THE FIRST 1 MILLION

How focusing on triggers, not users got
Brilliant in the 2 comma club

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Community-generated resource in math and science with over 1 million monthly users

Finding product/market fit:

- How do you know if you have it?
- How can you improve product/market fit?

Product/market fit looks different for different companies

Product/market fit ≠ early hypergrowth

Some of these companies had early hypergrowth.

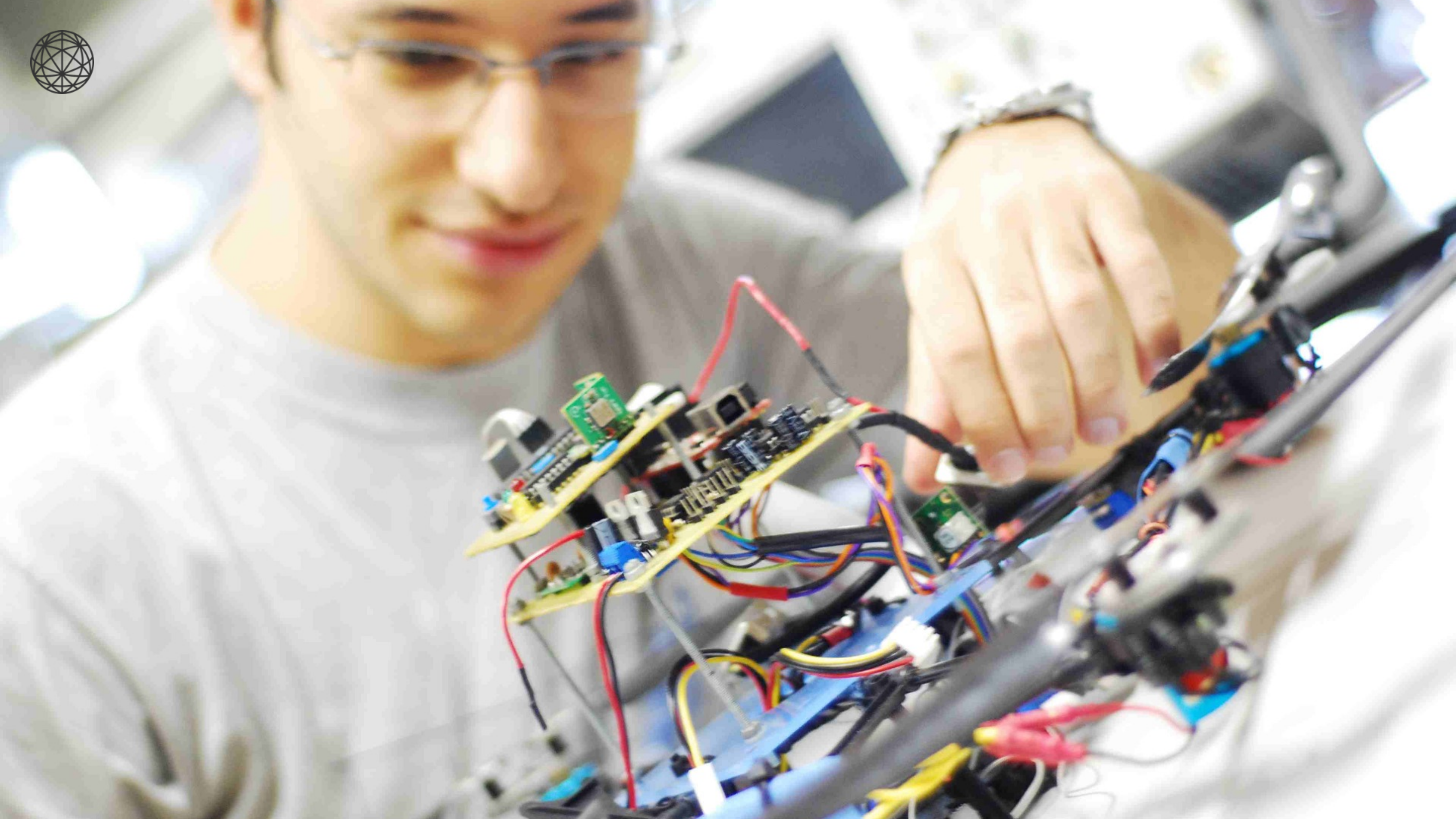Others did not.

Others changed their product completely.

