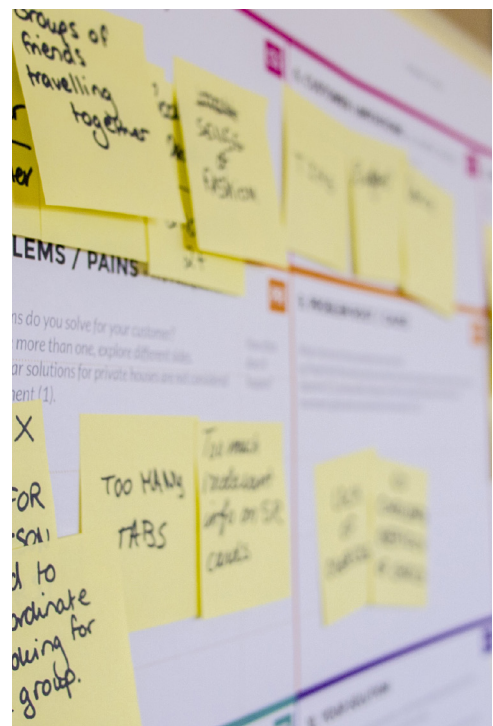




# PRODUCT MANAGEMENT CAREER GUIDE

Student Affairs at Carnegie Mellon University Silicon Valley





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# PROGRAM & PRODUCT MANAGEMENT CAREER GUIDE

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## Acknowledgment section

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These career guides are adapted each year, and the career services team would like to sincerely thank the 2019 cohort of Peer Career Consultants for creating the first iteration. We appreciate the hard work of Chaitra Dinesh Pai, Nursultan Dyussebayev, Arpit Gupta, Sweta Hari Kumar, and Joseph Konan who researched specific fields of interest and compiled helpful tips and resources for students to enable them to make the most of their CMU-SV experience and navigate the internship and job search process in Silicon Valley. Their valuable contributions made these career guides possible. Additionally, the example resumes are compiled from recent alumni who also wanted to help our future students at CMU-SV. Thank you to everyone who contributed their time and effort.

## Introduction

Welcome to the Exponential Era of Product Innovation!

Future makers aspiring to drive world-changing products - this guide equips you with the comprehensive skills to excel in the dynamic domain of product management.

As a student at the CMU Silicon Valley campus situated in the backyard of pioneering giants like Google, Apple, and Meta, you find yourself at the global epicenter of technology breakthroughs. All around you, history is being coded, designed, and developed.

This is the exponential era - where companies grow from garage projects to billion-user platforms at unprecedented speeds. Entire industries transform in months powered by emerging capabilities in artificial intelligence, immersive realities, and hyperconnectivity.

The products defining these exponential shifts demand a new breed of visionaries. You.

As aspiring product managers and technology leaders, you must drive innovation strategically - beginning from the campus.

This guide acts as the blueprint to maximize your CMU Silicon Valley experience, lighting the path ahead with best practices and insider perspectives. It details:

- 1. Immersive Simulations:** Hands-on exposure to product design through local hackathons, conferences, and case competitions
- 2. Technical Proficiency:** Obtaining specialized skills in UX, security, and open source technologies
- 3. Strategic Thinking:** Learning directly from pioneering founders and observing startups firsthand
- 4. Career Acceleration:** Resources for CV refinement, interview preparation, networking and more

When leveraged fully, these four cornerstones will equip you with the real-world proficiencies to excel as the product trailblazers of tomorrow. Not just managers, but directors of exponential advancement.

The future of technology beckons your brilliance. Are you ready to lead the next wave of game-changers? This guide prepares you for the exhilarating ride ahead!

# EXAMPLE RESUME

*When sharing your product management skills on your resume, it's recommended to:*

Incorporate emerging skills such as remote team leadership, proficiency in new project management tools (e.g., Notion, Trello updates), and adaptability to rapidly changing technology landscapes.

*When sharing your product management achievements on your resume, it's recommended to:*

Emphasize outcomes and metrics, such as successful product launches, user growth rates, and revenue impacts, to showcase the ability to drive results in a shifting market.

To give you an idea of what a product management resume can look like before it's tailored to the job description, please see the example below. \*Please note, these roles may not have occurred in 2023. This is a resume example from a real CMU-SV student, however, other data points are edited each year. Please recognize that this is not a real candidate. Please email career-services@sv.cmu.edu if you have any questions about this example resume or if you need to schedule a resume appointment, please do so through Handshake.

<p>CMU Tartan tartancmu@andrew.cmu.edu • Sunnyvale, CA • 123-456-7899 • <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/in/cmurtartan">https://www.linkedin.com/in/cmurtartan</a></p> <p>Seeking Technical Product Manager opportunities starting Jan 2024. MS in Software Management at Carnegie Mellon University, Silicon Valley. Possess hands-on experience in gathering user requirements, Full stack development and leading development teams across organizations</p>	
<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <p>Carnegie Mellon University   Master of Science in Software Management   Mountain View, CA   3.90/4.00 Aug 2022 – Dec 2023  <b>Relevant Courses</b> • Machine Learning • User Centered Research Methods • Metrics for Software Manager • Product definition and strategy • Software Engineering and Management • Elements of Software Management • