

# Continuous Discovery, Proven-Better-New Bets, and the AI-Native PM Bar

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This brief covers three strong product themes: bias checks for builders, practical discovery and prioritization frameworks, and clearer signals on AI-native PM hiring. It also highlights lessons from OpenAI Codex and PE-backed product organizations.

### Big Ideas

- **Question the “great product, bad distribution” story.** Shreyas Doshi’s compound bias is the belief that your product is great, competitors mainly win on marketing, your product is better, and the answer is to keep improving it. He says nearly every passionate builder has some version of this, and elite builders first learn to see it in themselves. **Apply it:** use those four statements as a checkpoint in roadmap and post-launch reviews. [1]
- **Use “Proven Better New” to separate certainty from risk.** Mark Pincus argues the best product makers copy what already works, make obvious user-valued improvements, and isolate true novelty into a smaller “new” layer that will probably fail at first. He pairs that with weekly testing and launching early enough to learn. **Apply it:** label bets as proven, better, or new, then give the “new” bucket the highest experiment cadence. [2]

### Tactical Playbook

1. **Continuous discovery, weekly.** Teresa Torres’s minimum is weekly customer touchpoints by the product trio—PM, designer, and engineer—focused on an outcome. Talk to customers while ideas are still rough,

compare multiple solutions rather than validating one favorite, and break each option into desirability, viability, feasibility, usability, and ethical assumptions for fast tests. **Why it works:** it reduces context loss, rework, and confirmation bias. [3]

2. **Restate symptoms as business goals.** In forward deployed work, the stated problem is often just a symptom: a latency complaint may really be a conversion problem. From there, choose the highest-impact, easiest-to-ship option and keep scope small enough to iterate inside the time box. **Apply it:** force every request into an outcome statement before prioritizing. [4]

## Case Studies & Lessons

- **OpenAI Codex: same app, different model, different outcome.** Andrew Ambrosino says Codex usage is up 6x since February to more than 5 million weekly active users, with nearly 100% internal adoption, and that the same product would have flopped in November because the model was not ready. He also says AI still lags on design because code is easier to grade, while great design requires novelty and cultural understanding. **Lesson:** model readiness can be the real product constraint. [5, 6]
- **PE-backed product orgs: delivery without commercial alignment is a trap.** Be Kaler Pilgrim says treating product as IT/delivery—and burying the CPO too deep—predicts mandate failure. The hidden failure modes: feature factory, “land of lost toys,” tech-debt hangover, and GTM misalignment where the roadmap ships but net revenue retention does not move. **Lesson:** product leadership needs commercial fluency and tight sales/CS alignment. [7]

## Career Corner

- **AI-native PM hiring now has a ladder.** Jiaona Zhang’s four levels run from chat mode to workflow automation, app-building inside existing tools, and shared apps/shipping. Her current map puts product at Level 1–2, engineering at Level 2–3, and CS, sales, and finance at Level 1; Level 3 is her minimum bar for AI-native PMs, while Level 4 stands out. **Apply it:** automate one weekly task, then embed the output in the tool you already use to make the Level 2→3 jump. [8]

“A lot of companies are getting rid of the product role... I think that’s a terrible idea.” [9]

OpenAI’s Codex lead also says “PRDs are not dead,” while Pilgrim argues judgment and financial fluency remain durable in the AI era. [10, 7]

## Tools & Resources

- **PM OS** — <https://www.news.aakashg.com/p/pm-os> [8]
  - **Team OS** — <https://www.news.aakashg.com/p/team-os-cc> [8]
  - **Company OS** — <https://www.aakashg.com/how-to-build-ai-native-team/> [8]
  - **AI PM interview guide 2026** — <https://www.news.aakashg.com/p/ai-pm-interview-guide-2026> [8]
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## Sources

1. The Fundamental Cognitive Bias of Product Builders
2. Mark Pincus unpacks his “Proven, Better, New” framework (with Reid Hoffman) | Masters of Scale
3. Continuous Discovery
4. What is a Forward Deployed Engineer? (with Founding Rippling FDE)
5. X post by @lennysan
6. X post by @lennysan
7. Where Does Product Go Wrong in PE-Backed Firms? - Be Kaler Pilgrim
8. substack
9. X post by @lennysan
10. X post by @lennysan