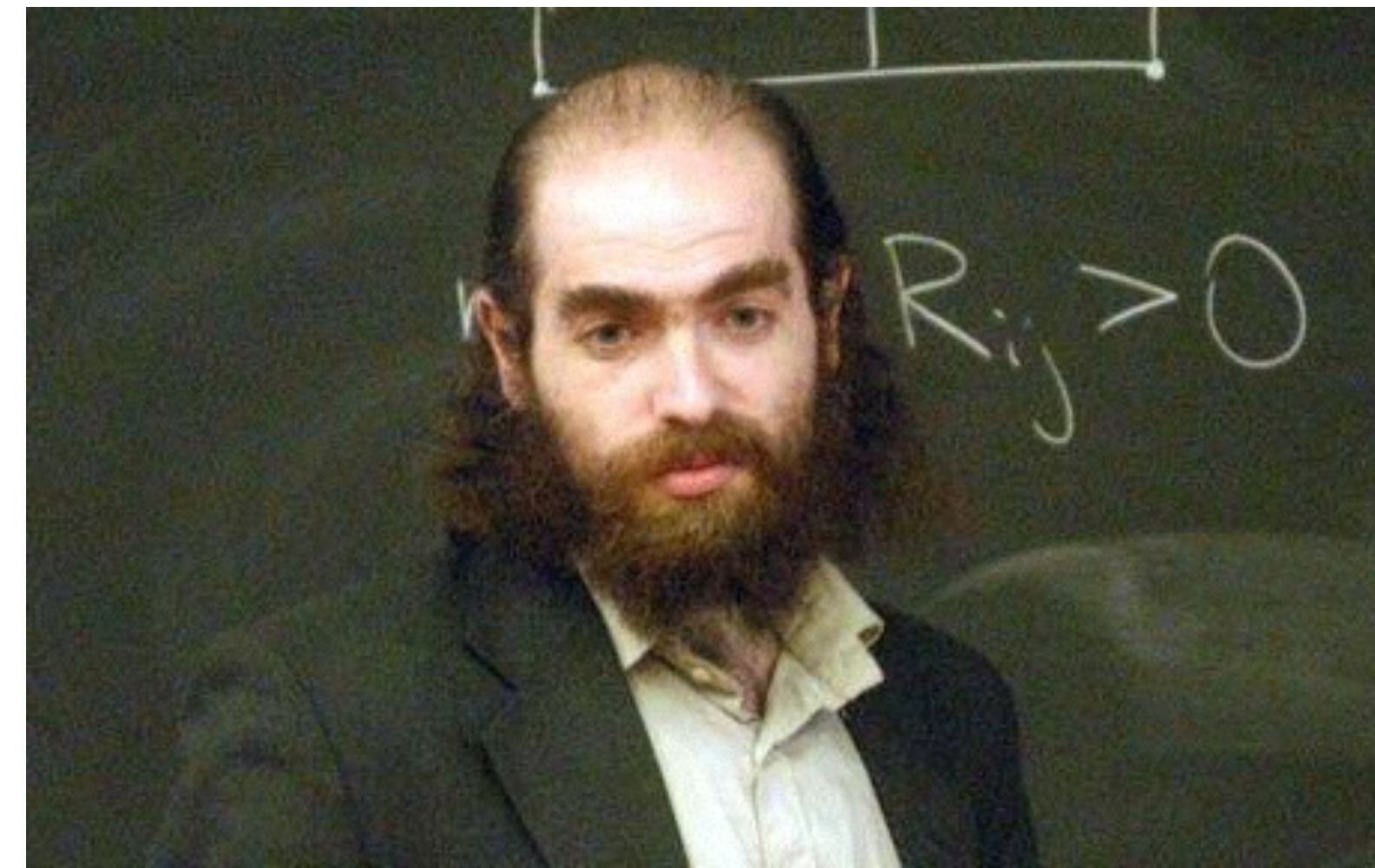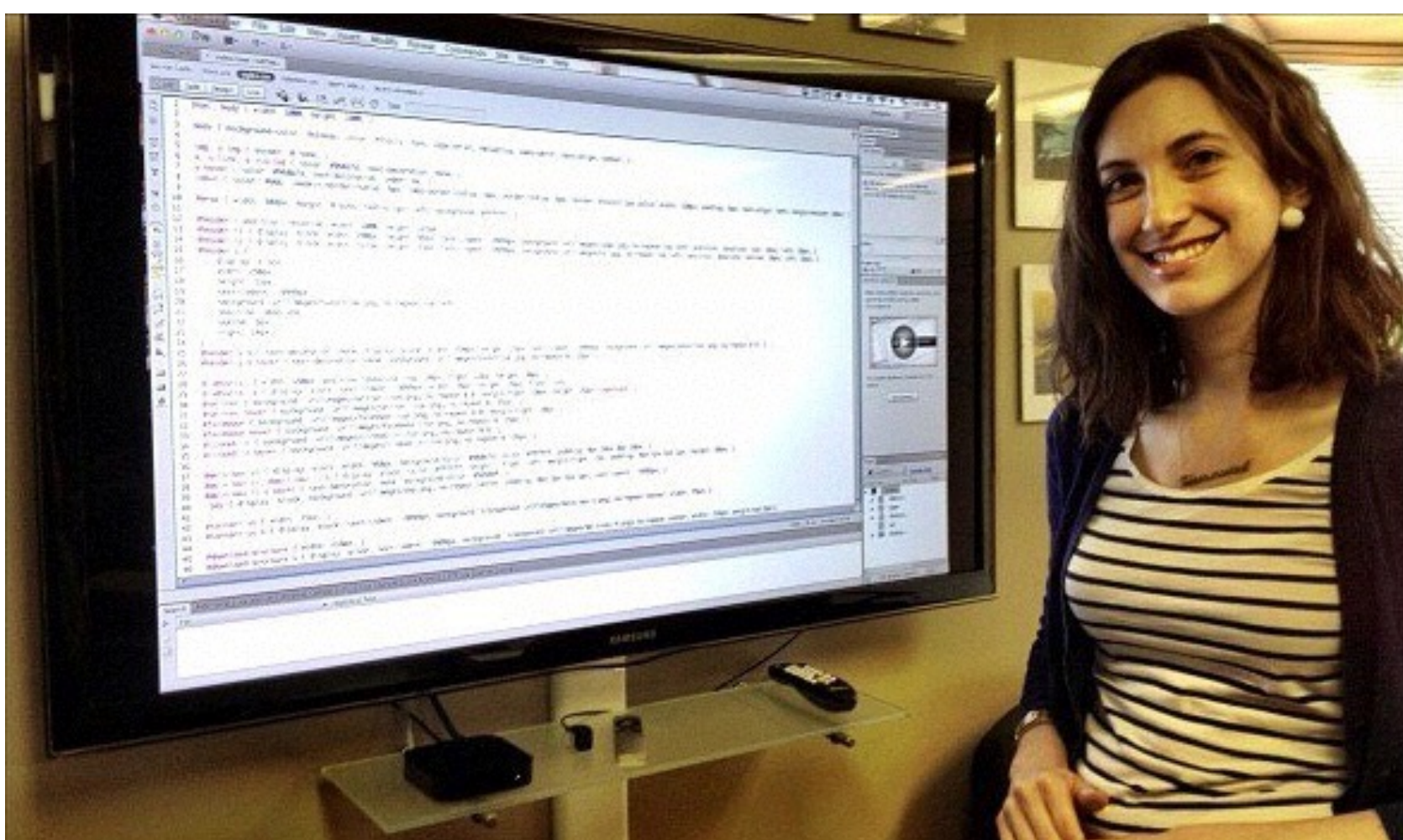