

Product Design Intern

BuzzFeed Design

Internal Tools

Improving the Employee Feedback Process at BuzzFeed

Summer Intern Project



Project Overview

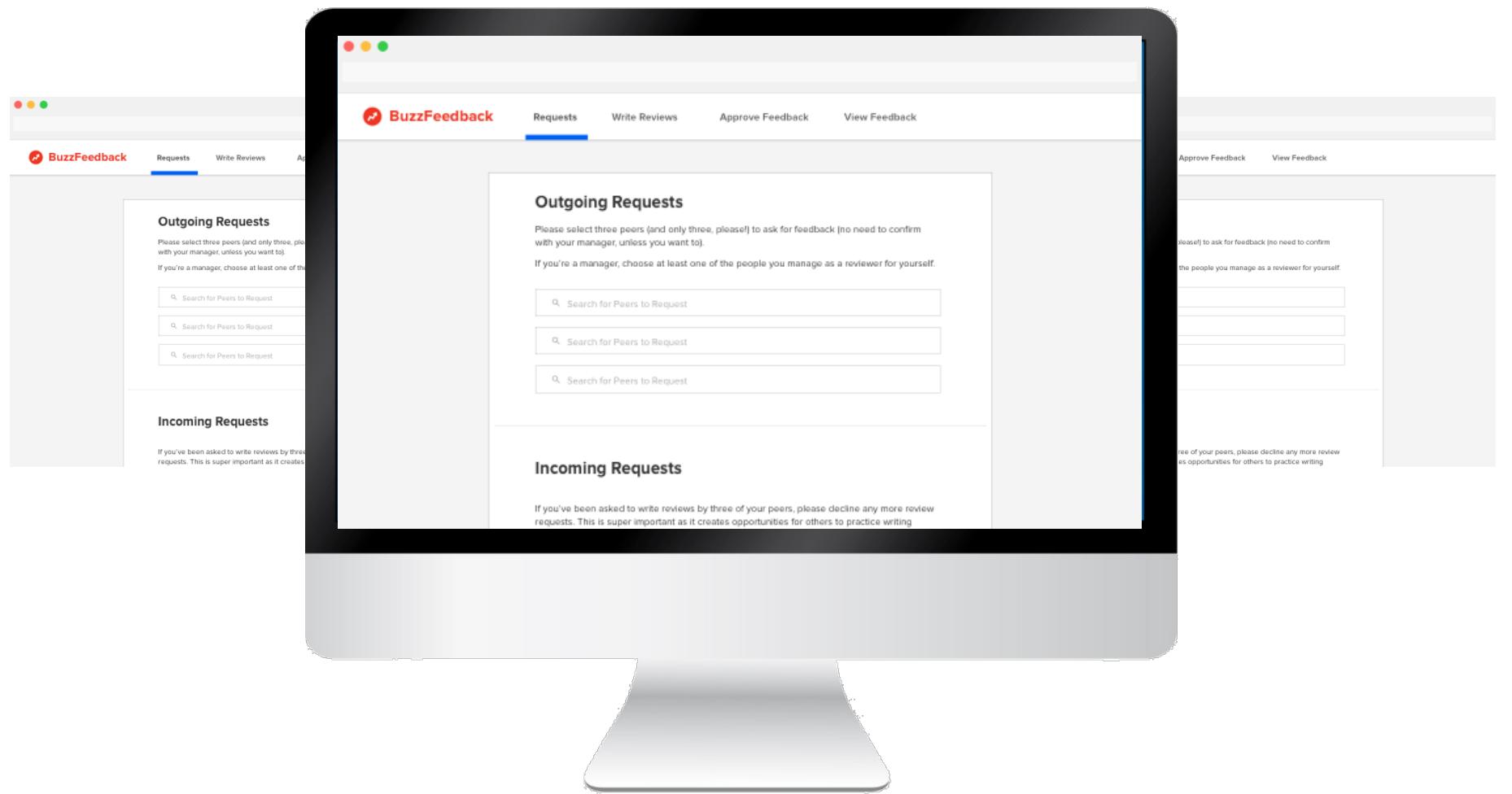
The current process of emailing feedback to managers leads to a lot of time and effort spent organizing/formatting the feedback. This stems from emails being easily missed, differing format of feedback sent (Google Doc/pasted in Email/Word Doc...etc). We want to be able to streamline this process and allow managers to focus on the quality and delivering valuable feedback rather than organizing it all out.

Final Design

The screenshot shows the 'Requests' section of the BuzzFeedback application. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the BuzzFeedback logo and links for Requests, Write Feedback, Approve Feedback, and View Feedback. Below the navigation, the title 'Outgoing Requests' is displayed. A note says: 'Please select three peers (and only three, please!) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to). If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.' There are three search input fields labeled 'Search for Peers to Request'. Underneath, the title 'Incoming Requests' is shown with a note: 'If you've been asked to write reviews by three of your peers, please decline any more review requests. This is super important as it creates opportunities for others to practice writing reviews, and encourages a more diverse selection of reviewers across the organization.' A list of incoming requests from 'Lindsey Marratta', 'Emily Brick', and 'Cap Watkins' is provided, each with 'Decline' and 'Accept' buttons.

The screenshot shows the 'Write Feedback' section of the BuzzFeedback application. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the BuzzFeedback logo and links for Requests, Write Feedback, Approve Feedback, and View Feedback. Below the navigation, the title 'Lindsey Marratta's Feedback' is displayed. A note asks: 'What's the one **Tech Leadership Principle** this person has particularly embodied over the last six months? Provide specific examples, projects, etc. to support your review.' On the left, a sidebar lists 'SELF' (Lindsey Marratta), 'PEERS' (Ivan Butyliuk, Wolasi Konu, Jacqueline Yue), and 'DIRECT REPORTS' (Derrick Ho, Hana Carpenter, Cap Watkins, Tom Harman). To the right, there's a large text area with the placeholder 'Start typing your feedback here'.

Project Overview



Objective

Cut down time and effort spent organizing and reminding employees to write feedback. Overall reduce the amount of time spent not related to work or providing meaningful feedback.

Measurements of Success

- ↓ days over first deadline dealing with feedback requests
- ↓ days over review period where feedback is still not delivered/submitted
- ↓ hours spent approving and organizing feedback
- ↑ quality of feedback (Secondary Goal)

People Involved

Design Lead (Cap Watkins)

Engineering (Dave Mauro)

Design (Derrick Ho)

Target Audience

Managers

As a manager responsible with relaying/providing feedback to my employees, I want to be as hands off on the peer review as I can be, while having some assurance that the process is moving along in a timely manner.



Direct Reports

As someone receiving feedback on my work, I want to receive peer feedback from the peers that are best suited to give feedback for me.



Peers

As someone responsible for providing feedback on my peers, I want to be able to focus on providing helpful feedback for peers without worrying about how that feedback is delivered. I also want to be reassured as to how this feedback is being used.



Target Audience

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Peers

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Research



Objective

What makes this process so inefficient and how can I design a product that fits seamlessly into how people currently work?

Key Research Questions

Personal experiences with review/feedback process?

What are your personal views on feedback?

What is stopping you from leaving uncensored feedback?

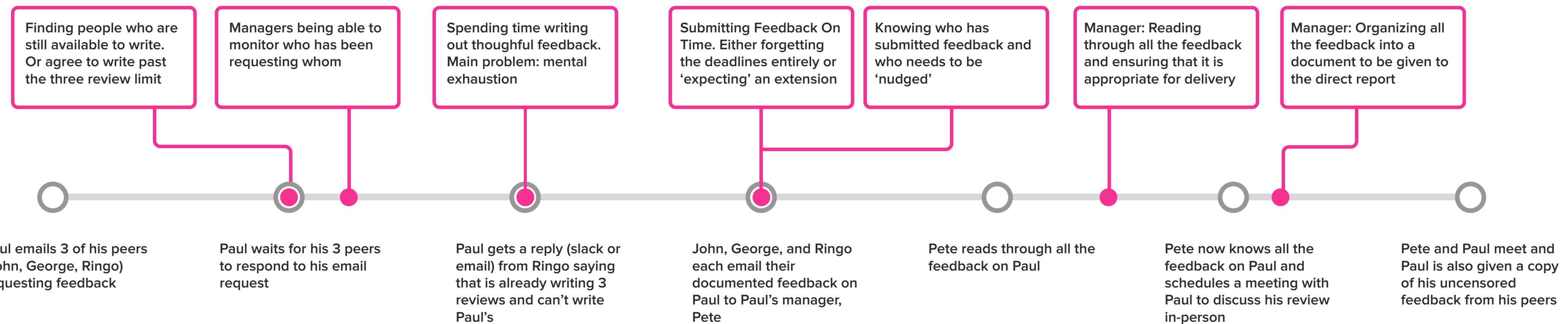
Participants

3 Managers (1 Engineering, 1 Product Manager, 1 Designer)

2 ICs (1 Engineering, 1 Designer)

Research

Observations



Research

Insights

Instructions

Interpretation of instructions varied drastically between people and was often the cause of missed deadlines. A goal should be to design with the proper affordances of what needs to be done.

