# Principles of an Agile Roadmap
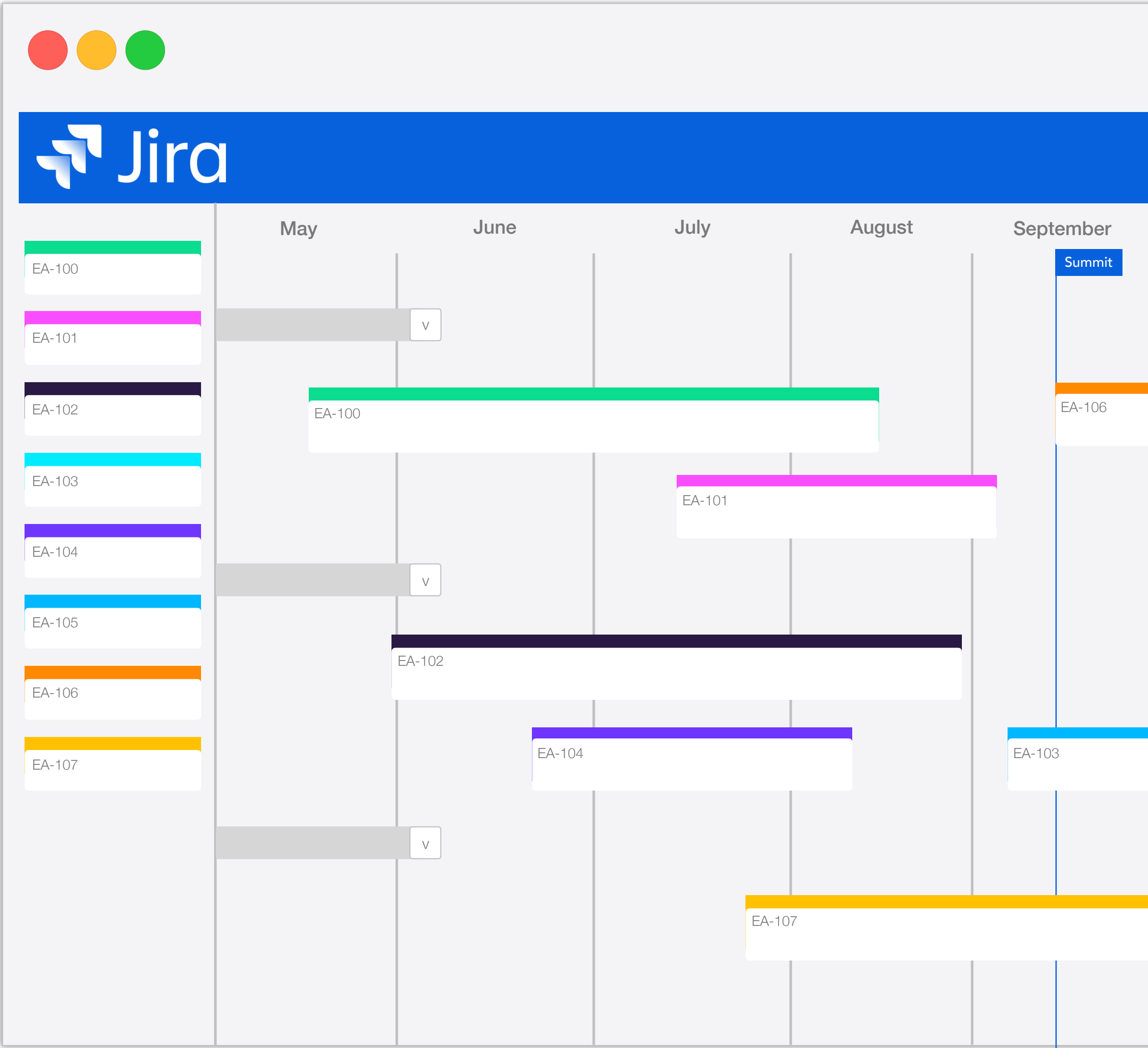
# contents

# what is an agile product roadmap?

"A product roadmap is a plan of action for how a product or solution will evolve over time. Product Owners use roadmaps to **outline future product functionality and when new features will be released.**

