

Building a UX Design Roadmap: From Research Priorities to Shipped Experience

Connecting evidence, design intent, and delivery commitments



What senior stakeholders expect:

- Sequenced priorities, clear dependencies, defensible rationale



The three horizons:

- Discovery, design, post-release iteration



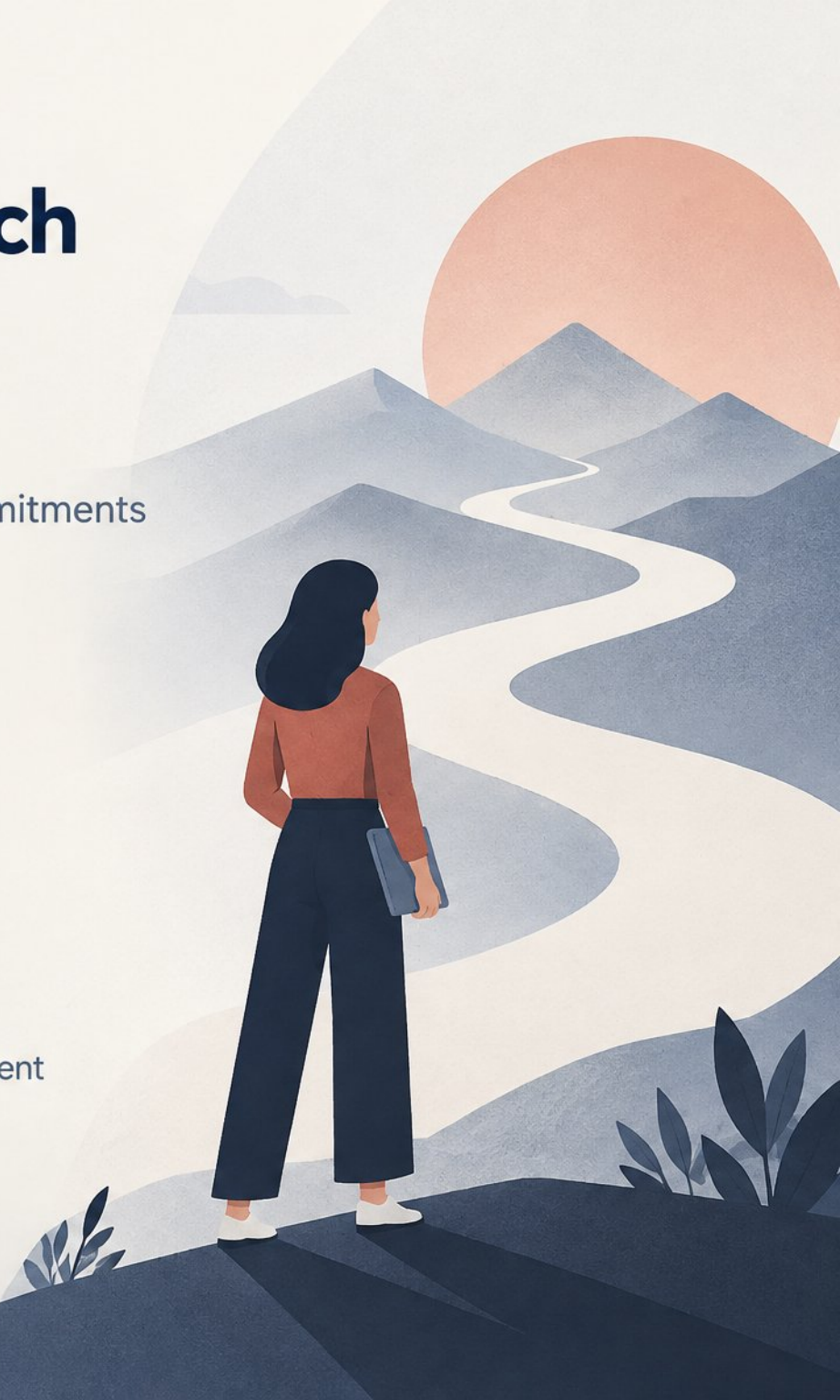
Failure modes:

