



nextview

Championing the founders who are
redesigning the Everyday Economy.

Seed Stage Board Deck
Template

SAVE TIME, COMMUNICATE BETTER, GET MORE DONE WITH YOUR BOARD.

The Goal: Stepping Up Your Board Game

Even at the seed stage, we believe it's important to establish a board cadence. In doing so, you operate more professionally and strategically, you prepare for later stages when boards are required, and you get more from seed investors who can help you and champion your cause.

BEFORE THE MEETING

SEND YOUR DECK IN ADVANCE

The 75% or more of your actual meeting should be about discussion and solving problems – not merely updating investors. Send your deck a couple days in advance so all directors can see the data and get initial context. This lets you dive into a more productive discussion, following a brief section of housekeeping and recapping the slides during the meeting.

Additionally, design should be professional, but don't agonize over beauty. Send as a PDF to preserve your fonts and layout.

DURING THE MEETING

FOCUS ON 2-3 MAJOR ISSUES

At first, immediately following your seed fundraiser, most discussion will be about product direction and key hires. There may also be some early Series A commentary (which won't be revisited until before your next fundraiser process.)

Other major topics to discuss:

- Go-to-market plans/tests
- Product/market fit data
- Setting/reviewing milestones
- Asking for/receiving help

AFTER THE MEETING

WHAT ARE THE ACTION ITEMS?

Good board directors don't merely hear your updates, poke and prod, then go about their days. They should be used to remove barriers, make intros, suggest solutions, and meet 1:1 where specific expertise or deeper discussion can be useful.

Ensure everyone knows what they're responsible for delivering and when.

Additionally, if you're entering your first board meeting, be sure you come away with a set cadence for the first 6-9 months of board meetings.



nextview

Board Meeting
mm. dd. yy

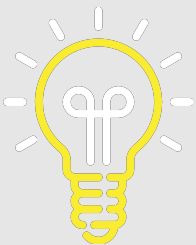
Seed Stage Board Deck
Template

AGENDA

1. Housekeeping
2. Progress Update
3. Financials
4. Team Update
5. Current Priorities
6. Key Concerns

EXAMPLE HOUSEKEEPING

- **Hiring**
 - Current org chart, with openings and requests for help
- **Office & Logistics**
 - Potential moves and cost (rent, \$ per sq. ft., lease length)
 - Insurance, healthcare, legal & other service providers
- **Approval of Meeting Minutes (if in use)**
- **Financials:**
 - Cash out date and burn rate
 - 409A valuation
 - Cap tables
 - Common/preferred stock dashboard



TIP

Any or all of these can appear in your Board Updates slides. These are important and recurring items, but they shouldn't take up more than the first 30-60 minutes of the meeting.

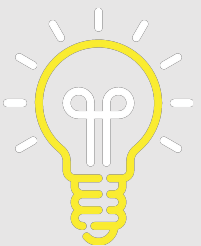
EXAMPLE PROGRESS UPDATE

Highlights:

1. Update
 - Context
2. Update
 - Context
3. Update
 - Context

Lowlights:

1. Update
 - Context
2. Update
 - Context
3. Update
 - Context

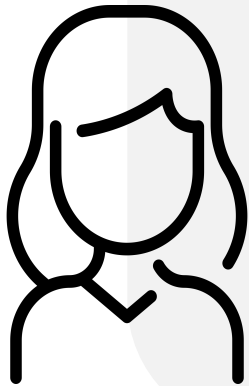


TIP

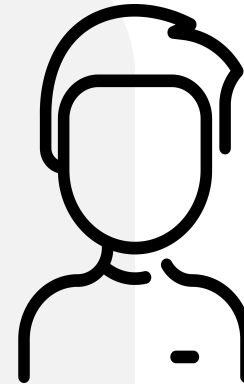
This slide sets the tone for the meeting. You want to summarize the things that are going well and articulate a few key concerns. You'll talk about everything later, but this helps surface a few major things to help focus the coming conversation.

EXAMPLE FINANCIALS

STOCK OPTION GRANTS



1. **New Hire: (Name, Role)**
 - X shares = Y%
2. **Current Employee: (Name, Role)**
 - X shares = Y%
 - Rationale (e.g. "Founding team member")



EXAMPLE FINANCIALS

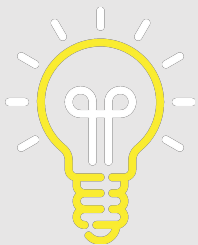
Cash Balance: \$N

Cash Out Date: MM/YY

Notable in (Month):

- e.g. “Increase in payroll, rent, legal fees”
- e.g. “Decrease in marketing spend: events, paid Facebook”