When used in agile development, a roadmap **provides crucial context** for the team's everyday work, and **should be responsive to shifts in the competitive landscape**. Multiple agile teams may share a single product roadmap"
*- Atlassian*
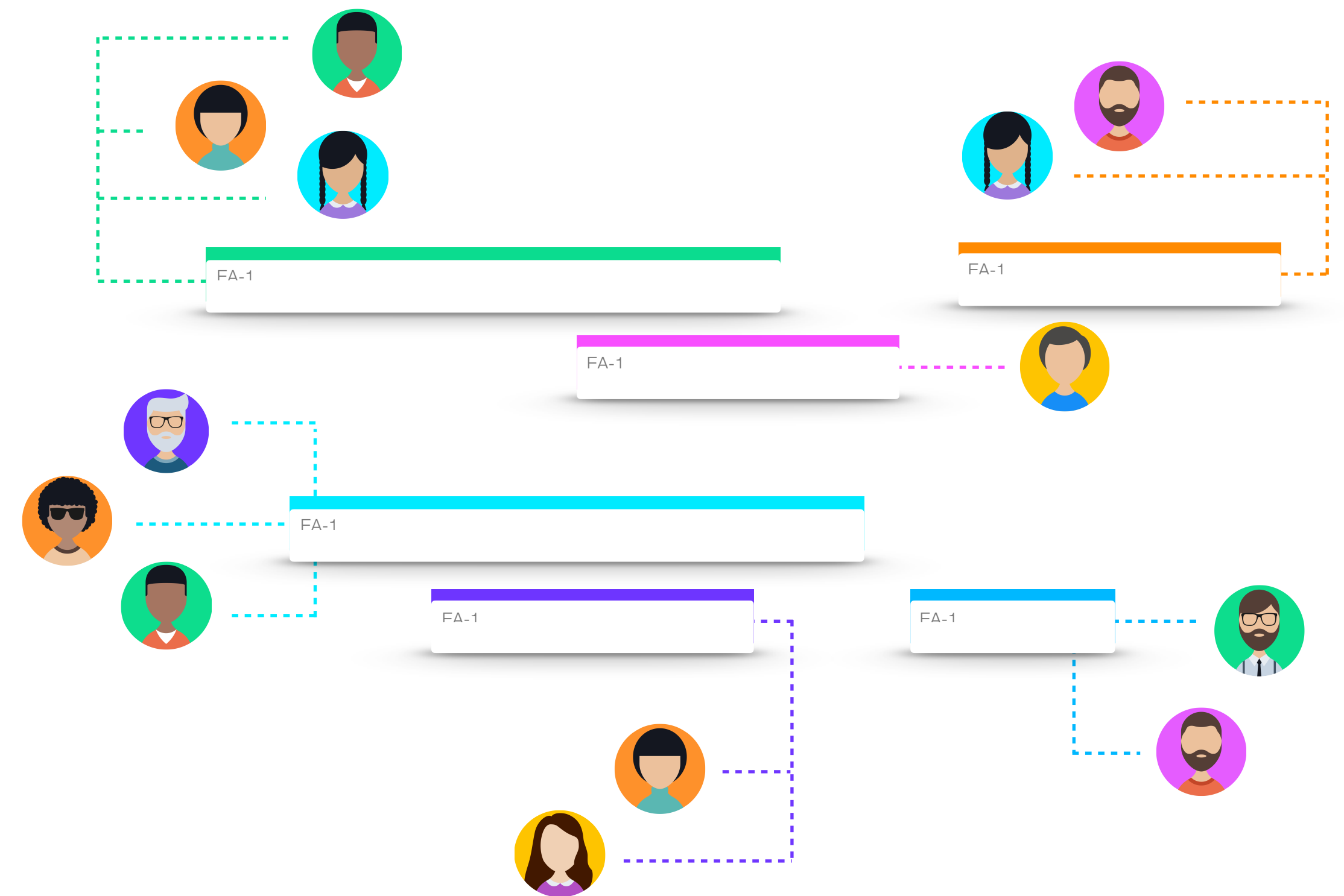
# what does a good product roadmap look like?

A good product roadmap should be all of these three things: **clear**, **visual** and **accessible**

**Stakeholders should be able to answer the following questions by looking at it:**

- **What** are we doing?
- **Why** are we doing it?
- **How** does this tie back to our OKRs?

