid to Product Managers and Senior Product Managers is much the same as last year. Product management pays better in the US!

Full package value

£71k
€79k
\$139k



Average package value across all regions

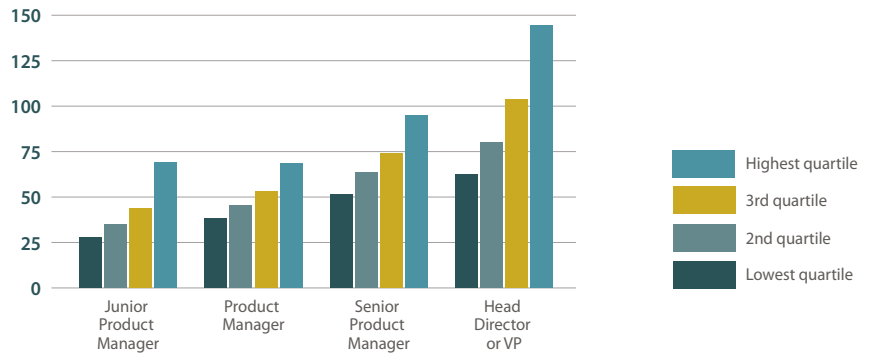
The average package value for Product Managers and Senior Product Managers.

50% of all respondents receive a bonus, 13% get some shares, 13% a company car and 42% get pension contributions and health insurance.

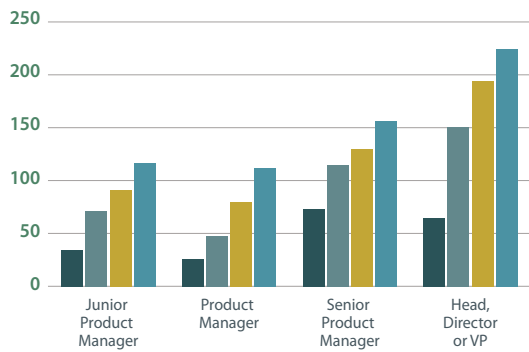
Salaries across the world



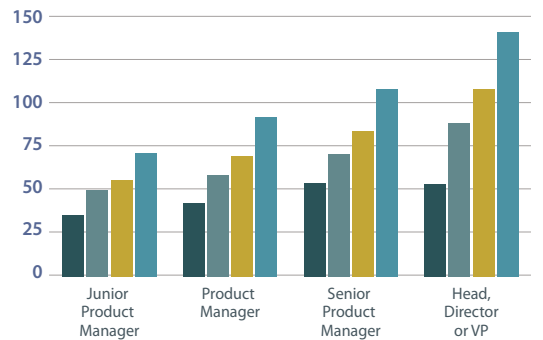
£ (in thousands)



\$ (in thousands)



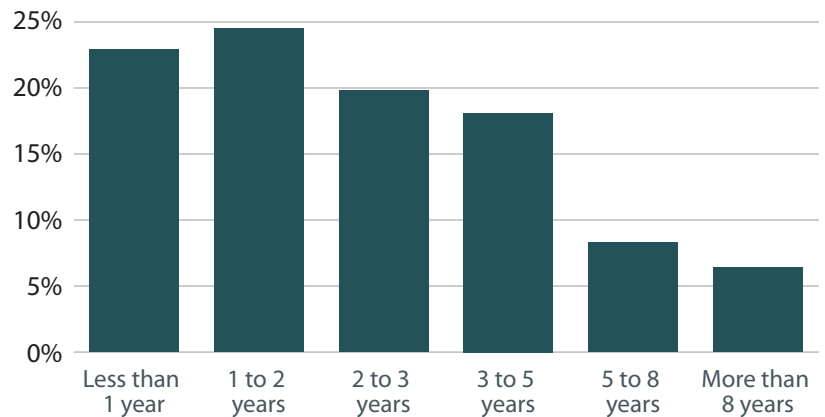
€ (in thousands)



Current role

3

The average number of years respondents have been in their **current** role



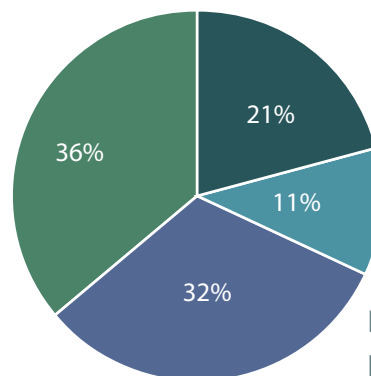
How long have you been in your role?