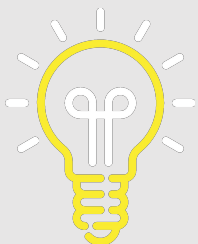
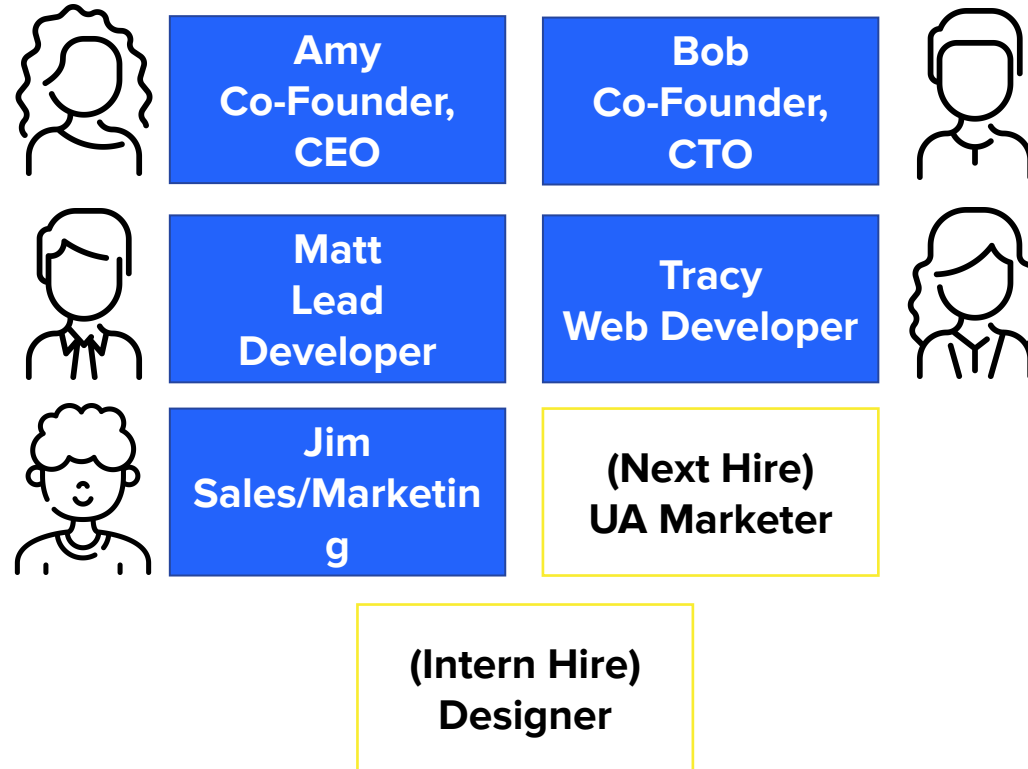
	(Month)	(Month)
Revenue	\$N	\$N
Operating Expense	\$N	\$N
Net Income	\$N	\$N
Cash Burn	\$N	\$N



TIP

It's often a good idea to put a note next to the Cash Balance or Cash Out Date lines that shares whether your burn is consistent with plan or you're spending more/less aggressively.

TEAM UPDATE

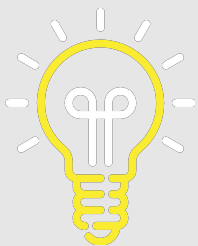


TIP

This can go in the front or back of the deck. We prefer front because it's easier to get through quickly and focus the rest of the discussion on the 1-2 most important issues.

TEAM COMPENSATION

Name	Role	Base Salary	Equity	Share Count	Start Date
Amy	CEO	\$N	\$X%	X	M/D/Y
Bob	Head of Product	\$N	\$X%	X	M/D/Y
Matt	Lead Developer	\$N	\$X%	X	M/D/Y
Tracy	Web Developer	\$N	\$X%	X	M/D/Y
Jim	Sales/Marketing	\$N	\$X%	X	M/D/Y
TBD Hire	UA Marketer	To approve: \$N	To approve: \$X%	X	M/D/Y
TBD Intern	Designer	\$N	(small to none)	X	M/D/Y



TIP

Typically, the board directors (and your first few employees) think about equity percentages. As you grow, however, compensation starts to reference share counts. After all, at the seed stage, the dollar amount is less meaningful than the percentages, which reverse at a later-stage startup earning revenue.

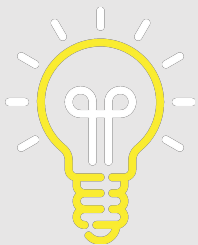
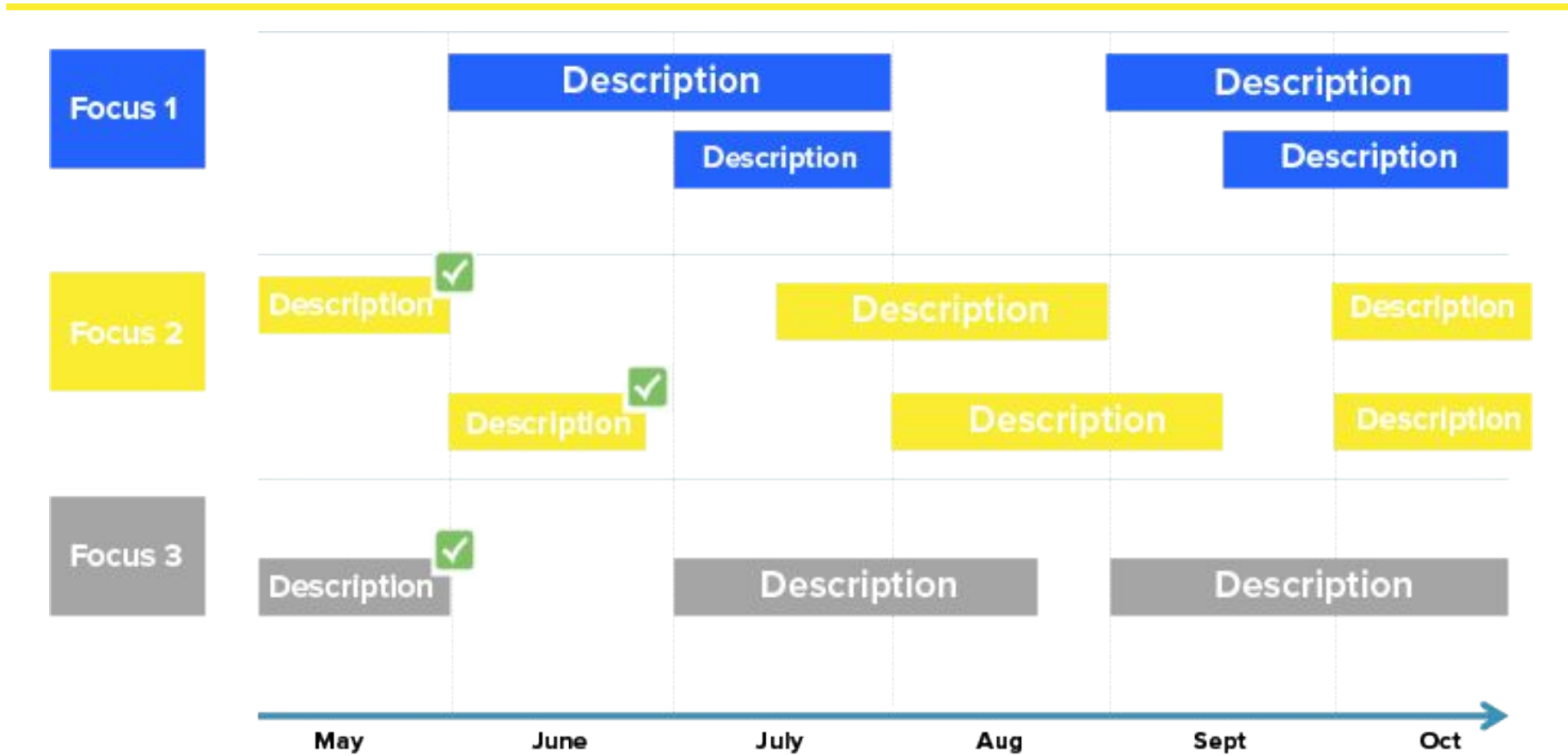
CURRENT PRIORITIES