# why agile teams need roadmaps

**Communication with Stakeholders:** roadmaps allow teams to make better informed decisions by identifying group purpose and structure, and keeping stakeholders informed

**Shared Product Vision & Direction:** allows teams to visualise shared product vision at a glance, and become a filter for prioritising development based on value to customer

**Action Orientated Teams:** contextualising the teams day-to-day work gives purpose and satisfaction to the completion of tasks. This allows teams to keep stakeholders appraised of updated by allowing teams to track progress towards epic completion
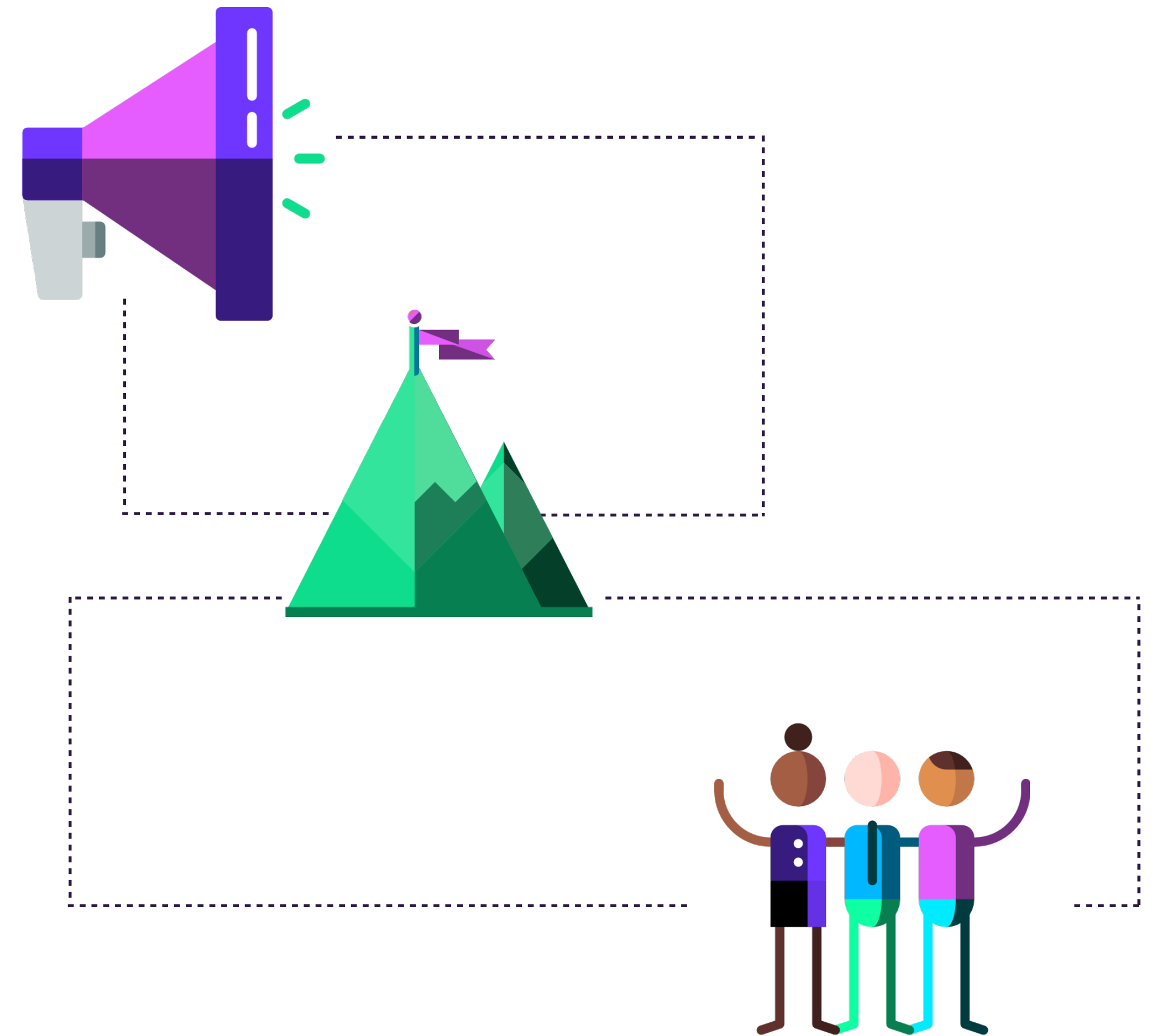
# why your roadmap is not a gantt chart

| GANTT CHARTS | ROADMAPS |
|---|---|
| Primarily used for task dependency and critical path management | Used to communicate product vision with the team, customers and stakeholders throughout the business |
| Highly granular | Focuses on high-level groups of work |
| Assume that work will be completed in a linear fashion | Is not fixed |
| Any modification to the schedule is treated as a negative, as tasks are directly dependent on one another | Learning and adaptability are favoured over rigidity |