People build a career in product management. Approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of respondents have more than 4 years total experience and **26%** have more than 10 years in various roles.

Seniority Levels

36%

of respondents who classed themselves as Head of, Director or VP



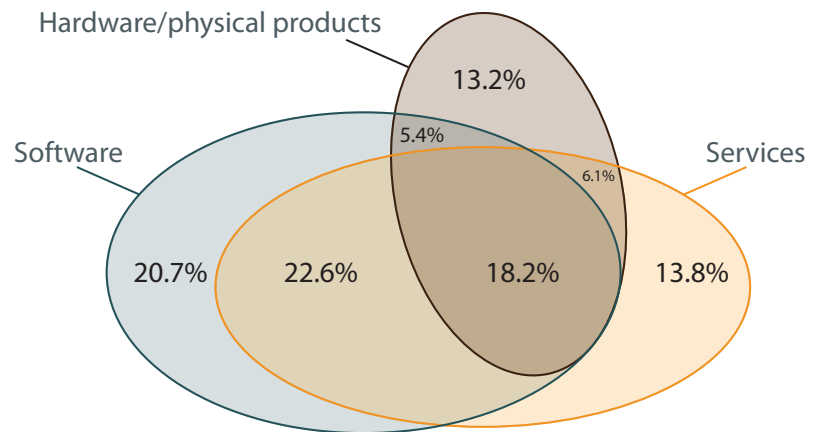
Based on your experience and position in your company do you consider yourself to be a...

Over a third of respondents to our survey are running product management in their organizations. These senior people may have a greater interest in the results, so perhaps more of them responded.

Types of product

52%

of product people are responsible for a mix of different types of products



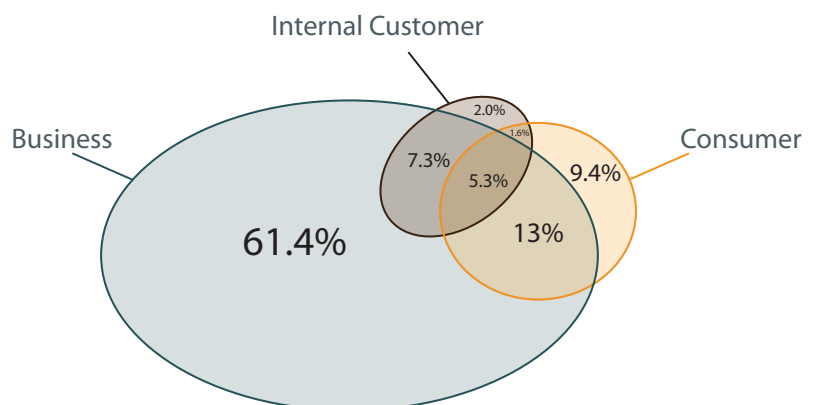
Are your products software, hardware/physical products or services?

18% of product people have the challenge of managing propositions made up of software, hardware and service elements.

Types of customer

87%

of survey respondents look after products sold to businesses



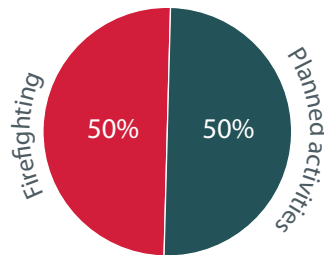
17% of respondents have Government focused products

Many product managers must understand diverse markets with products aimed at businesses, consumers, government, or internally focused.

