

SAIT Podcast – The Art of Product Marketing

ANNCR: The Best Careers You Never Knew Existed podcast, sparked by SAIT, the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, and co-hosted by CITI Careers and Technology and Innovation. The podcast that helps you navigate jobs in Alberta's emerging and exciting economy. Learn about careers like UX designer, robotic process automation, and international kitten cuddler. Maybe not the last one, but you get the picture. By talking with experts, leaders, and those who have done the journey in Alberta's emerging landscape, we'll provide the insight you need to expand into a new career.

Lora: I'm Lora and I work in Continuing Education and Professional Studies at SAIT.

Zach: And I'm Zach, the founder and community leader for Careers in Technology and Innovation.

Lora: Welcome to the podcast. In this episode, we're talking to the fabulous Vicki Laszlo about Product Marketing.

Zach: Yeah, I'm really excited for this podcast as she goes through Product Marketing, an important and emerging career in technology. And just the breadth of experience that she shares being in different companies.

Lora: I'm excited. Make sure you stick around for resources and advice after the interview. We hope you enjoy our conversation with Vicki.

ANNCR: Now, here's a career you never knew existed.

Zach: Thank you so much for coming. Vicki, would you like to introduce yourself to our audience?

Vicki: Hi, my name is Vicki, and currently I'm working as VP of marketing for an early stage FinTech company called Go Fetch.

Zach: Thanks. Can you tell us a little bit more about what Product Marketing is?

Vicki: This is a good question, and if you Google it, you might find several different answers. But the cool thing about Product Marketing, it's a job function that touches like product, marketing, sales, customer success. And the answer I think has really streamlined over the years. We've seen like an explosion in growth of the function and a lot of roles being established in companies. But I see Product Marketing as the driving force behind getting products to market. And you want to keep them there, like product marketers, they're really the overarching voices of the customers. They're the masterminds of messaging. They help enable sales and really accelerate adoption of products. And that's why I mentioned it sits at the intersection of product, strategy, sales, customer success, and even working with other marketing teams.

Zach: So, what are the typical activities or problems that are faced by product marketers? Kind of the day-to-day responsibilities.

Vicki: Yeah. So, there's a really good organization out there, like the Product Marketing Alliance and so they listed a survey or a study, and this is from 2021, so it might have changed a little bit, but I think it still really holds true that the top five responsibilities of Product Marketing managers are product positioning and messaging, managing product launches, creating sales collateral and other content creation, customer and market research, along with storytelling are a big part of the role.

Zach: Can you give us some examples of some of the work that you've been doing lately in your role that demonstrates some of the things you've just shared?

Vicki: One of the main responsibilities of a product marketer is really to champion the voice of the customer, right? You're not so much trying to sell just products or features, like you might have a really good product that has a capability or a functional value, but what's the solution that you're selling? You talk about pain points or how it solves people's products and so part of the rule is like, we're working on relaunching what our company is, Go Fetch. We're a FinTech platform that works in the US, in the veterinary pet care industry and pet insurance. We're working on repositioning and relaunching the product. My focus has been creating narratives for the product and messaging that really draw on customer insights. So that people who use our products see it to solve their challenges and reach their goals. And this is going to vary between business-to-business, and business-to-consumer.

Vicki: But the job starts from the earliest stages of product development to understanding the nuances of how the product works, what its features and benefits are, and how you can translate them to customer value. And then it goes to launching the product and taking it to market, and then working with Sales and customer success teams to help support your customers. So, you asked about what I've been doing – market research, so understanding where we fit in the market. There are some competitive elements in there, just how we compare to what's out in the market already and understanding that. A big part of it is product messaging. I've been writing our core story, our value propositions, using like a framework. This is very simplified, but what's the feature of the product, what's its capability, and what's its benefit? And turning that into the story. How the product can be positioned in the market so it's attractive to who we're trying to serve, and what differentiates it?