- feature list, unprioritized backlog, no measurement



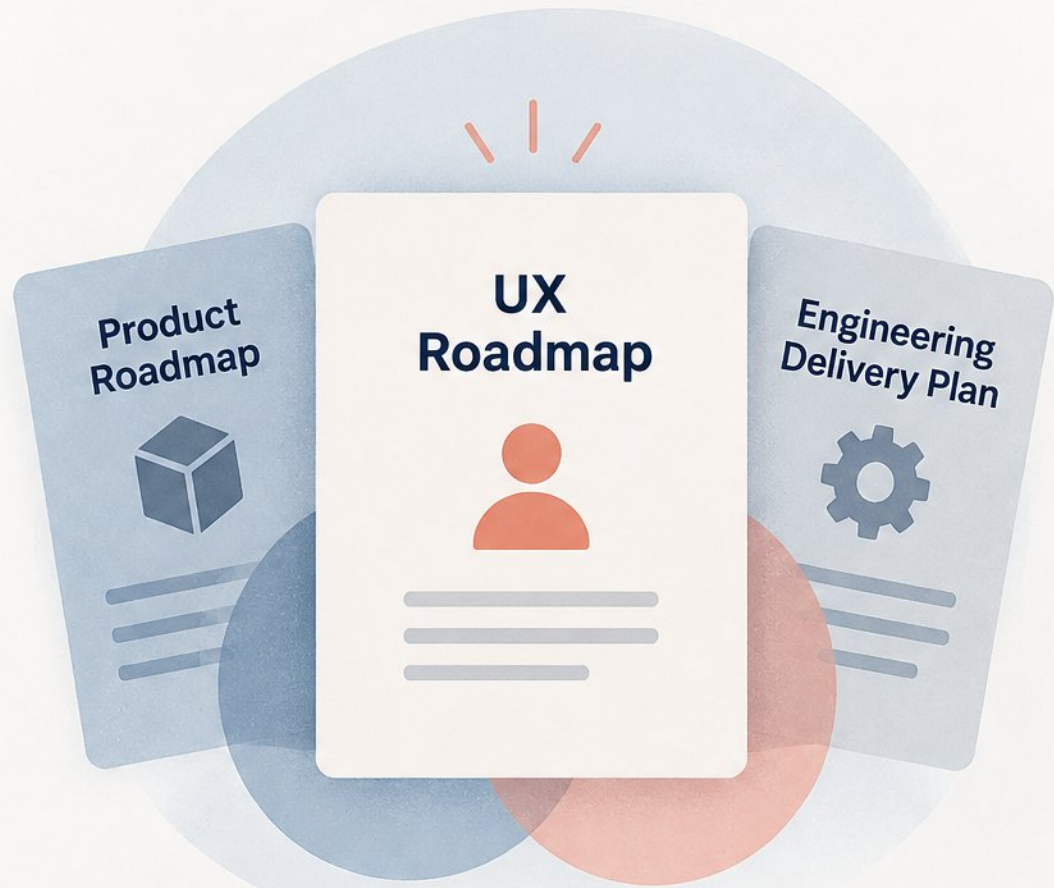
Scope:

- we stop at delivery and engineering planning



What a UX Roadmap Is — and What It Is Not

- Not a product roadmap or an engineering delivery plan
- A user-centered strategy doc: what to fix, research, validate, improve
- UX roadmap asks what users need; product roadmap asks what ships
- Three types: field, specialty, and hybrid roadmaps
- Organized by outcome and confidence, not feature and date
- Owes each audience clarity: executives, product, engineering, design

