

5. Product Discovery Checklist

This checklist is designed to be used before, during and at the end of discovery. It's lightweight, but rigorous enough to stop solution jumping.



Automatic “Not Ready” Flags

Discovery is NOT ready if:

- No user input was gathered.
 - The team cannot articulate the problem in one sentence.
 - Different stakeholders describe the problem differently.
 - The “why now?” is unclear or based on assumptions.
 - You solution-first rather than problem-first.
 - Success metrics are undefined.
 - No customer journey or workflow is defined.
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1. Discovery Readiness (Before You Start)

- ☐ Is there a clear problem or opportunity (not a solution request)?
- ☐ Do I have a basic understanding of the idea?
- ☐ Is there a business owner / stakeholder for this idea?
- ☐ Is discovery time-boxed (e.g. 1–3 weeks)?
- ☐ Do I know who needs to be involved vs just informed?

! If you can't explain the problem in one paragraph, discovery is not ready !

2. Problem Framing

- ☐ Have I written a clear problem statement?
- ☐ Have I identified who experiences the problem?
- ☐ Do I understand the current state (how it works today)?
- ☐ Have I captured pain points, inefficiencies, or risks?
- ☐ Have I documented assumptions clearly?

3. User & Stakeholder Understanding

- ☐ Have I spoken to actual users (not just stakeholders)?
- ☐ Have I validated what users say vs what they do?
- ☐ Have I captured needs, not requests?
- ☐ Have I identified differences between user groups?
- ☐ Have I confirmed business goals and constraints?

4. Scope & Constraints

- ☐ Are in-scope and out-of-scope areas clear?
- ☐ Have dependencies been identified?
- ☐ Is this a platform, process, or people problem or a mix?
- ☐ Is non-build an option?

5. Exploring the Problem Space

- ☐ Have I mapped the end-to-end journey or flow?
- ☐ Have I identified bottlenecks and workarounds?
- ☐ Do I know where value is created or lost?
- ☐ Have I avoided jumping to the “obvious” solution?

6. Solution Options (Not Designs)

- Have I identified multiple possible approaches?
- Have I included non-tech or process options?
- Have I documented pros, cons, and risks of each?
- Have I captured unknowns that need validation?

☒ Aim for options, not answers.

7. Assumptions & Validation

- ☐ Have I listed the riskiest assumptions?
- ☐ Have I validated them with users, data, or stakeholders?
- ☐ Do I know what is proven vs still assumed?
- ☐ Have I killed weak ideas early?

8. Outcomes & Success Criteria

- ☐ Have I defined the desired outcome?
- ☐ Are success metrics clear and measurable?
- ☐ Do stakeholders agree on what “success” means?

9. Discovery Outputs (Required)

- ☐ Problem statement documented
- ☐ User needs & insights captured
- ☐ Constraints and risks listed
- ☐ Assumptions validated (or rejected)
- ☐ Outcome & success metrics defined
- ☐ Clear recommendation: Proceed, Park or Stop

10. Handover to Prioritisation

- ☐ Is discovery clearly closed?
- ☐ Is this ready for prioritisation?
- ☐ Are next steps clear?
- ☐ Have findings been shared visibly?



Red Flags to Watch For

- “We already know the solution”.
- Discovery running with no end date.
- Stakeholders disengaged until sign-off.
- No user input.
- Discovery turning into delivery.