"I thought we were supposed to CC the feedback to the person we were writing for when completed."

Eric Price (Engineering IC)

Productivity Spans

People spend a lot of effort in writing meaningful feedback and it often takes a long time and is rarely all done in one sitting. Writing feedback more often happens in short sprints rather than in one sitting

"I'll write one person's feedback at a time. It takes about an hour or so, I don't think I could sit for that long."

Amy Filmore (Director of Product Management)

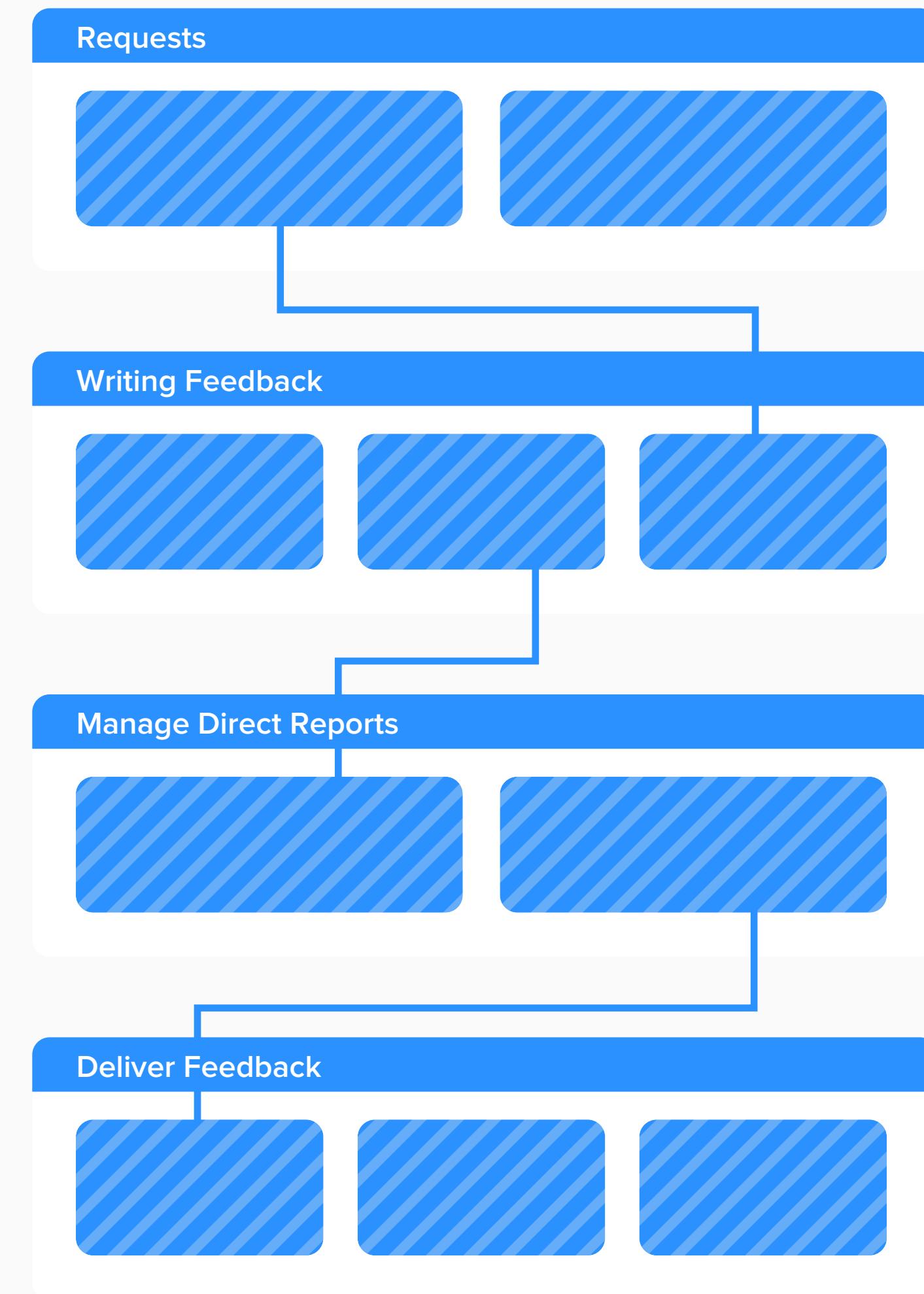
Process Methods

Everyone works in a different way and with a variety of different tools. The design should attempt to be adaptive to each unique work process.

"The most tedious part was honestly sifting through so many different word and google docs, emails, and I even had someone send me an excel spreadsheet."

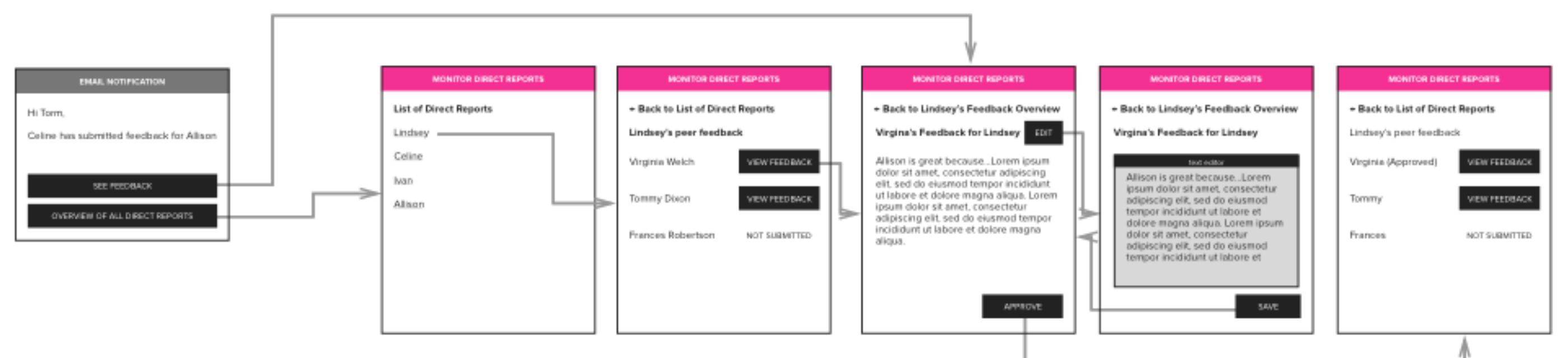
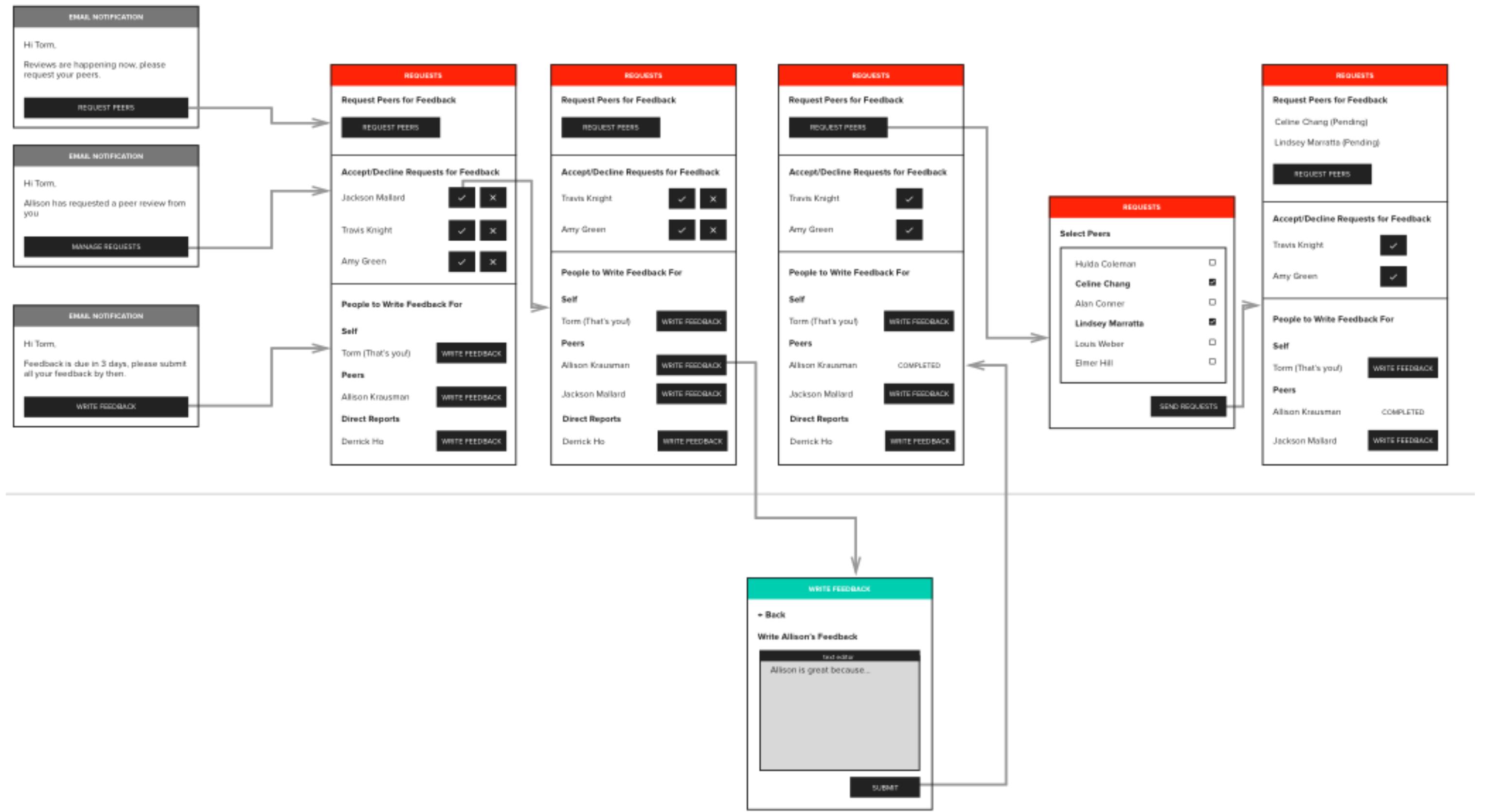
Brian Seltz (Engineering Manager)

