

Dear readers,

I originally published this deck on <http://andrewchen.co> - where you'll find the latest version, with notes, comments, etc. I also have a number of other similar decks, essays, and discussions.

Building a new growth team is hard. You have to figure out the macro organizational issues – how it fits in with marketing, product, and other functions – as well as the micro, like how to measure the success of these teams. It's a tricky topic and something that a lot of teams are thinking about right now.

A few months ago, I spoke on lessons learned from various organizational structures for the growth teams at Uber, organized as 5 broad topics:

1. Why create a growth team?
2. What's the difference between a “growth hacker” and a growth team?
3. What's the difference between growth and marketing/product/whatever?
4. Where should growth teams focus?
5. I'm starting or joining a growth team! What should I expect?

To answer these questions, Brian Balfour and I worked on a deck, based on materials from [Reforge](#). (Check them out for more practical reference materials on this topic)

The deck is presented below! Hope you enjoy the materials, and feel free to reach out or follow me for realtime updates at [@andrewchen](#) on Twitter.

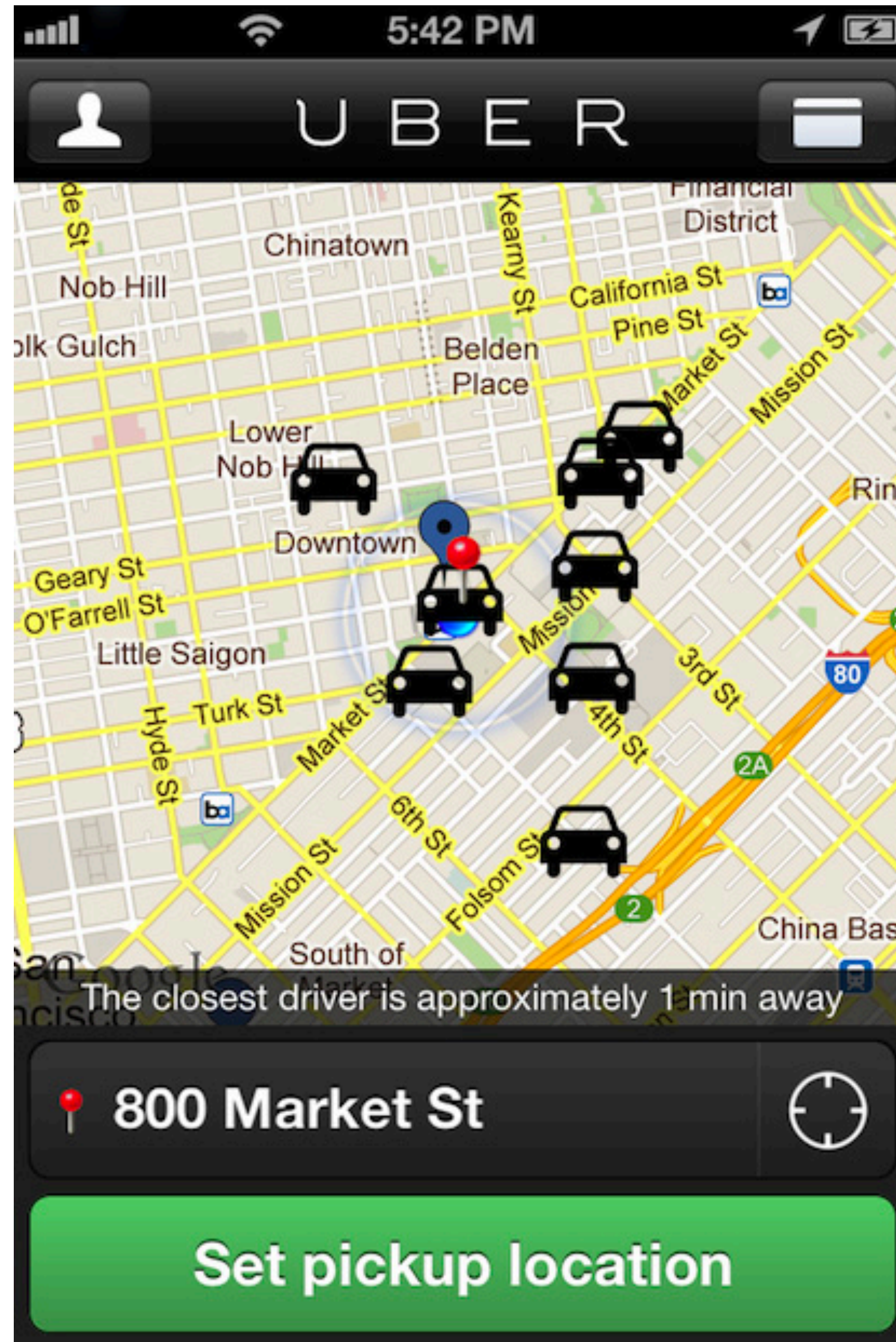
Thanks,
Andrew

5 Key Questions on Building Growth Teams

Andrew Chen

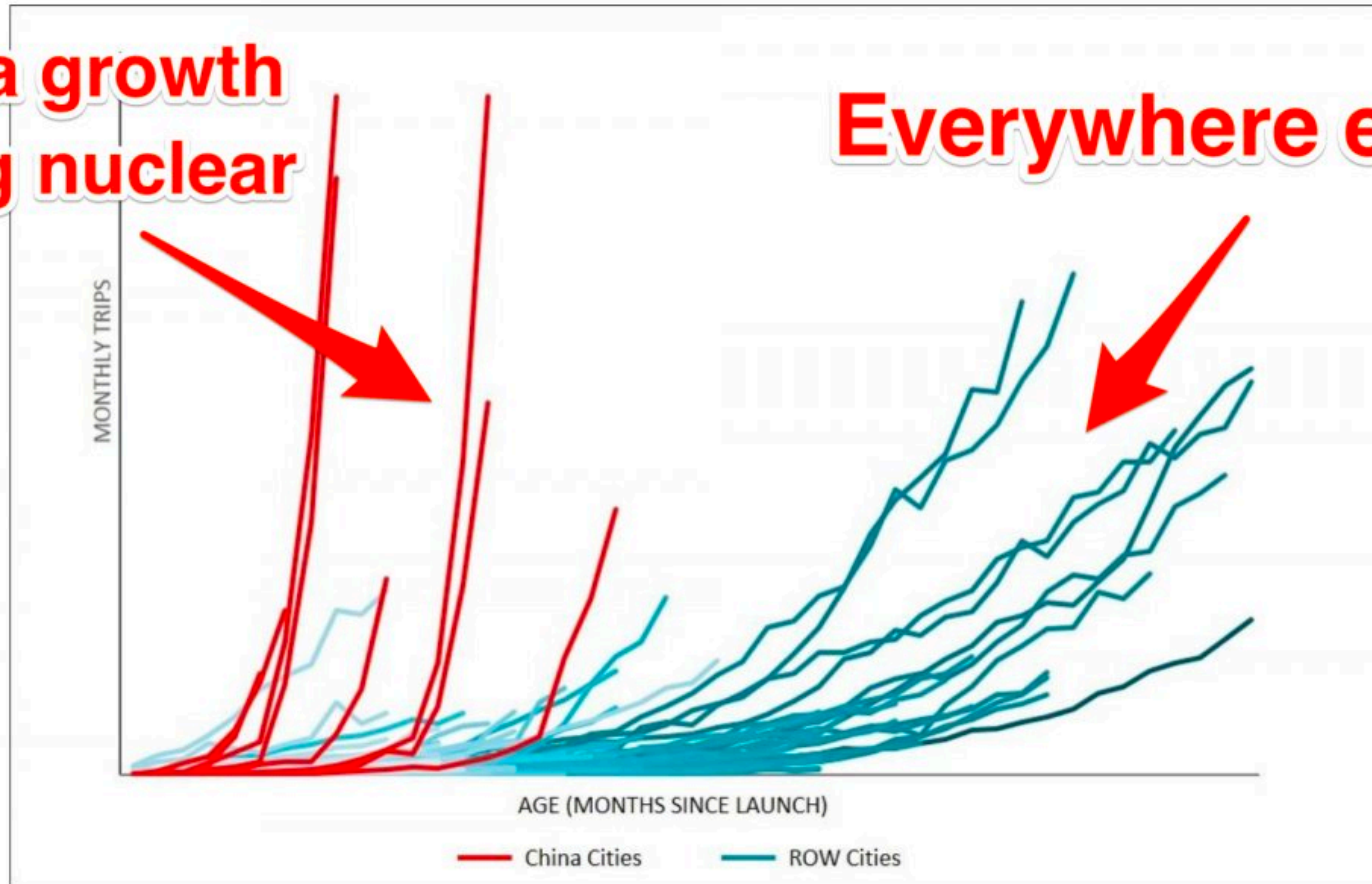
Andreessen Horowitz

Ex-Head of Rider Growth, Uber



**China growth
going nuclear**

Everywhere else





KEY QUESTION #1

WHY CREATE A GROWTH TEAM?