# example: agile product roadmap

Roadmap for a Car Infotainment System



Roadmap built using Easy Agile Roadmaps for Jira
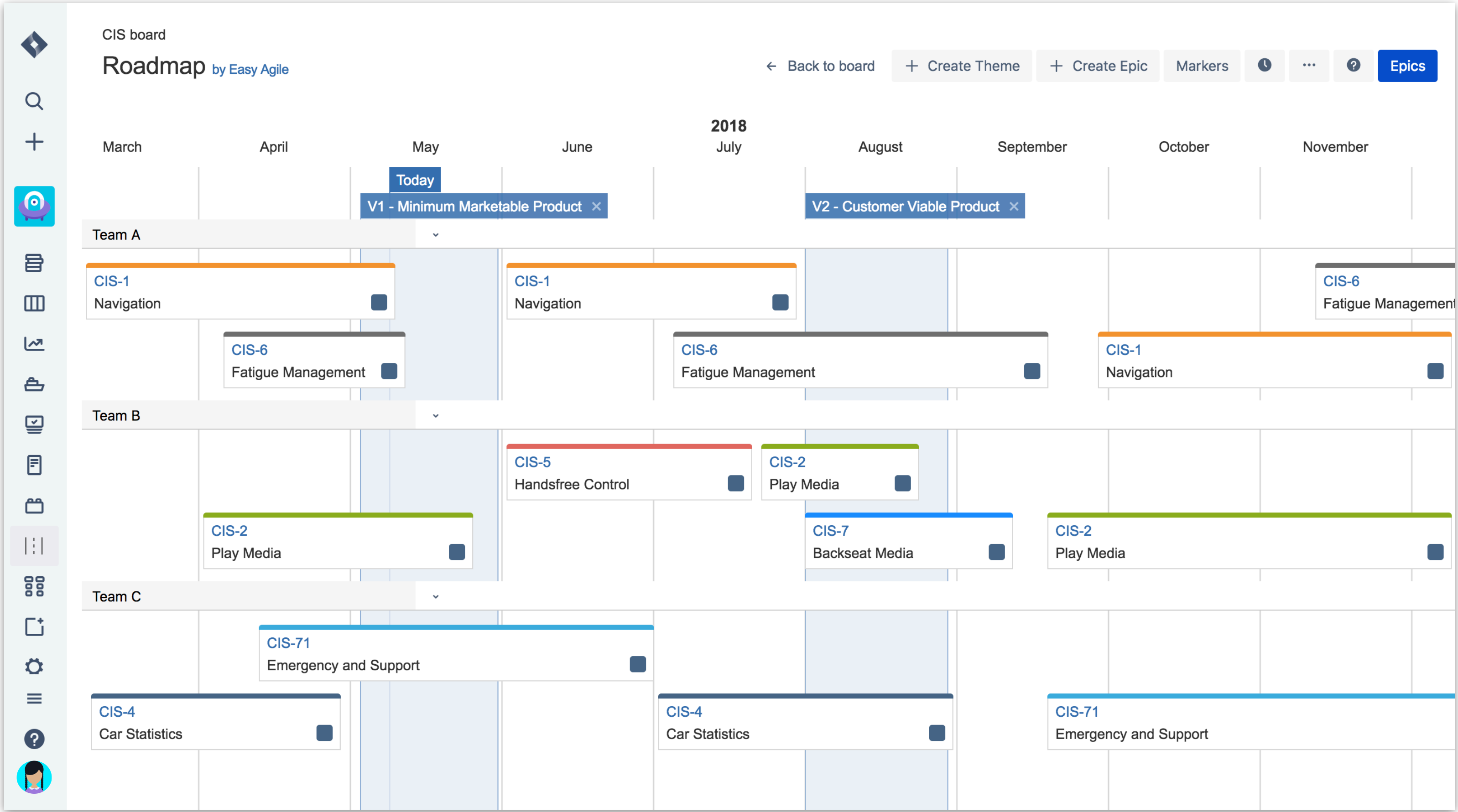
# How Having a Product Roadmap Assists Teams