Your progress updates will be the most customized to your business. Rather than propose one generic layout, we're showing three directionally correct layouts, each for a specific scenario:

1. **A pre-launch startup.**
2. **A post-launch, pre-revenue consumer mobile startup.**
3. **An early-revenue SaaS startup.**

These slides might be mainly text, mainly graphs, or a combination. They also might be broken up across multiple slides.

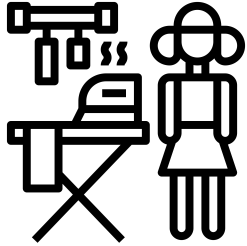
PRODUCT ROADMAP



TIP

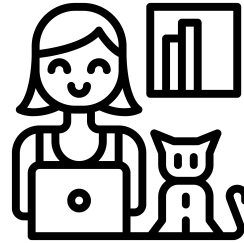
- *To demo at the meeting: X update, Y update, Z update*
- *In design/dev now: A update, B update, C update*

USER PERSONAS



“Busy Betty”

- Female (30s/40s), driven professional, values her time
- Uses many apps to save time
- Passive on social; active on blogs (lifestyle/hacks, business)



“Digital Dana”

- Female & male (20s), young professional, time-waster
- Serial app adopter/dropper (mostly entertainment)
- Hyperactive on social media



“Casual Cara”

- Female (30s/40s), primary driver is family, not career
- Makes time for leisure (reading, watching, listening, apps, etc.)
- Very active on Facebook only

TESTS PLANNED – 3 MONTHS

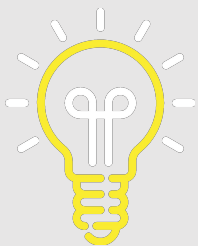
1. Offline/Local (events + flyers) – nonscalable tactics to acquire first cohort & learn
2. Facebook + Instagram – multivariate testing of messaging + audience targeting
3. Lifestyle Blogger Outreach – built target list of 100 (5 in draft now; 3 published)
4. Google AdWords – targeting longtail keywords on specific brands, trends
5. Paid content placement – targeting lifestyle/fashion sites □ blog post housed on optimized landing page

USER TESTING

- **Surveyed X User Prospects**

- (How we found them)
- (What we hoped to learn)

- **Key Insights**

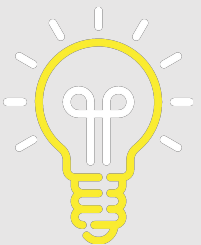


TIP

Early on, before you have a firm idea of who you're targeting, you should form a few hypotheses which you then test. Once there's traction, you can focus more resources on that user.

USER TESTING

- **We thought we were selling to X customer but now believe Y is a better target**
 - (How you plan to prove/disprove this thesis)
- **Prioritizing X feature higher on product roadmap**
 - (Why?)
- **Passionate responses to X, not Y**
 - (Early hypotheses as to why)
- **X moved in the market which changes Y**
 - (What was it? e.g. Facebook just launched XYZ)



TIP

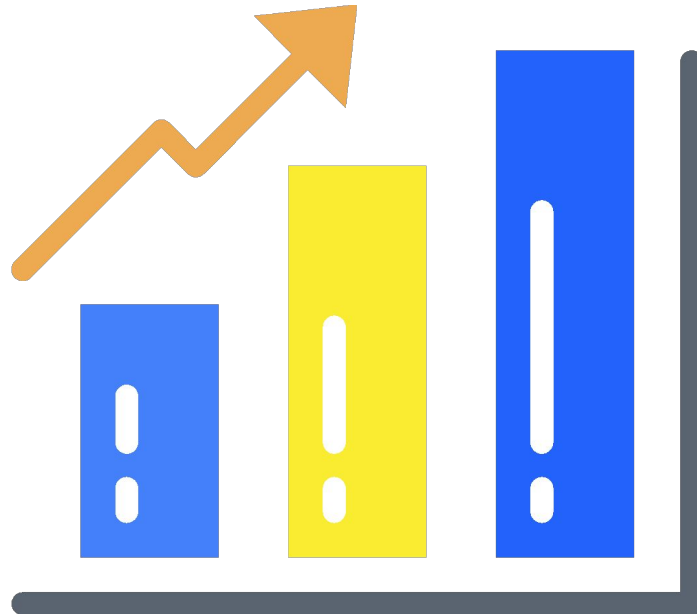
These examples are generally the “so what?” moments from the previous slide. How has what you’ve learned thus far affected your approach to customers/GTM, product, or overall market or competitive landscape? Discuss with your board.