Vicki: And then for the marketing and communications, what messages need to be shared across what channels, and really putting together the go-to-market and even the launch plan for it. Starting with “do we have the right name and the right partner activations, and what are we

doing for top of the funnel, and middle of the funnel content” and really championing the voice of the customer. I've been deep in doing user interviews from our pilot and our beta phase, and really talking to people and hearing them describe the product in their own words, hearing them describe the value propositions and assessing product market fits. So, one of the questions I've been asking in interviews is how would you feel if you could no longer use this product? Very disappointed, somewhat disappointed, kind of meh, or I'm not going to use the product at all. And if they say they're very disappointed, there's a metric that if you get 40% of people who say they're very disappointed, you're likely to have achieved product market fit there.

Vicki: And that metric comes from the founder of Superhuman, that email platform. So, this is kind of a long answer because depending on your role, the stage of your company, how big it is, what industry you're in, the role can vary. But what I love about it, it's not boring.

Zach: Awesome. I'm going to just give you a quick couple follow ups because there's a few words that you used in there that I'm not sure everyone would know, or I certainly wouldn't know. You talked about both channels and funnels. Can you explain a little bit more about what those are?

Vicki: Yeah. Really simplified, when you look at your marketing funnel, it's the upside-down triangle and you have the different stages. So, like awareness, consideration, decision making, purchase, advocacy.

Vicki: And when you look at the top of the funnel, the awareness stage, people are just getting to know you. They need to discover you and who you are, so you have this top of the funnel content, collateral and activities that you do to drive awareness. And then once they know who you are, it's the consideration stage. You want to provide value as to like why they should pick you. So, you're establishing more of the trust and building the product or the solution that you pick. In the consideration stage, kind of in the middle of the funnel, there's different content and you're getting deeper into serving their needs beyond just what's at the top of the funnel awareness stage. And then when they go to decision making or purchase intent, then your kind of at the bottom of the funnel. And so, what you serve to them or how you talk to them or the tactics that you use become different from the awareness type of tactics. And then the channels are just how you get the word out there. Digital marketing, social media, paid performance, basically your sales channel. Do you build like referrals or virality into your product?

Lora: So, Vicki, I'm curious, how did you get into Product Marketing?

Vicki: I think, like a lot of people, I don't know, some people are very intentional about it, I think other times it's happy accidents. I think I'm a little bit of the happy accident, trying to carve my way into it. Which I think it's good for people who are looking to pivot their careers or move into another kind of area of marketing. So, I started my career super early, as a designer and my first marketing manager said, “You're going to have to choose between being a creative or being a businessperson.”

Vicki: And it just so happened that the company I worked for had a lot more projects to work on. But I also loved the business side and the strategy side of marketing. So, I started doing like brand marketing advertising and then as digital marketing started to grow and evolve, I moved into digital marketing, social media, managed that social strategy, building communities like Zach is doing, and then performance marketing. So, I kind of had a strong marketing foundation that I'd established over the course of my career. And then it came a time where I was doing mostly like performance marketing, but it was more on the sales side of things, for one of the larger social network platforms, and I wanted to get back into marketing. And then Product Marketing just seemed like a good opportunity to build on the foundation that I have, and really flex the strategic storytelling, curiosity muscles. And then when I saw a job opening for a Product Marketer, I just went for it. Established a relationship with the people who were interviewing, and in a little bit of time I was hired into that company. So that's how I got into Product Marketing.

Lora: Okay, here's a student question for you.

Student: Hey Vicki. I'm a student here at SAIT and I'm just wondering, what would you say is a better opportunity? Product Marketing or digital marketing?

Vicki: I think the better opportunity is what's going to work for that person. I think if you want to look at it in terms of career growth or like the statistics from the labor boards, I'm not sure. I would say learn the basics. If you're thinking about marketing, there's the foundational elements there and familiarize yourself with marketing fundamentals and concepts and things like target audience segmentation and your customer journey. But once you start to really explore marketing, then you can choose a specialization and identify what interests you most. If you're very data driven and an analytical person, I don't think writing messaging and stories is really going to be up your alley every day and vice versa. If you're more of a creative storyteller, diving into the depths of data may not be as fulfilling for you. So, then you can start to find and specialize in an area that can help you stand out in the market. And what's also really cool is if you're not sure, let's say you want to get into analytics, take the Google Analytics certification. If you're interested in social performance marketing, take the Facebook Blueprint course. Get a feel for it, and then go from there. And if you're really worried about employability, then do the research on the jobs and the statistics and take a look at how the field is changing and what's growing. Then you can use that as a litmus test for yourself, but you're going to be in your career for a while so I would say follow the path that interests you and that speaks to you and that you're going to enjoy doing, day in and day out.