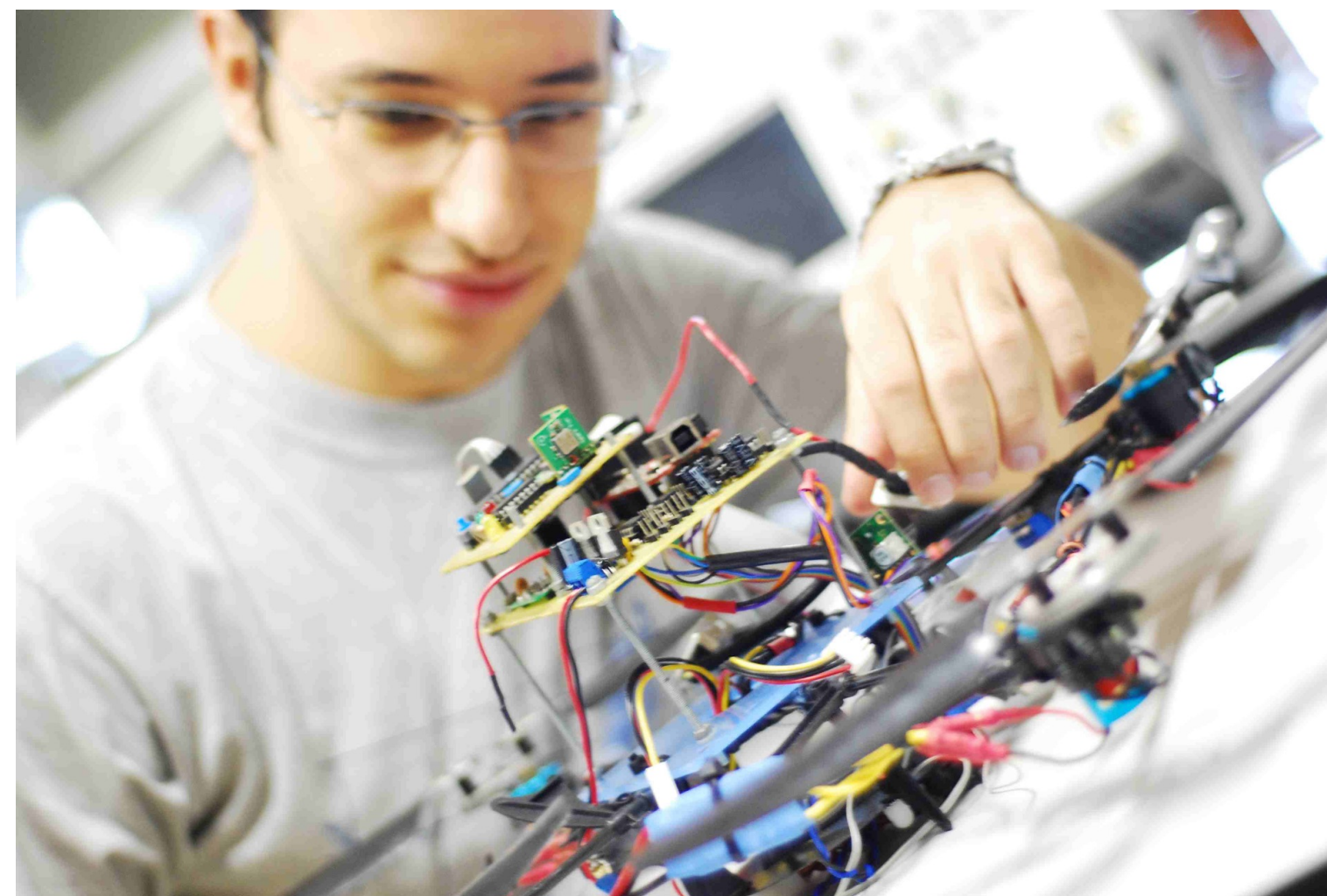**Step 1. Identify the trigger for your product**