CURRENT PRIORITIES

1. A pre-launch startup.
2. **A post-launch, pre-revenue consumer mobile startup.**
3. An early-revenue SaaS startup.

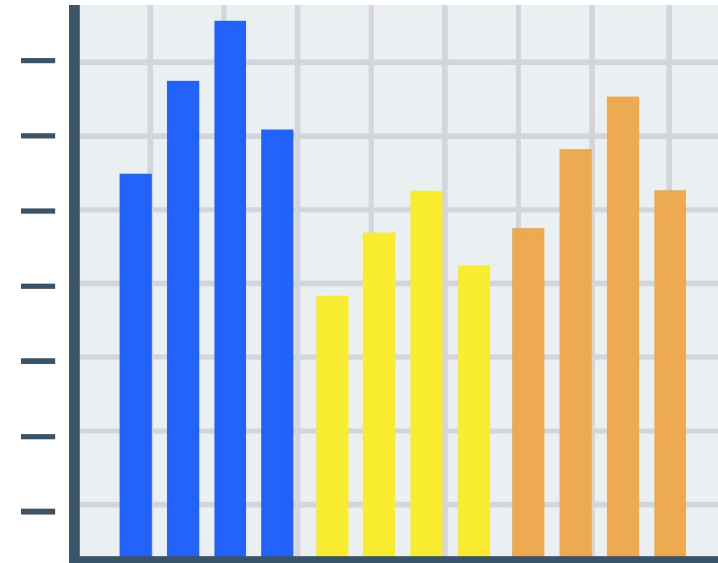
GROWTH

(KPI 1)

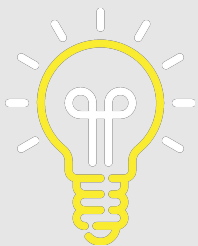


Commentary
as needed

(KPI 2)



Commentary
as needed



TIP

Brief summary of what this data means and what resulting actions you'll take. (Discuss in the meeting if needed.)

ENGAGEMENT

(List important top-of-funnel action)

Q2: 10.6%

Q1: 10.1%

□ Flat Q2Q & below target.
Growing is Priority #1.

(middle-of-funnel action)

Q2: 23.2%

Q1: 15.1%

□ Higher than anticipated

(middle-of-funnel action)

Q2: 3.3%

Q1: 3.9%

□ Watching carefully but growing
Priority #1 takes precedent today.

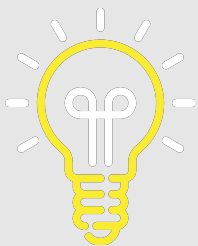
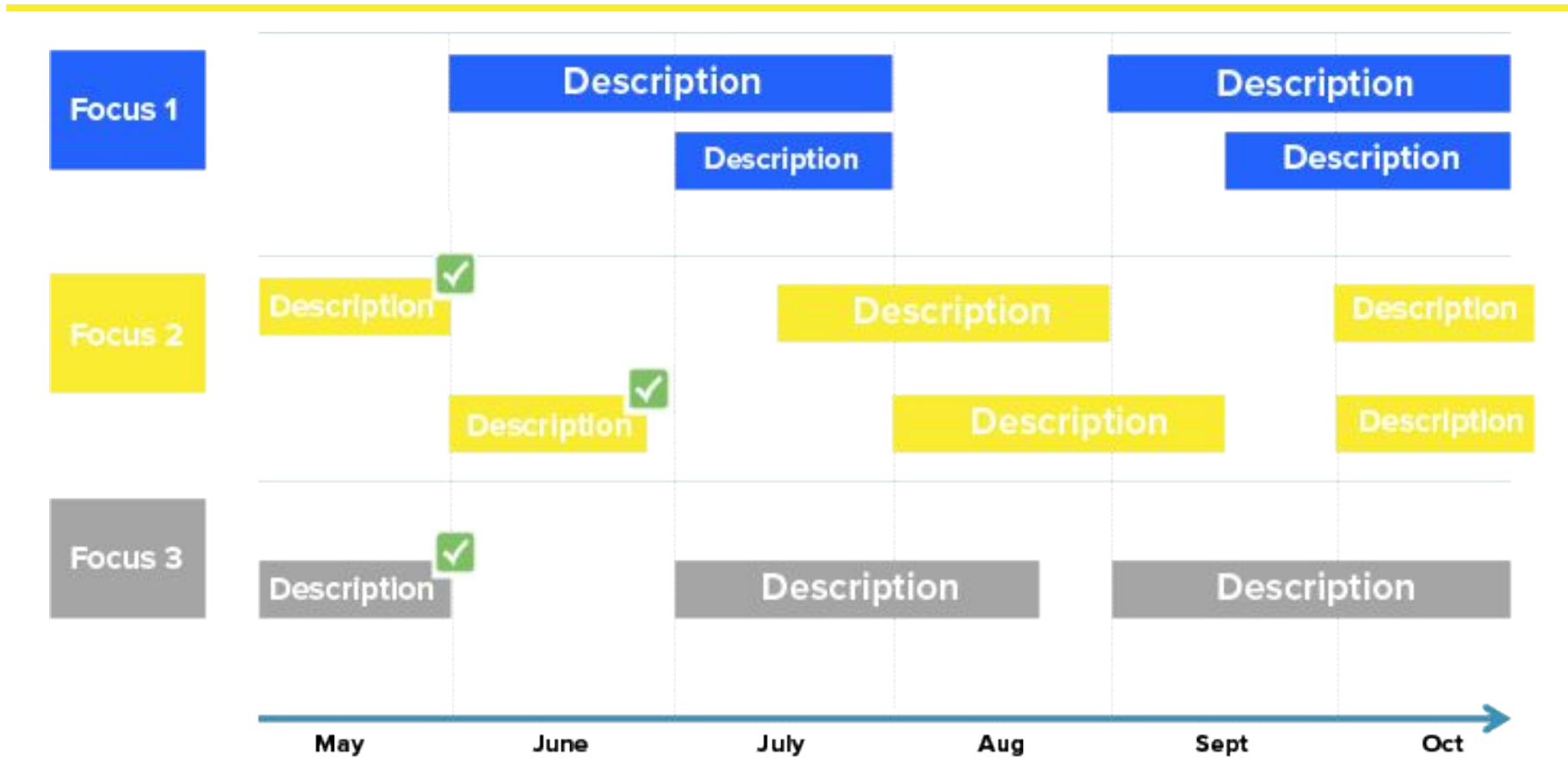
(bottom-of-funnel
action)