UBER



TESLA



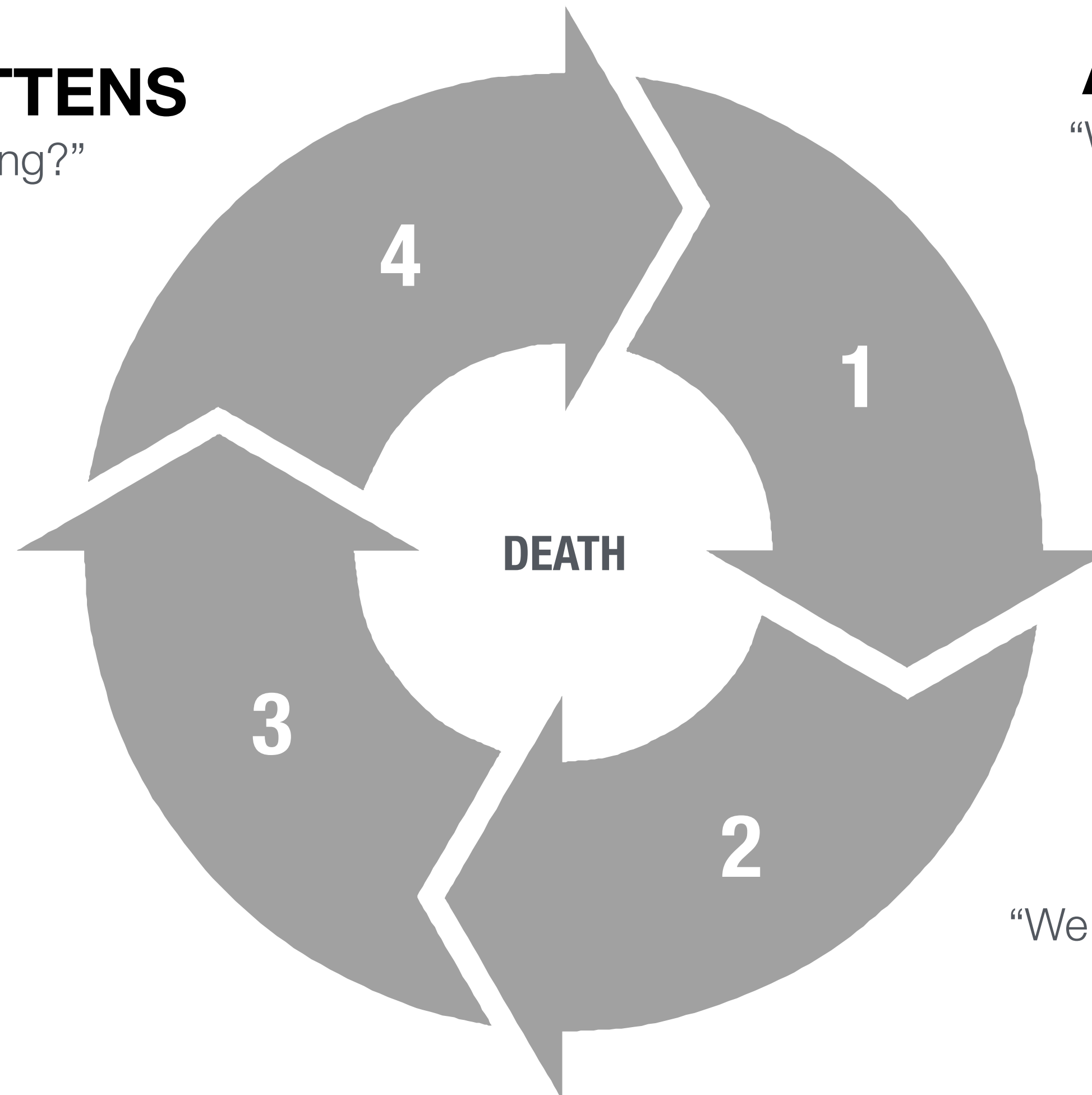
The Product Death Cycle

GROWTH FLATTENS

“Why did we stop growing?”

ADD FEATURES

“We just need to add more features that users want.”



LAUNCH

“We just need a bigger launch with more press.”

INITIAL SPIKE

“It’s working! I think.”



BETTER PRODUCT DOES NOT EQUAL MORE GROWTH

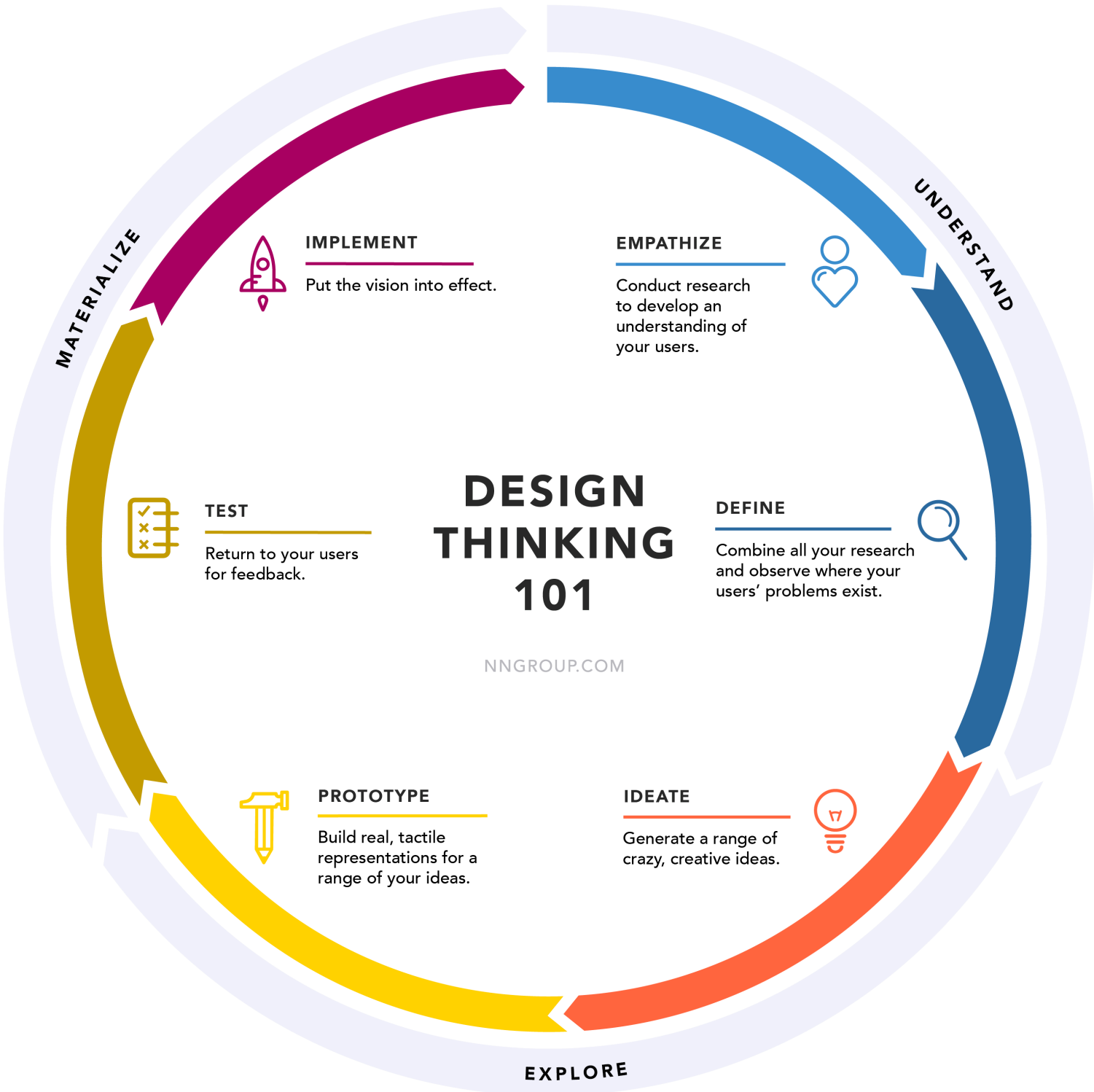
Saying you just need a better product submits yourself to the “if you build it, they will come” mentality.



