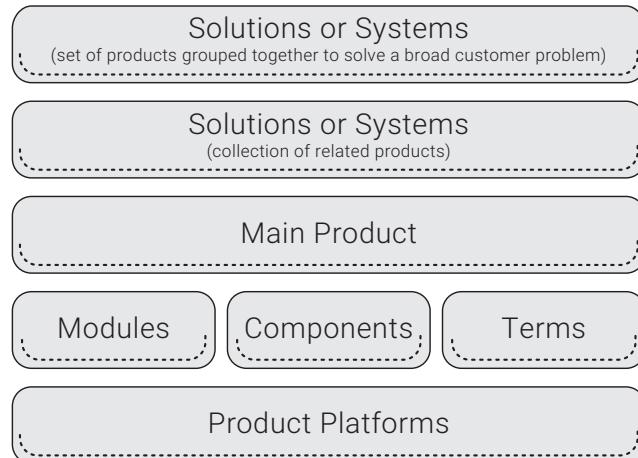


Product Manager's Desk Reference (3e) Illustration Insights – Chapter 1 Figure 1.1

The Product Taxonomy

Within a business context, a product is not always a single, stand-alone item; instead, within most companies, there is a taxonomy of products and services. A product may be part of another product or product line, packaged with a group of products, or offered as a solution or system to meet broad sets of customer needs. Products and product lines are usually part of a larger product portfolio—either in a single firm, in a business unit, or in a division of a larger company. Alternatively, products can be broken down into product components, modules, or terms (as in a credit card or insurance policy). Products may be built upon product platforms or product architectures. In order to visualize this taxonomy, take a look at the model shown below.

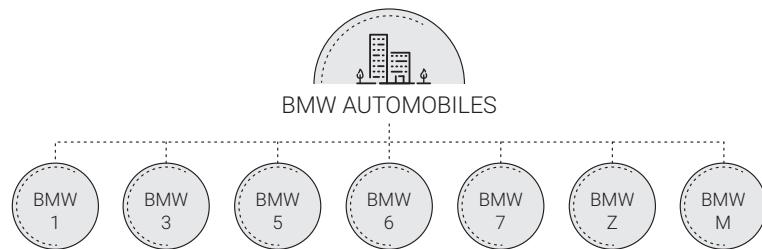
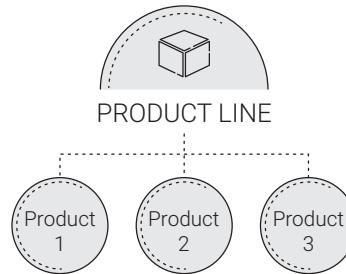
Think of how your company organizes its products in this way. See if you can associate your company's products, solutions, and systems in a manner similar to this. Also, if you're considering a new job as a product manager in another company, you can gain some traction in your "ramp up" if you're able to map out the product organization taxonomy. Use the space below the diagram to sketch out your company's taxonomy.



Product Manager's Desk Reference (3e) Illustration Insights – Chapter 1 Figures 1.2, 1.3

Product and Product Line Structures

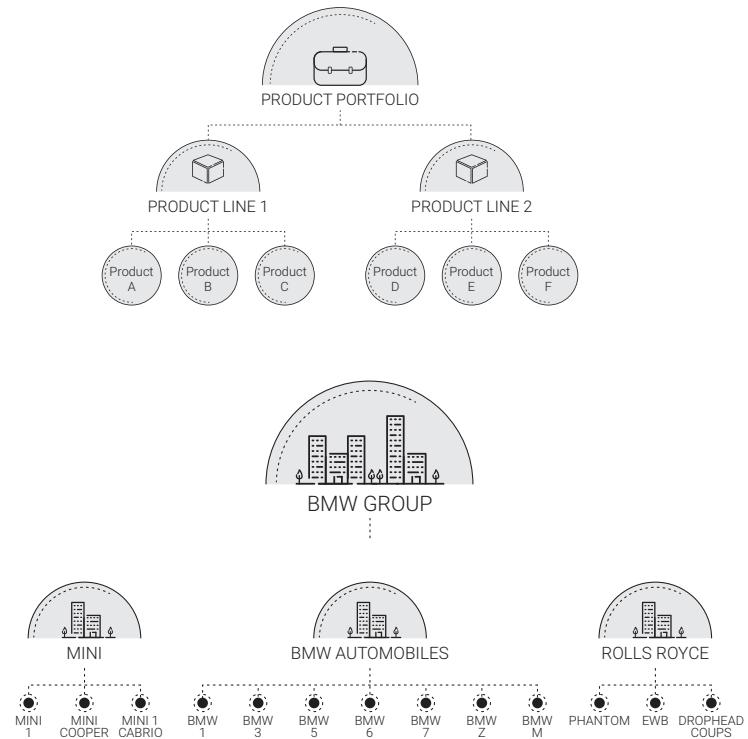
Every company uses a structured method to organize their products and product lines. Visual examples from The Product Manager's Desk Reference (3e) portray a generic product and product line chart. those of an automobile company. Regardless of the company where you work, you will benefit from understanding the product and product line hierarchy because it provides insights into who's working where, how roles and how responsibilities may be divided up. It also provides you with perspectives on how product's are managed across the life cycle. With these illustrations in mind, you can use this to draw your own company's product hierarchy and record some notes