Q2: 8.2%

Q1: 4.0%

□ Doubled Q2Q after X product
update, discussed last meeting.

PRODUCT ROADMAP

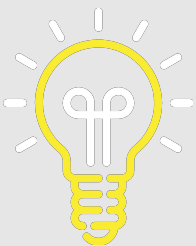


TIP

- *To demo at the meeting: X update, Y update, Z update*
- *In design/dev now: A update, B update, C update*

TAKEAWAYS & ACTION ITEMS

- **X channel is doing great; forward invest in it**
 - (Or, “Best channel starting to fail. Why? What do we test next?”)
- **Engagement changed significantly (+ or –)**
 - (Why? What does it mean)
- **Product roadmap changes**
 - (What updates/shuffling will happen based on previous slides?)
- **Broader Discussion: Are things working?**
 - (What does board see elsewhere? Benchmarks?)



TIP

The last point here is a sort of “meta” question. It’s good to discuss with the board whether the business “machine” is starting to work well or not in general. For instance, if you’re getting 2% growth week over week and daily active users to monthly active users is 15%, that’s not great. Your board will have context on these things. And you can discuss openly if this is good/bad/ok and whether current traction and financials will get you where you want to go.

CURRENT PRIORITIES

1. A pre-launch startup.
2. A post-launch, pre-revenue consumer mobile startup.
3. **An early-revenue SaaS startup.**

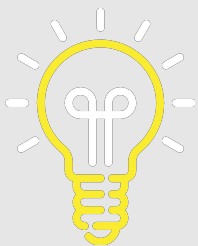
KPI DASHBOARD

Going Well/Advantages:

1. Top-line growth: **\$300K Q1** (record quarter)
2. Retention: **0.5%** churn
3. CAC: Improved to **\$X**
4. ASP: **\$X**
5. Early sales process implemented + strong initial results
6. Product NPS of **85**
7. New features (X & Y): strong qual. feedback + early adoption

Concerns/Risks:

1. Biggest acquisition channel (XYZ) slowing
2. Top-of-funnel marketing (site traffic down **15%**; net new leads down **25%**)
3. Sales/marketing alignment
4. When to hire for customer success



TIP

For early-stage cos, you're trying to get a feel for the unit economics, aka tune the machine. CAC/LTV over time, churn over time, avg. selling price, etc. are all part of that.

SALES DISCUSSION

QTD Sales Results

- (Trend of note; e.g. X new deals / \$N new \$ACV from Y channel)
- (Trend of note; e.g. X customers from Y specific industry)
- Total: \$300K total bookings in Q1 – 105% of goal

