

The PM growth plan

Developed by 18F

Responsibility	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
Team leadership			
Lead the product team.	Relays direction and important information to the team. May rely on a project manager to help organize.	Proactively organizes the team. Makes sure team members understand the project vision and direction, and are aware of important information. Begins to learn some project management skills.	Makes sure team members understand and are excited about project direction. Helps each team member shine. Comfortably delegates work. Is comfortable owning many project management tasks.
Responsible for team culture. Each team member's expertise contributes to the vision.	Listens to each team member respectfully, and considers their perspectives. Makes decisions that incorporate others.	Helps team members speak up even when they may not be comfortable. Ensures that all voices are included in decisions.	Intentionally builds a shared team culture. Helps team members understand and build trusting relationships with one another.
Participates in team retrospectives and help the team continuously improve their practices and processes.	Participates in team retrospectives. May rely on the project manager to facilitate and identify action items.	Participates in team retrospectives. Identifies and takes responsibility for appropriate action items. May rely on the project manager to facilitate.	Is comfortable facilitating team retrospectives. Helps the team identify appropriate action items and ensures that they are completed.
Engage subject matter experts or others from the organization as needed.	Welcomes input from subject matter experts. Partners with project manager to ask for feedback and advice from relevant experts.	Seeks input and feedback from subject matter experts. Identifies which expertise is needed when.	Builds two-way relationships with subject matter experts and consults them throughout the life of the product.

Ensure that everyone (on team, outside team) is aligned with the product vision.	Helps teammates understand the vision. Can explain the vision to leadership when asked. Uses feedback from inside and outside the team to adjust the vision.	Ensures that teammates are aligned with the vision. Finds appropriate channels to publicize the vision. Confidently represents the vision to leadership. Uses feedback to adjust the vision.	Leads teammates to set a vision that adds value to people inside and outside the team. Proactively explains the vision to individuals outside the team. Helps others understand how the vision benefits them.
Ensure key stakeholders understand the state of the project at all times and how they can contribute and provide feedback.	Can explain the product when asked. Listens to feedback from stakeholders and reports it back to the team to decide whether, and how, to act on it.	Finds good channels to publicize progress. Seeks feedback from stakeholders and brings it back to the team for discussion. Helps stakeholders understand when feedback is out of scope/not actionable.	Builds two-way relationships with stakeholders and incorporates their perspectives into planning. Protects the team from rapid changes in direction based on feedback. Can effectively say 'no' to key stakeholders.
Coordinate and garner organization support.	Understands how the product benefits the organization. Can explain the vision and value of the effort when asked.	Advocates for the product within the organization. Asks for resources as needed. Contextualizes requests against planned outcomes.	Proactively evangelizes the product and wins support across the organization before it is needed. Generates enthusiasm for the product.
Strategy			
Ensure that the product team is solving the right problem and decide what part(s) of the problem that the team will address.	Receives direction from senior leadership and works with a project manager and teammates to understand where to start.	Receives direction from senior leadership and organizes the team to understand the problem and decide how to approach it.	Does not need clear direction from senior leadership. Proactively identifies meaningful problems to solve and makes proposals to leadership.
Sets the vision.	Sets a vision that is strongly influenced by direction from senior leadership. May rely on project manager or senior teammates to help set a vision.	Uses input from the team, senior leadership, and other parts of the organization to create a vision.	Researches the problem space and organizational context to set a strategic vision. May proactively propose ideas to senior leadership.