Structure and Navigation



Structure and Navigation

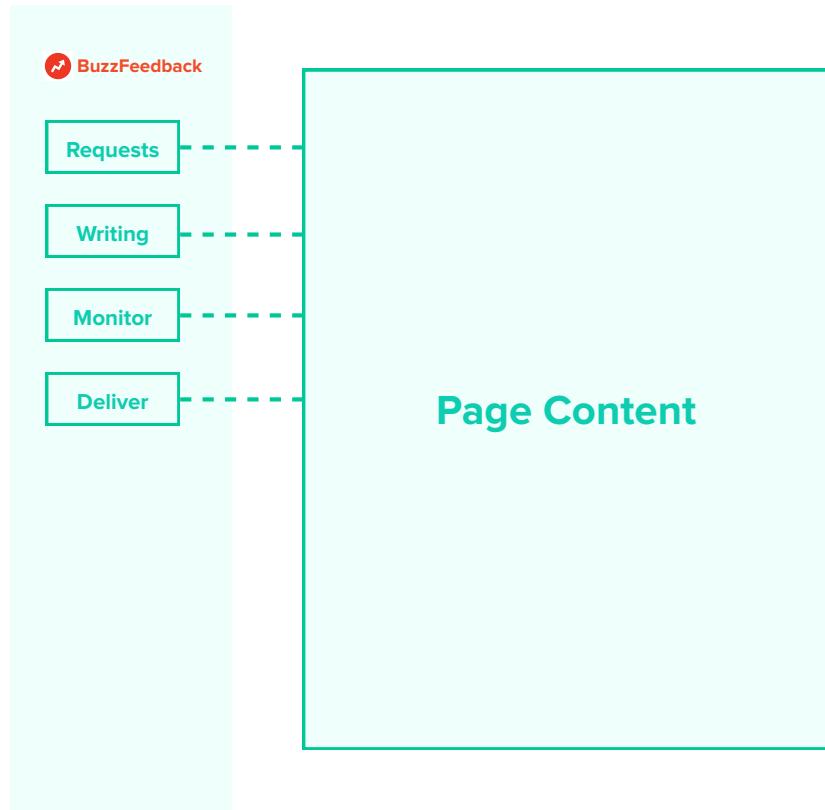




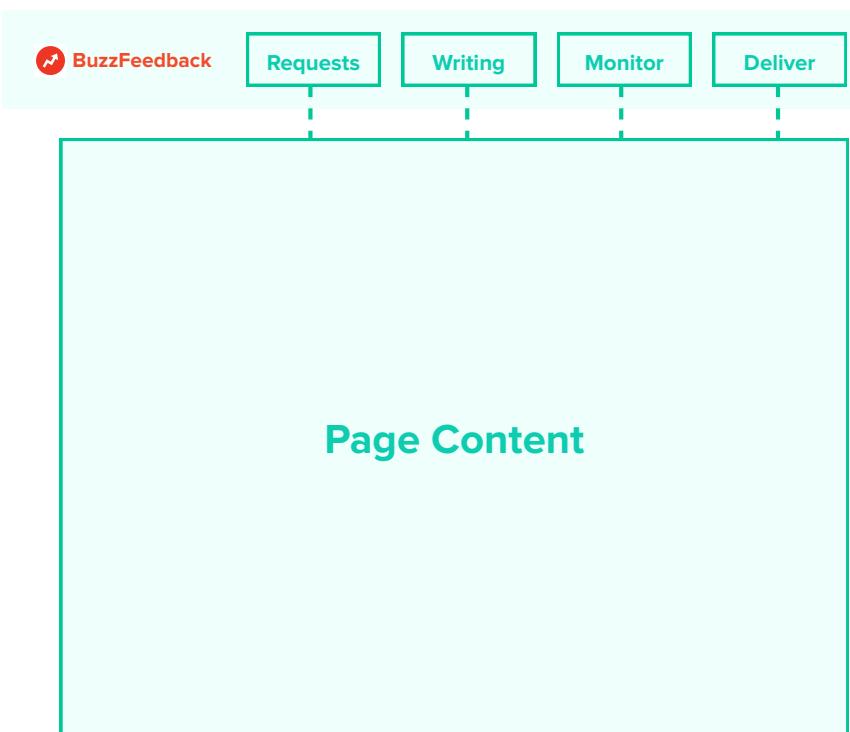
Structure and Navigation

Navigation Structure

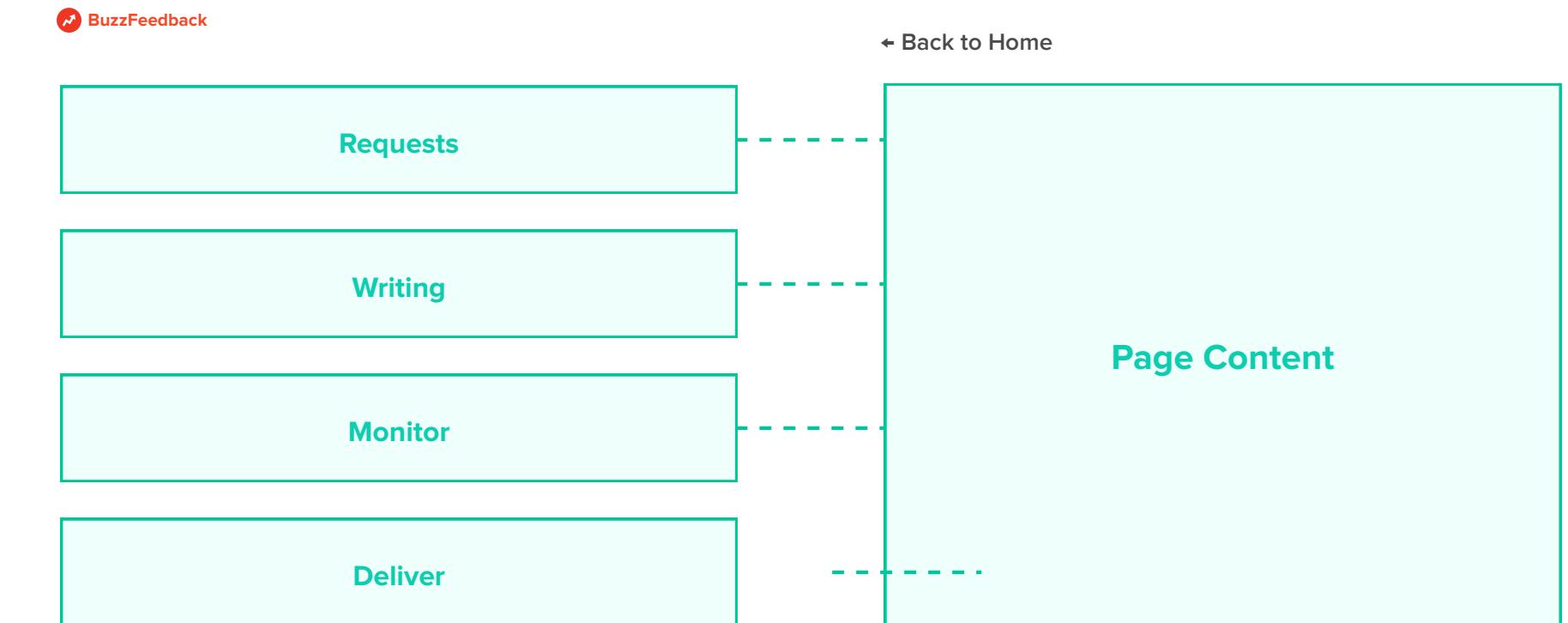
Sidebar



Top-Nav

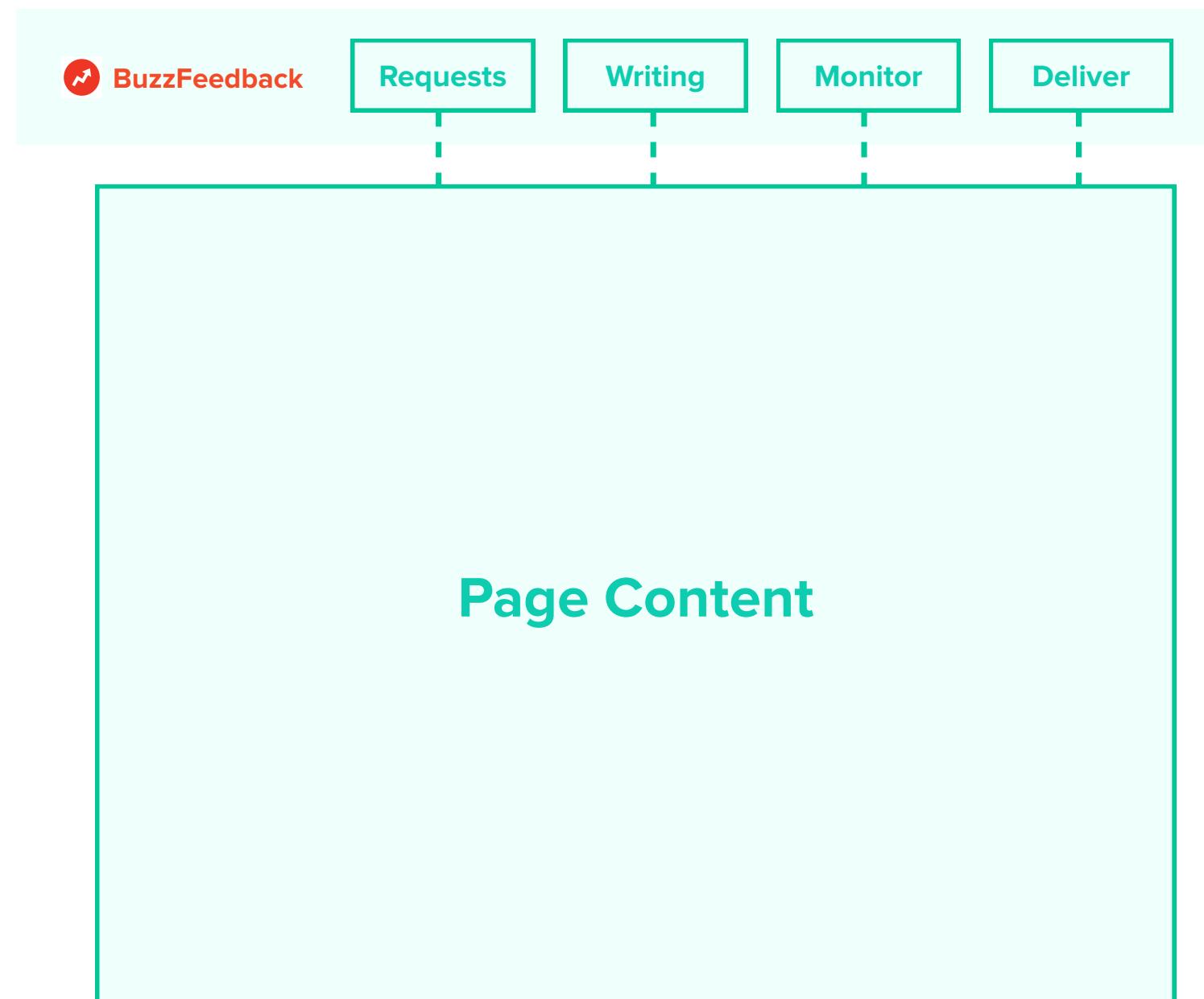


Home Dashboard



Structure and Navigation

Navigation Structure



1. CTA Focus

Places the focus on the page content allowing the user to focus on the specific task at hand. At the same time, it allows for easy task switching found in user research.

2. Timeline Affordance

Helps dictates what needs to be done and in what particular order (left to right)

Requests

Feedback

● Github [buzzfeed/design] Updated spec doc co...

● Lindsey Marratta Hey Derrick, would you mind writing my...

● BuzzFeed [Announcement] Weekly Community Re...

● Basecamp (BuzzFeed Design): Here's the latest acti...

● Tom Harman Cheers! Was wondering if you would wri...

● Basecamp (BuzzFeed Design): Here's the latest acti...

● Celine Cheng Hi Derrick!! Reviews are coming up, woul...

Requests

Outgoing Requests

“Will you write a review for me?”

Incoming Requests

“Yeah, I’ll definitely help write your review”!

Requests

Outgoing Requests

Three Search Fields

Outgoing Requests Due: Monday July 9, 2017

Please select three peers (**and only three, please!**) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

SEARCH FOR A PEER
SEARCH FOR A PEER
SEARCH FOR A PEER

Single Search Field

Outgoing Requests Due: Monday July 9, 2017

Please select three peers (**and only three, please!**) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

Jacob Zlink × Derrick Ho × Arthur Li × SEND REQUESTS →

Search Modal

Outgoing Requests Due: Monday July 9, 2017

Please select three peers (**and only three, please!**) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

You have no outgoing requests right now. Remember to have sent out all your feedback requests by Monday July 9

SELECT PEERS

Outgoing Requests Due: Monday July 9, 2017

Please select three peers (**and only three, please!**) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

Jack Dawlitt Senior Engineer
Jacob Zlink Senior Designer
Jacque Hillbury Engineering Manager

SEND REQUESTS

Requests

Outgoing Requests



Outgoing Requests

Due: Monday July 9, 2017

Please select three peers (**and only three, please!**) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.



Referring Back to Research Insights