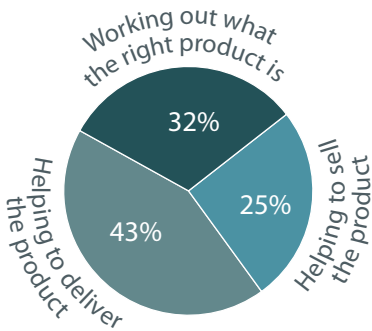
Time

50%

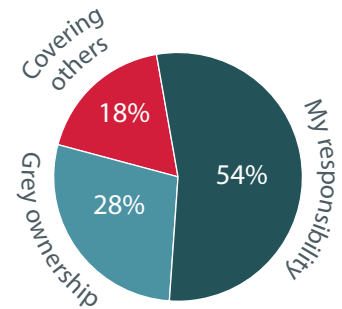
The amount of time spent on unplanned 'fire-fighting' activities



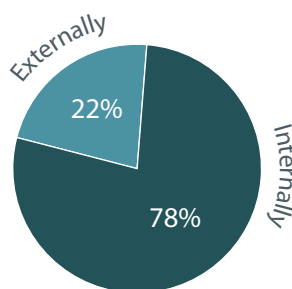
Planned vs un-planned



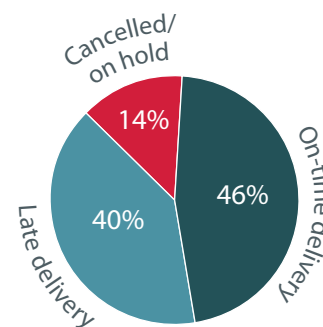
Product activities



Activity ownership



Working Internally/Externally

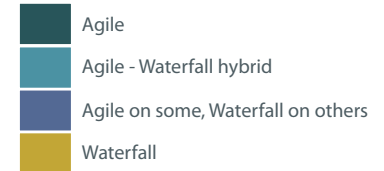
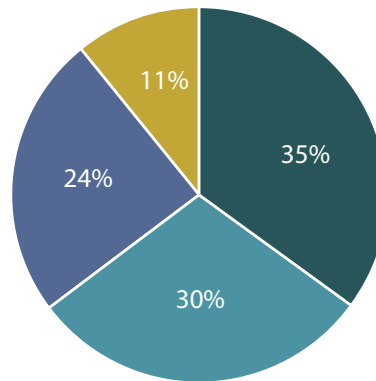


Project delivery

Development approach

89%

The number of respondents reporting their company use a type of Agile development



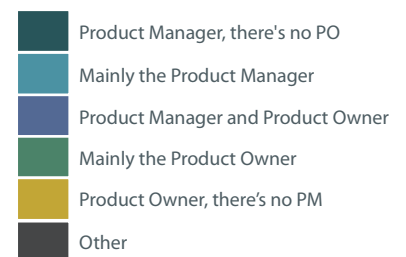
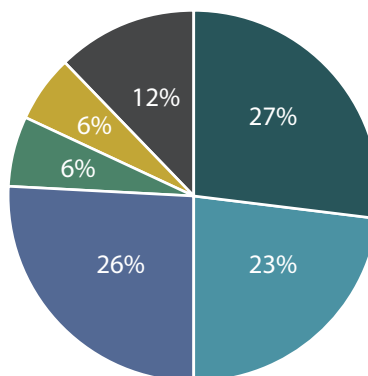
Only 30% of product managers in companies using Agile are the Product Owner.

56% of companies use a mix of approaches e.g. Scrum + Kanban or Scrum + Waterfall.

What to build?

50%

of respondents say it's the Product Manager who makes the decision on what to build



In Agile, who makes the decision on what to build?

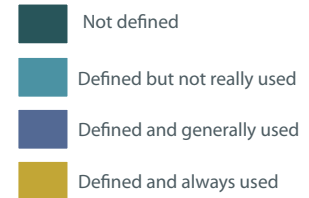
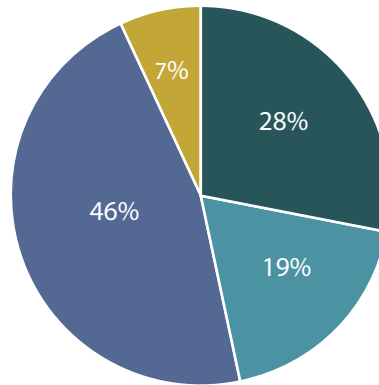
26% of respondents say its Product Managers and Product Owners working together who make the decision.

