

△ Categories interviewer is looking for during interview

- Passion for users' problems that the company solves for
- ability to break down problem and articulate it
- collaborative leadership
- initiative

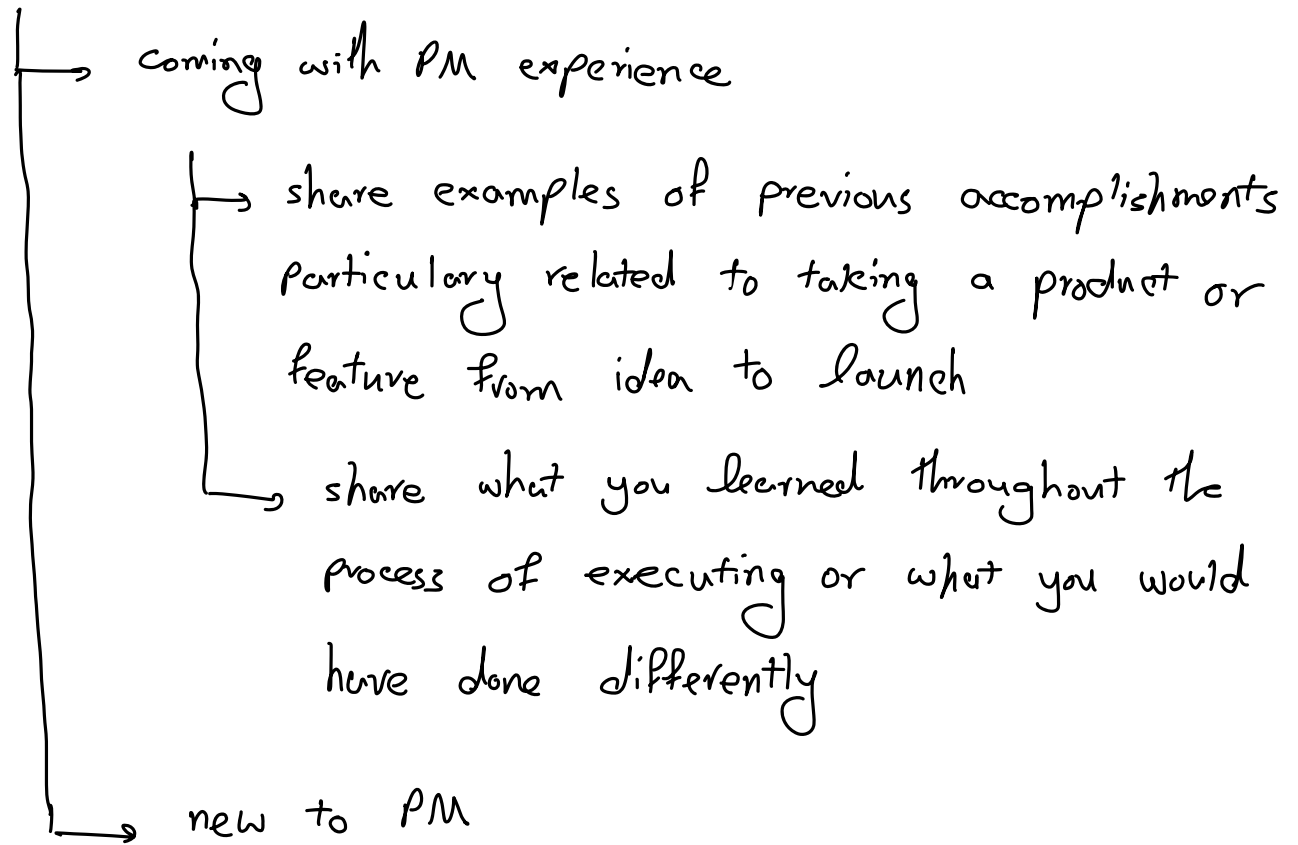
△ Behavior questions

- Situation (S) : what was the context of the problem?
- Task (T) : what needed to be done?
- Action (A) : what did you do?
- Result (R) : what was the outcome?

△ Case questions

- lead the conversation
- structure your thought process
- Paraphrase problem and confirm assumptions
- Ask clarifying questions to seek additional necessary information

⚠ Experiences to share in interview



↳ demonstrate how you applied transferable skills to product management in previous projects to deliver an outcome

⚠ you should know enough about design, business, and technology to be able to converse effectively with stakeholders from each of those domain

⚠ one way to stand apart is to your company of interest is create a product-related proposal or project that is beneficial to the company

steps to solve a problem

- How did you frame that problem at hand?
- why was it worth solving?
- what solutions did you consider and how did you evaluate them?
- what decisions did you end up making & why?
- how did you evaluate the success of your decision?



Advice for someone interested in getting into Product Management:

- **Talk to other Product Managers:** It's valuable to hear a first hand perspective -- what they enjoy, the biggest challenges, etc.
- **Ask yourself why:** It's important to do some introspection on your motivations for being a Product Manager and why you believe the role is the right one for you.
- **Mentorship is key:** When evaluating job opportunities, take into consideration the expected level of mentorship and guidance you can receive from an experienced Product Manager at the company.



The top qualities interviewers look for in Product Manager candidates:

- **Passionate:** Does the candidate truly care about the users and the problems they are trying to solve? Candidates who are excited and energized about solving hard problems are going to be more successful.
- **Problem Solver:** A skilled problem solver is comfortable taking a large problem and breaking it down into smaller ones.
- **Strong Communicator:** A Product Manager has many audiences -- it's critical to know how and what to communicate depending on who you are talking to.
- **Self-Starter:** A successful Product Manager takes initiative -- one who not only identifies problems but takes the next step of trying to solve it. A Product Manager's role is filled with ambiguity, and it's important for individuals to have the mindset to just figure things out.



