Blackblot® Product Manager's Toolkit® (PMTK) Overview

Table of Contents

1.   PMTK OVERVIEW

1.1.   PMTK Background

There is a myriad of product management templates available to product managers via the Internet. These templates were created by individuals or companies and are distributed for free or for a fee. However, templates created by individuals are either rudimentary or excessive and are often cryptic since they evolved from internal needs within a specific enterprise. Conversely, templates created by companies, for profit, aspire to be both tutorials and templates at the same time and thus miss both objectives and become complex, hard to engage, and time consuming. They can also be very expensive with price tags running into hundreds of dollars per template.

Compounding the issue is the true lack of consistency and uniformity in the appearance, instruction tone, and general workflow of the various templates on the market, even those emanating from the same entity. Working with many templates that drastically differ from each other is confusing and extremely frustrating for any product manager.

The solution is a set of intermediate templates designed for product managers by product managers, which are consistent, uniform, and focused on being a template – not a tutorial. A template is a template and no more.

1.2.   PMTK Scope

PMTK, originally written by Blackblot as work tools for internal use, provides flow with structure and allows the product manager to focus on content (what to write) and not on the method (how to write). Most documents in the toolkit are fill-in-the-blanks templates. Several documents are general guideline documents that help instill better process management and process efficiency. The templates were based on actual work experience and a variety of sources including books, articles, and other content available in the public domain.

There are countless books, articles, and educational opportunities on virtually every topic addressed by these templates. Product managers will be able to use the PMTK templates to do their work but will need to learn the product management discipline through professional training seminars or books, since these templates are not tutorials and contain few explanations or examples. The templates can be extremely useful, but some form of professional product management training is often needed in order to understand and properly use the templates.

The templates are intentionally broad and general in nature because every business is different. Product managers will need to modify the templates in varying degrees so that they fit their specific needs and particular reading audience.

1.3.   PMTK Use Convention
All templates are similar in appearance and structure, and follow the same simple work convention.

Pointed brackets colored in light blue contain instructions regarding content that should be entered into the document. For example: <Enter product name.> or <Define and describe the market problem the product is trying to solve.>. These instructions are subsequently deleted and replaced with relevant content.

Pointed brackets with italicized text colored in violet contain comments or examples. For example: *<Comment: This section is the last task and is done once the MRD is complete.>*. These comments and examples are ultimately deleted from the document.

1.4.   PMTK Content
Please view the PMTK index file for a current list of templates and documents contained in the "Blackblot Product Manager's Toolkit®" (PMTK).

1.5.   PMTK Evaluation Package
Downloading the PMTK Evaluation Package is highly recommended in order to verify product suitability and fitness to any specific purpose. The PMTK Evaluation Package contains the PMTK document set in Adobe Acrobat document format. Upon purchase customers will receive the corresponding set of documents in Microsoft Word document format.

1.6.   PMTK Commercial Package
PMTK is a set of living documents continually refined through user suggestions and requests. Registered users will periodically receive updates and new templates (when available) via a mailing list, free of charge and not limited by time. The PMTK license grants registered users free unlimited updates and upgrades.

PMTK commercial package is a collection of editable documents in Microsoft Word document format.