Instructions

A goal should be to design with the proper affordances of what needs to be done.

3 Peer Requirement

The UI helps imply what is needed (3 requested peers). Additionally, the affordance of the search bar directly indicates what kind of action the user needs to take.

Urgency

Gives off a sense of urgency and need for completion. The focus is placed on completing all three searches at once by differentiating empty and completed states

Requests

Outgoing Requests



BuzzFeedback Requests Write Feedback Approve Feedback View Feedback

Outgoing Requests

Please select three peers (and only three, please!) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

Search for Peers to Request

Search for Peers to Request

Search for Peers to Request

Micro Interactions

1. Empty State

Outgoing Requests

Please select three peers (and only three, please!) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

Search for Peers to Request

Search for Peers to Request

Search for Peers to Request

2. Search for Peer

Outgoing Requests

Please select three peers (and only three, please!) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

L Libby Talonfork Writing for 3 people already ▲

L Lindsey Marratta

L Lincoln Makoda

3. Send Request Conformation

Outgoing Requests

Please select three peers (and only three, please!) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

L Lindsey Marratta

Send Request

Search for Peers to Request

Search for Peers to Request

4. Pending Status Indication

Outgoing Requests

Please select three peers (and only three, please!) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

L Lindsey Marratta

C Cancel P Pending Request

Search for Peers to Request

Search for Peers to Request

5. Accepted Request

Outgoing Requests

Please select three peers (and only three, please!) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

L Lindsey Marratta

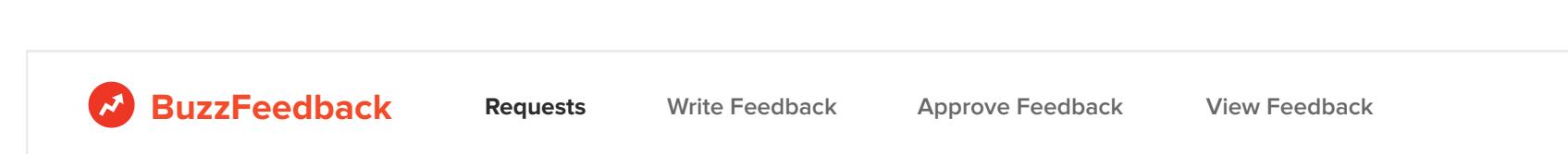
A Accepted

Search for Peers to Request

Search for Peers to Request

Requests

Incoming Requests



Outgoing Requests

Please select three peers (and only three, please!) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

Incoming Requests

If you've been asked to write reviews by three of your peers, please decline any more review requests. This is super important as it creates opportunities for others to practice writing reviews, and encourages a more diverse selection of reviewers across the organization.