Lora: Here's another question we get all the time from students.

Student: Hey Vicki. I'm just wondering what the difference is between product managing and Product Marketing and how they work together.

Vicki: Yeah, that's a good question. And the quick answer to that is I see a product manager's job as defining and building new products and features, and then it's the product marketer's job to commercialize or tell the story of that product to drive the demand, the adoption and have that effectively translate to revenue. So, I think the product manager is responsible for understanding the problems that the customers face and then they scope and they build the solution to it, and then the product marketer takes that product and then owns that take to market, go-to-market strategy, which is the narrative that defines the product's position in market and how it's going to benefit the users. They both are going to know the product inside and out, working together almost daily. Especially on things like scoping out the product and the roadmap. Those are more like product functions, but they might have their product marketer involved in that. So, the relationship is important, but the responsibilities and the outcomes that they work towards are different. So, the product manager scopes the product, builds that, works with the technical team, and then the product marketer like kind of writes the story and helps bring it to market and bring it to customers.

Lora: I feel like there's a lot of gratification that comes from Product Marketing, especially if you're also doing go-to-market strategies and launch strategies, because you get to take a thing that's not there, or has the opportunity for growth, and really engineer and be instrumental in terms of the growth of a product.

Vicki: I think that's what I really love about it. I think Product Marketing really does play a vital role for the company in a few different ways. Like when you have a very specific product you're selling, especially in the tech space or the business-to-business space, sometimes I say, "You're looking for the needles in the haystack, right?" Where you're trying to hone in on the right audience instead of the one size fits all. But the more research and the closer you get to the customers, the more you can influence and champion and contribute to the overall brand narrative. You can provide rich feedback to the product teams, to the sales teams, and work collaboratively with them. I think in this kind of day and age that we are in, there's a few different terms or buzzwords that get thrown around, but product led growth, if you investigate that, essentially it isn't the procurement department who has all the buying power, it's the user. So, when you think of platforms like Slack and how they were adopted in a company or some solutions that might come up for Teams, people might see a product and be like, oh, this would be valuable to our team or to our company to use that. So, I think in Product Marketing, you really get to put the user first and champion the voice of the customer versus just being the voice of the brand. But you translate that into strong storytelling and strong brand narratives. So, I feel it's impactful because you can work with sales and contribute to them, sit on sales calls and learn from them. You could talk to customer success and sit on the frontline and understand how they interact with customers and users. And then you're working with the product team to really break down and translate the technical details in the product into the user values and the benefits. So, it's a very rich role and rich function to be in.

Lora: A hundred percent. Vicki, you've been on a journey in your career, and you've spent some time away from Alberta and now you're back to Alberta. Can you talk a little bit about marketing

as a role and your journey to come back to Alberta and what your perspective is on the role of marketing in Alberta and how it's evolved?

Vicki: Yeah, that's a good question. I think Alberta's a very unique place to be, because it's always had a very strong sense of community, collaboration, and entrepreneurial drive. And I think when I was starting my career, and I'll speak specifically to Calgary, if you weren't in oil and gas, so we're going to put oil and gas on the shelf. But there was just a handful of consumer brand companies that were big and national. Like, you have WestJet, you have Shaw, you have the FGL, the Sports Check brand and such. I think sometimes, to me it felt a little bit limited. When they were hiring for a marketing position, they were hiring for a marketing specialist for Starbucks and I saw that job posting and I was like, "I can't believe that Starbucks is hiring for marketing here in Calgary." And it was for the Prairies region and then from Starbucks, I really loved the company and loved working in that role, but then I had a chance to move to Toronto and then work nationally. At the time, and it still is, Toronto was this huge hub that has the consumer-packaged goods industry, it has the media industry, it has the advertising agent industry, and financial services. So, you had a broad spectrum, not to mention the tech companies there too. So, you had a broad menu to choose from with how you wanted to structure your career. But I think what's really cool here is a lot of my friends who stayed in Calgary, they work in oil and gas or natural resources or agriculture. But now you're seeing the real diversification and the growth of tech and with remote work, many people who live here are working for national companies, they're working for American companies or you're seeing the fast-paced growth of Alberta based or Calgary based companies. So, I just think it's an exciting time because energy can be used loosely as a pun or as a motto in this city, but there does feel like there's a big shift with energy and investments and the kind of entrepreneurs that are scaling younger companies, not just the big ones. So, coming back, you really have that sense of community, of events, of meetups, and people who are working hard to drive and foster that sense of community and the other side attract a lot of talent. And attract a lot of businesses to set roots here too. From the time I left to the time I came back; it's changed exponentially in dynamic ways.