# product managers

## What do they do? What do they care about?

- Setting the product vision/strategy
- Defining the 'why', 'when', 'what', 'how' and 'who' of the product that will be built
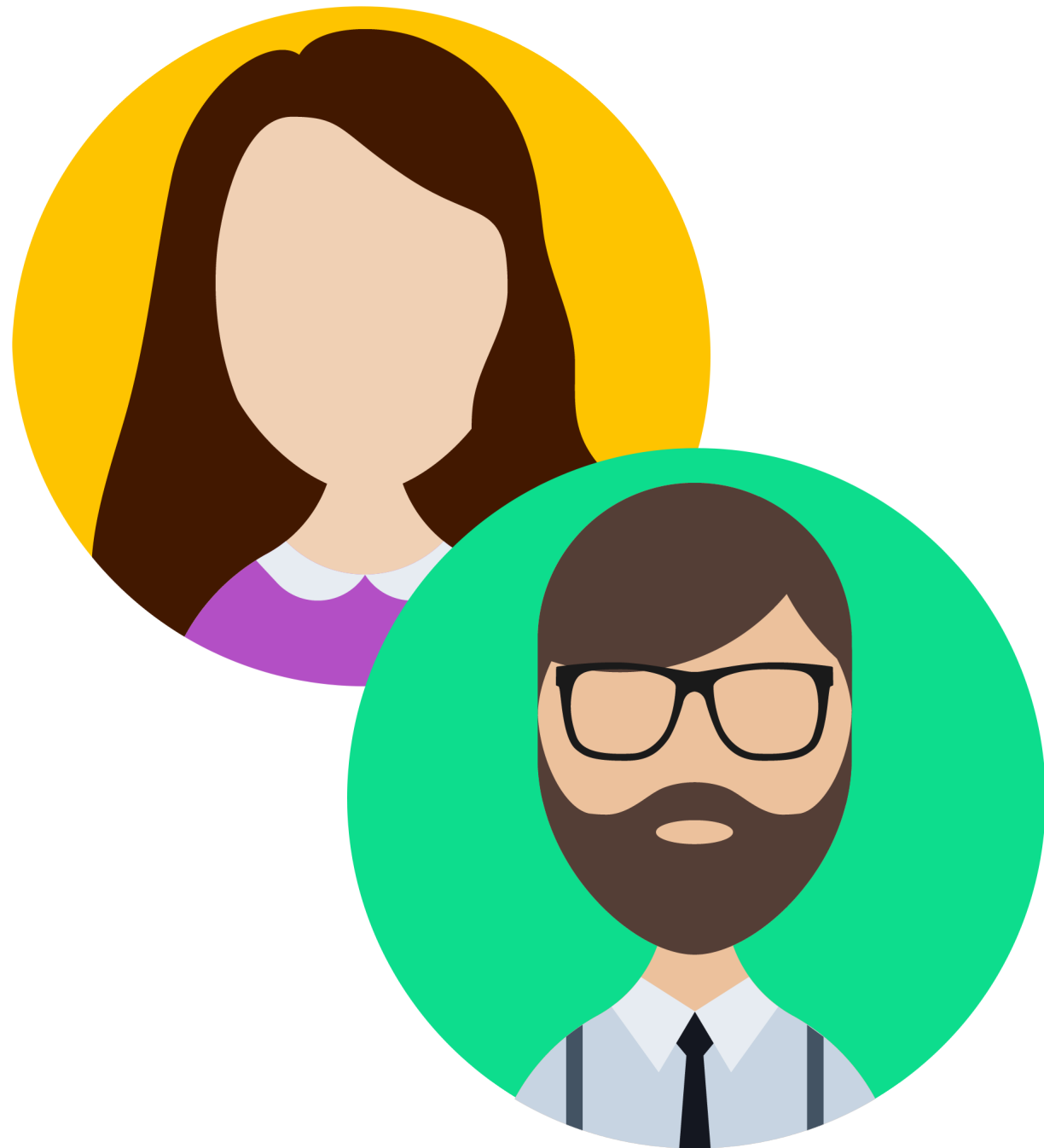
## What do they want?