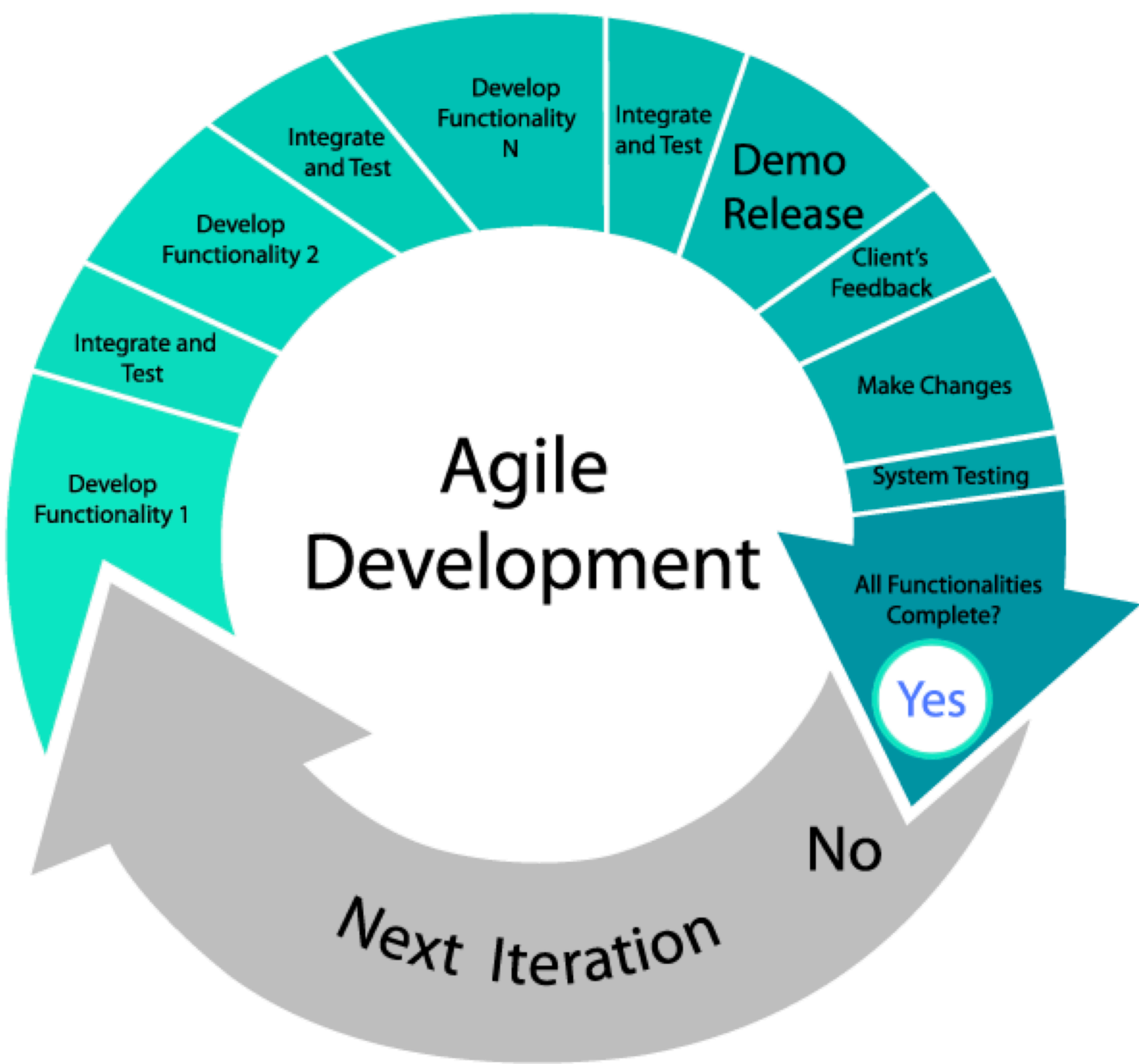
GROWTH IS TOOL

In knowledge work our tools are the processes we use to approach and solve different types of problems.

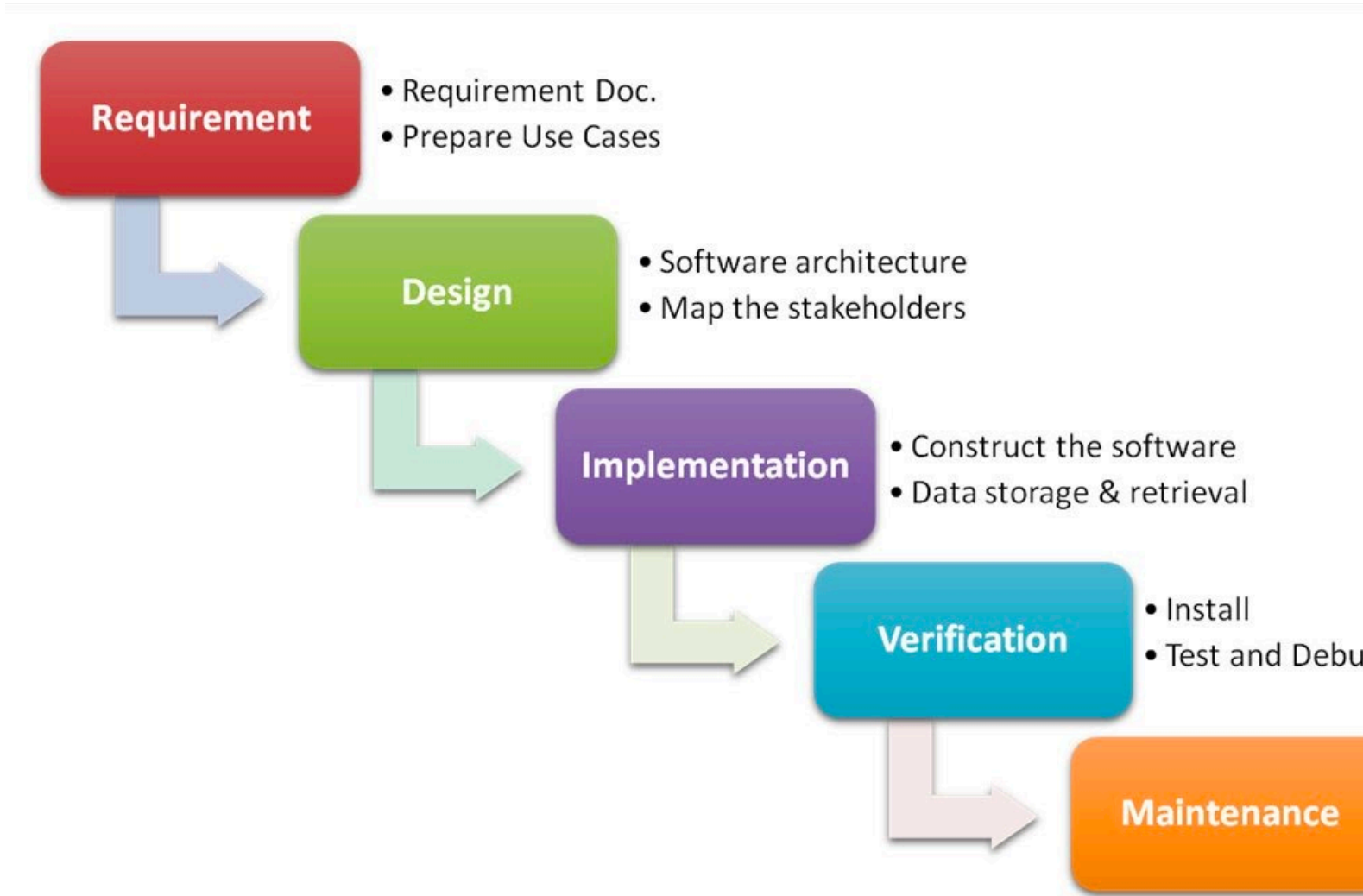
Design Thinking



Agile



Waterfall



GROWTH IS THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD APPLIED TO KPI'S

Credit: Steven Dupree - Former SoFi/LogMeIn

REFORGE

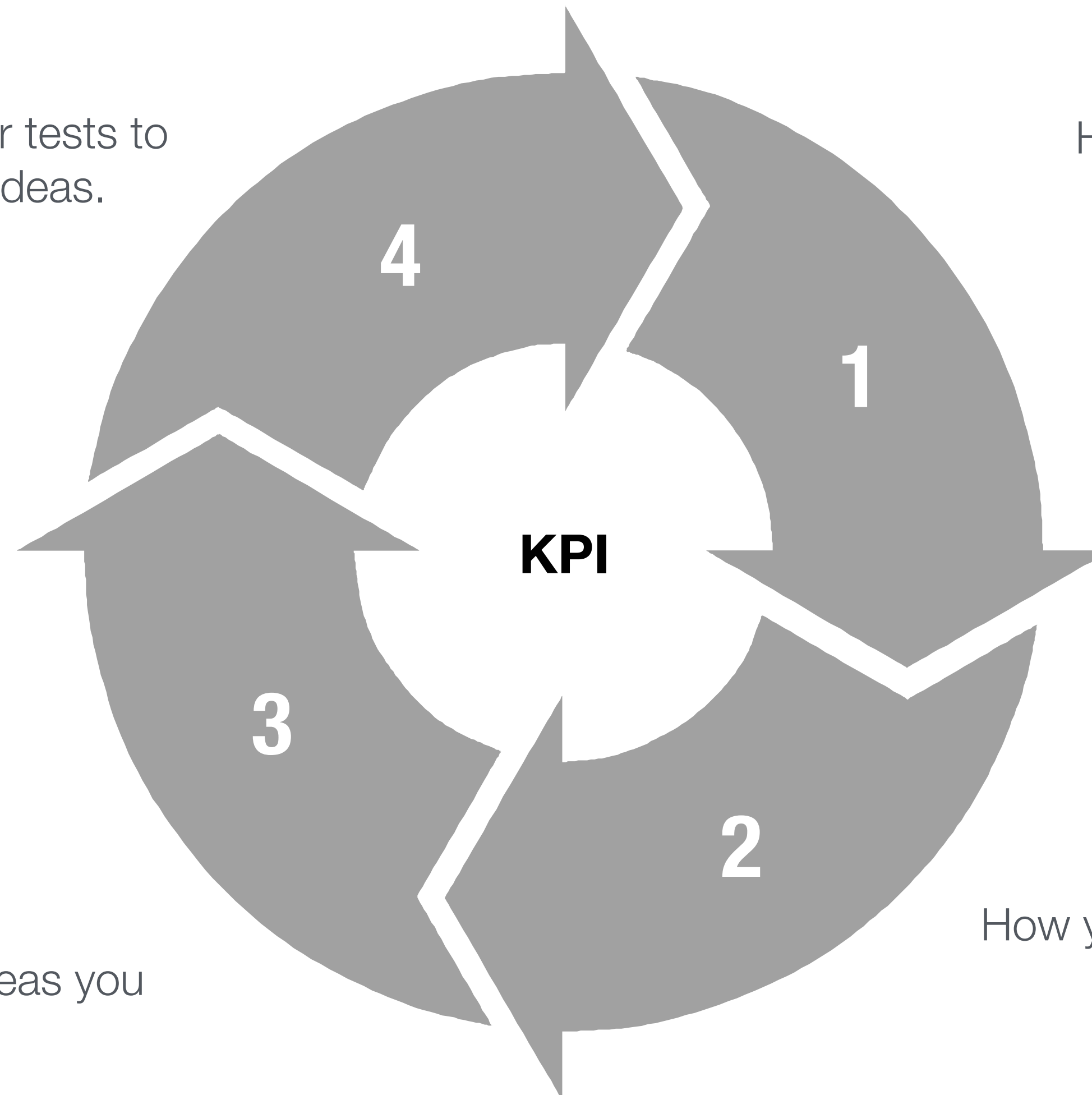
Main Steps Of Growth Process

ANALYSIS

How you learn from your tests to improve the next set of ideas.