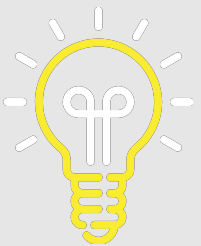
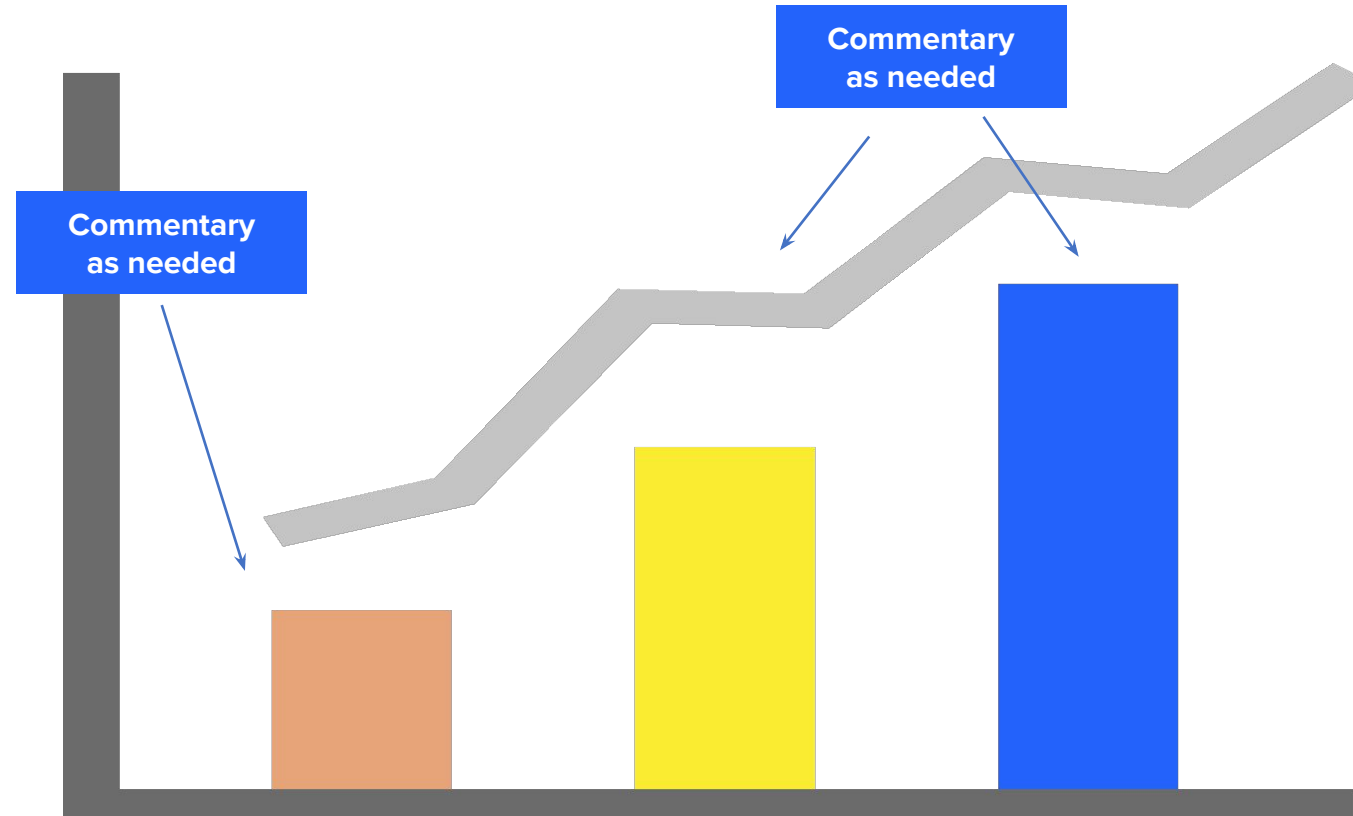
Pipeline

- (Trend of note; e.g. net new lead flow down QoQ)
- (Trend of note; e.g. total MQLs / opportunities strong despite lead flow)
- Focus is

Org Updates

- (New hires, promotions, quota changes, process changes, etc.)

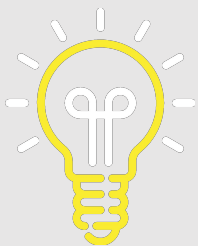
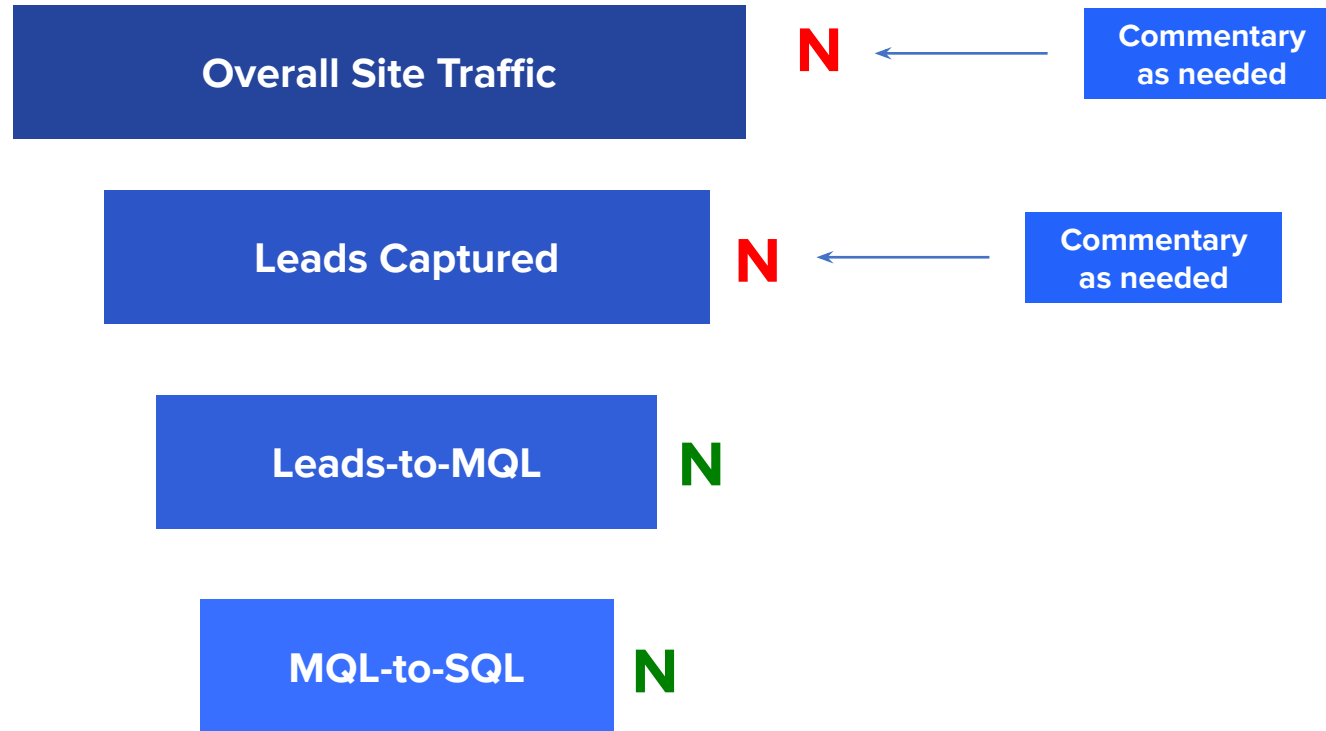
SALES OPPORTUNITIES



TIP

- *High-level analysis of the data.*
- *1-2 important things to know or discuss re: your creation of sales opportunities.*
- *Upcoming action items/tests to discuss.*

MARKETING FUNNEL



TIP

- *High-level analysis of the data.*
- *1-2 important things to know or discuss re: your top-of-funnel marketing.*
- *Upcoming action items/tests to discuss.*

GROWTH MACHINE

Marketing

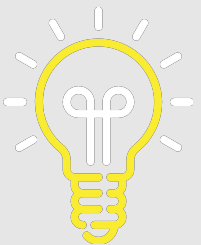
- Update / Win / Concern
- Update / Win / Concern
- Update / Win / Concern

Sales

- Update / Win / Concern
- Update / Win / Concern
- Update / Win / Concern

Product

- Update / Win / Concern
- Update / Win / Concern
- Update / Win / Concern



TIP

Plan to discuss only a few of the major items here. In general, you're answering three questions (read top to bottom on this slide): How are you generating demand? How are you converting demand? How are people engaging the product?

PRODUCT PERFORMANCE

NPS

N

Account Activation

N% register □ usage

Usage

7 Day: N%

30 Day: N%

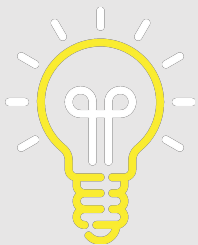
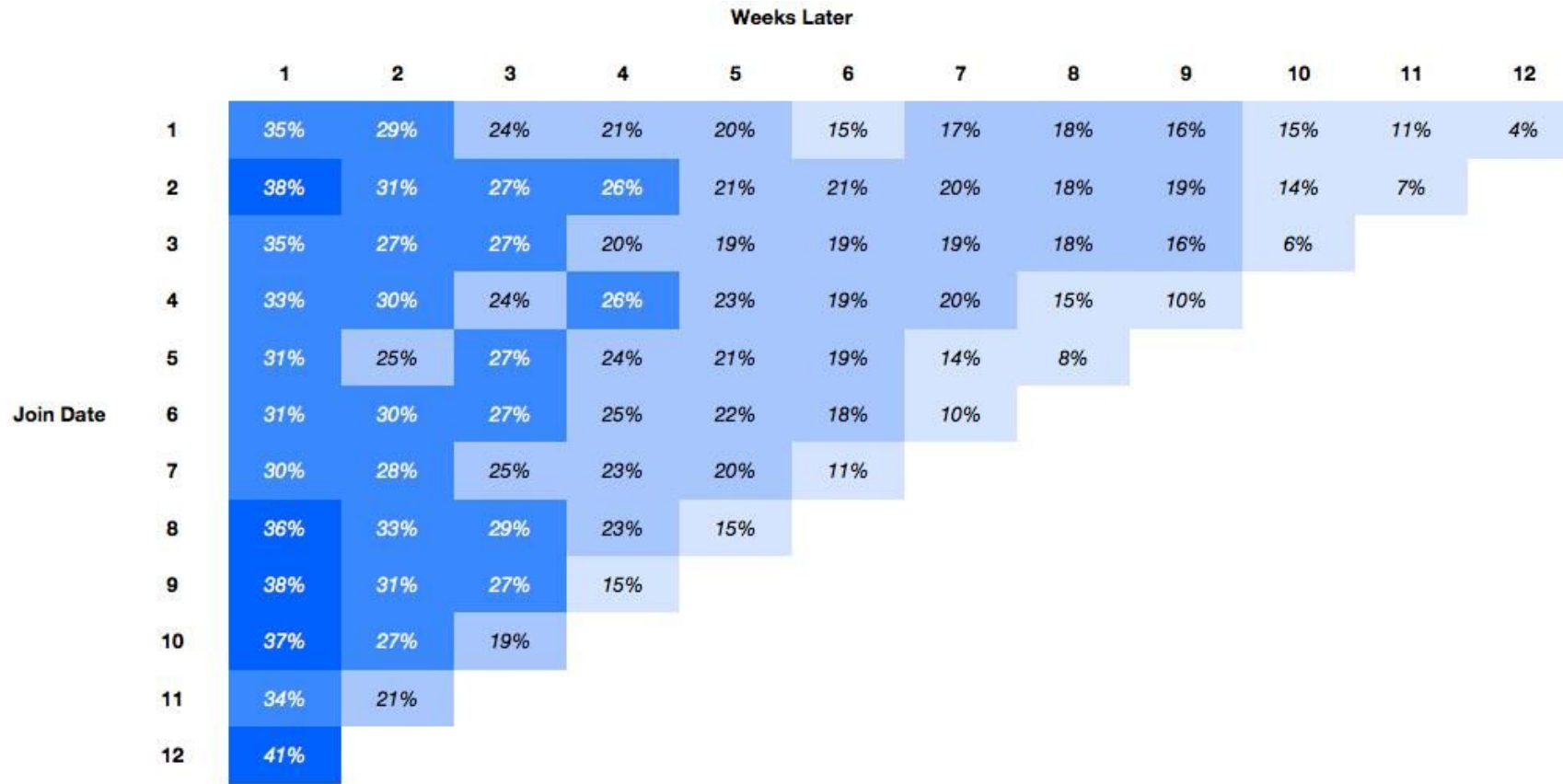
Feature Pipeline

- Recently Implemented: X, Y, Z
- 4-6 Months: X, Y, Z
- 6+ Months: X, Y

“Key quote as qualitative data point.”