- Streamlined communication systems with all stakeholders
- Efficient systems for planning projects, sprints, and timelines for the next big release

## Why roadmaps are useful to them?

- Communicating the vision for the product with all stakeholders
- Managing and prioritising ideas
- To ensure key customer feedback is promoted into new features/releases

# project managers

### What do they do? What do they care about?

- Manage scope, timelines, and resources for an on-time release
- Ensuring expectations are met and all stakeholders are happy with the end product

### What do they want?

- Streamlined communication systems with all stakeholders to ensure expectations are being met
- Efficient systems to ensure the development team has clear short and long term goals and a means of tracking workflow

### Why roadmaps are useful to them?

- Clearly communicating the product vision to all stakeholders
- Gauging project status and communicating that with all stakeholders
- Managing team's every-day workflow and the completion of tasks

# development teams

### What do they do? What do they care about?

- Responsible for planning, designing, developing, testing and project delivery
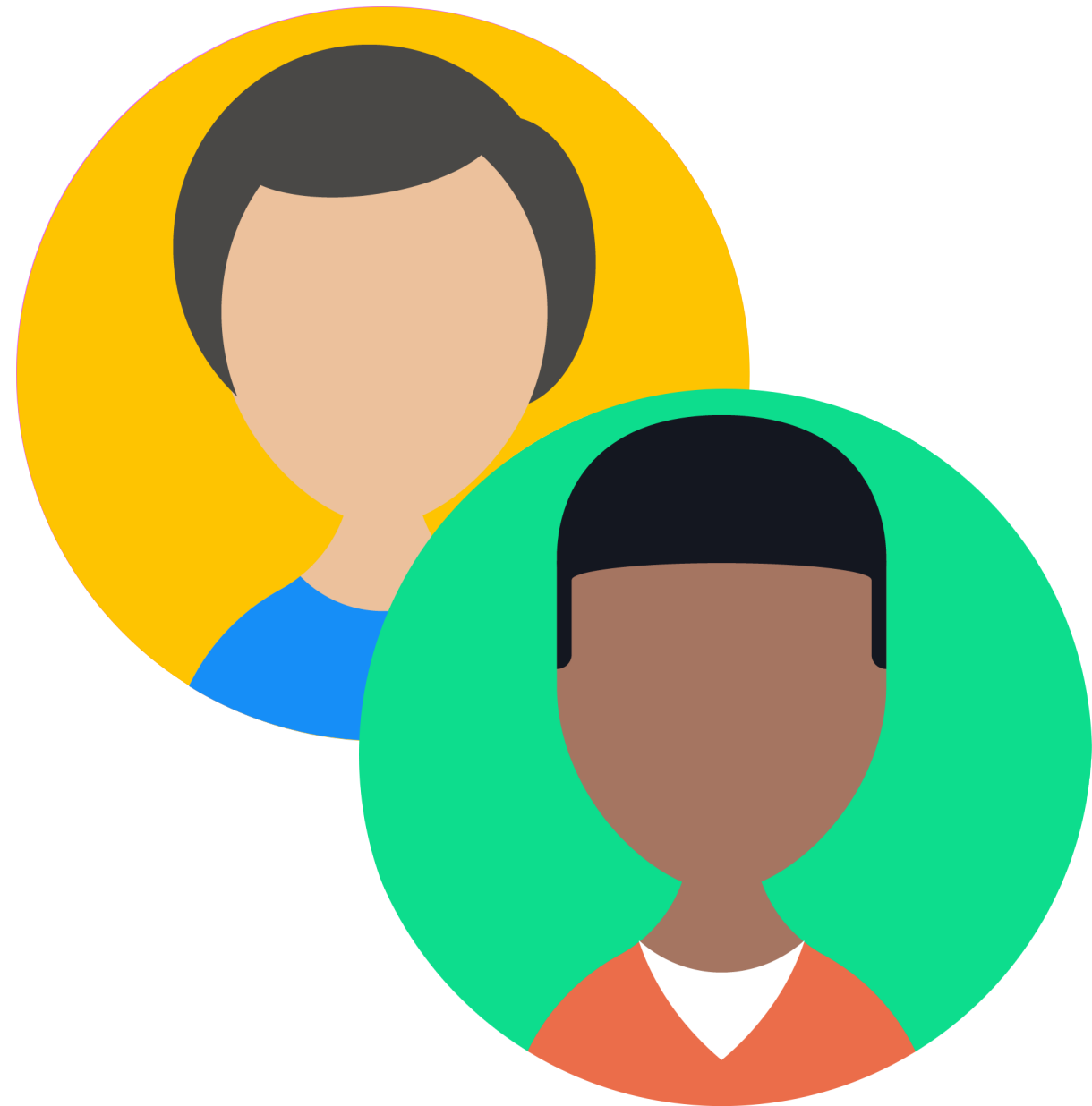
### What do they want?