In 12% of cases it's the Product Owner who makes the decision.

Process maturity

47%

of Product Management departments have processes that aren't really defined or widely used



How good are your product management processes?

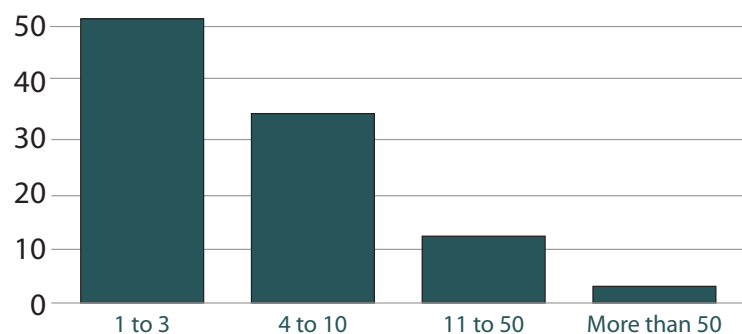
Only 7% of people say that their processes are always used.

Almost 3 in 10 people are working without the benefit of defined processes.

How big is your team?

50%

of respondents are responsible for managing a team.



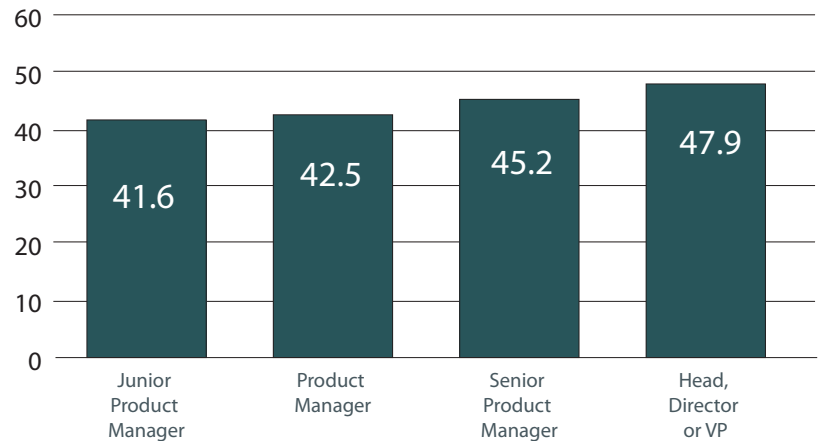
If you manage a team, how many people do you manage?

76% of Heads, Directors and VPs have 10 or fewer people in their team with only 3% having more than 50.

Work-life balance

44.5

The average number of hours worked per week calculated from all respondents



Average number of hours worked per week.

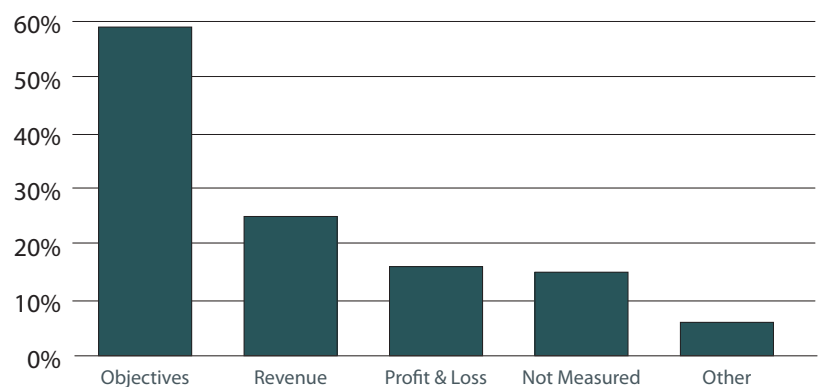
Guess what - the more senior you are, the more hours you work!