Owns the short and long term strategy for achieving the vision.	Charts a relatively direct path to achieving the vision. May not be comfortable navigating complex problems with many stakeholders. May rely on project manager or senior teammates for guidance.	Works with the team, but is comfortable setting a strategy alone if needed. Accounts for stakeholders and other complicating factors when planning a strategy. Adjusts the strategy when necessary.	Leads the team to set a strategy that accounts for complex constraints and stakeholder relationships. Adapts the strategy proactively as new information becomes available, but buffers the team from churn.
Ensure that the product solves the right problem for the right people throughout development.	Understands the primary users and the major problem or pain that they face. May rely on senior teammates and senior leadership to explain the need. May not be comfortable serving multiple user groups. Adjusts the product in reaction to feedback during development.	Gathers information from knowledgeable coworkers. Uses information from multiple sources to better understand the users and their needs. Balances the needs of multiple groups. Incorporates feedback into the development process and adjusts the product.	Gathers information from many sources and leads the team to address knowledge gaps and unknowns. Balances the needs of many groups, even when different users have conflicting needs. Uses multiples approaches to collect feedback throughout the process and adjusts the product appropriately.
Define the priorities for the product roadmap.	Articulates clear priorities for the product roadmap based on the strategy. May rely on the project manager to facilitate and ask guiding questions. Adjusts priorities based on feedback from teammates.	Articulates clear priorities for the product roadmap based on the strategy. Incorporates feedback from teammates into prioritization.	Articulates clear strategic priorities driven by the vision, strategy, and teammate expertise. Seeks feedback proactively and helps teammates understand the reasoning behind the chosen priorities.
Sets strategy for collecting and synthesizing user feedback.	Helps the project manager and design staff to define a way to collecting user feedback.	Partners with design staff to define a way to collect and synthesize user feedback. Understands that the method of collecting feedback may introduce bias.	Partners with design staff to define a system for collecting and synthesizing user feedback. Accounts for biases that are caused by the way that feedback is collected.
Delivery			
Sets sprint goals.	Sets achievable sprint goals. May rely on a project manager and teammates.	Sets clear, achievable sprint goals that support the strategy. Incorporates feedback from teammates.	Leads sprint planning. Facilitates the team to set sprint goals that support the strategy and vision. Balances near-term needs and long-term goals.

Sets appropriate key performance indicators.	Identifies a few key metrics to track the performance of the product based on goals. May rely on senior teammates in setting metrics. Adjusts the product in reaction to key metrics.	Works with the team to define a structured set of metrics that help the team understand and explain the performance of the product. Incorporates metrics when making key product decisions.	Leads the team to define comprehensive metrics and measures to understand and explain the product. Uses metrics to drive, and justify, product decisions.
Sets quality bar for whether product is 'good enough' with product team.	Works with team to define quality bar for the product. Makes the final call of whether or not work meets expectations. May rely on teammates to judge quality.	Defines quality bar for the product, incorporating feedback from teammates. Makes the final call of whether or not work meets expectations.	Sets quality bar based on end user and stakeholder needs. Communicates clear expectations for the team. Creates structured frameworks that allow teammates to accurately judge product quality.
Unblock issues that may arise.	Asks teammates about issues that are blocking or slowing down the team. Works with the project manager to find paths forward for the team.	Understands and tracks issues that are blocking or slowing down the team. Works with teammates to find paths forward for the team.	Predicts issues that may block or slow down the team and proactively addresses them. Works with teammates to resolve issues that are blocking or slowing down the team.
Procurement			
In a procurement action, drafts the background, scope, and evaluation criteria.	Drafts the background. May rely on the project manager and senior teammates to inform the scope and evaluation criteria.	Drafts the background and scope and then seeks feedback from teammates. May rely on senior teammates to define appropriate evaluation criteria.	Drafts the background, scope, and evaluation criteria and seeks feedback from teammates.
Partner with teammates to monitor vendor performance post-award.	Understands whether or not the project is on track. Understands whether or not the vendor is collaborating effectively. May rely on teammates to understand vendor performance. Works with teammates to identify needed staffing changes, but may rely on others to drive changes.	Able to judge project trajectory. Understands how effective the vendor is and approximately how well each vendor staff member is performing. May rely on teammates to deeply understand vendor performance. Works with teammates to understand and advocate for staffing changes as needed.	Able to judge and predict project trajectory. Understands the strengths and weaknesses of vendor staff members, and works with teammates to deeply understand vendor performance. Leads teammates to drive staffing changes as needed.