- Streamlined communication systems with all stakeholders to ensure expectations are being met
- Single source of truth
- To know they are working on relevant projects

### Why roadmaps are useful to them?

- Provides clarity around their everyday work
- Paints a holistic view by contextualising the reasons behind what they are building (customer outcomes)

# sales teams

## What do they do? What do they care about?

- Forecasting and predicting sales/sales goals
- Developing and maintaining customer relationships
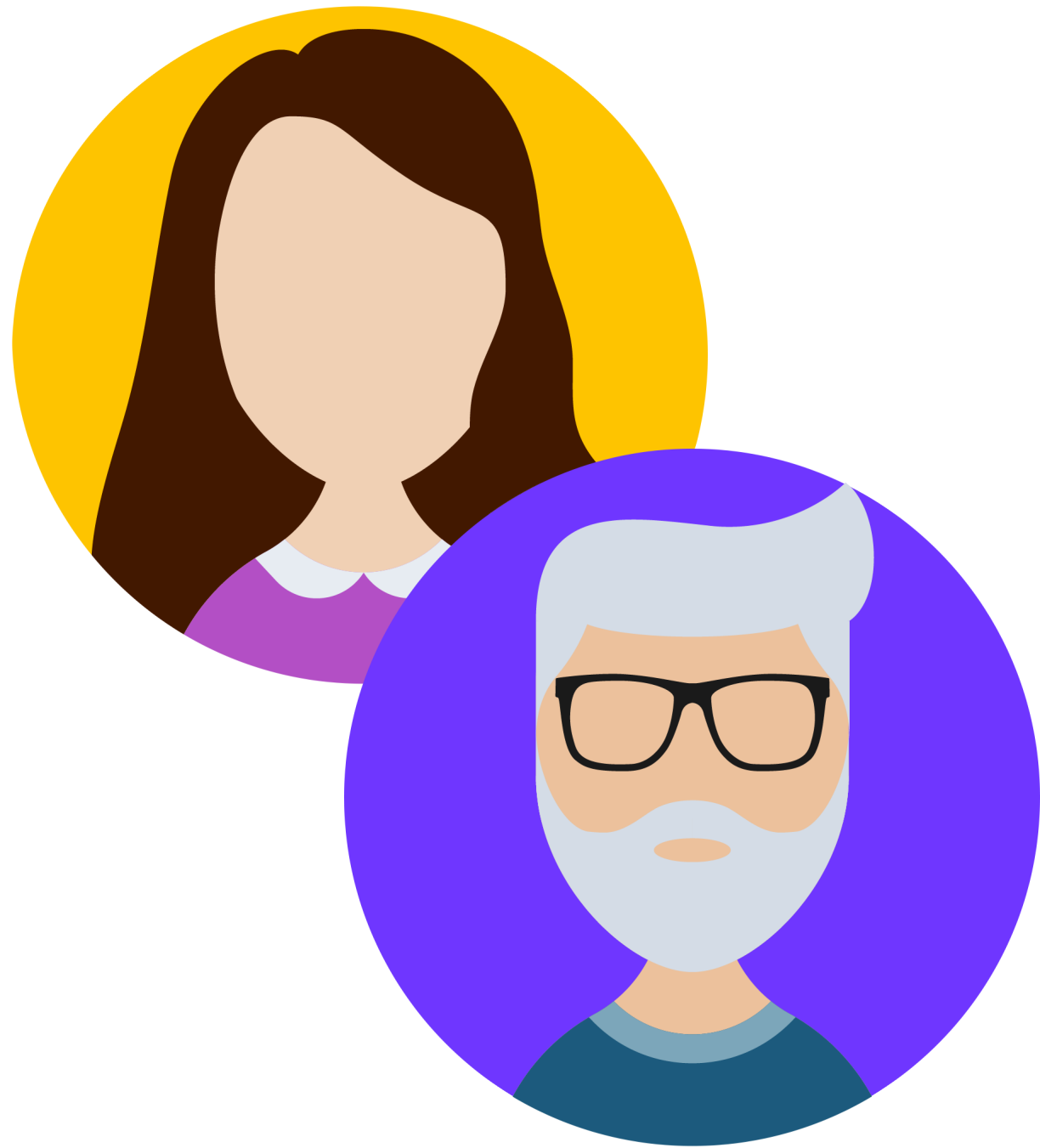- Managing customer expectations