Common types of questions you may get in a Product Manager interview:

- **Behavior Questions:** These are extremely common and intended to assess your skills as a Product Manager based on your prior experiences and background. Know your resume really well so you can speak to any part of it. It's also a good idea to be prepared with a few projects or products you worked on that you are most comfortable talking about.
- **Case Study Questions:** These can take different forms but are usually Strategy, Design, or Technical or some combination of the three. Practicing example case questions will prepare you to be more comfortable and confident answering these types of open-ended questions. Check out Lessons 2 and 3 from this course to review case study interviews in more detail.



Some tips on how to stand out in a Product Manager interview:

- **Use the STAR:** When answering a behavioral question, such as describing a problem you solved, consider the STAR Method to structure your answer: * **Situation** : Provide context for the problem * **Task** : Explain what needed to be done * **Action**: Describe specifically what you did * **Results**: Explain the ultimate outcome
 - **Remember to demonstrate learnings:** Often, more important than the ultimate outcome is what you learned along the way that helped you grow as a Product Manager. Make sure to highlight this when discussing your experiences.
 - **Always break down the problem:** Candidates who provide some clarity and structure to open-ended questions will stand out.
 - **Above and beyond:** It's not always practical or appropriate, but to really stand out, consider creating a product related proposal or project that is beneficial to the company and provide this as part of the interview process.



1. Clearly define the problem and the objectives

- Make sure you understand the problem upfront. Candidates will sometimes latch on to a small part of the prompt that they heard and spend a lot of time going down an obscure path.

2. Communicate your approach and provide some structure

- Think and communicate how you are going to structure the problem before diving into it. The primary goal of case questions is to evaluate your problem solving process and abilities, not to evaluate whether you got to the correct answer. In many cases, there is no single correct answer.
- Creating some structure around the problem is not only a good way to demonstrate that this is how you approach problems, but it is also a helpful interview tool. If you start by outlining your approach, you are less likely to forget to cover a certain aspect.

3. At each part of the problem, start broad and then narrow in

- At each part of the process that you've structured, start by brainstorming several different options, and then use some stated criteria to prioritize and narrow in.



Additional Product Strategy Practice Interview Questions

The best way to get better at Product Manager interviews is by actually doing them. You can practice by yourself out loud or even better with someone else. Here are some sample interview questions to get you started:

- How would you increase YouTube's daily active users ?
- What are some ideas for improving mentorship on the LinkedIn platform?
- What is your favorite product and why?
- Start a new product category for Amazon -- what would you choose and why?
- If you want to launch a new social networking product, what are the primary considerations?



1. **Always restate the question**

- Make sure you are answering the right question by saying in your own words what is being asked.

2. **Ask additional clarifying questions**

- State any key assumptions you are making and ask follow up questions to clarify.

3. **Have a clear methodology**

- There are many prioritization models out there (e.g. the RICE model). Find one or two that resonate with you and be prepared to use them, since prioritization questions are quite common in Product Manager interviews.

4. **State your approach at the outset**

- Structure is critical - provide some outline upfront for how you plan to attack the problem.



- **Tinkering is key:** Growth Product Managers are constantly trying new experiments, testing new ideas, and doing many of these at once.
- **New experiments more than new features:** Growth Product Managers focus on how to get more customers to use *existing* features. A major challenge is identifying and experimenting new ways for customer adoption.
- **Quantity, not just quality:** Sometimes in Product Management, the focus will be on building a small set of very high quality features to address customer needs. As a Growth Product Manager, quantity is critical -- you need to test a lot of ideas at once.



1. **Start with user needs**

- No matter the type of problem, keep the needs of your users first.

2. **Structure your approach**

- This is applicable to every type of problem. Providing structure upfront in the problem demonstrates organized thinking and is important to keeping your answer focused.

3. **Gain familiarity of common technical solutions**

- It's valuable to have a basic architectural understanding of some well known products -- for example Google Search and Facebook Newsfeed.

4. **Understand the differences between mobile and desktop applications**

- In preparation for your interview, review the key differences and considerations when building an application for mobile vs desktop. This is particularly important if the company you are interviewing with has a mobile product.

5. **Study the technology of the company you are interviewing with.**

- Prior to the interview, gain a basic familiarity with the company's key technology. This preparation will not only help you answer questions you are asked, but can also inspire questions for you to ask the interviewer.



Additional Technical Practice Interview Questions

The best way to get better at Product Manager interviews is by actually doing them. You can practice by yourself out loud or even better with someone else. Here are some sample interview questions to get you started:

- You are part of the Google Search web spam team. How would you detect duplicate websites?
- What are some of the technical challenges with building a system to help restaurants receive orders electronically?
- Facebook recently identified that mobile app users in 3rd world countries with significantly lower bandwidth have a poor user experience. How would you reduce bandwidth consumption across Facebook's mobile app?
- If you were the Product Manager for Gmail, how would you reduce the storage size on Gmail servers?
- How do you monitor performance and measure success of a recently launched product/service ?
- How do you gain credibility from the development / engineering teams as a new product manager?
- What is the importance of engineering and technical teams as stakeholders ? How do you integrate them into the overall product vision?



Meeta talks about specific examples of her day-to-day role as the VP of Product, including:

- Morning review of emails to identify which need urgent attention
- Looking at product metrics to see the direction her products are headed
- Structuring her day to spend time on day-to-day tactical work as well as long term strategic thinking
- Balancing the various requests that come to her (e.g. production bugs, sales team requests, customers feature requests, etc)