Zach: As someone who's had a career path in many different companies, also company sizes, do you see that Product Marketing role, in Alberta right now? We do have a lot of startups. We're seeing companies raise capital into the series A and B rounds, so we're scaling and there are opportunities to work at these larger brands as well. Do you see that role being significantly different in a startup like where you work versus working at a larger tech company or even working at a big brand like Starbucks. What differences do you see?

Vicki: Yeah, huge differences. I mean, when you're working at a small company, you don't have the resources and the budgets and the team size and scale or the customer basis to support large scale teams. I'm trying to think of what the stat was that I had read. I don't know if it's accurate, but a good percentage of product marketers still feel like they work in their own silo, like as one product market as an individual. The bigger company you get, sometimes you'll have one Product Marketing manager to five product managers and that's hard to juggle and hard to manage. And then as the company grows and gets bigger, then you might start to see, instead of

a one-to-one ratio, like one product manager to two or three PMs. So, the size of the company varies. And in the bigger companies you might have product managers who focus just on messaging, just on market research, just on the storytelling aspect of it. Or maybe working more on sales enablement and working closely with the sales team versus in bigger companies, there's more room to be specialized even within your niche. But when you're at a small company like I am, you're like an octopus. You've got like eight arms in different areas of the function.

Vicki: You're writing messaging, you're doing interviews, you're figuring out what social or the demand gen looks like. You're working with the partnerships. So, that's where the role gets really varied. If you like a fast pace, you're curious, you're entrepreneurial, you're driven, small companies and startups are a fun and exciting challenge. Maybe not the most stable, it's kind of like trying to stand up in a canoe, it feels like sometimes. And then the bigger companies you go to, I think you get more of that stability, that foundation, the swim lanes become a little bit more defined versus in a small company.

Zach: I feel like I can learn a lot from you, about getting more tentacles and arms and standing up in canoes. These are skills. These are highly skilled skills. Does Product Marketing fit in product or marketing, like in an org chart?

Vicki: I think this is again, from the Product Marketing Alliance, about 60, maybe 70% of the roles sit in marketing, but in some companies, you do have Product Marketing that sits under the product team. So again, the answer can vary from company to company. I think some of that reflects on the fact that you work so closely with product and if you think about a startup or a company that's scaling up or in its growth stage, you start with product and you might have a general marketer, and then when you want to dive more into positioning, messaging, product launches, more features, and you're like, "Hang on, we need somebody who can handle the specifics of the product." Then they're likely to bring on a Product Marketer to help specialize in that. So sometimes you can see where they might be like, "Oh, we'll just put that product marketer on the product team because they are working with product anyway." But in my experience, most of the time, it sits within the marketing function.

Lora: So, Vicki, what type of person makes an ideal product marketer?