Lindsey Marratta

Decline Accept

Decline Accept

Decline Accept

Emily Brick

Cap Watkins

Simple Temp Feedback Message

Incoming Requests

If you've been asked to write reviews by three of your peers, please decline any more review requests. This is super important as it creates opportunities for others to practice writing reviews, and encourages a more diverse selection of reviewers across the organization.

Lindsey Marratta

Accepted

Write Feedback CTA

Incoming Requests

If you've been asked to write reviews by three of your peers, please decline any more review requests. This is super important as it creates opportunities for others to practice writing reviews, and encourages a more diverse selection of reviewers across the organization.

Lindsey Marratta

Write Feedback

Requests

Incoming Requests

Simple Temp Feedback Message

Incoming Requests

If you've been asked to write reviews by three of your peers, please decline any more review requests. This is super important as it creates opportunities for others to practice writing reviews, and encourages a more diverse selection of reviewers across the organization.

Lindsey Marratta

Accepted

Write Feedback CTA

Incoming Requests

If you've been asked to write reviews by three of your peers, please decline any more review requests. This is super important as it creates opportunities for others to practice writing reviews, and encourages a more diverse selection of reviewers across the organization.

Lindsey Marratta

 Write Feedback

Referring Back to Research Insights

Productivity Spans

The feedback process more often happens in short sprints rather than in one sitting with single tasks accomplished at a time.

One Task At A Time

Focus the attention on managing ALL requests rather than providing a distraction for the user to start writing feedback.

Accomodating Timeline

User research showed that people often completed requests and writing in different sessions due to attention span, and this solution did the best job to accomodate that behaviour.

[Requests](#)[Write Feedback](#)[Approve Feedback](#)[View Feedback](#)

Outgoing Requests

Please select three peers (and only three, please!) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to).

If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

 Search for Peers to Request Search for Peers to Request Search for Peers to Request

Incoming Requests

If you've been asked to write reviews by three of your peers, please decline any more review requests. This is super important as it creates opportunities for others to practice writing reviews, and encourages a more diverse selection of reviewers across the organization.

Lindsey Marratta

[Decline](#) [Accept](#)

Emily Brick

[Decline](#) [Accept](#)

Cap Watkins

[Decline](#) [Accept](#)

Writing Feedback

What's the one [Tech Leadership Principle](#) this person **has particularly embodied** over the last six months? Provide specific examples, projects, etc. to support your review.

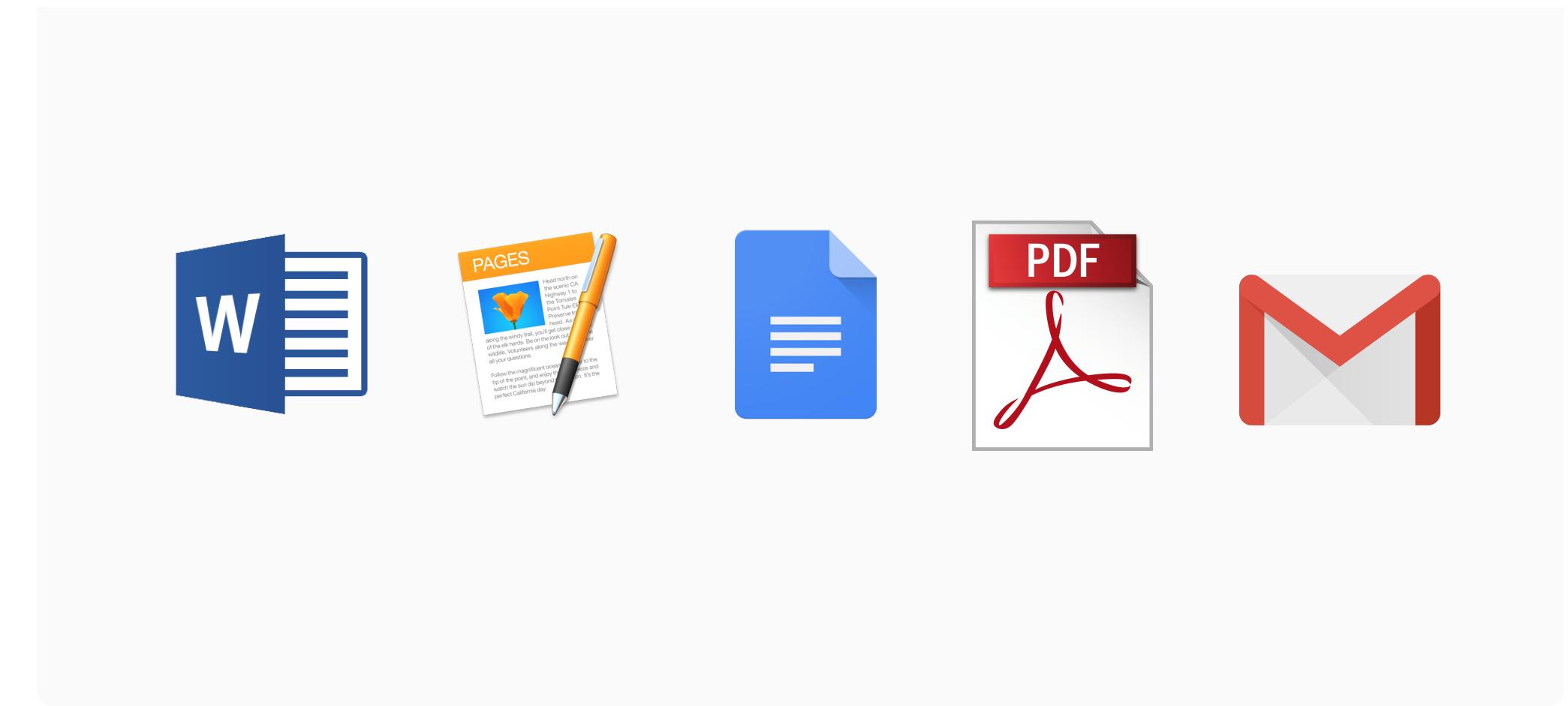
Lindsey is great because |

Submit

Writing

Process Methods

Everyone works in a different way and with a variety of different tools. The design should attempt to be adaptive to each unique work process.



Writing Explorations

1. List View

People You Have to Write For (1/7 Completed)

SELF REVIEW

Tom Harman

PEER REQUESTS

Lindsey Maratta

Emily Brick

Caylee Betts

DIRECT REPORTS

Hana Carpenter

Wolasi Konu

Celine Chang

Jacqueline Yue

Derrick Ho

Write Feedback

← Back

Tom Harman (Self) Feedback

What's the one **Tech Leadership Principle** this person **has particularly embodied** over the last six months? Provide specific examples, projects, etc. to support your review.

Start typing your feedback here

What's the one **Tech Leadership Principle** this person **has particularly embodied** over the last six months? Provide specific examples, projects, etc. to support your review.

Start typing your feedback here

Save **Send to Manager**

2. Sidebar

Completed 1/7

SELF

Lindsey Maratta

PEERS

ivan butyluk

Wolasi Konu

Jacqueline Yue

DIRECT REPORTS

Derrick Ho

Hana Carpenter

Cap Watkins

Tom Harman

Tom Harman

Writing Explorations

2. Dropdown Selection

A screenshot of a web-based feedback form. At the top, there's a dropdown menu labeled "Write Feedback For:" with "Tom Harman" selected. Below it is a large text area with a placeholder "Start typing your feedback here". Underneath this area is another identical section for a second feedback entry. At the bottom left, the text "Saved 15 minutes ago" is displayed. On the right side, there are two buttons: a white "Save" button and a blue "Send to Manager" button.

3. Sidebar

A screenshot of a sidebar interface titled "Lindsey Marratta's Feedback". It shows a progress bar at the top indicating "Completed 1/7". The sidebar lists several users categorized by their relationship to the person being reviewed: "SELF" (Lindsey Maratta), "PEERS" (ivan butyliuk, Wolasi Konu, Jacqueline Yue), and "DIRECT REPORTS" (Derrick Ho, Hana Carpenter, Cap Watkins, Tom Harman). Each category has a corresponding text input field where users can type their feedback. The rightmost column contains a partially visible feedback entry for Jacqueline Yue.

Writing

Moving Forward

3. Sidebar

The screenshot shows a user interface for a feedback application. At the top left are three colored window control buttons (red, yellow, green). Below them is a header bar with the text "Completed 1/7". The main content area is divided into sections:

- SELF**: Shows "Lindsey Maratta".
- PEERS**: Shows "ivan butyliuk", "Wolasi Konu", and "Jacqueline Yue".
- DIRECT REPORTS**: Shows "Derrick Ho", "Hana Carpenter", "Cap Watkins", "Tom Harman", and "Tom Harman".

For each person listed under "Lindsey Maratta's Feedback" and "Tom Harman", there is a text input field with the placeholder "Start typing your feedback here". Below each input field is a note: "What's the one [Tech Leadership Principle](#) this person **has particularly embodied** over the last six months? Provide specific examples, projects, etc. to support your review."

Designing for Managers

Easier to monitor progress of all writing responsibilities.

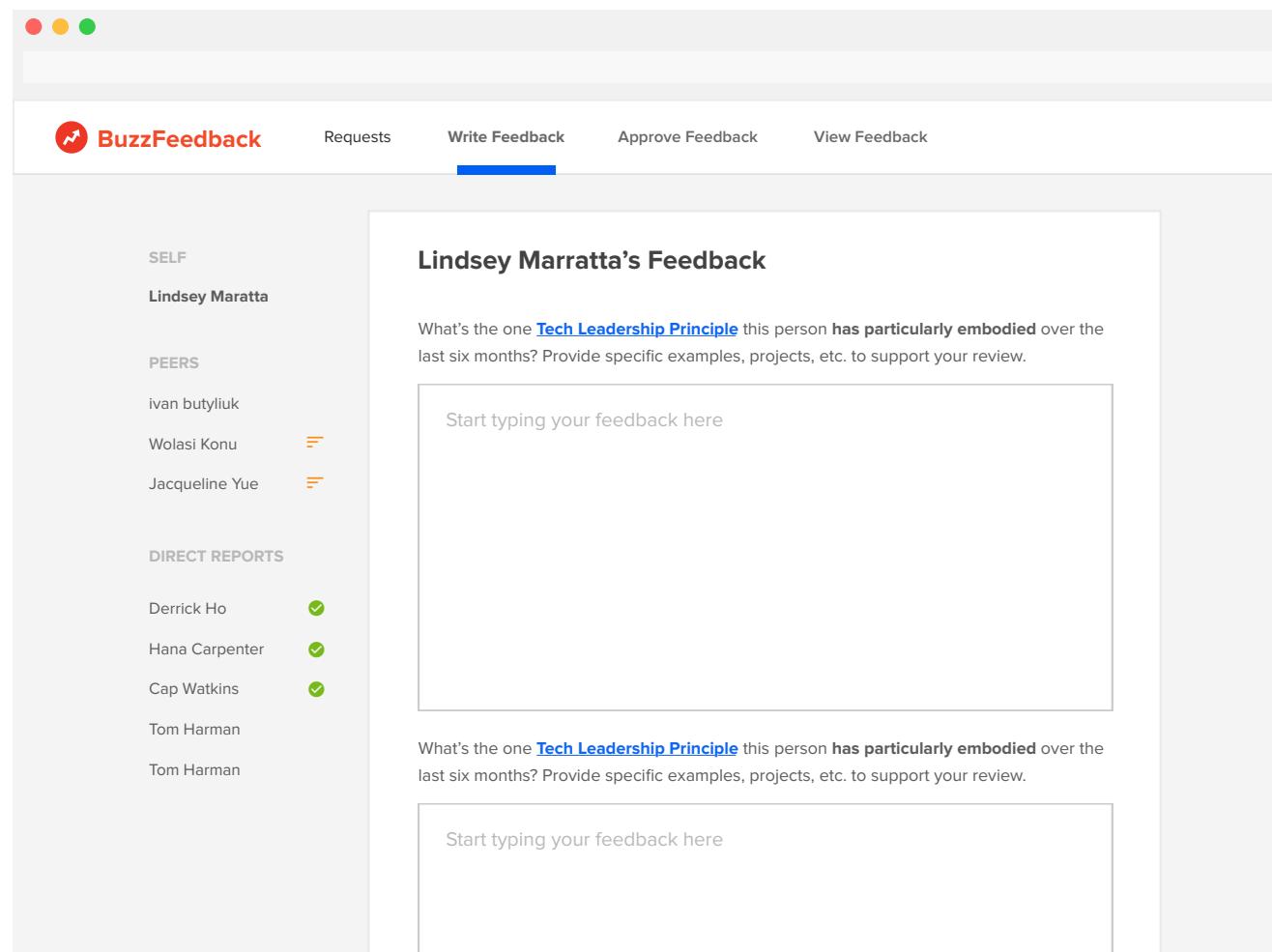
Considering this application is built primarily for managers, who tend to have more people to write for, being able to check progress of all responsibilities makes more sense.