- What is the moment in time when a user needs your product? This is your **trigger**.
- When and how frequently does this trigger occur?

Product-market fit = how often people choose your product when that trigger occurs.

Define triggers, not users

Define triggers, not users

Be specific about the **trigger** for using your product

This makes the use case specific so that you're building your experience around solving a need.

Example of a trigger

When someone is trying to understand a concept, they want lots of examples that convey the key ideas efficiently, and problems to test understanding and recall.

Triggers make product/market fit concrete before you achieve hypergrowth.

Product/market fit = how often people choose your product when that trigger occurs.

Step 2. Start from your triggers when making product decisions

**Here's what decision-making looks like when you
don't start from your triggers**

Listing pros and cons for features, and weighing the relative
merits of each

Example. Allowing users to message each other

Pros

- Users can keep each other engaged
- Allows deeper network connections
- Lots of users have been asking for it

Cons

- Adds product complexity
- Would bump important infrastructure project

Focus on what you want to achieve, not the tactics that supposedly work

Do your decisions move your product further up the product/market-fit **spectrum**, such that more people choose your product more often in response to the trigger?

From triggers to product/market fit

Step 1. Identify the trigger for your product.

Step 2. Start from your triggers when making product decisions.

Product-market fit = how often people choose your product when that trigger occurs.

What we gained from focusing on triggers, not users

1. **Reduced inputs simplify product decisions**

2. Clearly falsifiable hypotheses

What we gained from focusing on triggers, not users

1. Reduced inputs simplify product decisions
2. **Clearly falsifiable hypotheses**

"Maybe people just don't want what our product does, and that's why nobody used it today."

Stay focused on concrete, answerable questions

1. Does your trigger actually occur in people's lives, and how often?

2. What are they doing now in response to it?

3. Why will your product satisfy the user more than the alternatives?

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