

Kick it off Right

Making the most of your
1st meeting
with stakeholders

by Carri Craver





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Ideas Types



NEW PRODUCT IDEA

Nothing exists except the idea. There is no data. It may be great. It may be terrible.

These ideas are generally messy and success is harder to pinpoint early on.



FIX INTERNAL ISSUE IDEA

There is already a clear problem that inspired this idea. The company is struggling to something or do it well. Success is clear. The path to success can still be bumpy.



GROWTH IDEA

Growing a company to reach more people or better serve current customers is great. The ideas to do so can be good and bad. How to achieve success here can require delicate product evolution.



Who are these stakeholders?

Stakeholders are anyone who is going to be approving or directing work on a project and anyone you will use the product.

And they won't always agree on things.

Pre-Meeting Prep

- Research company
- Research people
- Research industry
- Research competitors
- Research similar products/solutions in other industries

All the research is so that in the meeting you have as much understanding to draw from as possible.

You ask better questions if you understand things.





**Mindset:
Be ready to think
and ask questions**

Core Questions

All questions derive from these questions

QUESTION 1
BENEFIT

Will enough people benefit enough from this product to use it?

QUESTION 2
BUSINESS

Will this be positive for the business?

QUESTION 3
POSSIBLE

Is it doable given the constraints?

More Questions

BENEFIT

- Does this solve the problem?
- Will people sign up?
- How will they benefit?
- Is this benefit substantial enough?
- What do they have to give up?
- Will they keep using it?
- Will they tell others?
- Will they enjoy it?

BUSINESS

- Will it reduce cost?
- Will it bring in revenue?
- Are there regulations that need to be followed?
- What will it cost to maintain?

POSSIBLE

- Is the marketing side affordable?
- Is the deadline reasonable?
- What is the current competition?
- Is this so new it will need explaining?
- Is this a trend that is growing?
- Is the product concept full of complexity?
- Does the stakeholder have the expertise needed?
- Will the stakeholder be productive to work with?
- Do I understand the details enough?



Stakeholders go first

Learn their priorities

They tell you what matters to them **by what they say and don't say.**

- Typically people start with their solution. (Not great)
- Sometimes they discuss the core problem (More important)
- You will always get insight into their perspective and personality.

- Bonus: Take good notes.



More Questions to Understand Idea & Stakeholder

**What
inspired this
idea?**





**Who are you
a hero to?**

**What makes
you uniquely
qualified?**



While they're talking, consider...

BENEFIT

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Ask a few Evaluation Questions

Phrasing is important

**CAN THIS MAKE MONEY?
INSTEAD ASK:**

Tell me about the market size for this product.

What competitors do you think you will be able to pull customers away from?

What is the timeline needed for bringing in revenue?

**WILL ANYONE USE THIS?
INSTEAD ASK:**

What key focus do you think is most important to draw people in and keep them interested?

What are your ideas on lowering the hurdles for people starting to use or continuing to use the product?

**CAN YOU AFFORD TO
MARKET IT?
INSTEAD ASK:**

Are you closely connected to your target market?

Will people interested early on promote your product?

Activity Time

Let's Practice



Home cooked meal sharing

Self funded by a couple with no software background but general business success

IDEA

Let neighbors share their home cooked meals when they over cook.

They post photos of the leftovers, ingredient list, set a price, and neighbors can buy them and stop by to pick them up.

INSPIRATION

Busy parents with a neighbor who loves to cook but is single and always overcooks. Want to help both of them.

The busy parents started buying meals from the neighbor and saved money over eating out and the neighbor threw out less food and made money so she could cook more.

UNIQUE QUALIFICATION

Good at connecting neighbors. Started hosting an annual Bastille Day party in her yard. Now it is an annual event that draws thousands and the city closes downs a few block for.

Did you consider?

Which important concepts did you address? How did you phrase your questions?

INEXPERIENCE ISSUE

Are you prepared mentally and budget wise for when some things veer off course? It is common even for experienced teams building something new to struggle at points.

REGULATIONS

Will the state and federal regulations slow growth or impact marketing strategy?

Will keeping up with changes be a struggle?

MARKETING HEAD START

What are the plans to scale up the strategies used to build their neighborhood connections?

How to suggest a shift?

Notice I didn't say a different idea.

Use their words

The reality is many ideas aren't going to fulfill the 3 questions. It's your responsibility to help them focus the idea so it does or suggest a new concept.

Nudge people with their own words. Bring up a way to focus in on helping the group they mentioned wanting to help most. Or the details that keyed in a problem people are most likely to pay for.





End Meeting Goal

Confident in You

Hire you or be impressed with your work as an employee

UNDERSTANDING

You clearly understand the product/idea.

PATH

You can create a path to make the most out of the idea/product, push the project forward.

CAPABLE

You can work do the type of work required to create what is needed.



Carri Craver

Thanks for joining today.

You can reach me at carri@hey.com or [@ccgirl](https://twitter.com/ccgirl) on Twitter.



Q&A

Ask away!