Vicki: There's many different types of people that I've worked with. My Product Marketing mentor, I'll call her my mentor, she might like that. She's very disciplined, and I mean this in a good way, a very disciplined and diligent straight shooter. Like A and B and C and D and is very skilled as a product marketer, and then you have somebody like me who's a little bit more all over the place, blame it on my ADHD or whatnot, who come from different backgrounds. You have people who will move into Product Marketing from different roles within an organization. You can have somebody who moves from Sales into Product Marketing, or a solutions consultant could make a good technical Product Marketing manager. You have people who have maybe been doing brand marketing, who will specialize and move into marketing. So, I think the skills are strong communication. That's a big one. Being able to translate problems into

solutions, being able to be a bit of a detective and pull together insights and infer information and distill information is important. Like analytics, I mentioned communication, but communicating with empathy and clarity. The research, the planning is important. I find it's really important to have somebody sweat the details of things, this is a very small example, but sometimes I'll get screenshots where the numbers don't add up or the date is something really random and I will look at that and be like, "Hey, we can't put this into our collateral because the numbers don't add up." You want people to trust us as a company. Well, somebody might do the math on that, so we should have correct numbers instead of just like a placeholder, like Lorem ipsum that you might use for texts.

Vicki: So, I think somebody who sweats those small details is good. I think something that's important is the relationship building side of Product Marketing. So being able to persuade, have good negotiation skills, good interpersonal skills, because oftentimes you work with people who don't report to you. You work side by side, so you really need to get them to buy into your ideas, to buy into what you're telling them and to see you as a valuable resource. So, I think those interpersonal and relationship skills are critical for Product Marketing. And then we can go into like the technical skills too, or the foundational skills of marketing but I think that's important.

Lora: So, I was wanting to get into what is, what do you think is the hardest thing about being a product marketer?

Vicki: It's going to depend on your situation. Are you pivoting into Product Marketing from another career, which I had, and now I think there's a lot of fantastic resources out there. There are courses, there's YouTube videos, there's Product Marketing Alliance, there's forums that really help people when you have a question that you can turn to. I think sometimes it's where to start. The role is so broad. We talked about positioning, messaging, customer research. So, depending on the company, you might be like, I don't know where to start if you're not given a lot of direction or if you don't have peers that you could work off. But I think that what's difficult is sometimes you don't even own the metrics. Like how much pipeline you bring in for sales. Well, that could be a demand gen metric or how many deals have you closed? That's a sales metric. So, I think sometimes the work happens behind the scenes. I mean, there are metrics and there are KPIs, but I think in Product Marketing you really need to make your work visible. And so, I think that's one of the difficulties. If you don't get up at a meeting and be like, "I closed six deals," or "We just gained X new followers," or "This is what our engagement was." I think sometimes you need to demonstrate and tell your own story internally. And then when you get into the role, it's where do you begin? So, asking a lot of questions, working with the team and being a little bit of a detective to be able to figure out where to focus if you're not getting that type of direction.

Lora: Yeah, absolutely. So, one of the questions we always like to ask people is, what would you have liked to have known when you started?

Vicki: What Product Marketing is? I think theoretically, I understood the concept of it, but I didn't know how to actually go and do it. I didn't really have a mentor at the time. It's like, okay, what are the things that are going to make me successful in this role. So, I think the foundational elements of go to market strategy, positioning, messaging, being able to do good competitive intelligence, how to work with sales teams and give them content that's going to work for them. And then how the Product Marketing team works with the other areas of marketing too. Marketing works with other functional areas too, like demand generation, brand and corporate, and how that works specifically with the company that you're in. There's a good forum and site out there, and it's called Share Bird for anybody who's interested in Product Marketing and it's just questions. "Does anybody have a messaging framework that you'd recommend?" or "I'm looking to get a promotion. How do I do that?" Or "I'm not being heard by my product team. What can I do to facilitate that relationship" You get answers from a lot of smart people in the industry.

Vicki: And I think one of the most important things is, how do I fit in and work well with the product team where they start to see my role as valuable. Where they don't just look at marketing and think, "Oh, your emails and social media," or "You do the advertising stuff," but no, you're a strategic function. You take the user insights, you distill them, you tell the story, you turn it into messaging that the rest of the company uses. So how I can better integrate with the teams that I work with?

Zach: I wanted to ask a little bit about, because I know you're collaborating with SAIT a little bit on educating product marketers with a course. So, I'm curious about what are the type of topics that you would put in a course to educate someone and what people can expect.

