The value of internal and external beta programs

Thoughts & observations from the Product leadership perspective



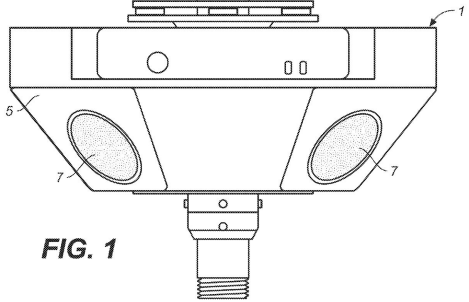


FIG. 1

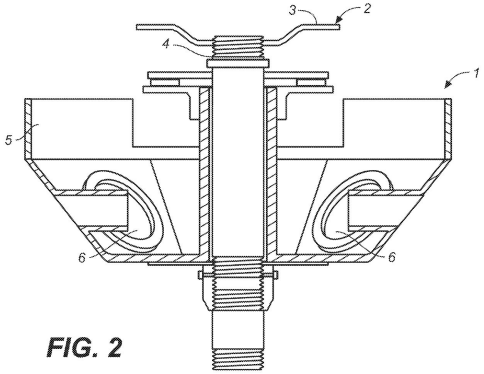


FIG. 2









Senior leaders are *aware of* the importance of testing

Gather valuable insights into the performance and usability of products at all stages.

Help identify major issues early to prevent bugs from becoming defects.

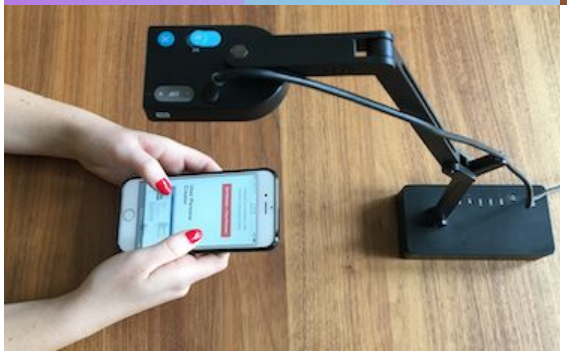
Validates features and increases the chance of product success and customer satisfaction.

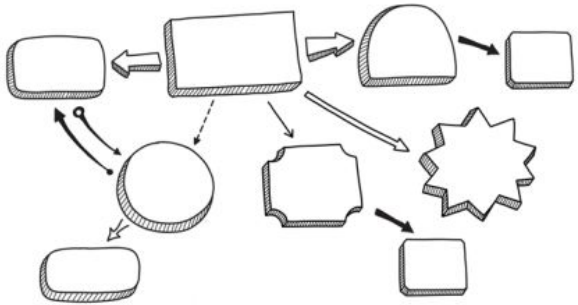
Framing the goals for testing













Awareness of biases, perspectives & motivations

Testing will reveal biases within the organization; views on competencies and hierarchy can influence the receipt of feedback.

Some leaders may see feedback as complaints or impediments, but it's crucial to reframe it as constructive input for improvement.

Successful testing programs often align with the primary concerns of senior leaders, such as business impact, ROI, and maintaining focus and speed.



What senior leaders care about

Validation of Core Beliefs

Executives seek outcomes that reflect their core beliefs about the company, its customers and their needs, and they will need help to appreciate an outcome that might contradict their perspectives.

Operational Capability

Executives care about development leverage and their organization's ability to establish and sustain a robust delivery and go-to-market operation, that delivers improvements in product quality, market fit, and customer satisfaction.

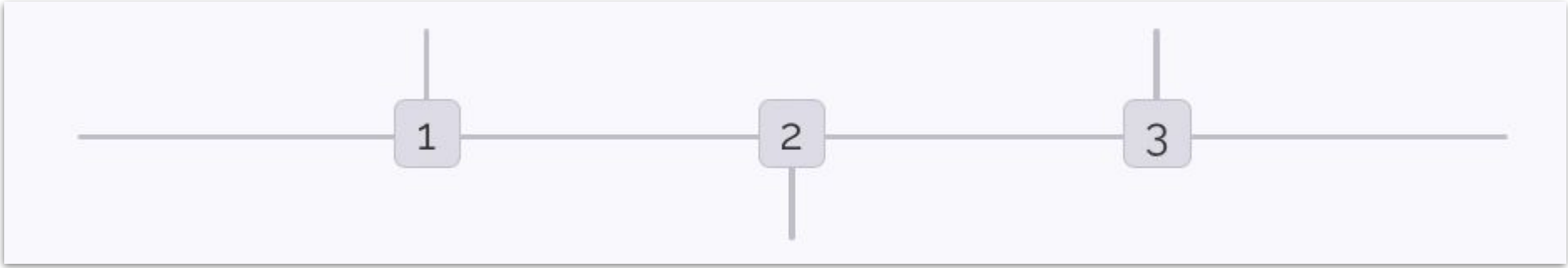
What senior leaders expect

Alignment with strategy

Outcomes should support strategic goals and positioning, ensuring that the product or service meet customer needs and aligns with the vision.

Customer-centric insights

Real value is created when actionable insights into customer behavior and preferences, enable the company to deliver exceptional experiences.



Risk mitigation

Early warning to address potential issues early, allowing the company to use its investments wisely and minimize opportunity costs.

How to engage senior leaders



Gather strategic context

Work with business partners to understand the competitive, financial and technological environmental factors that govern decision making.



Increase relatability

Speak to your leaders' sensibilities to illustrate how learnings from tests have improved speed, number of launches and benefited business outcomes.



Resource allocation

Find creative ways to secure resources, leverage previous insights and optimize the time commitment to conduct thorough testing.



Data management

As portfolios grow senior leaders will need concise, and well structured insights and recommendations to expedite the planning process with confidence.

Setting up for success



Transparency in collaboration

Product, Program and Engineering must co-define the objectives of the internal and external tests and the metrics for success, providing regular updates on progress and key findings. Trust is vital.



Build advocacy and empowerment

Socialize the value of testing and use every opportunity to demonstrate to key stakeholders from different departments how lessons benefit them. Celebrate the wins, and what was learned from failure.



Understand the value of your effort

All resources can become scarce and focus should prioritize supporting the highest value initiatives. Work with Product to set the appropriate expectations at every step of the development process.

Discussion