US product managers work on average 49 hours a week.

Personal performance

59%

The most frequently used personal performance measurement is Management by Objectives



How are you measured (tick all that apply)?

Revenue (25%) and profit & loss (16%) metrics are used for many respondents. Customer satisfaction is the most common metric in the 'other' category.

Your big issues

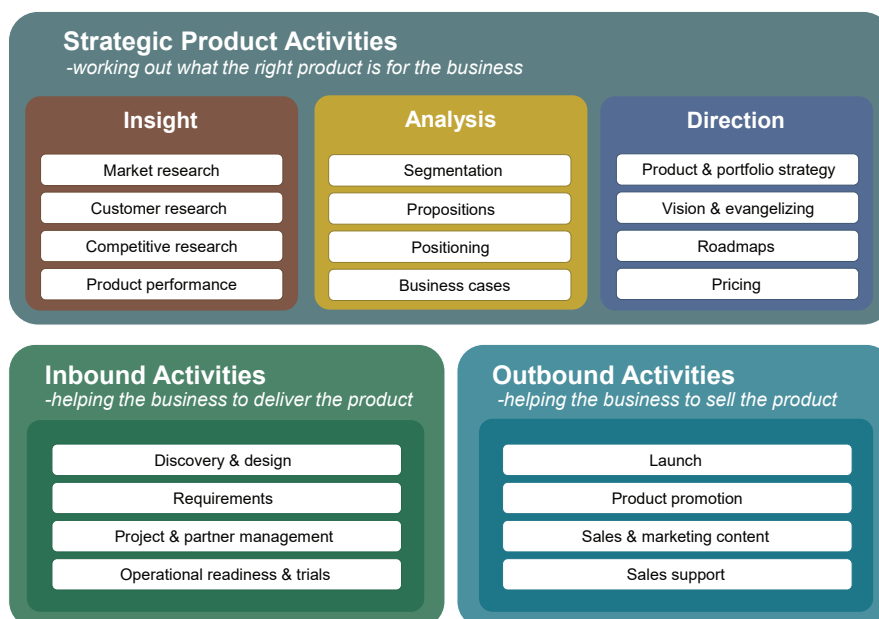
We've analyzed hundreds of written comments to identify the most common issues raised by respondents.

In order of priority these are

1. There is a lack of understanding of product management throughout the whole organization
2. Product management is viewed as an operational or execution function and not as a strategic partner in the business
3. Product management leadership is under-represented on the board. Product leaders are not seen as equals with their CTO, CMO, CFO peers
4. There is a lack of alignment between the teams that need to work together to deliver the product, making stakeholder management and cross-functional working challenging
5. Lack of data-driven decisions and constantly changing priorities
6. Unclear or weak strategic vision at a corporate and product level
7. Stress was a constant underlying theme - the drivers of stress are apparent from the issues above

The number 1 issue raised by respondents was that product management is not understood by the rest of the organization.

Our Product Activities Framework can help with this. It identifies all the product related activities that need to take place in any company with products. Companies use it to describe which product roles own each activity, understand any gaps and determine any overlaps.



[Product Activities Framework](#)

Your big issues

"Too many businesses are trying to combine the PO and PM role. PMs wear too many hats."



"Let's get back to strategy... agile has monopolized our focus and attention on execution."



"We often write business cases after we have started development (so backwards!) in order to validate we made the right choice."



"If you want to develop a strong product manager, you have to recruit on mindset and leadership skills and develop the rest."



"Sales are too dominant. Quick wins are concrete, strategy can be debated."



"Stakeholder management is fun, but hard and it's importance in our roles should never be understated."



"We're just spread too thinly and often have to play the role of 'adult in the room'."



"There is more positive noise around user-focused, data-driven product management, which is seen less as a luxury and more as essential product management today."



"It's a leadership role in some divisions, but in others it's still overruled by software architects who want to punt their next shiny idea to market."