Vicki: The course that we are building for SAIT, with my collaborator and co-instructor Peter Martins, we are doing it, so people have the foundation of what it means to be a product marketer. What's the role? How do you identify your target audience? How do you write product positioning and messaging that resonates? How do you look beyond the feature set to drive value, and then how you turn that into a scalable go-to-market plan. We talked about outlining the value you bring to customers, the story you tell them, but how you work cross-functionally with go-to-market teams. What are some growth strategies that you can implement? How this function would work with demand generation, performance marketing, what a successful go-to-market strategy looks like. So, we want this to course to be for somebody who's looking to pivot their career. Whether somebody's like a junior marketer or coming out of school, there's strong foundational planning, but then there's also for more senior people, how they can take a product to launch and beyond that, and really understand the elements that go into a great go-to-market plan.

Lora: Yeah, we're super excited about that program as well, but I'm curious about you. How do you keep up to date and what do you do for learning?

Vicki: I think with many people this day and age, number one is there's great groups out there like Product Marketing Alliance, I mentioned Share Bird. There's another agency called Demand

Curve that does amazing growth marketing courses and content and landing page breakdowns and offers little course sprints and things like that. So, I think the traditional marketing of like five to 10 years ago has rapidly shifted and evolved. While some of the foundational elements are still true, a 30-page marketing strategy, depending on your industry, you could distill that down into a couple pages and it's more about what are the elements of that strategy? And then rapidly execute and iterate. I think companies like Drift and Intercom, they put out really good marketing content. Like thought leadership is one way to really grow your audience. So, their thought leadership doesn't just center around like "This is how you use our product," but they've really invested in thought leadership content around marketing and with Drift specifically, Product Marketing.

Vicki: There are some good podcasts out there, the Market Tech podcast. There's another woman, Emma Stratton, she has her own agency called Punchy and she interviews different product marketers and has a video podcast, YouTube channel called Adventures in Messaging, so I love her. I think Demand Curve is one of my big go-tos.

Vicki: The architect podcast is great. And then I think, um, there's so many new tools and technologies that you can just. , working for a little company as a small team, I've really turned to like platforms like Notion, Zoom is critical, but like how I work with Notion and other really cool startups and build my own kind of marketing tech stack to facilitate what I'm doing and like ChatGPT has become like a second brain and been really, really helpful over the course of the, I don't know how long it's been released now, like, I don't know, six weeks, two months. I don't even know how long it's been released now, but I, I call it like my second brain, and it's really helped to scale some of the work that I've been doing. It doesn't replace the work that I've been doing, but I use it like a tool, and it's been, it's been valuable.

Zach: What do you wish you would've known that now, at the beginning of your career?

Vicki: Well, something yeah, that I know now that I didn't know at the beginning of my career. Well, I think careers aren't just the posts that you see on LinkedIn, but I think what's been cool. Of late is people are opening about their career experiences, because it's cheesy, but when it comes to motivational quotes, other than the, hanging their cat on the clothesline, there's the iceberg, right?

Vicki: Which is the tip of the iceberg. But everything that's under the water, and I think careers for some people, they are very linear and they're very structured. People have a, a five-year plan and they follow it. And then I think for other times careers are a little bit more like a doodle and it's not a straight line. And it's okay to pursue your interests and it's okay to pursue your passions. And it's okay, to experiment within your own career without being so hard on yourself. So, I think I've really enjoyed the experiences that I've had along my career, and I don't see it as being like a linear kind of path. So, it's really enjoying the journey and not putting so much pressure, so much pressure on myself as to making my career like it, it's very important to me and it is like one of my primaries focuses and has been like a driver. There's, the journey can

look different for everybody. And I think if, I do believe, if you work hard and apply yourself, you can make amazing things happen for you. Like, and I believe that for anybody,

Zach: We, from the outside looking into your career, we think it's a successful career. I know success is a moving metric, but do you think so those, those are consistent themes about what's allowed you to grow and be successful as a marketer.

Vicki: I think so. I mean, I've had the privilege of working for really great consumer, facing brands, but that, how big the company is or how much brand equity it has. That's, it has, that's really not the be all in the end all. And I think with my career, why I say it's a bit of a different path, like I planned on, I, I thought I would stay in Toronto, but I moved back west for family reasons. And so my career took a bit of a detour. Versus kind of the path that I thought it would be on versus some of my peers who I've worked with. But that's okay because I've gotten to do really interesting work. I've gotten to work with really interesting companies. I've gotten to work with really interesting people.

