

Opportunity Solution Tree

Discovery | Referenced framework | Portfolio version 1.0

A visual structure connecting a desired outcome to customer opportunities, possible solutions, and experiments.

Problem it solves

Teams jump from a business outcome to one favored solution without exploring the opportunity space or alternative approaches.

When to use it

- A team needs to align around an outcome.
- Customer evidence reveals multiple needs or pain points.
- Several solution options are being considered.
- Continuous discovery needs a shared visual map.

When not to use it

- As a substitute for direct customer evidence.
- When the desired outcome is undefined.
- When every branch is treated as a committed roadmap item.

Inputs

- Desired product outcome
- Customer interview and observation evidence
- Opportunity statements
- Solution ideas
- Key assumptions and experiment options

Process

- 1. Set outcome** - Choose a measurable outcome the product team can influence.
- 2. Map opportunities** - Organize customer needs, pain points, and desires from evidence.
- 3. Generate solutions** - Explore multiple ways to address selected opportunities.
- 4. Identify assumptions** - Expose desirability, usability, feasibility, viability, and ethical assumptions.
- 5. Design experiments** - Choose tests that create decision-quality evidence.
- 6. Update continuously** - Revise the tree as evidence and decisions evolve.

Decision points

- Is the outcome measurable and influenceable?
- Is each opportunity grounded in evidence?
- Have multiple solutions been explored?
- Which assumption is most important and uncertain?
- What evidence changes the tree?

Outputs

- Outcome statement
- Opportunity map
- Solution alternatives
- Assumption map
- Experiment backlog
- Discovery decision record

Success measures

- Opportunity evidence coverage
- Solution alternatives considered
- Assumptions tested
- Experiment cycle time
- Outcome movement

Portfolio application

I adapt the tree for enterprise and AI products by adding assumption risk, evidence status, operational constraints, and human-oversight considerations.

Common pitfalls

- Inventing opportunities in a workshop.
- Turning the tree into a feature backlog.
- Mapping too much without prioritizing.
- Treating branches as mutually exclusive facts.
- Failing to update the tree.

Skills demonstrated

- Opportunity mapping
- Continuous discovery
- Experimentation
- Outcome alignment

- Evidence synthesis
- Facilitation

Interview discussion prompts

- How do you distinguish an opportunity from a solution?
- How do you keep the tree evidence-based?
- What enterprise constraints would you add?
- How does the tree change roadmap conversations?

References and attribution

Opportunity Solution Trees - Product Talk

Established framework developed by Teresa Torres. This portfolio page explains my application and extensions.

<https://www.producttalk.org/opportunity-solution-trees/>

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