"The noise around this software development methodology versus that software development methodology seems to have become synonymous with "product management". We need to bring the discussion back to the value of strategic product management and how it can benefit your customers and organization."

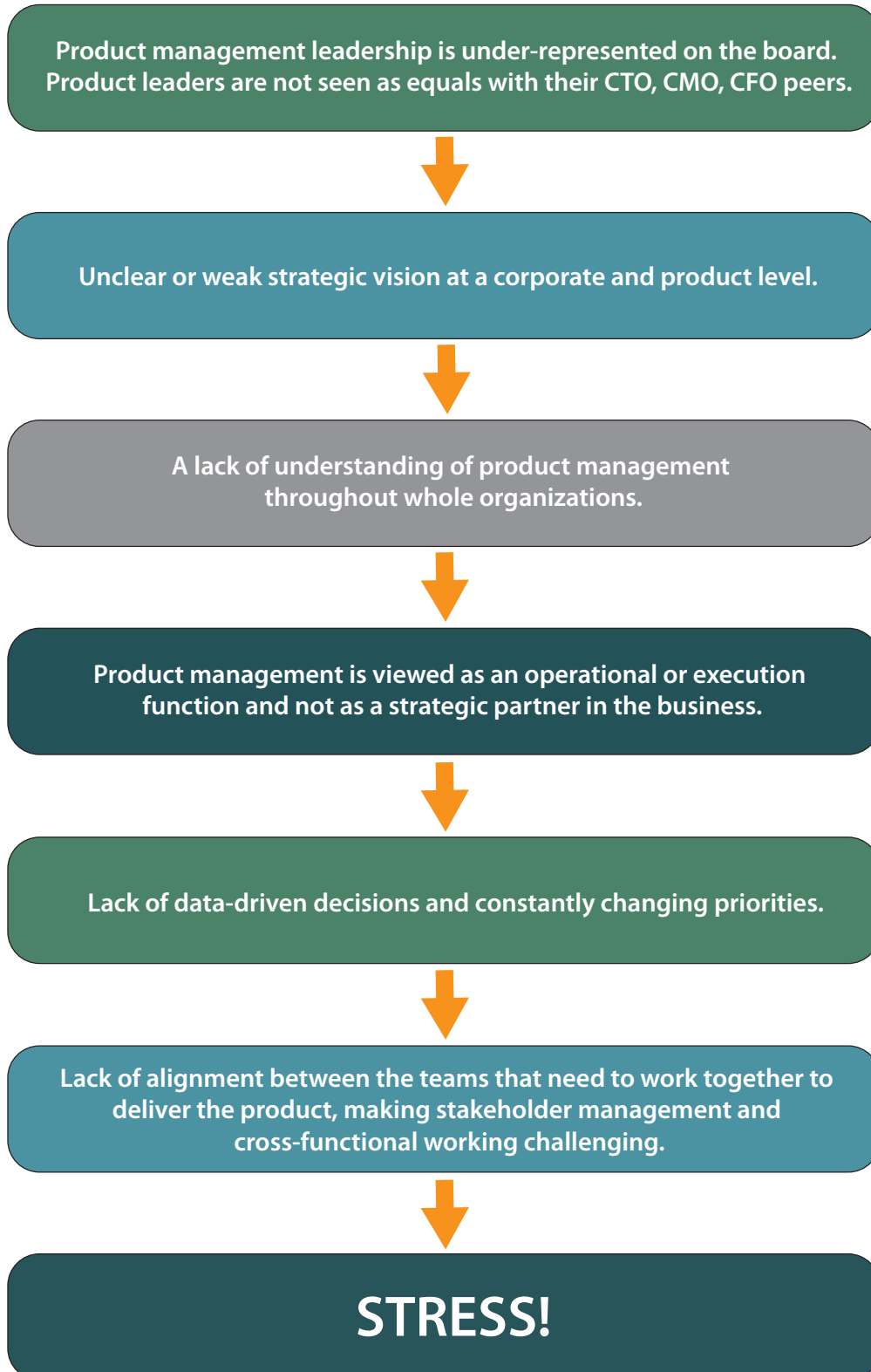


"As a leader my most difficult job, after defining the product management role, is ensuring that the team is spending the majority of their day in that space and not on admin and analysis tasks that a BA or PO should be doing."

