MERZIYAH POONAWALA

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Senior Product Manager with 10+ years of independently owning and delivering product initiatives across various industries including healthcare, fintech and marketplaces. Experienced in system thinking and designing end to end app experiences, converting ambiguity into execution and operating in 0 to 1 solution space. Strong technical background and track record of delivering in fast-paced environments.

Career Highlights:
- Enabled startups to secure $70M and $15M in funding respectively through user insights and managing technical and business tradeoffs
- Led discovery workshops for Walmart's $140M AI voice initiative, shaping early product strategy and aligning teams on key user needs
- Mentored 10+ product teams in agile execution, user research, and roadmap strategy to refine product experiences and improve team velocity

WORK EXPERIENCE

Senior Product Manager   **12/2016 - 09/2024**
Def Method, New York, NY (Software Consultancy)
- Advised business leaders at startups and Fortune 10 companies on product vision, roadmaps, and execution, for web and mobile apps
- Guided cross-functional teams through product development phases from concept to launch
- Led cross-functional teams in feature development and prioritization, ensuring hypothesis-driven MVPs addressed core user pain points
- Owned the end-to-end product lifecycle, balancing feature delivery, scalability challenges, and technical debt through informed trade-off decisions.
- Conducted market and competitor research, and user interviews to break into new industries

Key Achievements:
- Launched 6+ MVPs, within 3-6 month timeframes for apps with a TAM of $12M-$600M/year
- Doubled revenue per paid user by strategically targeting high value segments through deep market and user insights for marketplace app
- Developed integration strategies between web and CRM to enable a personalized omni-channel experience at NY Public Radio

Product Manager, Core Product   **01/2013 - 12/2016**
NovoPath, Princeton, NJ
- Owned product lifecycle for a $25M/year healthcare platform, working with global development team, streamlining operational processes
- Partnered with vendors on integration initiatives, enabling seamless record transfer across medical systems
- Partnered with sales as the product expert, conducting on-site product demos and providing technical knowledge on the product's capabilities

Key Achievements:
- Unlocked $500M market opportunity by leading user research, product strategy and design for a new medical testing module
- Launched 10+ HL7-compliant EMR solutions by spearheading vendor integrations and translating API specifications into requirements
- Improved customer satisfaction to 95% by revamping release management, increasing transparency and reducing post-release deployment issues

Project Manager   **01/2009 - 12/2012**

NovoPath, Princeton, NJ
- Led full-cycle implementation of NovoPath software across labs and hospital networks
- Conducting on-site user research and workflow analysis, identifying key pain points, and streamlining interdepartmental communication.
- Defined the timeline and schedule for software implementation and managed communication with stakeholders
- Owned product launch and stakeholder training, increasing user adoption and reducing implementation friction.
- Managed the deployment of the new software and provided on-site support during go-live of the software, ensuring seamless adoption and high customer satisfaction

Key Achievements:
- Orchestrated software conversion for projects ranging from $500K to $2M/yr
- Drove $150K revenue increase through partnership with sales and implementation teams

Software Developer   **11/2004 - 12/2008**

NovoPath, Princeton, NJ
- Built core features in .NET, Python, and SQL
- Designed custom diagnostic report templates using Word macros in collaboration with pathology lab administrators.
- Built internal tools to assist sales, support and development teams.

Key Achievements:
- Defined and executed on technical requirements for enhancing the products Cytopathology module generating over $1MM in annual revenue.
- Developed an internal CRM tool to track customer-specific features, improving deployment and QA processes for the engineering and support teams.

EDUCATION
Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Management and Business Strategy
Rutgers, Business School • New Brunswick, NJ
Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science
Rice University • Houston, TX

CERTIFICATIONS
Fundamentals of AI (Hugging Face)
Prompt Engineering for ChatGPT (Coursera)
Generative AI for Professionals (AI Mindset)

SKILLS

Product Management: Cross-functional leadership, Product Vision & Strategy, Strategic Roadmaps, Communication, Stakeholder Management, Agile Methodologies, B2C/B2B, User Research & Testing, Customer Journey Mapping, Data Analysis, Success Metrics, Product Lifecycle Management, Prototyping, Customer Experience & Support

Technologies/Tools:

Jira, Looker, Miro, Figma, Trello, Google Analytics, HubSpot, Python, SQL