FACEBOOK

PRODUCT MANAGEMENT

Interview Prep Guide

What You'll Find in This Guide

Welcome to your prep guide for your product manager interview at the Facebook company. Whether you're taking your initial screen or your onsite interview, our Product Managers put this guide together to help you understand what to expect and how to prepare.

Before you begin, please check out our **video** about our product sense and execution interviews (password: FB_Interview).

Interview overview

Understanding the content of your initial and onsite interviews

Both your initial and onsite interviews will include product sense and execution interviews. If you pass your initial interview and move on to the onsite interview round, you'll have product sense and execution interviews as well as a leadership & drive interview (a behavioral-type interview).

Before you dive into the details of the prep work in this guide, here's an overview of what to expect from your product sense and execution interviews to help you gain high-level perspective.

Both the product sense and execution interviews are case studies / hypothetical questions and typically cover products that may be associated with Facebook (i.e. Birthdays, People You May Know, Ads, Marketplace, Video, Sports, Events, etc.), so it's important to get more familiar with the many features of Facebook. The hypothetical questions may also cover other products you use that aren't related to Facebook Products, or questions that prompt you to create something new.

For both interviews, you'll start with the big picture before breaking down the problem area into smaller components. In order to build a product solution or identify a KPI / metric, you'll need to prioritize some elements (e.g. a specific user group or user problem). When you do that, always consider what will have the biggest impact on the product / users. In both interviews, your interviewers will be assessing the following:

- **Structure:** Use a framework of your choice to solve the problem methodically.
- **Ability to discuss tradeoffs:** Feel free to use a prioritization framework to assess more complex scenarios, such as evaluating pros and cons of two possible solutions in order to choose the best one to implement.

- **User empathy and ability to think about different user segments:** For example, in the execution interview we're expecting you to identify and track relevant metrics based on the specific user segment.
- **Creativity and innovation:** Especially important in product sense interviews, the creativity or uniqueness of the solution is as important as the process you go through in devising it.

Product sense interview prep

How to prepare for your product sense interview

This interview focuses on your product knowledge, creativity, instincts, and awareness.

Questions could focus on a product that you feel is a great product, why it's a great product, and what you'd do if you were a PM or the CEO of that company. Other questions that could come up in this interview are looking at an existing Facebook Product like Groups, Events or Birthdays and figuring out how you'd evolve it. Your interviewer will be able to give you guidance along the way, although we'd expect you to lead the conversation. In this interview it's very important to have structure in your thought process and to be able to revert back to your original idea / goal.

What we're looking for

- How you take an ambiguous idea and create a great product
- Your ability to empathize with the user
- Intentional design choices
- Prioritization to get things done

Why we ask

In addition to setting the vision for their teams and describing the most important problems to solve, Facebook product managers often will roll up their sleeves and work with their teams to identify and articulate ways to improve our products for the people who use them.

As you identify ideas and solutions, we may ask you to sketch out what your interface could look like and how people would use it. Don't be afraid to use a whiteboard or piece of paper to think out loud.

Practice exercise

In this exercise, think about showing your creativity, innovation, ability to build a product from the ground up with little input, understanding of value to the customer, and your insight into how the product fits within a Facebook marketplace.

Try the following on a whiteboard or paper to show visuals.

Example: What would you build if we asked you to improve a product, such as Facebook Stories?

Stage 1: Framing / Goal Setting

- What is the product vision? Understand the product landscape (be sure to tie all of the next steps back to this original vision and idea).
- What are the goals of your product and how will you measure success?
- Users:
    - Who would use this product and why?
    - How would you segment these people?
    - Which segmentation should we start with for this product?
    - Who are your users and why?
    - What are their segments?
    - Why did you choose this audience?

Stage 2: Features / Solutions

- How does the product function?
- What are the user flows—onboarding?
- Wireframing (avoid picking a segment and rushing to a solution without thinking it through from framing)?
- Think of a hypothetical product:
    - Who is the audience?
    - What problem is this product solving?
    - Why would people use it?
    - What would you build as MVP?
    - How would people use it?