-- Customer, Business

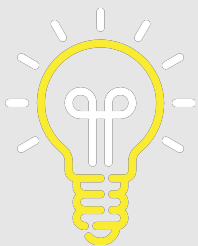
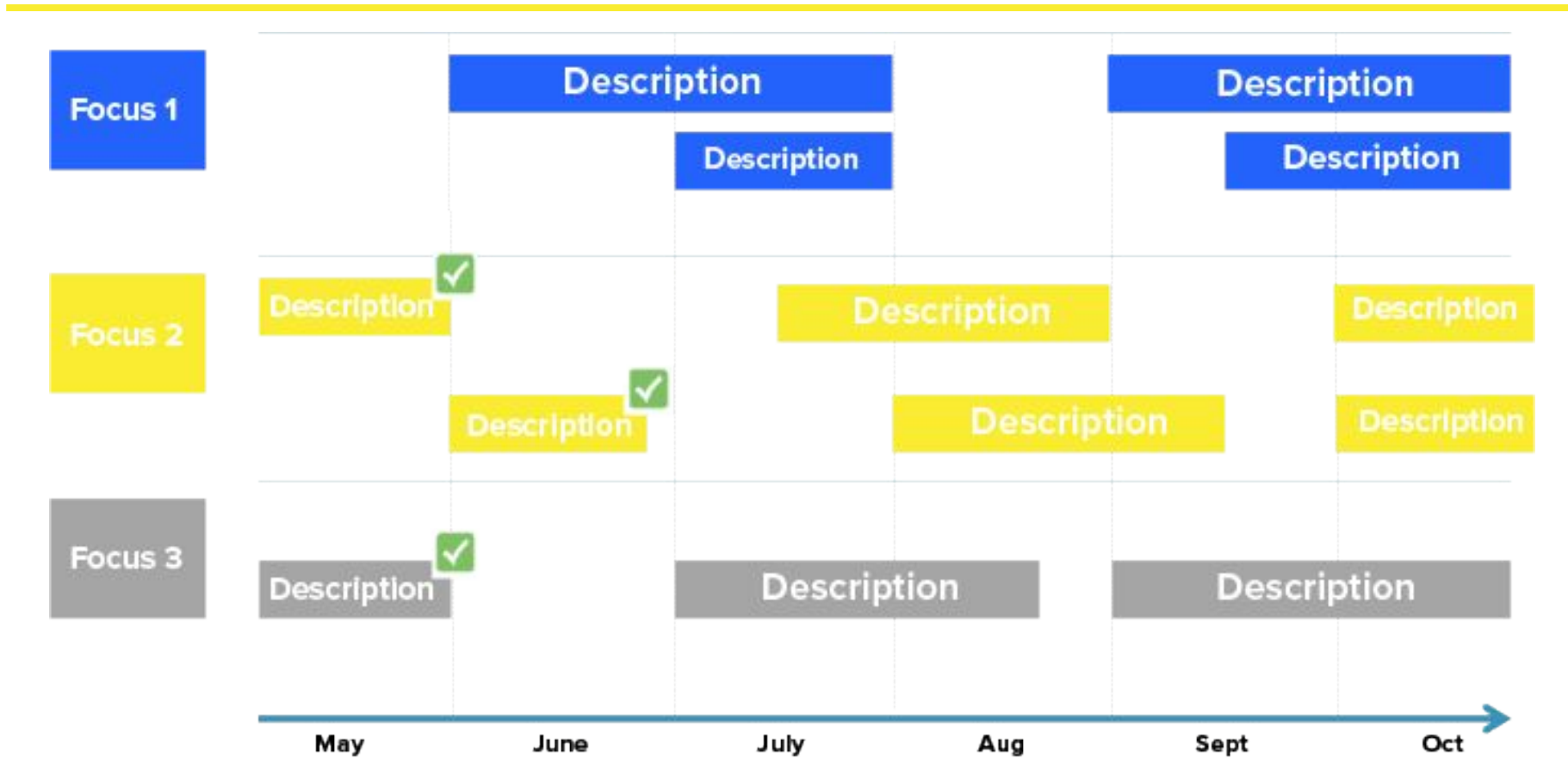
EARLY COHORT ANALYSIS



TIP

Although you'll lack this much data initially, it's critical to begin tracking by cohort and to measure each cohort's engagement over time.

PRODUCT ROADMAP

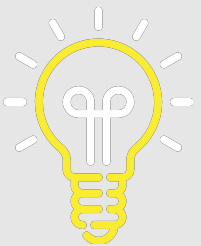


TIP

- *To demo at the meeting: X update, Y update, Z update*
- *In design/dev now: A update, B update, C update*

KEY CONCERNS & REQUESTS

1. Concern/request #1
2. Concern/request #2
3. Concern/request #3

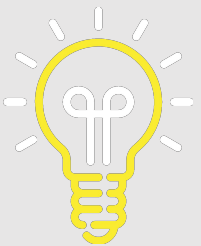


TIP

It's crucial to be as transparent as possible early on. It both sets the tone for your board relationship and helps you gain valuable advice and support. Early board meetings aren't simply investor updates.

RUNNING UPDATE TEMPLATE

FOR BOARD UPDATES AFTER SEED FUNDRAISING



TIP

This is less formal but keeps your board current. Because the doc can be annotated by all parties, it helps CEOs and board members have a productive, iterative discussion rather than a one-way information dump.

RUNNING UPDATE TEMPLATE

Instead of a full deck, you might compile a running log of important updates, with a summary at the top. In some cases, your board may also like to annotate different sections before the meeting and flag various topics to discuss or clarify further.

[Click here to view the update document.](#)

This can be sent as an email, or a living document.