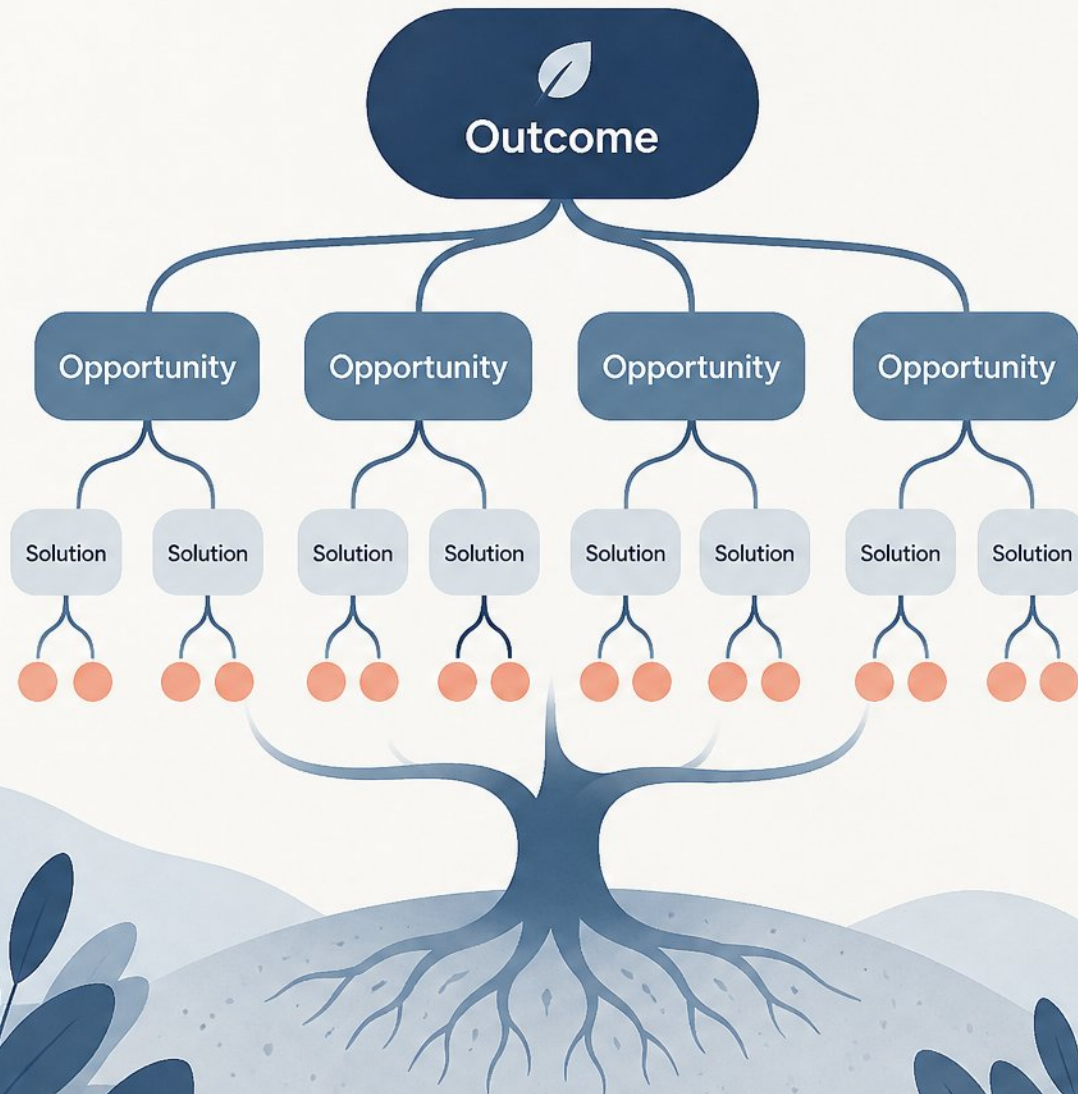


The Evidence Layer: Making Inputs Credible

- Harvest generative research, usability findings, analytics, support themes, competitive signals
- Record source counts and dates for every opportunity — the count is the verdict
- Five or more distinct sources is established; one is a quote; none is a solution
- Write opportunity statements, not solutions — most written opportunities are solutions in disguise
- Build an evidence register partners can challenge, contribute to, and trace
- Decide when existing evidence is sufficient and when new research must run first



Mapping Opportunities with the Opportunity Solution Tree



Four layers: outcome at the root, opportunities, solutions, assumption tests



Keep three to five opportunities, two to three solutions each; prune the rest



Evidence thresholds: five sources is established, one is a quote, none is a solution



The tree generates candidates; it does not rank them—prioritization comes later



Trace every roadmap item to an opportunity, every opportunity to the outcome

Prioritizing Experience Work Against Business Constraints

- Impact/effort and RICE: $\text{reach} \times \text{impact} \times \text{confidence} \div \text{effort}$
- Kano and weighted scoring for experience initiatives
- Adapt criteria so usability debt is not structurally disadvantaged
- Score debt by user severity, breadth, business impact, fix difficulty
- Cost of delay and cost of inaction for unresolved problems
- Shared visible criteria make trade-offs negotiable, not personal
- Log trade-off decisions so they are revisited, not relitigated



Giving UX Debt and Accessibility a Seat at the Table



UX debt lives in UI, interaction, copy, IA, accessibility, and journey consistency



Score by user severity, breadth, business impact, and fix difficulty — not WCAG level alone



Blast radius as leverage: one design-system component fix clears dozens of findings