## What do they want?

- Streamlined communication systems to communicate customer feedback/roadblocks with all stakeholders
- An understanding of the product vision/strategy to sell to customers

## Why roadmaps are useful to them?

- Closes the gap between Sales and Product Teams
- An understanding of the product vision/direction to sell to customers
- Gives Sales Teams an understanding of the scope of work that is possible for them to sell i.e. "We would buy, if the product had this feature" - "Thanks for your feedback, unfortunately we aren't planning on focusing on that in the next 12 months, but I will be sure to follow up with you should we move forward with it"

# marketing teams

### What do they do? What do they care about?

- Track trends and monitor competition
- Developing and maintaining customer relationships

### What do they want?

- Streamlined communication systems with all stakeholders to ensure expectations are being met
- Single source of truth
- To know they are working on relevant projects

### Why roadmaps are useful to them?

- Closes the gap between Marketing and Product Teams by sharing product vision
- Paints a holistic view by contextualising the reasons behind what they are building (customer outcomes)
- Sharing the product vision closes the gap between Marketing and Product Teams by giving them common objectives

# Building Agile Roadmaps

# best practice: building agile roadmaps

## Focus on themes of work not features:

in their simplest form, themes represent high level groups of work (like epics). In an agile product roadmap these themes should be be customer-focused unlike traditional waterfall roadmaps where themes tend to be focused on business objectives.

**Examples of themes include:**
- customer on-boarding experience
- reducing tech debt
- customer satisfaction and engagement

By grouping work into themes, teams are able to tell a story about where they are headed, and the goals, objectives and outcomes that will get them there. This high-level visualisation allows teams to easily answer the following questions;

**What** are we doing?
**Why** are we doing it?
**How** does this link back to our OKRs?

# best practice: building agile roadmaps

## Think of a roadmap as a 'living document':

if the environment that you are in is agile, then change is inevitable. Customer needs and requirements will change on an ongoing basis, and your roadmap should reflect how you intend to provide value to your customers meaning your roadmap should be regularly reviewed and adjusted.

### Things to note:
It is important to set expectations with your stakeholders that the roadmap is a guide, not a promise

# best practice: building agile roadmaps

## Actively collaborate with stakeholders when setting/reviewing the roadmap:

when creating/reviewing the product roadmap, it is important to collaborate with your stakeholders when determining customer-centric goals. It is unrealistic to think that as the Product Manager, only you can represent the customer voice.

By engaging the perspective of developers, sales reps, customer support and engineers in the process, a holistic view of the customer experience is ascertained and thus a more realistic basis for determining what we should do and when, because we know our customers value this.

**Things to note:**
Collaborating on the contents of the roadmap, does not mean allowing all stakeholders to have 'edit' privileges. At the end of the day, the Product Manager must own the product roadmap and ensure that any changes are made by them, and shared with the team

# best practice: building agile roadmaps

## The roadmap needs to be somewhere accessible to all stakeholders:

The product roadmap should be the team's single source of truth, representing the plan of execution against the companies OKRs.

Visibility into 'what is going on' and more importantly 'why am I doing what I'm doing' is crucial in establishing transparency and confidence in your team.

The roadmap represents the overall vision for the team for a period of time, and ensuring the roadmap is accessible to all stakeholders is a way of achieving organisational alignment.

# Agile Roadmaps:
# The Essential Glue Linking
# Strategy and Tactics

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conteneo