HYPOTHESES

How you develop targeted ideas.



EXPERIMENT

How you execute the ideas you have chosen.

PRIORITIZE

How you decide which ideas to execute.

REFORGE

KEY QUESTION #2

**WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN A “GROWTH HACKER”
AND GROWTH TEAM?**



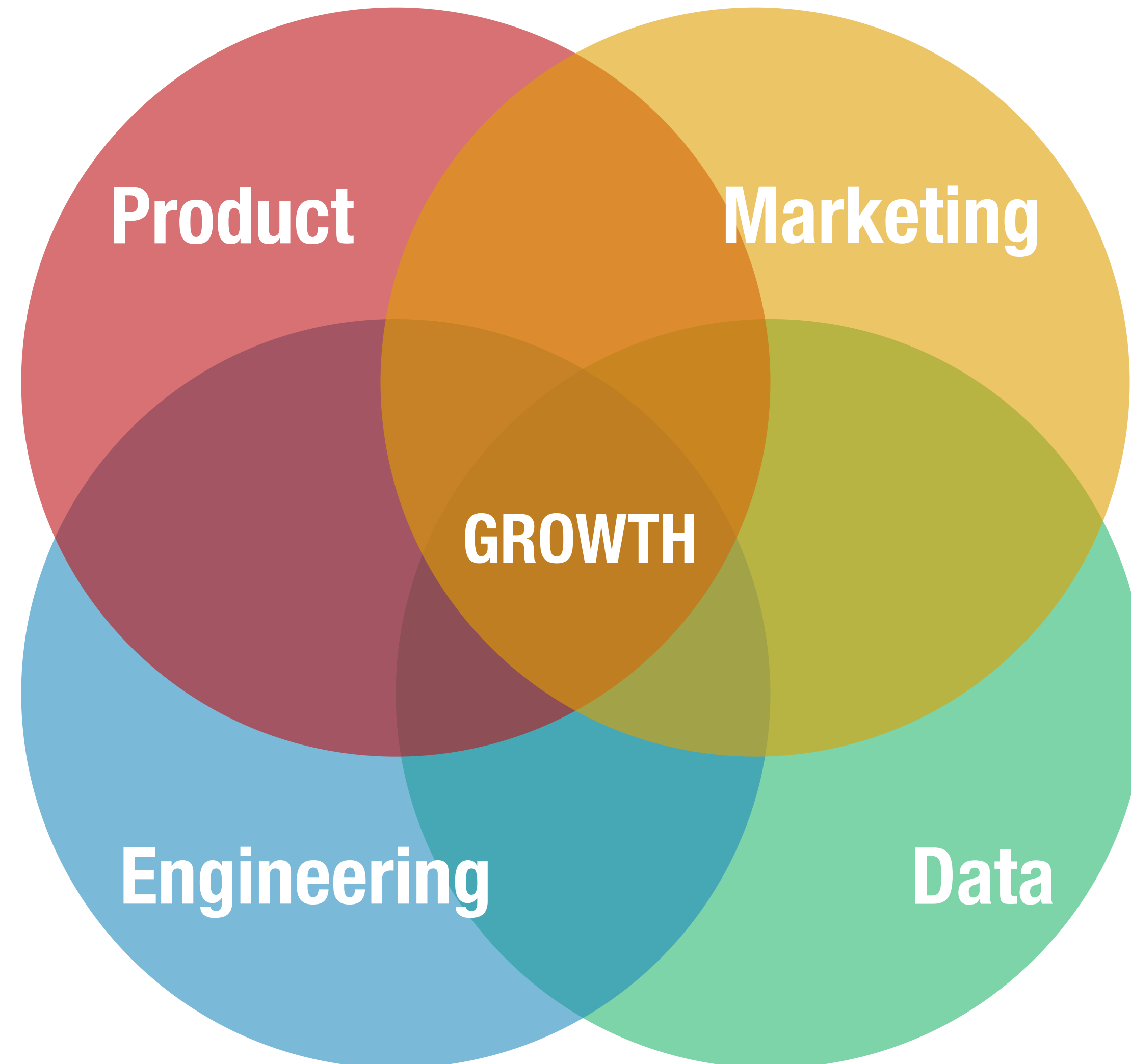
THE **MYTH** OF THE LONE GROWTH HACKER

Putting one person in charge of growth is a recipe for failure.

GROWTH IS A TEAM SPORT

Most Missions Need Cross Functional Skills

To run the growth process optimally most missions require cross functional skills.



5 Potential Roles For A Growth Team

Different teams will have different mixes of these roles.

1 **GROWTH PM**

Product Manager responsible for the experiment roadmap.

2 **GROWTH ENGINEER**

An engineer focused on implementing the experiments.

3 **GROWTH MARKETER**

A versatile marketer with an expertise in a given channel.

4 **GROWTH DA**

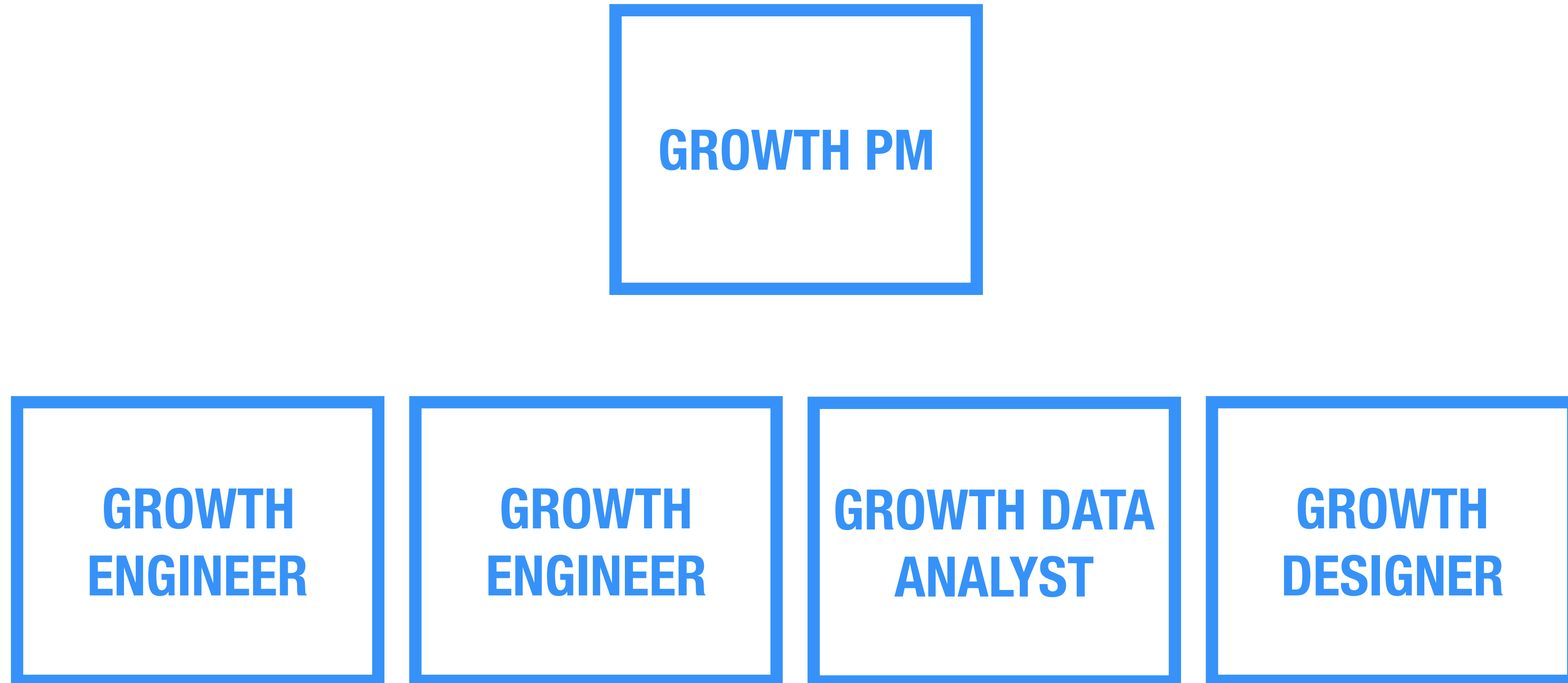
Data analyst focused on drawing insights from experiments and data sets to inform areas of opportunity.

5 **GROWTH DESIGNER**

A versatile designer focused more on quick implementation than pixel perfect design.

Example #1: Growth Team - NUX

Example of a New User Experience Growth Team



Example #2: Growth Team - SEO

Example of a growth team responsible for SEO.