Are you stressed?

We think there is a strong connection between the issues highlighted and why product people feel under stress.

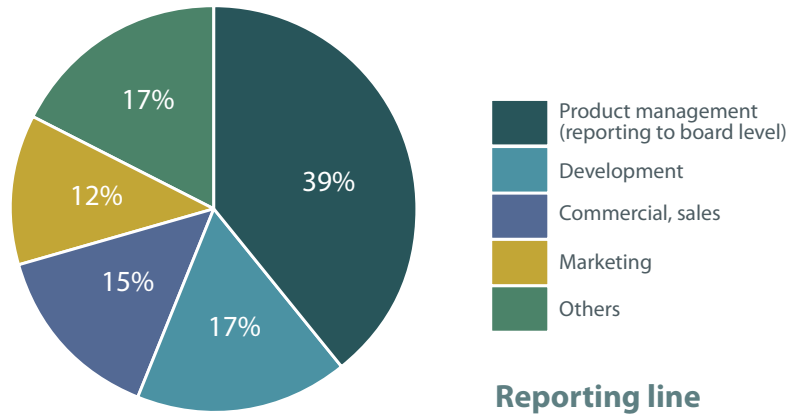
Do you agree?



Reporting

39%

of Product Management departments report directly to the board

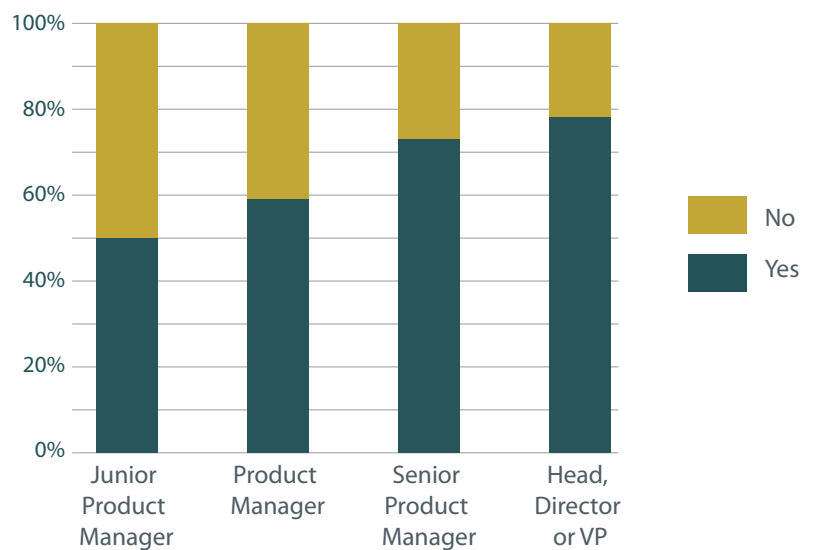


We believe the high proportion of Product Management teams reporting directly to the board reflects the value of an independent, unbiased function.

A leadership role?

67%

of respondents believe that product management is a leadership role in their company



Only 50% of Junior Product Managers consider that product management is a leadership role in their company, compared to 78% of Heads, Directors and VPs.

Stop fire-fighting

... and deliver world class product management



Public training courses

- Product Management and Product Marketing for technology-based products
- Build the skills, tools and confidence to excel in your role
- Attend a 3-day public certified course with industry peers in locations across the world



On-site private training

- Improve team performance with customized on-site private training
- Get the whole team using consistent best practice approaches
- We come to you so you save travel costs and make the most of your time together



Product Management Audit

- Get set-up for success with an audit of product management in your business
- A structured review of your product management with practical recommendations on how to scale, optimize or mature
- Learn how to build a world class product team and department



Leadership forum

- An exclusive 1-day workshop focused on leading and improving product management
- For product management leaders in technology-based industries
- An opportunity to discuss the issues that matter with peers and industry experts