Execution interview prep

How to prepare for your execution interview

This is a very analytical, metric- and KPI-focused interview. Facebook is a deeply data-driven company with more than 2 billion users. Given the large amount of data we have available to us, we expect our product managers to be able to look at data to make decisions.

What to expect

In your execution interview, we'll ask questions about how you identify and prioritize opportunities, and execute against them to build products. This interview will focus on how you analyze a set of constraints and problems to come up with the right set of metrics to measure success. We'll also ask how you adapt your plans and troubleshoot problems with new information and changing circumstances.

What we're looking for

- **Goals:** Being mindful of how the goals (especially quantitative goals) can be gamed or how they can sometimes be counter indicative of progress.

- **Metrics:** What would you use to measure if the product is healthy? Which one would you prioritize? What happens if one is decreasing and the other is increasing?

- **Navigating a complex tradeoff:** "A" or "B" option—how do you know what to show to which communities of users?

- **Debugging:** Say you notice a specific metric dropping week after week. The interviewer will present a problem statement and you should ask questions to describe how you'd approach this challenge and determine what's causing this metric to drop.

Why we ask

At Facebook, product managers leverage strong critical thinking skills to create logical structures geared to help guide decisions for their team. These logical frameworks serve as the backbone of the product, keeping technical decisions grounded in the real-world problem that their product is solving for the community.

Product managers leverage these frameworks to provide their team a focused plan driven by high-impact goals. Product managers often have to make difficult prioritization and tradeoff decisions in pursuit of these goals, and adapt their plans as the team executes.

Practice exercise

When coming up with solutions, show your ability to prioritize and execute well. Example questions could be: "We've recognized a 10 percent drop in newly registered users. What data would you need to look into to understand and fix the problem?" "If you're the product manager for 'X' product, define the goals and metrics."

Other execution questions

- What is the one-sentence mission / goal of a product or feature?

- What metrics would you use to measure progress and success?

- How do you qualify and define the specific metrics you're proposing?

- What metrics might you harm? How would you make a tradeoff?

- How would you decide what to improve / build to achieve this goal?

- How would you prioritize the different things you want to work on?

Leadership & drive interview prep

How to prepare for your leadership & drive interview

What to expect

In your leadership & drive interview, we'll focus on understanding how you motivate a team, drive alignment, build relationships, and work with others. While the product sense and execution interviews use hypothetical cases, the leadership & drive interview focuses on behavioral questions about how you've worked with others in the past.

What we're looking for

Your interviewer will ask four to five behavioral questions to assess your ability to build and support a team, and lead efforts. Focus areas include:

- **Taking ownership:** How could you have prevented a failure in your past instead of blaming external factors? How do you resolve conflicts instead of avoiding or ignoring them? How have you taken on and solved a challenging situation, whether or not you were told it was your problem to solve?

- **Being introspective:** Are you aware of your weaknesses? Are you willing to learn and grow?

- **Supporting people:** Do you appreciate that people have different needs and motivations? Are you able to adjust leadership style to specific situations, collaborating, reconciling differences?

- **Grit and scrappiness:** Can you stick with something? Can you get something done with insufficient resources because you care?

As you answer your interviewer's questions, ask yourself if your responses include examples that show how you:

- Demonstrate initiative.

- Exhibit introspection and self-awareness.

- Can be open about your failures and talk through examples of what you've learned from them.

- Lead and support a team, including conflict management.

- Are passionate about what you've done.

Appendix / resources

Links to exercises, information, and guides to help you prepare

Our product managers collected some helpful resources with content and activities for your interviews. Take a look through the list as you prepare.

Product sense interview prep
- This **article** shares one useful framework in parsing ambiguity to build great products, from Maryanna.

About Facebook
- **Facebook Newsroom** (as well as the Products page) to explore the different products / updates. Many news updates are written by product managers at Facebook, which will give you a sense of the product manager role.
- **Facebook Careers**
- **Facebook Life**

Thanks for taking the time to review this guide and good luck in the interview - you'll do great!