ORGANISATIONAL PRODUCT MATURITY ASSESSMENT

The Six Characteristics of Product Maturity

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To understand how an organisation matures, we look at six core characteristics that make up a product operating model. Each one highlights a different part of the system; from how strategy is shaped, to how teams are structured, enabled, and supported, through to how products are delivered, measured, and championed across the business.

By tracking maturity across these six characteristics, we can see not only where the organisation sits today but also where it needs to grow to embed product thinking at every level.

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	Strategy & Planning	Resourcing & Staffing	Empowering & Enabling	Making & Delivering	Sensing & Responding	Embedding & Evangelising
	Define strategic goals and prioritised problems to solve, ensuring clear alignment with business priorities and measurable outcomes.	Attract, develop, and empower people with the right skills, ensuring teams are equipped and supported to solve strategic problems.	Establish effective frameworks, processes, and ways of working that enable product teams to operate with clarity, autonomy, and impact.	Continuously discover, design, and deliver products through iterative practices that solve customer problems and create business value.	Measure and interpret product performance in the market, and rapidly adapt to customer, competitive, and environmental change.	Secure the alignment and active support of non-product leaders, embedding product thinking across the organisation.
Forming	No formal product strategy exists. Decisions are made by senior leaders based on intuition and hierarchy, rather than market or customer evidence.	No formal product organisation exists. Product responsibilities are distributed across functions without clear ownership or dedicated roles.	No formal frameworks or processes. Teams work in silos with inconsistent approaches.	Engineers are handed requirements to build. No structured discovery, validation, or iterative delivery process	No dedicated function tracks product performance. Understanding is anecdotal, typically from sales or marketing feedback.	Product thinking is not understood or supported by non-product leaders.
Emerging	Strategy is tactical, focused on delivering product increments or solving short-term problems. Prioritisation is informal and inconsistent.	Product roles start to appear but are loosely defined. Teams exist but are not optimally aligned to products. Limited pathways for career development.	Basic product processes, tools, and frameworks are introduced, but adoption is inconsistent.	Basic discovery and delivery practices are introduced, but are inconsistent. Limited customer validation occurs. Go-to-market planning is ad hoc.	Basic product metrics are tracked but are incomplete or not well-understood. Some market intelligence is gathered but rarely analysed systematically.	Leadership is somewhat aware of product management but with limited understanding. Basic support for product initiatives exists.
Performing	Strategic goals and problems to solve are clearly defined and informed by customer research and analytics. Prioritisation is mostly aligned with business objectives and customer outcomes.	Product roles are clearly defined and understood. Team structures support product management processes. Career frameworks and basic skill development are in place.	Standardised frameworks and processes are applied across teams. Tools and methodologies are widely adopted. Training supports consistent capability building.	Iterative discovery and delivery practices are embedded. Regular customer validation informs development. Roadmaps connect strategy to execution. Go-to-market plans exist for major releases.	Comprehensive metrics are regularly tracked and reviewed. Market intelligence is gathered systematically, with early data-driven decision-making.	Leadership increasingly sees product management as a driver of growth. Cross-functional collaboration is improving, with product thinking beginning to spread beyond product teams.
Excelling	Product strategy is well-defined, communicated, and integrated across the organisation. Prioritisation frameworks balance customer, business, and market needs.	Teams are optimally aligned to product portfolios. Career progression and capability-building programs are well-established. Leadership invests in ongoing development.	Frameworks are tailored to organisational context and needs and are continuously improved. Centres of excellence share best practices across teams.	Sophisticated discovery and delivery processes optimise speed and quality. Experimentation, customer feedback loops, and testing (e.g. A/B) are standard. Launches are well-orchestrated and integrated with product learning cycles.	Advanced analytics provide deep insights into product performance. Market and customer intelligence is actionable. Predictive analytics begin informing strategy.	Senior leaders actively champion product management. Cross-functional teams are aligned around product outcomes. Product thinking is embedded in organisational culture.
Leading	Product investment decisions are dynamically linked to business objectives. Strategy adapts in real-time to market shifts and customer trends, with roadmaps optimised for both value and growth.	Cross-functional, autonomous teams thrive. A robust competency framework supports continuous growth, with managers actively coaching, developing, and celebrating product careers.	World-class capabilities are embedded across the organisation. Frameworks evolve continuously, informed by global practice, and the organisation contributes to advancing industry standards.	Continuous discovery and delivery are seamlessly integrated. Customer co-creation and rapid experimentation fuel innovation. Go-to-market excellence includes pre-launch anticipation and post-launch optimisation.	Real-time product intelligence drives continuous optimisation. Predictive insights shape investment and innovation. The organisation leads its market in sensing and adapting to change.	Product teams are fully trusted to optimise value. Transparency and alignment across all functions ensures every leader applies product thinking. The organisation is recognised as product-led in its market.

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Quick Maturity Signals

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Quick Signals give a fast way to spot where an organisation sits on its product maturity journey. They strip back the detail and highlight the most visible signs, how strategy is set, how teams are structured, how work gets done, and how product thinking shows up day to day.

	Strategy & Planning	Resourcing & Staffing	Empowering & Enabling	Making & Delivering	Sensing & Responding	Embedding & Evangelising
Forming	Strategy absent; work driven by leadership requests and urgency	No product roles; responsibilities scattered across functions	No frameworks or standard ways of working; teams siloed	Requirements handed to engineers; no discovery or iterative practices	Product performance not tracked; understanding anecdotal	Product management not understood or supported by non-product leaders
Emerging	Strategy exists but not embedded; day-to-day work remains tactical	Roles exist but loosely defined; teams not aligned to products	Basic frameworks introduced but inconsistently applied; limited autonomy	Basic discovery and delivery introduced but inconsistent; limited customer validation	Basic metrics tracked but incomplete; limited analysis of market intelligence	Awareness exists but limited understanding; minimal support for product initiatives
Performing	Strategy referenced but inconsistently applied in planning and prioritisation	Roles clear and understood; teams aligned to products; basic career frameworks in place	Standardised processes and tools adopted; training supports capability building	Iterative discovery and delivery established; roadmaps link to backlogs; GTM structured for major releases	Comprehensive metrics reviewed regularly; data increasingly informs decisions	Leadership recognises product as growth driver; product thinking begins spreading beyond product teams
Excelling	Strategy consistently drives day-to-day priorities and trade-offs	Teams optimally structured; career pathways and skill development programs well-established	Frameworks tailored and continuously improved; best practices shared; teams highly autonomous	Experimentation, testing, and feedback loops embedded; launches well-orchestrated and learning-driven	Advanced analytics provide deep insights; predictive data informs strategy	Leaders actively champion product; cross-functional teams aligned around outcomes; product thinking embedded in culture
Leading	Strategy dynamically integrated into all decisions and continuously adapted	Cross-functional, autonomous teams; robust competency frameworks; leaders actively invest in growth	World-class frameworks evolve continuously; product ways of working shape the wider organisation	Continuous discovery and delivery fully integrated; customer co-creation and rapid innovation embedded	Real-time intelligence drives optimisation; predictive insights shape investment and innovation	Product fully trusted and applied across all functions; organisation recognised as product-led

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