Top Product Management Challenges

Productside

624
participants

Based on 624 open-ended responses from product managers across **Productside courses in 2024–2025.** Responses were coded across multiple themes to reflect how challenges overlap in real product work. *

From 2024 to 2025, challenges around "Customer & Market Understanding" and "Strategy & Vision" increased.

PMs are expected to make better strategic decisions with deeper customer insight, instead of just delivering features.

Percentages reflect how often each challenge was mentioned. Responses may include more than one challenge.

Roles & Responsibilities

What helps

- Clearly defining who owns which responsibilities and where PM is accountable versus consulted
- Making decision-making explicit so teams know who drives, who approves, and who contributes
- Using shared responsibility and decision frameworks to reduce stakeholder friction

"Uncertainty due to the absence of a defined job description and responsibilities, combined with a lack of guidance from leadership on how to integrate product management."

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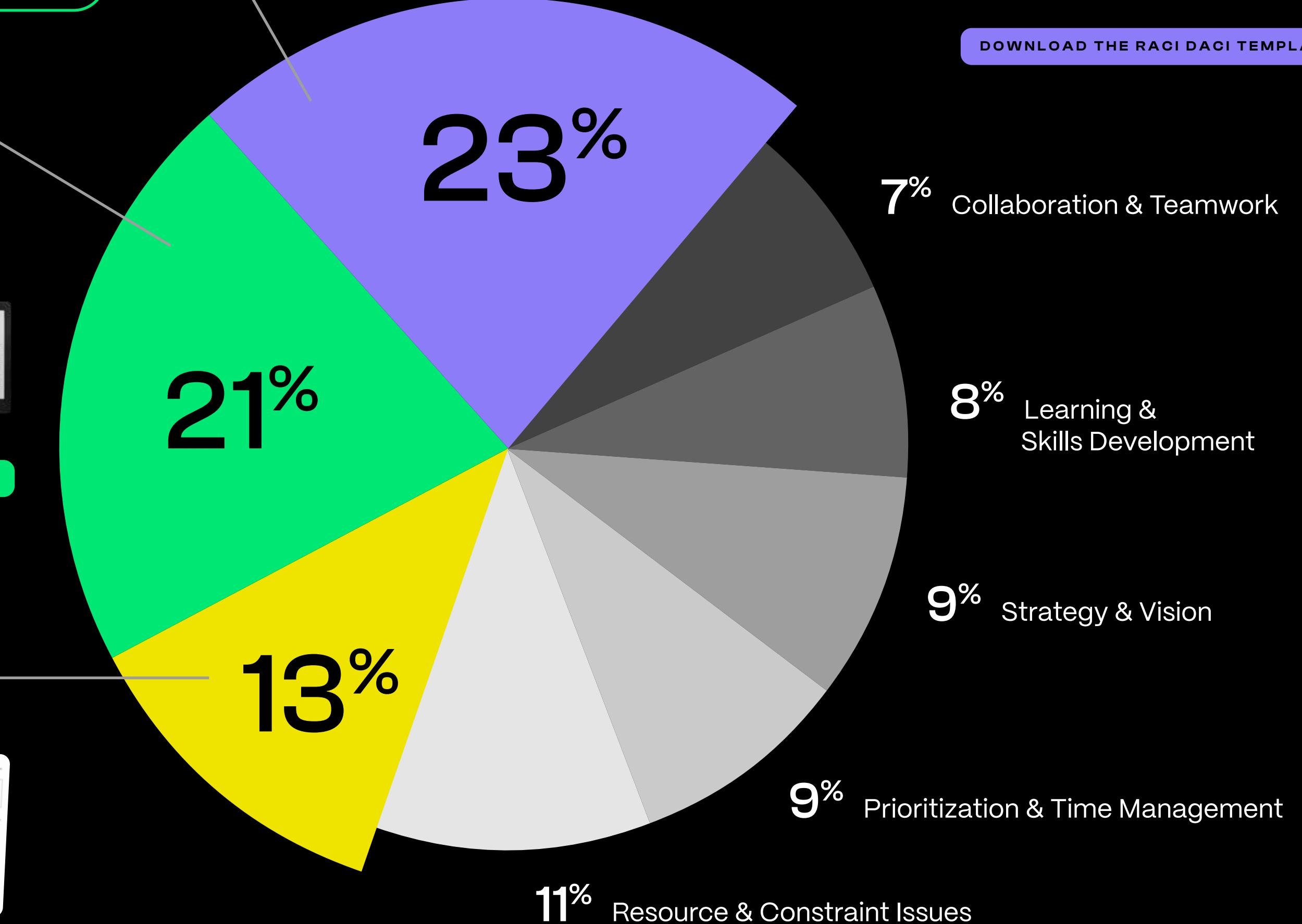
Process & Lifecycle

What helps

- Seeing the product lifecycle end-to-end, from strategy and discovery through delivery and learning
- Anchoring roadmaps to outcomes and success signals, not just features and deadlines
- Using a shared product operating model that teams can apply consistently across stages

"What are my blind spots in my product team? What are we not doing that we should be doing?"

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Customer & Market Understanding

What helps

- Running continuous, hypothesis-driven discovery instead of one-off research
- Framing customer conversations around problems, not solutions
- Turning customer input into shared insights that inform roadmap decisions

"Figuring out how to drive the roadmap with things that matter most to the customers."

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Pie chart:
- 23%
- 21%
- 13%
- 7% Collaboration & Teamwork
- 8% Learning & Skills Development
- 9% Strategy & Vision
- 9% Prioritization & Time Management
- 11% Resource & Constraint Issues

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