Writing

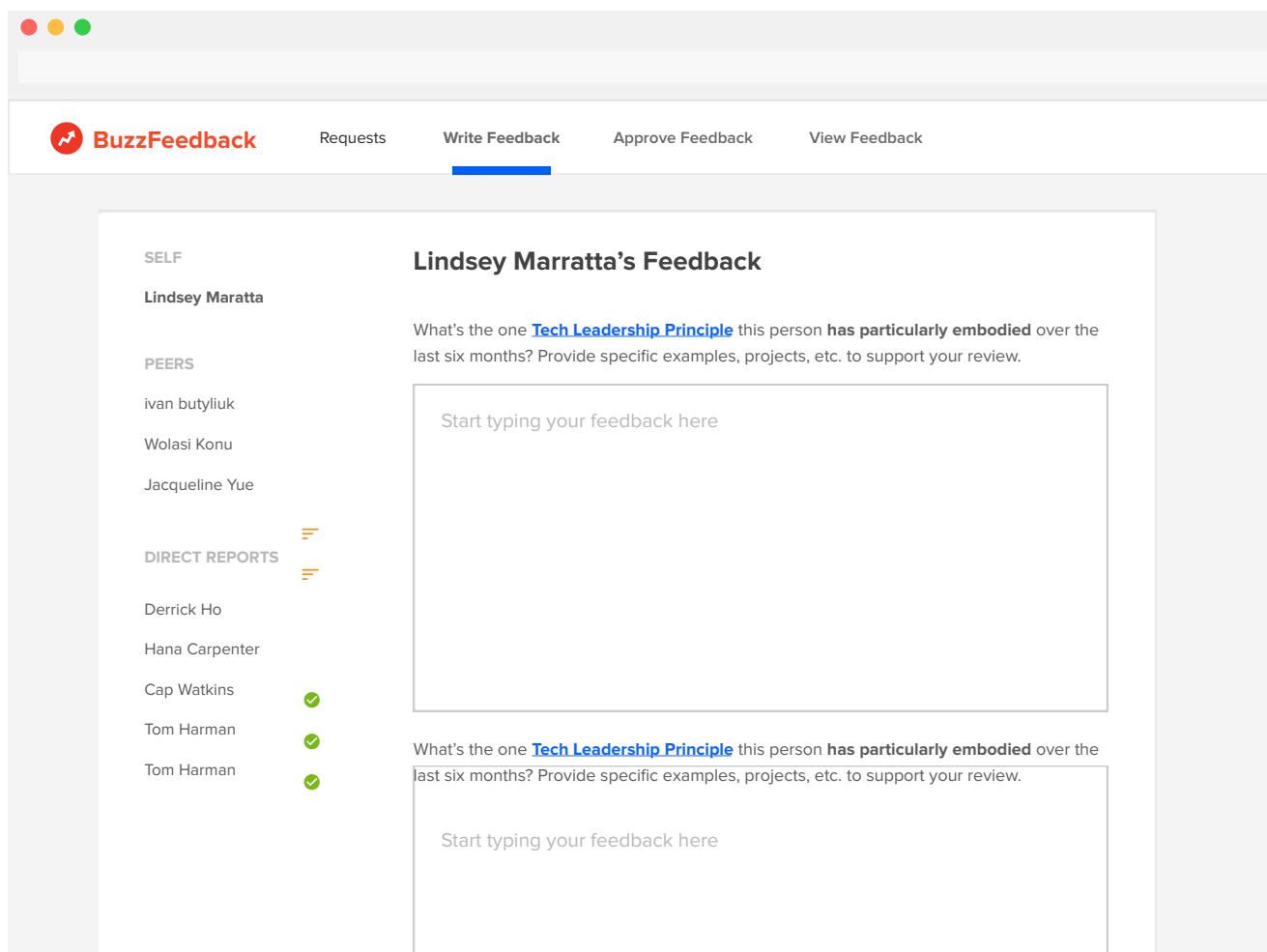
Visual Styling

Card Type Form



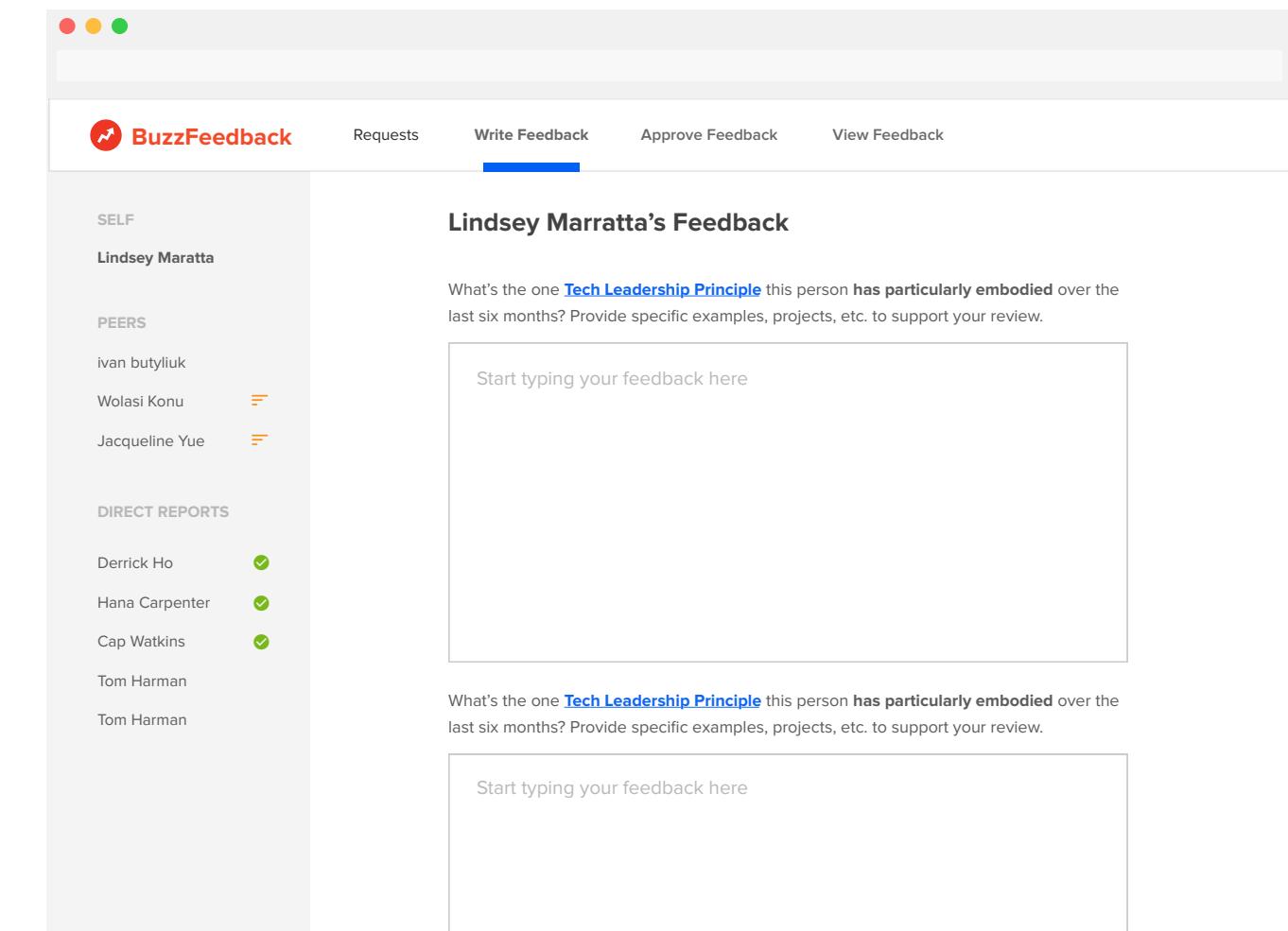
The interface features a top navigation bar with a BuzzFeedback logo and four tabs: Requests, Write Feedback (which is active), Approve Feedback, and View Feedback. Below the navigation is a sidebar with sections for SELF (Lindsey Maratta), PEERS (ivan butyluk, Wolasi Konu, Jacqueline Yue), and DIRECT REPORTS (Derrick Ho, Hana Carpenter, Cap Watkins, Tom Harman). The main area displays a card titled "Lindsey Marratta's Feedback" with a text input field asking for specific examples of Tech Leadership Principles embodied over the last six months. A second card below it has a similar prompt.

All Card Form



This interface is identical to the Card Type Form, featuring the same navigation bar, sidebar, and feedback cards. The main difference is the visual style, where each card is presented as a separate entity within the main content area.

Gray Sidebar



This interface includes a gray sidebar on the left side of the page. It contains sections for SELF (Lindsey Maratta), PEERS (ivan butyluk, Wolasi Konu, Jacqueline Yue), and DIRECT REPORTS (Derrick Ho, Hana Carpenter, Cap Watkins, Tom Harman). The main content area is identical to the other forms, displaying the "Lindsey Marratta's Feedback" card and its associated text input fields.

Writing

Moving Forward

The screenshot shows the BuzzFeedback application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo 'BuzzFeedback' (a red circle with a white chart icon), followed by 'Requests', 'Write Feedback' (which is underlined in blue, indicating it is the active page), 'Approve Feedback', and 'View Feedback'. Below the navigation bar, there are three sections: 'SELF', 'PEERS', and 'DIRECT REPORTS'. The 'SELF' section is for Lindsey Marratta, showing a feedback card with the title 'Lindsey Marratta's Feedback'. It asks, 'What's the one Tech Leadership Principle this person has particularly embodied over the last six months? Provide specific examples, projects, etc. to support your review.' A large text input field is present with the placeholder 'Start typing your feedback here'. The 'PEERS' section lists Ivan Butyliuk and Wolasi Konu, each with a small orange feedback icon. The 'DIRECT REPORTS' section lists Derrick Ho, Hana Carpenter, Cap Watkins, and Tom Harman, each with a green checkmark icon. Below the 'DIRECT REPORTS' section, there is another feedback card for Tom Harman, identical in structure to the one for Lindsey Marratta.

1. Information Relationships

Relationship to writing form itself made sense where other explorations felt detached and the feedback expectation was unclear

2. Visual Consistency

Stay consistent with the requests page and card content over gray background

Final Design

The screenshot shows the 'Requests' section of the BuzzFeedback application. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the BuzzFeedback logo and links for Requests, Write Feedback, Approve Feedback, and View Feedback. A blue horizontal bar highlights the 'Requests' link.

Outgoing Requests

Please select three peers (and only three, please!) to ask for feedback (no need to confirm with your manager, unless you want to). If you're a manager, choose at least one of the people you manage as a reviewer for yourself.

Three search input fields are provided for selecting peers:

- Search for Peers to Request
- Search for Peers to Request
- Search for Peers to Request

Incoming Requests

If you've been asked to write reviews by three of your peers, please decline any more review requests. This is super important as it creates opportunities for others to practice writing reviews, and encourages a more diverse selection of reviewers across the organization.

Three incoming request entries are shown, each with 'Decline' and 'Accept' buttons:

- Lindsey Marratta
- Emily Brick
- Cap Watkins

The screenshot shows the 'Write Feedback' section of the BuzzFeedback application. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the BuzzFeedback logo and links for Requests, Write Feedback, Approve Feedback, and View Feedback. A blue horizontal bar highlights the 'Write Feedback' link.

Lindsey Marratta's Feedback

What's the one **Tech Leadership Principle** this person has particularly embodied over the last six months? Provide specific examples, projects, etc. to support your review.

