Atlassian Values & Management Interview

Albert Chow, 17/03/2023

# Questions for the Interviewer(s)

* How do you embody these values?
* Where did these values come from?
* How has this set of specific values impacted the culture at Atlassian?
  + How do these values differ from the “1-word” values that are frequently used in other companies
  + These values are most directives: they tell us to behave a certain way instead of being vague like “friendship”
* What does an average day look like in your job?
  + Katrina, as an Engineering Manager
    - How has this differed from your previous work as a Technical Lead and a Java Developer?
  + Roxanne and Loren as recruiters
  + What about for a typical software engineer? Are they spending time designing how things interface, writing code or discussing with other people what they should do? Something else?
* How does the company as a whole choose what sort of products it wants to try to develop?
* Are the different teams within Atlassian very similar or different from each other? In terms of their culture, how they interact with other teams etc
* Do team members socialise with each other a lot, both inside and outside the workplace?

# Open company no bullshit

What's your approach when having difficult conversations? How have you resolved conflict in the past? Have you adapted your communication style to achieve a better outcome in a potentially negative situation?

* Situation: The secondary lecturer for the unit I teach produces poor materials and would become defensive under criticism from students
* Task: To facilitate a comfortable environment in which students feel they can learn from quality materials and educators
* Action: I put feedback in the team’s Slack channel to raise students’ concerns about the quality of the course notes. I carefully gauged the secondary lecturer’s response, and when I found that he was still being defensive despite many students raising concerns, I spoke to the primary lecturer about the secondary lecturer’s attitude.
* Result + Evidence: The lecturers together agreed that the course notes needed changing, and the primary lecturer asked me to help as part of the process in rewriting the notes. We engaged in a collaborative effort with a lot of back and forth to make sure that everyone involved was happy with the new format, and students have expressed significantly fewer concerns since.

# Play, as a team

How do you work with other people? How have you helped make a team/individual more successful if they weren’t performing well? Have you ever had to put the team’s goals above personal ambitions?

* Situation: The new TA I was mentoring was underperforming
* Task: To guide and develop other TA’s ability to teach, facilitate students’ learning and assess their understanding
* Action: When the TA was assessing students’ understanding, I watched his interactions with the students to see how he taught and assessed them. I then gave him advice for how to improve, and suggested that he should question the answers the students have given to make sure that they understand the concepts in more depth
* Result + evidence: He became more thorough in his approach to teaching. He was able to identify which students contributed more to the group work and push their understanding more by asking them more detailed and targeted questions.

# Build with heart and balance

How do you think about prioritisation and decision making? What are examples when you or the team have missed the mark? How did you react? How did you approach fixing things?

# Be the change you seek

When have you advocated to push for change? What did you learn from this process? What was the outcome?

* Situation: Students struggled to engage in Zoom classes
* Task: To facilitate students’ learning
* Action: I created a casual environment in which students felt not only comfortable showing up to my classes, but excited because they felt that they were engaged. I made sure the students felt that they could talk to me about anything – engaging in casual chats about hobbies, uni life, and I would put memes at the start of each class.
* Result: The majority of my students were engaged enough to continue coming to the classes throughout the whole semester, and they were therefore able to learn more from me in that time
* Evidence: I have maintained either friendships or professional relationships with many of them. Some of them have gone on to become TAs as well, and have since taught classes with me

# Don’t #@!% the customer

How is your mentality ‘user-centered’? How have you put the customer first? What trade-off(s) did you make to do this?

* Situation: In my old band we frequently had clients who would ask us to perform specific songs that weren’t part of our regular sets
* Task: To provide entertainment to our clients
* Action: I created arrangements of the requested songs so that we’d be able to perform them
* Result: Our clients have been happy with our performances and have recommended our band back to our agency, who would further recommend us to new clients
* Situation: Students ask me to show them how to do the assessment questions
* Task: To enable students to understand the content as deeply as possible
* Action: I asked them to explain to me what they understood and questioned them on the working that they already understand and make them work through it themselves
* Result: The students understand the content to a deeper level and are able to answer questions I ask them in much more detail