Facebook PM interview: the only post you'll need to read

COMPANY GUIDES   AUG. 08, 2019

PM interviews are really challenging. The questions are difficult, specific to Facebook, and cover a wide range of topics.

The good news is that the right preparation can make a big difference and help you land a Product Manager job at Facebook. We have put together the ultimate guide to help you maximize your chances of success.

Here's an overview of what we will cover:

- Process and timeline
- Example questions
  - Product sense
  - Execution

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1. Interview process and timeline ↑

1.1 What interviews to expect

What's the Facebook PM interview process and timeline? It takes four to eight weeks on average and follows these steps:

1. Resume, cover letter, and referrals

2. HR phone screen: one interview

3. PM phone screen: two interviews

4. PM on-site: three interviews

In most cases, you'll start your interview process by talking to an HR recruiter on the phone. They are looking to confirm that you've got a chance of getting the job at all, so be prepared to explain your background and why you're a good fit at Facebook. You should expect typical behavioral and resume questions like, "Tell me about yourself," "Why Facebook?" or, "Tell me about a product you launched from start to finish."

If you get past this first HR screen, the recruiter will then help schedule the first interview, which will be done over the phone with Facebook PMs. One great thing about Facebook is that they are very transparent about their recruiting process. Your HR

Each interview you do with Facebook will take 45mins and follow one of three themes:

- **Product sense**, where you'll be tested on your product design and strategy skills

- **Execution**, where you'll be tested on your data analysis and prioritization skills

- **Leadership & Drive**, where you'll be asked to demonstrate that you are an empathetic leader

At the phone screen stage you will typically get one Product sense and one Execution interview. And at the on-site stage you will typically get one of each type of interviews (three in total).

1.2 What happens behind the scenes

Your recruiter is leading the process and taking you from one stage to the next. Here's what happens at each of the stages described above:

- **After the PM phone screen**, the two interviewers you've talked to have 24h to submit their ratings and notes to the internal system. Your recruiter then reviews the feedback, and decides to move you to the on-site interview or not depending on how well you've done.

- **After the PM on-site**, the three interviewers will make a recommendation on hiring you or not and the recruiter compiles your "packet" (interview feedback, resume, referrals, etc.). If they think you can get the job, they will present your case at the next hiring committee.

- **The hiring committee** includes senior leaders from across Facebook. They will review your packet and make a final decision based on all the data points that have been collected about you in the process. The committee also sets your level and therefore compensation.

It's also important to note that hiring managers and people who refer you have little influence on the overall process. They can help you get an interview at the beginning but that's about it.

2. Example questions ↑

Let's dive in and look at the three types of interviews you can expect at Facebook: Product sense, Execution, and Leadership & drive. We've analyzed questions reported by former Facebook PM candidates on Glassdoor.com and identified the top ten most

2.1 Product sense interview questions ↑

Facebook PMs decide what problems their teams work on and help design solutions for these problems. It's therefore important that they have strong product design and product strategy skills.

This is the part of the interview process to show that you're obsessed with the user. Here are a few of the skills Facebook is looking for when asking product sense questions.

- How you identify who to build for and what their needs are

- How you focus on creating value and impact

- How you make intentional design choices

- How you handle critique, constraints, and new data

We've listed the top ten product sense questions that Facebook tends to ask, according to data from Glassdoor. We recommend that you develop a framework or step-by-step approach to answer these questions. To get you started on this, you can check out our articles on how to answer product design questions and product improvement questions in PM interviews.

Top ten product sense questions asked by Facebook

- Pick a Facebook app / any product — how would you improve it?

- How would you improve Facebook groups?

- How would you improve Facebook birthdays?

- Design a social travel product for Facebook

- Design a jobs product for Facebook

- Design a product to help users find a doctor on Facebook

- Facebook events is struggling. How would you turn it around?

- Should Facebook enter the dating / jobs market?

- How would you monetize Facebook marketplace / messenger?

- What should Facebook do next?

2.2 Execution interview questions ↑

Once PMs have decided what problem to solve and what features to build, it's time to execute! Facebook prides itself on being a data-driven organization so it's essential that you show you're data-driven, too.

This is the part of the interview to display that you have strong analytical and prioritization skills. Here are a few of the things Facebook is looking for when asking execution questions:

- How you set the right goals for a product and measure against them

- How you identify, frame, and evaluate trade-offs

- How you analyze and debug problems

- How you set your team up for success

We've listed the top ten execution questions that Facebook tends to ask, according to data from Glassdoor. Once again, it's a good idea to develop a framework to answer these questions.

For more information, check out our articles on how to answer strategy questions, estimation questions, and metric questions. We also recommend reading up on how to answer prioritization questions.

Top ten execution questions asked by Facebook

- You are the PM for Facebook live — what features would you prioritize?

- You are the PM for Facebook pages — what features would you prioritize?

- You are the PM for Facebook posts — what reactions should we add next?

- How would you set goals and measure success for Facebook live?

- How would you set goals and measure success for Facebook notifications?

- How would you set goals and measure success for Instagram stories?

- Facebook groups usage dropped 10% — what do you do?

- Facebook ads revenue dropped 20% — what do you do?

- Facebook newsfeed engagement dropped by 2% — what do you do?

below without looking at other people's answers. Our team will get back to you with suggestions on how to improve your answer.