**THERE IS NO PERFECT STRUCTURE.
EACH HAS PROS AND CONS.**

Cross Functional Team Structure

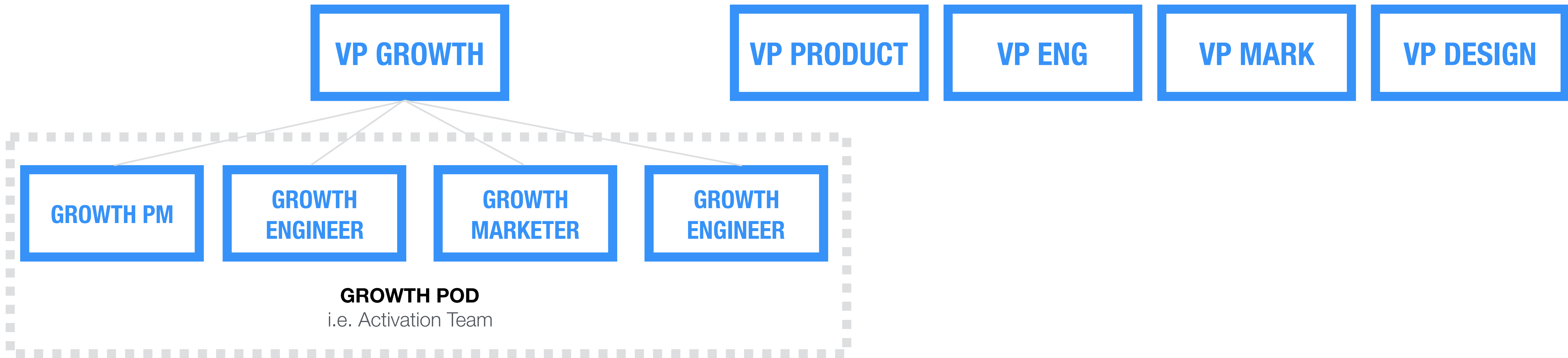
Each team has growth resources



GROWTH POD
i.e. Activation Team

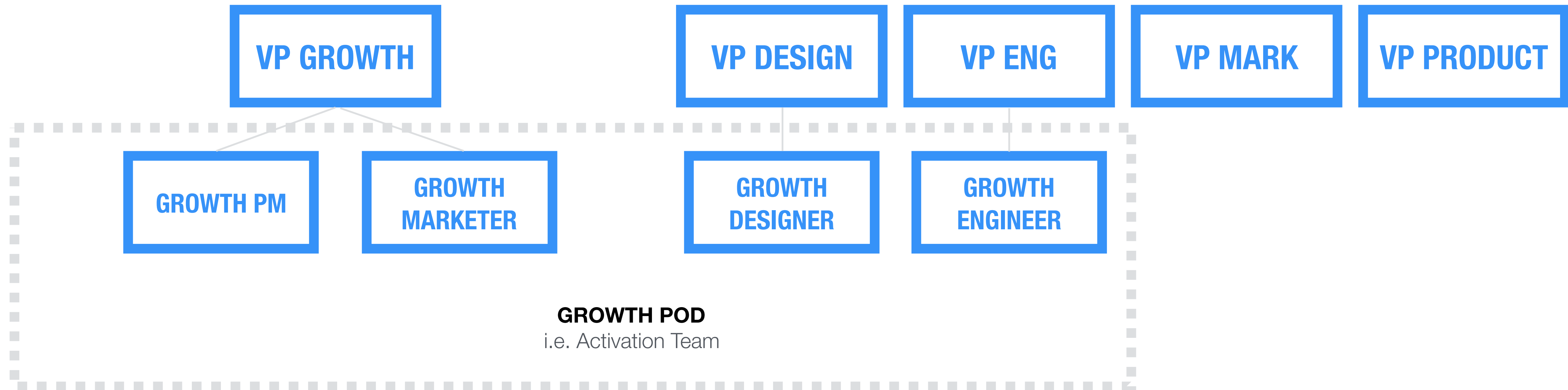
Independent Team Structure

Growth is a fully independent team from others.



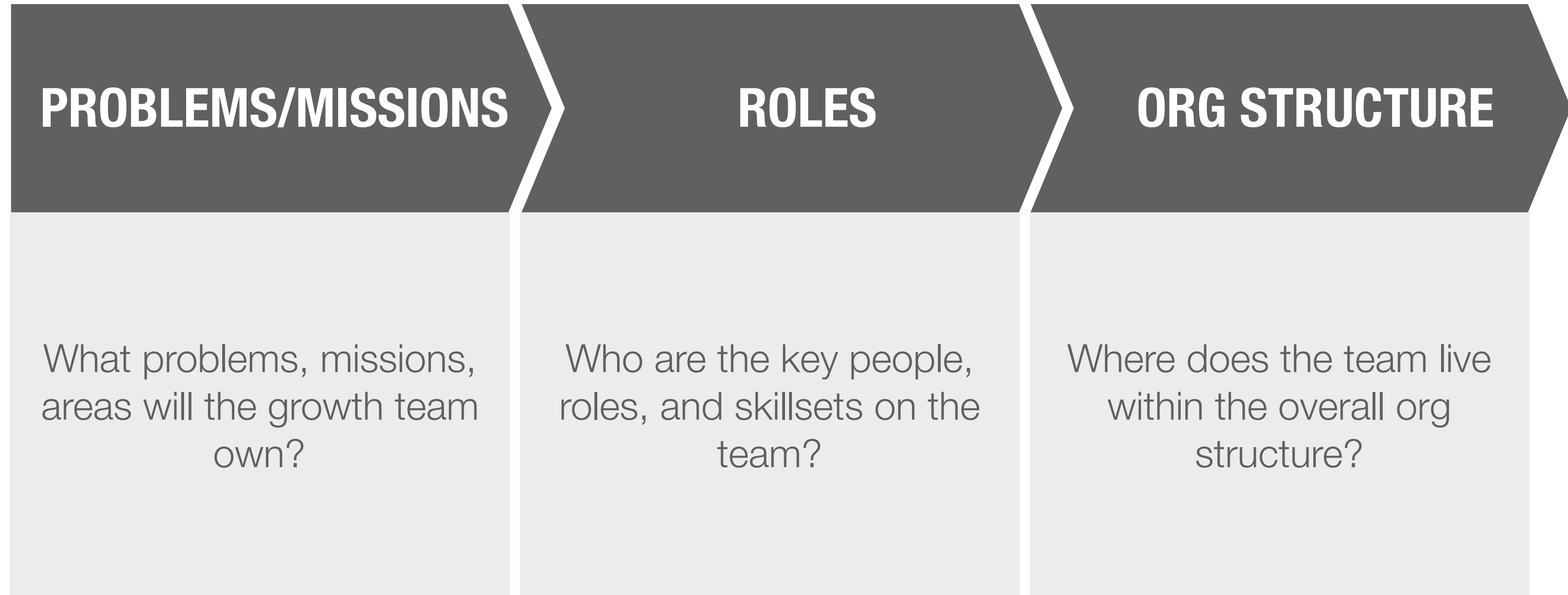
Mixed Structure

Combination of cross functional + independent



Thinking Through Your Growth Team

Three key questions to answer.



KEY QUESTION #3

**WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN GROWTH AND X?**

X = MARKETING/PRODUCT/MAGIC/WHATEVER

Growth vs Marketing

Where does marketing end and growth begin?

BRAND



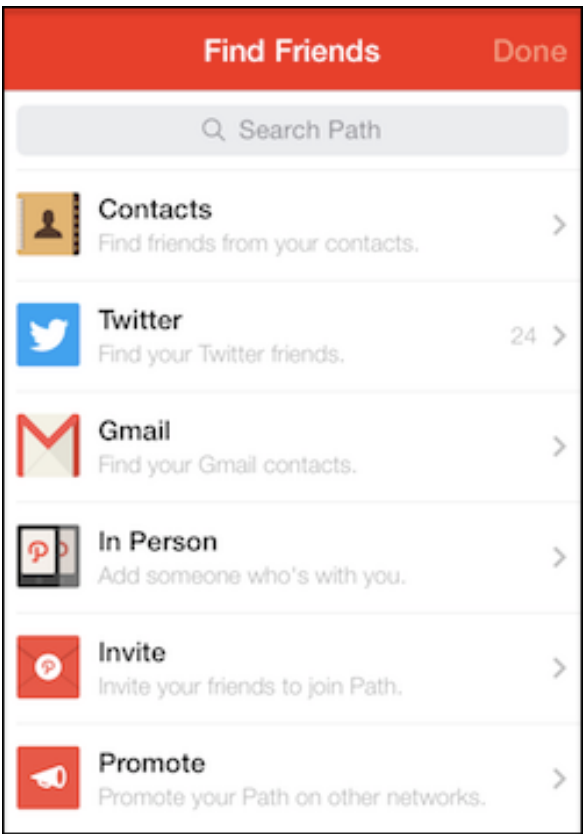
The soft elements of marketing.
Branding, PR, Events, etc.

GROWTH MARKETING

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	A	Milling							Input				
2	Inlet			Outlet					Derived from Fan Mei, MS Thesis, 2006				
3	Corn, Ai	1.00 kg		Corn powder, Ao	1.00 kg								
4								Corn Feed	1.00 kg				
5	B	Mashing		Outlet				Water Usage	2.68 kg				
6	Inlet							Total Mass In	3.68 kg				
7													
8	Corn powder, Bb1	1.00 kg		Mash, Bo	2.60 kg								
9	Water, Bb2	1.00 kg						Ethanol Out	0.32 kg				
10	Inlet total, Bi	2.00 kg		Outlet total, Bo	2.60 kg			CO2 Out	0.31 kg				
11								DDGS Out	0.33 kg				
12	C	Cooking/ Liquefaction		Outlet				Wastewater Out	2.72 kg				
13	Inlet			Liquefied Mash, Co1	2.67 kg			Total Mass Out	3.68 kg				
14	Mash, Ci1	2.60 kg		Wastewater, Co2		0.23 kg							
15	Steam, Ci2	0.30 kg		Outlet total, Co	2.90 kg								
16	Inlet total, Ci	2.90 kg											
17	D	Fermentation		Outlet									
18	Inlet			Fermented Mash, Do1	2.97 kg								
19	Mash, Di1	2.67 kg		Fermenter									
20	Water, Di2	0.61 kg		CO2, Do2	0.31 kg								
21	Inlet total, Di	3.28 kg		Outlet total, Do	3.28 kg								
22													
23	K	Scrubber		Outlet									
24	Inlet			CO2 Emitted, Ko1	0.31 kg								
25	Fermenter	0.31 kg		Wastewater, Ko2	0.17 kg								
26	Water, Ki2	0.17 kg											

The technical and quantitative pieces of customer acquisition.
SEO, Email, Paid Acquisition, etc.