Product Manager's Desk Reference (3e) Illustration Insights – Chapter 1 Figures 1.4, 1.5

Product Portfolio Structures

A product portfolio is the set of all products, product lines, or other groupings within a business unit or business division. Portfolios can include existing products, which may be at various phases of their own life cycles, as well as incoming products (those anticipated, actually in development, or in the launch phases). In smaller organizations, a single product or product line may in fact comprise the entire portfolio. A visual example of this type of product portfolio is shown below. If you want to view your own company's product portfolio from a good vantage point, use the space below to sketch out that model.



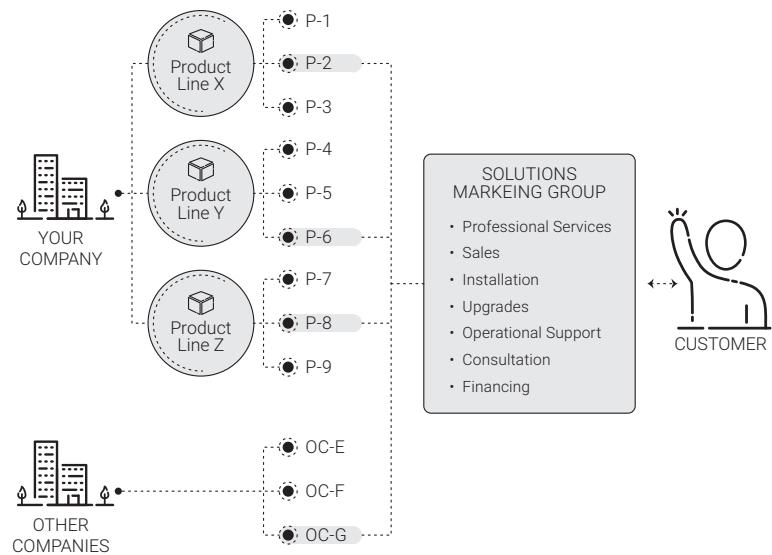
Product Manager's Desk Reference (3e)

Illustration Insights – Chapter 1 Figure 1.6

Solutions

Related products and services will sometimes be grouped into solutions, bundles, or systems. Solutions are fairly intricate because they solve complex problems, often have a high degree of integration, and usually require customization for a specific customer type or industry application. An organization that focuses on solutions should be structured to support solutions-based sales, marketing, delivery, and post-deployment services.

The figure shown here provides a conceptual snapshot of a solution in a B2B environment. In this case, several internal product lines and a product from an external company are assembled, to which value-added programs are supplied, such as consulting and operational support. If your company uses this technique, see if you can create your own visual of that structure in the space below.



Product Manager's Desk Reference (3e)

Illustration Insights – Chapter 1 Figure 1.7

The Product Management Life Cycle Model

The Product Management Life Cycle Model (Figure 1.7) is a representation of a product's business from beginning to end. It provides a holistic view of what's involved in the business management of a product. Out of necessity, the model is a linear, progressive, and static depiction of something that is actually three-dimensional, recursive, and dynamic—but for most purposes, it's a useful approximation. I say this because many people refer to a “product management process” as if it's one set of things to do. It's not. Instead, think of it as a meta-level grouping of processes and subprocesses, as represented by broad areas of work. These include:

1. Customer and Market Insights
2. Product Strategy Formulation
3. Product Planning and Prioritization
4. Product Development and Introduction
5. Post-Launch Performance Management

The Product Management Life Cycle Model represents a way to think about all the moving parts of your product business and reveals the overarching instrumentation you need to assess customers and markets, formulate strategies, shape your product investments, develop and release your products, and manage them once they're in the market.