Feedback input field: Start typing your feedback here

SELF

Lindsey Marratta

PEERS

Ivan Butyliuk (orange equals sign icon)

Wolasi Konu (orange equals sign icon)

Jacqueline Yue (orange equals sign icon)

DIRECT REPORTS

Derrick Ho (green checkmark icon)

Hana Carpenter (green checkmark icon)

Cap Watkins (green checkmark icon)

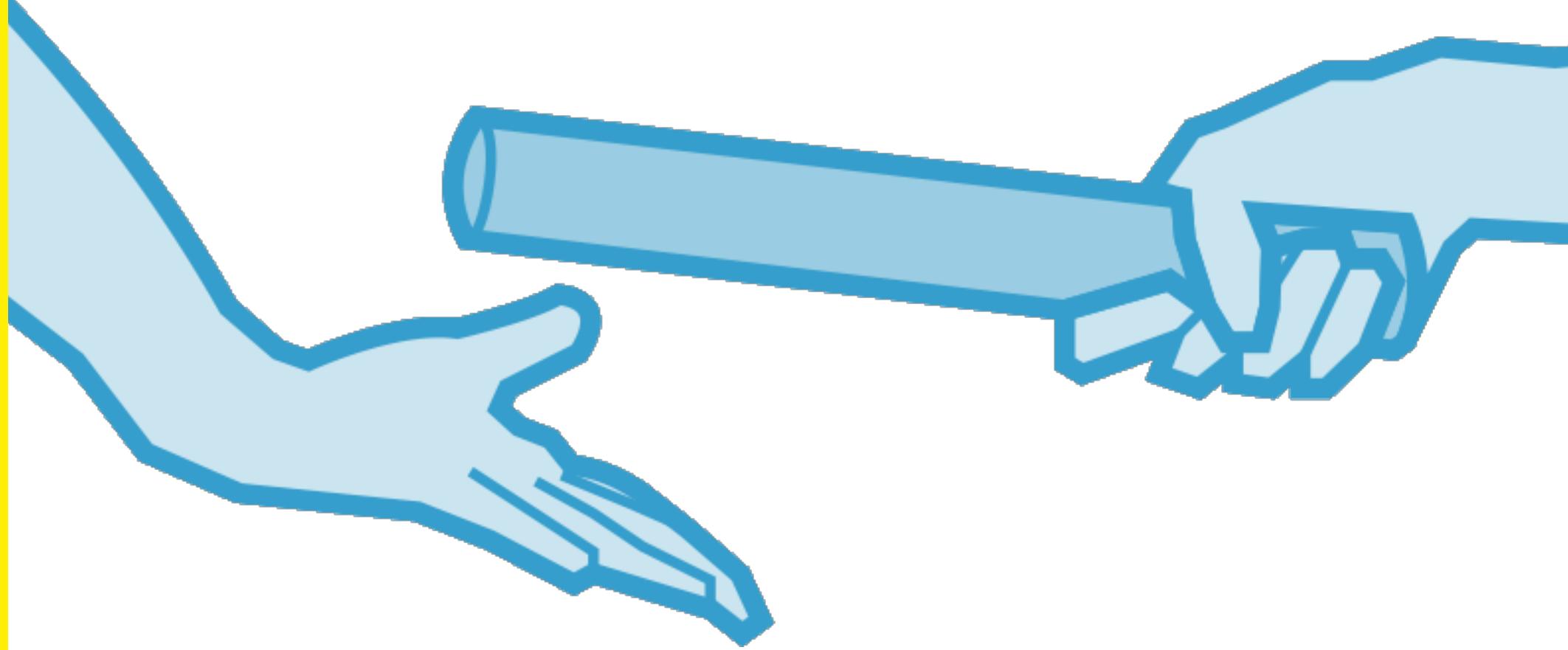
Tom Harman

Tom Harman

What's the one **Tech Leadership Principle** this person has particularly embodied over the last six months? Provide specific examples, projects, etc. to support your review.

Feedback input field: Start typing your feedback here

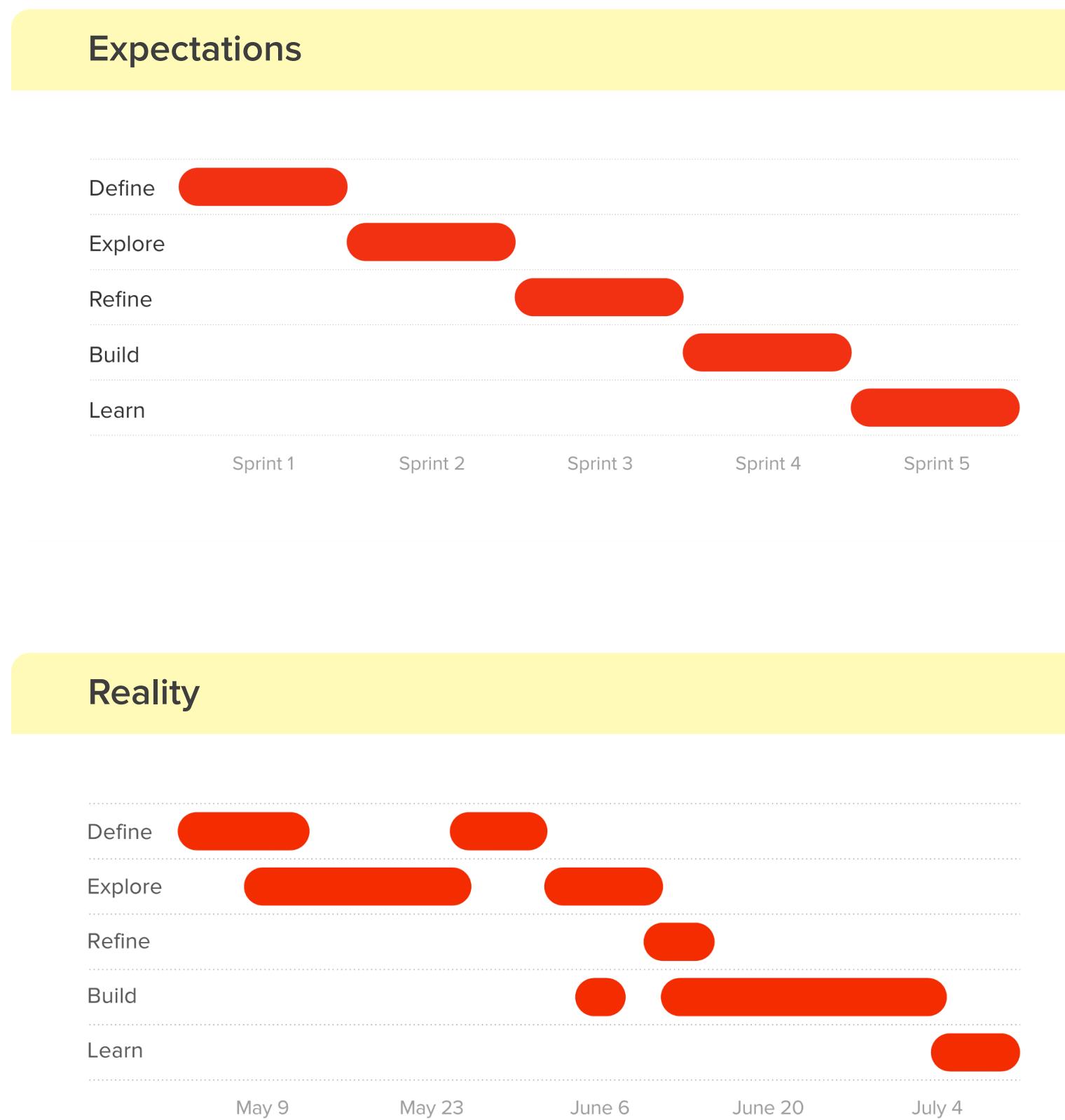
Next Steps



- 1. Finalize the 'Monitor Feedback' page**
- 2. Test/Build/Learn and Iterate**
- 3. Slack/Email Integration**

Post Mortem

Project Takaways/Lessons Learned



Understand the Product and Process Problem

This project left me on my own for the most part and had me learn a lot about product, data, and visual process altogether. Without a designated PM to help scope out the project or Data Scientist to validate assumptions against, I found myself learning a lot from the people around me. This taught me a lot about mentorship and communication in terms of being comfortable around those that you work with. Throughout these first four weeks, I gained insights into other product roles and established so many connections that helped set my goals and expedite process for the remainder of my internship.

Post Mortem

Project Takaways/Lessons Learned

The screenshot shows the BuzzFeedback application interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the BuzzFeedback logo, followed by tabs for Requests, Write Feedback (which is active), Approve Feedback, and View Feedback. On the left, a sidebar lists users under three categories: SELF (Lindsey Maratta), PEERS (Ivan Butyluk, Wolasi Konu, Jacqueline Yue), and DIRECT REPORTS (Derrick Ho, Hana Carpenter, Cap Watkins, Tom Harman, Emily Brick). Each user has a small profile picture and a green checkmark next to their name. The main content area displays two feedback requests. The first request is for "Lindsey Marratta's Feedback". It asks, "What's the one Tech Leadership Principle this person has particularly embodied over the last six months? Provide specific examples, projects, etc. to support your review." Below this is a text input field with the placeholder "Start typing your feedback here". The second request is for "Tom Harman". It also asks for a Tech Leadership Principle and includes a similar text input field with the placeholder "Start typing your feedback here".

Tom Harman

This looks awesome! Keep it up!
Love the level of detail here

Trust in My Own Visual Design

As this was my first project coming into this internship, I was still learning the BuzzFeed design critique process and picking up on things I noticed from other designers. Many of the other projects going on were built on established products though, so there was a larger emphasis on visual design and brand alignment especially with things related to site experience. For the first two weeks, I applied the same process to this product even though it was in a complete different scope which caused me to spend more effort than necessary on visual over interaction. Iterating past the first portion of the request page, I began to trust my own visual design decisions more and more and felt comfortable going in one direction straightaway.