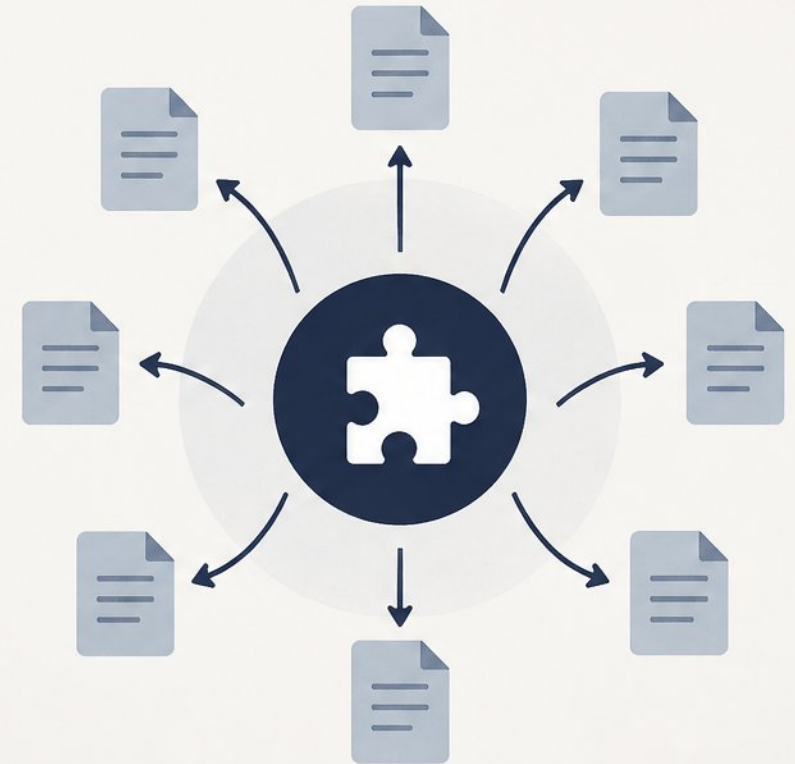
Paydown models: percentage per sprint, dedicated remediation sprints, or a hybrid



Report three numbers per release: open blockers, open majors, and the trend



Component fixes beat page patches: group findings by component and rule



Sequencing Across Discovery, Design, Delivery, and Learning

DIFFERENT
HORIZONS
A STRONGER
TOMORROW



- Structure cycles around real decision points, not calendar blocks
- Run continuous discovery in parallel with committed delivery work
- Use Now/Next/Later as confidence horizons — resist turning them into dates
- Show options, bets, and unknowns; don't hide them from partners
- Map dependencies across research questions, design decisions, and engineering readiness

Reserving Roadmap Capacity for Learning



Weekly customer touchpoints as a standing event, never a phase



Hypothesis log beside the increment backlog: validated, killed, inconclusive



Prototype first — the discovery track's unit of work



Learning milestones as roadmap artifacts, e.g. three onboarding experiments per cycle



Decision gates, not deadlines: scale, iterate, or kill — rules set in advance



Defining Outcomes, Metrics, and Success Signals



Outcome statements the team can act on and stakeholders can verify



Pair experience metrics with business metrics — never substitute one for the other



HEART in use: adoption and task success for activation, retention for downstream proof



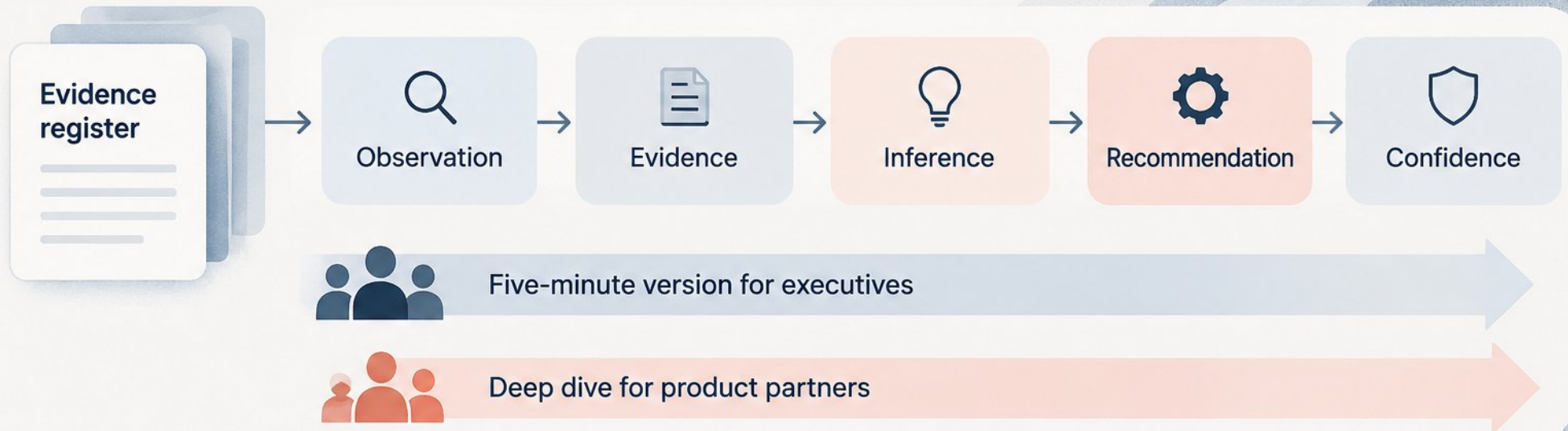
Set baselines and thresholds before work starts — no retrospective metric fitting



