

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/customer-centered-decision-making/>

Julia Collins, founder and CEO of Planet FWD, explains her company's decision-making framework and how the early team based their decisions on listening to customers' needs. She recommends building products with rapid prototyping, testing, and iterating.



Transcript

- Is there any frameworks you can share with us 00:00:04,770 in terms of how you make decisions around the types of products that you would wanna design for? - Yeah, well, the decision-making framework itself 00:00:14,700 that we use at Planet FWD is pretty light, but it is important within teams to be able to signal where you are in the continuum of making a decision.. So, something that we say is, "Is this an idea, "is this a proposal, "or is this a decision?" And that creates a lot of clarity within the team, especially when you're brainstorming or you're working very quickly across multiple projects.. It's important to be able to signpost and signal, "Oh, no, this is just an idea.. "I just wanna get this out." Versus, "This is a proposal.. "I'd like for us to be able to price this and scope it." Or, in some cases, like, "This has been decided "and I'm communicating it as a decision." In general, I think we are very inspired by design thinking when we think about the way to bring products to market, in particular human-centered design.. So, before we had any perspective on Moonshot as a cracker product or Planet FWD as a data and software platform, we just did a lot of listening.. And by we, I mean the early team.. So, myself, one other MBA who I hired.. Really just did a very like methodical customer discovery sprint.. We talked to 50 chief sustainability officers working in companies to understand what their needs were, what their motivations were, what the incumbent solutions were..

And we used that customer discovery to create sort of an initial perspective on what we could build.. And then we did some really rough prototyping to be able to test it with real users.. And so we used Figma and some other tools to be able to sort of create a sample product and then got that in front of users and had them tinkering with it.. And then from that, we developed a sort of a quick application.. So, it was actual software.. But, again, we sprinted like maybe six weeks developing it, and then we figured out, "Would people pay anything for it? "Would people pay even \$1,000 for this solution?" And so it was just really, we've heard this framework a lot of times to test, to rapid prototyping, testing, and iterating.. We very much did that, and I think that is the right way to build products...