GROWTH PRODUCT



Areas of the product that have a huge impact on growth. NUX (New User Experience), Viral/ Referral, Sharing.

Growth vs Product

Where does product end and growth begin?

**BUILDING CORE
VALUE**

PRODUCT

**GETTING THE LARGEST % OF
TARGET AUDIENCE TO
EXPERIENCE CORE VALUE AS
QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE**

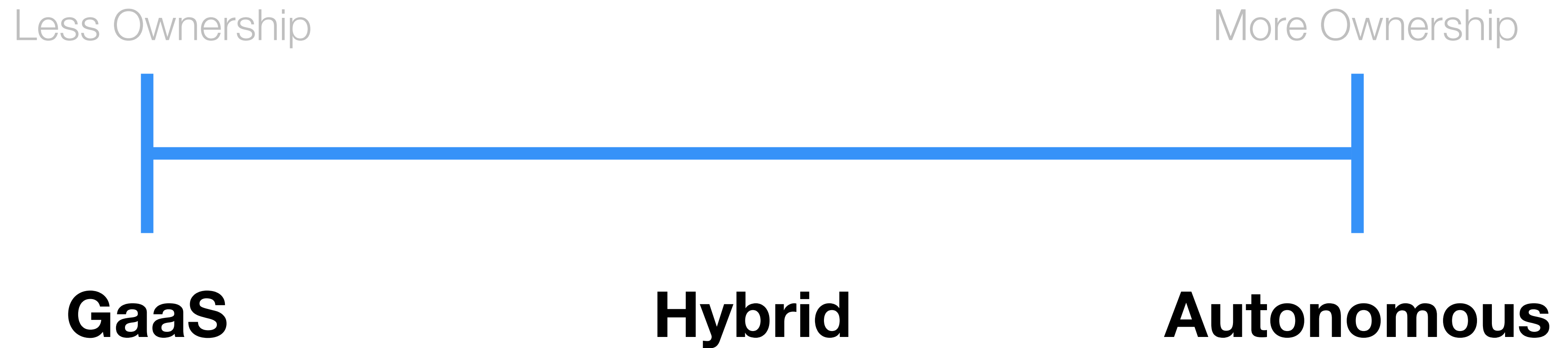
GROWTH

**GETTING USERS TO
EXPERIENCE THAT CORE VALUE
AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE**

MIX

Three Models For Ownership

A Broad Framework



Pros/Cons Of Each Model

How different ownership models compare.

	Pros	Cons
GaaS	Growth can stay nimble and be involved in more areas of the business at once.	Turf tension and competing priorities teams. Growth can't control their own destiny.
Autonomous	Growth can control their own destiny and move on big changes quickly.	Much larger team needed over time or experimentation slows down.
Hybrid	Hypothetically best of both worlds.	Hard to draw lines between teams cleanly. Still end with competing priorities.

KEY QUESTION #4

**WHERE SHOULD GROWTH TEAMS
FOCUS?**

Prioritization Framework

Three inputs to prioritizing.

Effort

Mktn	Eng	Des
High	Med	Low

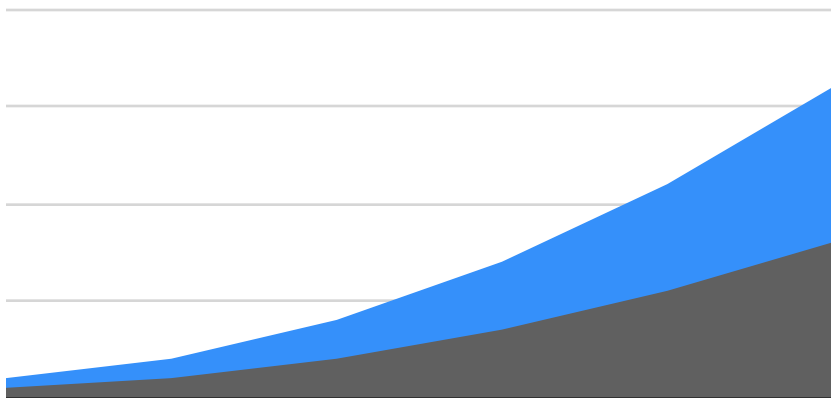
How much design, engineering, marketing resources will it take to test?

Success



How likely will this be successful?

Upside



If successful, what is the likely impact on overall growth?

Two Components Of Upside

Break analysis of upside down into two components.

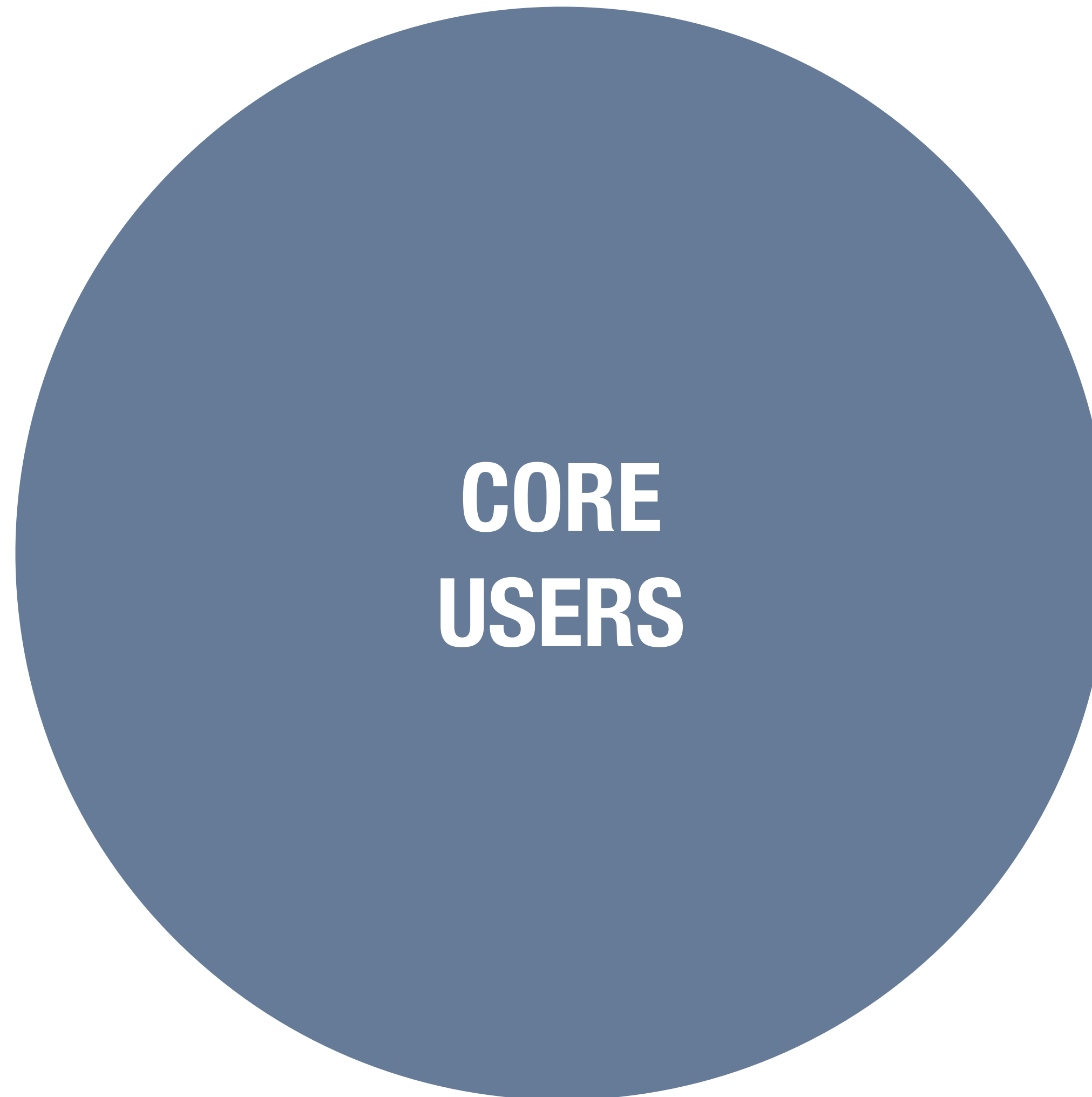
REACH How many people will this experiment touch?