Guardrail metrics need scope, tolerance, and consequence to catch regressions



Stakeholder Alignment and the Roadmap Narrative



- Reframe findings as recommendations: observation, evidence, inference, recommendation, confidence
- Five-minute version for executives; deep dive for product partners
- Pre-empt objections on scope, speed, and perceived design delay
- Tie research to the metrics your PM is measured on
- Governance: review cadence, change log, who can change what



Operating the Roadmap: Reviews, Reprioritization, and Change Control



Now reviews weekly, Next monthly, Later quarterly — match cadence to volatility.



Write reprioritization triggers in advance, so reversals read as judgment.



Keep a visible decision log: what changed, who decided, and why.



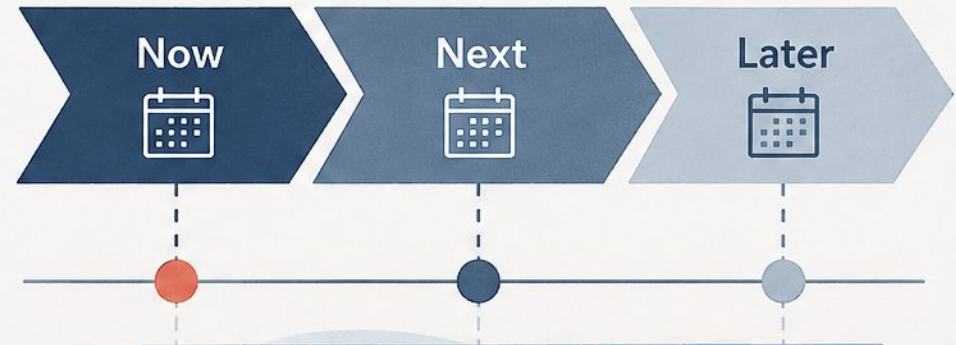
Retire stale items explicitly; silent decay erodes roadmap credibility.



Reserve interrupt capacity for incidents and stakeholder escalations.



Give the roadmap a slot for shipped work that missed its outcome.



Decision Log

	_____		_____
	_____		_____
	_____		_____



Artifacts and Tooling: One Source of Truth

- Match artifact to audience: one-pagers, board visuals, living documents
- Decide what lives in the tool versus the story around it
- Feedback-led, strategy-led, or delivery-led tools each add friction
- Keep roadmap artifacts accessible and readable for varied stakeholders
- Maintain one source of truth across docs, boards, and tickets



Pitfalls, Anti-Patterns, and Stress Tests

PRESSURE REVEALS WEAK POINTS. PREPARATION BUILDS RESILIENCE.



Anti-patterns: infinite redesign, research theater roadmap, unowned experience debt list



When the roadmap becomes a compliance document, not a planning tool



Stress-test against funding cuts, leadership change, platform shifts



Capacity optimism triggers quality collapse — plan for real throughput



Recovery: shrink scope, log decisions, rebuild credibility with evidence



Workshop: Drafting Your Next Two Quarters



Apply evidence, prioritization, and metrics to a real product area



Draft a one-page now/next/later roadmap with explicit assumptions



Peer critique against the anti-pattern and stress-test checklist



Commit to one stakeholder conversation and the artifact you'll bring



Personal action list: what changes in your next planning cycle

Now / Next / Later

Now	Next	Later

Assumptions

- _____
- _____
- _____

Open Questions

- _____
- _____
- _____

Peer Critique

- _____
- _____
- _____

Stakeholder Conversation



PersonWise.

PersonWise • AI digital-human course platform



Scan the code or click anywhere to watch this course live, with voice Q&A

personwise.ai/t/8a30f3c5/public