2.3 Leadership & drive interview questions ↑

PMs work with a range of different collaborators: engineers, designers, data analysts, etc. They need to be able to motivate their team, resolve conflicts, drive alignment, build relationships, and work with others.

This is the part of the interview where you really want to show that you've got drive and empathy. Here are a few of the skills that Facebook is looking for during the leadership & drive interview:

- How you earn trust and take ownership

- How you process and grow from past experiences

- How you support the people around you

- How you overcome difficult situations

We've listed the top ten leadership & drive questions that Facebook tends to ask, according to data from Glassdoor. For more information, check out our article on how to answer behavioral interview questions and the "Why Facebook?" question.

Top ten leadership & drive questions asked by Facebook

- Tell me about yourself

- Why Facebook?

- Why product management?

- What's your biggest accomplishment?

- What's a good PM / bad PM?

- Tell me about a product you lead from idea to launch

- Tell me about a time you overcame a really difficult challenge

- Tell me about a time you managed a conflict / disagreement in a team

- Tell me about a time you failed at work

- Tell me about a time you lead a team

3. Preparation tips ↑

Now that you know what questions to expect, let's focus on how to prepare. Here are the five most important things you can do to get an offer as a Facebook product manager.

3.1 Deep dive into the product / organization

As you've probably figured out from the example questions listed above, you can't become a PM at Facebook without being familiar with the company's products and its organization. You'll therefore need to do some homework before your interviews.

Here are some resources to help you get started with this:

- Facebook annual reports and strategy presentations (by Facebook)

- Facebook's approach to latest tech trends (by CB Insights)

- Facebook's products teardown (by HowDo)

- Facebook org culture analysis (by Panmore Institute)

3.2 Brush up on product fundamentals

If you're already an experienced PM then this step doesn't apply to you. But if you're more junior or if you're trying to break into product management then it's worth spending some time on refreshing your memory about basic product management concepts.

Here is a list of free resources to give you a starting point:

- Popular PM interview books reviewed (by IGotAnOffer)

- Digital Product Management (by the University of Boston - free to audit)

- Product Management Guides (by Aha.io)

- Product Design (by Udacity)

- What distinguishes the top 1% of product managers from the top 10%? (by Ian McAllister on quora)

on quora)

- Product Requirements Document Example (by Product Hunt)

- Data-Driven Product Management: Choosing the Right Metrics for Your Product (by productcoalition.com)

- How Should Product Managers Say No? (by productcoalition.com)

3.3 Learn a consistent method for answering PM interview questions

As mentioned previously, Facebook will ask you questions that fall into certain categories like behavioral, design, strategy, estimation, and metric questions. Approaching each question with a predefined method will enable you to build strong interview habits.

Then, when it comes time for your interviews, these habits will reduce your stress and help you to make a great impression. Here is a list of our free guides on different types of PM interview questions to help you prepare:

- Behavioral questions

- Product design questions

- Product improvement questions

- Favorite product question

- Strategy questions

- Estimation questions

- Metric questions

- Prioritization questions (by Product Manager HQ)

BUT, having a method for solving PM interview questions isn't enough by itself. You also need to be able to communicate your answers clearly, under the pressure of interview conditions. That's where practice comes into play.

3.4 Practice by yourself or with peers

approach for each question type. It also gives you time to correct your early mistakes.

If you have friends or peers who can do mock interviews with you, that's a great option too. This can be especially helpful if your friend has experience with PM interviews, or is at least familiar with the process. You can also find peers to practice with on websites like Pramp.

3.5 Practice with experienced PM interviewers

Finally, you should also try to practice with experienced PM interviewers as they'll be able to give you much more accurate feedback than friends and peers. If you know a Product Manager who can help you, that's fantastic! But for most of us, it's tough to find the right connections to make this happen. And it might also be difficult to practice multiple hours with that person unless you know them really well.

Here's the good news. We've already made the connections for you. We've created a coaching service where you can practice 1-on-1 with ex-interviewers from leading tech companies like Facebook. Learn more and start scheduling sessions today.

PM Interview Coaching

Any questions about Facebook PM interviews?

If you have any questions about Facebook PM interviews, do not hesitate to ask them below and we will be more than happy to answer them. All questions are good questions, so go ahead!

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Arvind Radhakrishnen • 2 months ago

What do you want to do? -

Facebook wants to promote marketing events within Facebook groups - it could be professional events (tech seminars), or cultural events and events that relate to singers coming to city for an event

Facebook is used for charging $ for buying event tickets via facebook - facebook making $ as booking fee either charged to customer or event organizer.

For simplicity and relatability, let us assume we are targeting cultural events like a famous singer coming from India and is having 3 hour event at Atlanta, GA. Promoters are looking to promote this event agressively in Facebook and would like to make bookings asap.

Who is this for? - The customer persona in this case is indian - either immigrants, or Indian Americans who specifically like to listen to his songs. It would be combination of single, couple or group of individuals/famililies. They may also want to share the event with their friends outside of the group so that they can also join them to listen to this singer.

Arvind Radhakrishnen ➜ Arvind Radhakrishnen • 2 months ago

Response for question: How would you improve Facebook groups?

Goals & Constraints:

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