X

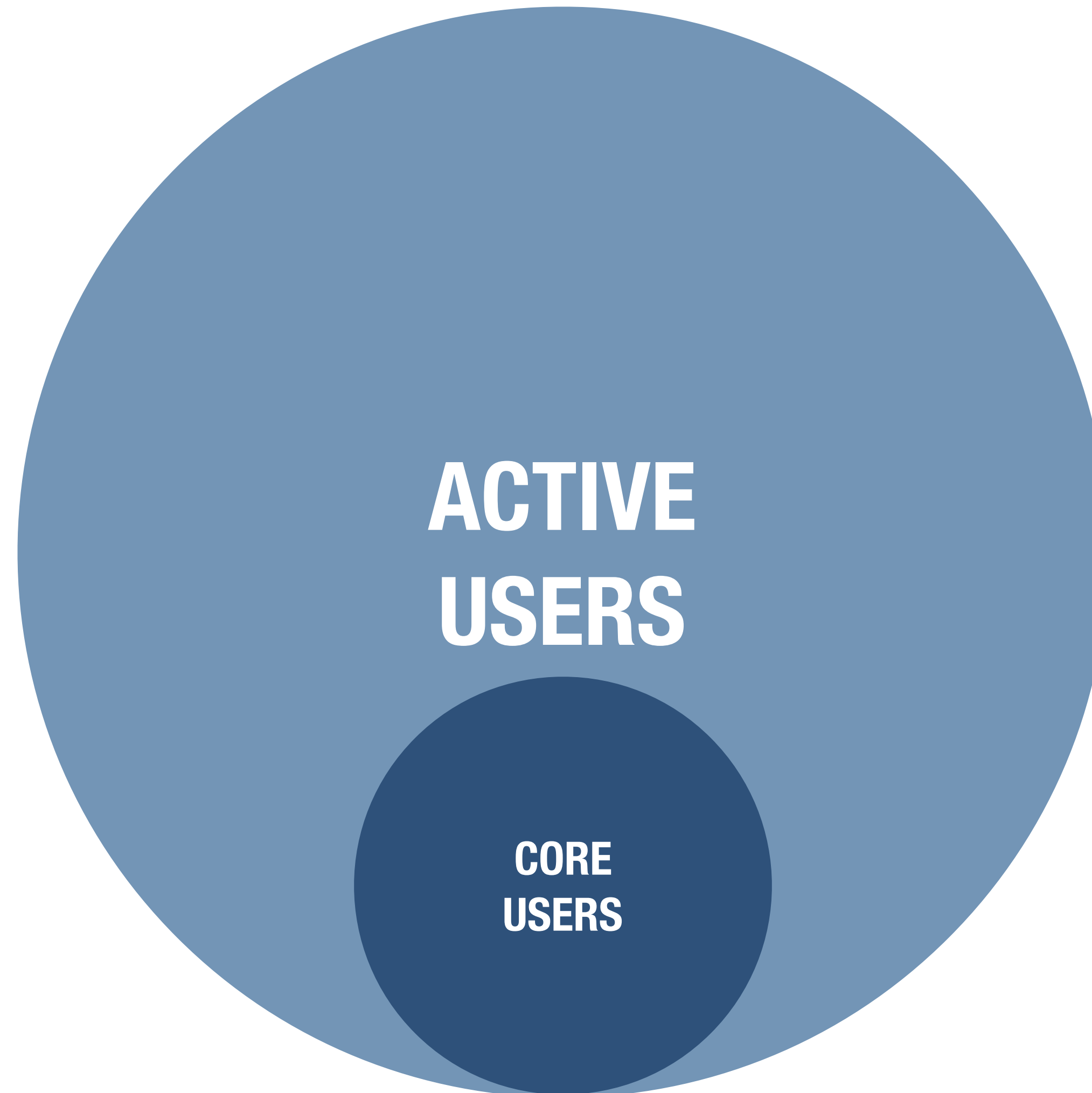
IMPACT What is the expected impact on the variable I'm trying to improve?

UPSIDE Total amount of upside on my growth model.