Vicki: And for somebody like me where I'm very like curious, I like to learn and I like to explore, like it's actually, it's served me like really well. And now, being at like a really small early stage startup, it's flexing, all the muscles that I've kind of built up over this point in my career. I don't know if it's for everybody, but it's certainly been a lot of fun and trying to build something from the ground up has been a very cool experience. If you would've asked me that like five years ago. I probably wouldn't have seen myself working for such a small, small company, but it's. A profoundly like, yeah, like incredible experience that I think has made me 10 x the marketer that, that I was before I started working for Go Fetch like two years ago.

Zach: Yeah. I think we hear, and I think I'm hearing it from you, is like attitude, confidence, belief. Ultimately these things, the hard skills, the technical skills are really important, or the foundational skills, I think is the word you used. It's really, really important, but ultimately the way that you approach your work and then the mindset and attitude really kind of trumps all. Would you agree?

Vicki: Yeah. I really do think so. And I think the one thing, I think this was from like a Simon Sinek talk. I'm not trying to claim it as my own, but I think it was in his talk where he talked about like, with careers, it requires patience, right? Like if you're. Goal is to be like the C M O. There are some people who very young climb the ladder and like boom. Like all the stars aligned. They have the skills, they have the talent, and they just like kind of crush it. And, they hit that rule early on in their career. But for most people it. It's actually like the patience game.

Vicki: And I think that's really kind of standard across everybody in the careers is, that's the one thing is you need patience for it. When you're working at a company, you might be promoted in three months, but for some people it takes three years to be promoted, right? So you never know. So you need, you need to have faith in yourself. Uh, lots of positive self-talk, but you also need to learn like, and not be afraid to know like what's serving you and what isn't serving you anymore. Because that's okay too. And Zach, like, what I really respect from the, the CITI

community is people who join the community or, or the voices that I've heard. They've, they come from like, for different reasons. They come maybe because, they've been part of a layoff, or they come because they're curious and they want to explore something new for themselves. So, I think having, those hard times, being open-minded and finding a network of people or groups that support you is really, really critical. But yeah, like being empathetic. Being curious and building relationships with people and being like a partner in, in positioning yourself as like in a partnership. That really goes a long way.

Lora: I feel like I've learned a ton and I've been in marketing, so I really, really appreciate your perspective, Vicki.

Zach: Yeah, I learned a lot as well. I agree with a lot of the things that you said today, Vicki, and I think you just said it really well, so thank you.

Vicki: Wow. You're welcome. Thanks for having me.

Lora: So, we really enjoyed our conversation with Vicki.

Zach: Yeah, that was really enjoyable and I hope everyone listening has got something out of it. For me, I really enjoyed learning more about the differences in marketing and where Product Marketing kind of sits in the middle of the organization between product, marketing, sales, and the importance of it, as well as just hearing the stories of the different opportunities that are available, um, across Canada as well as the nuance in Alberta. And I really enjoyed the depth and detail, that Vicki shared today. It's clear that she has a lot of experience in this space.

Lora: I really like the idea of Product Marketing and how much it's tangibly attached to success of a product. so many times, marketers can kind of feel a little bit removed, and I like the idea that you're working with the product team to take something to market and seeing how it. Grow and evolve over time, and, and I feel like that's a, uh, an opportunity for a really rewarding contribution to an organization's growth.

Zach: Yeah. too often I think people really admire or attracted to just the product part of the organization, building the product. But without great Product Marketing, no one's going to use your product. So, it's just equally as important, if not more. And I really enjoy. Vicki was just such a wealth of knowledge. She shared a ton of resources and that'll be shared below on the site. Um, they're useful, so look below.

Lora: We also offer several marketing programs at s including a Product Marketing bootcamp, and, uh, a program in digital marketing. So, if you like what you've heard, please connect with SAIT advising team or visit our website at SAIT.ca. Thanks for listening to our listeners and thanks to Zach for not only being part of the podcast, but also the work that you're doing. Building community for people that are evolving their careers.

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