How To Think About Reach



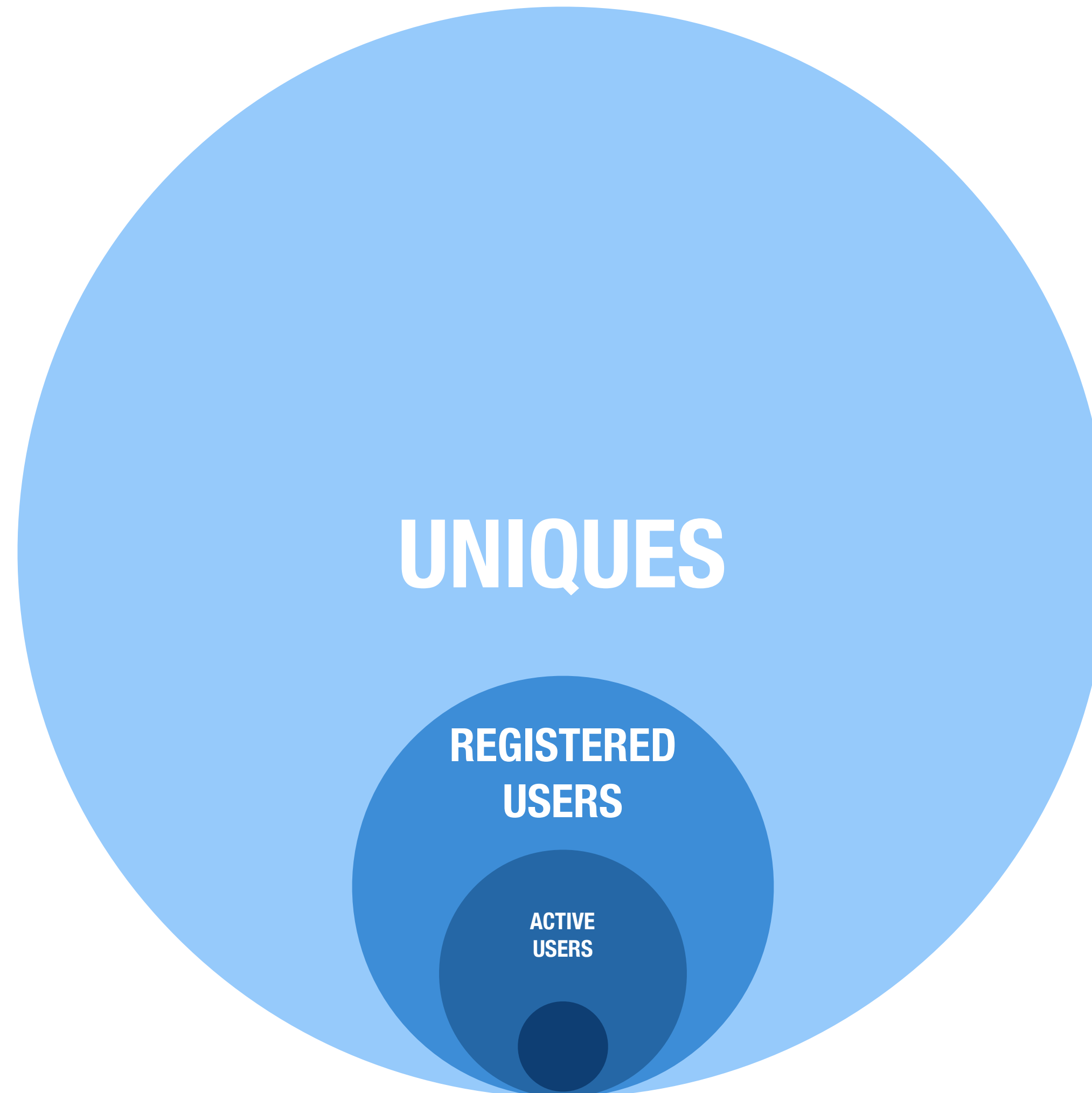
How To Think About Reach



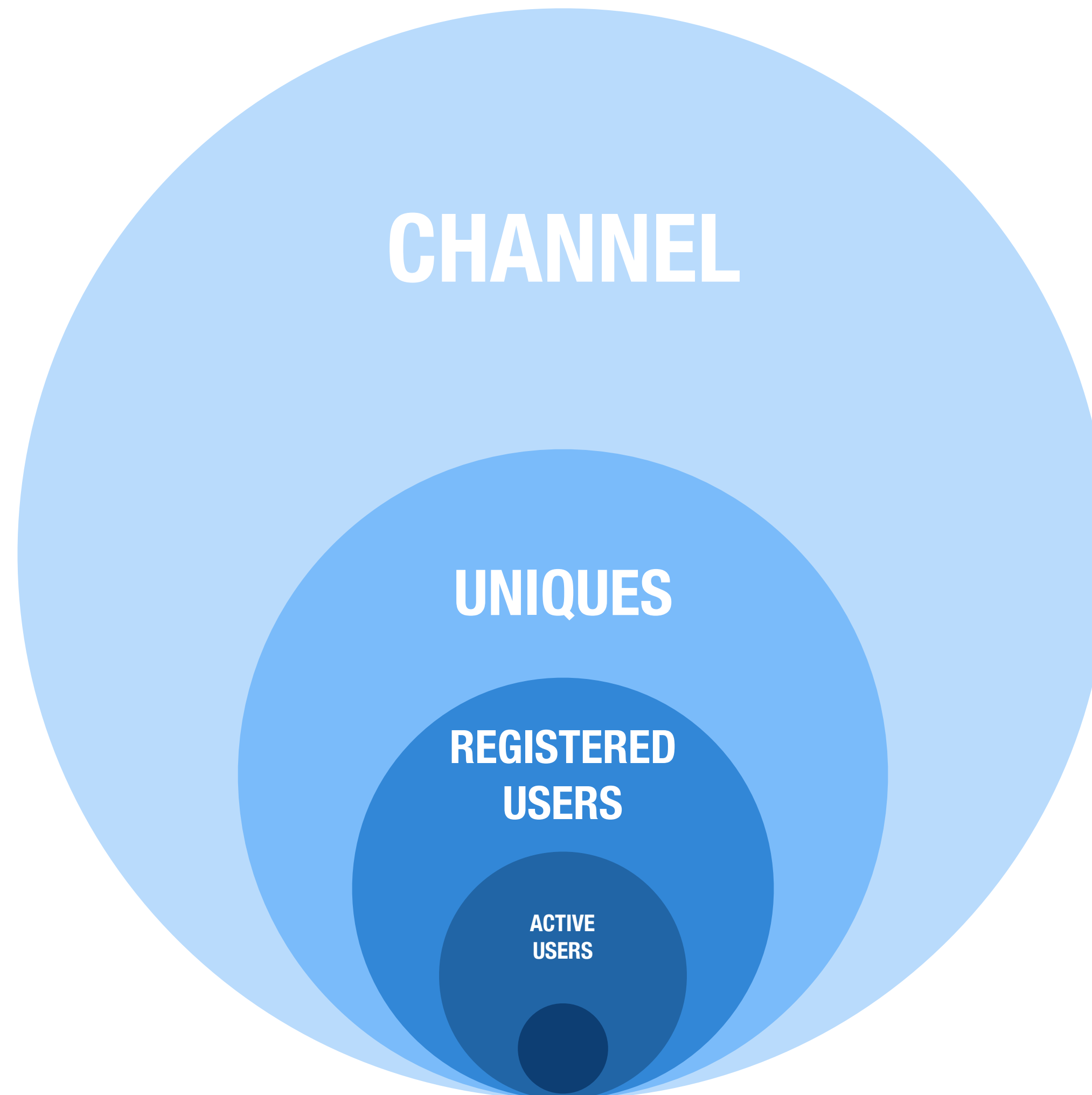
How To Think About Reach



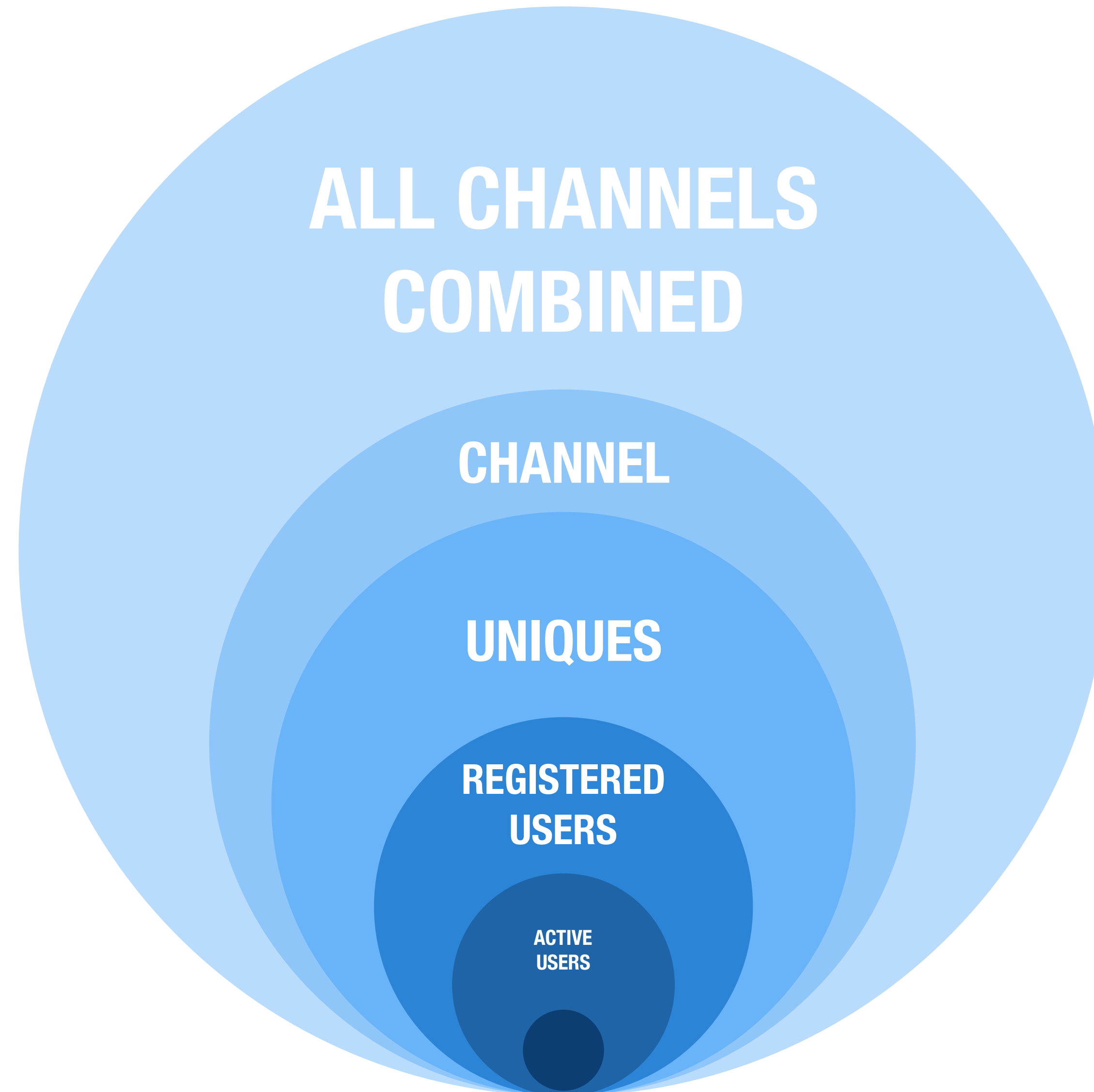
How To Think About Reach



How To Think About Reach



How To Think About Reach



**WHEN IT COMES TO REACH YOU
ARE GENERALLY BETTER OFF
THINKING OUTSIDE YOUR
CURRENT USER BASE.**

An Example From Airbnb Team

Airbnb Product - few things touch non-users

- Last-minute booking
 - Resolutions Tool
 - Photo Tool
 - Lantern
 - Help Center
 - Product Email
 - Referrals
 - Homepage
 - Booking flow
 - Calendar
 - Managed Listing
- Search
 - Wish-list
 - Dashboard
 - Neighborhoods
 - Groups
 - Your reservations
 - Account
 - List Your Space
 - Messaging
 - Check-in
 - Reviews
- Listing page
 - Verified ID
 - Privacy Settings
 - Marketing Emails
 - Profile
 - References
 - Account
 - Mobile web
 - Blog
 - Stories
 - Hospitality

KEY QUESTION #5

**I'M STARTING/JOINING A
GROWTH TEAM!
WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT?**

Elements To Consider

Remember there is no one right way.

Leadership DNA

Ex. Does the VP Product “get” growth?

1

Company Culture

Where is the company culture rooted? Engineering? Product? Design?

2

Ownership Model

Certain ownership models work better with certain structures.

3

Implementing: Expected Friction

Common friction when implementing a growth team.

Old Ideologies



“Good engineers don’t like to work on growth.” - VP Engineering

More Product = More Growth



“We should do this because people think it is a really good idea.” - PM/Marketer

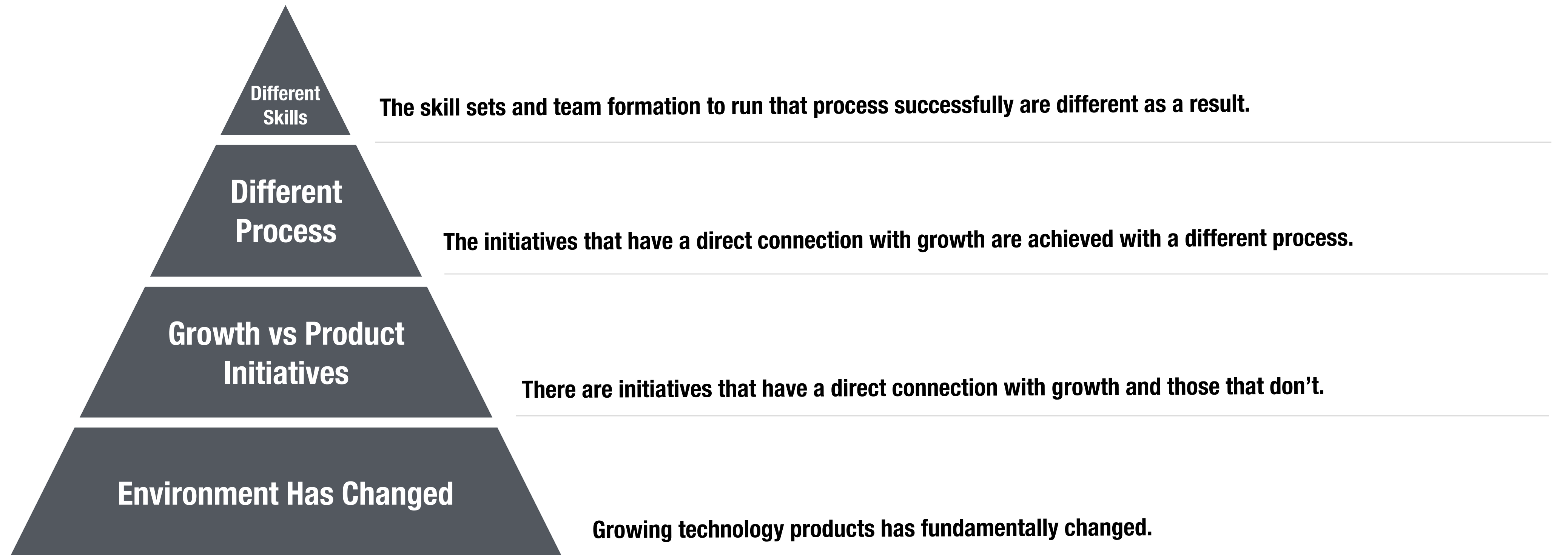
Stay Off My Lawn



“We own this. You can’t implement anything with out our approval.” - Engineer

Make Sure Everyone Starts With The Same Foundation

Build Your Implementation From The Ground Up



How To Overcome Friction

Tips on how to overcome the friction.

Understand Where Your Culture Is Rooted

1

CEO/Founder Buy-In and Authority

2

Educate, Educate, Educate

3

Understand The Whole Pie, But Start With A Piece

4

Prioritize Ruthlessly, Get Early Wins

5

Celebrate Wins and Failures w/ Data

6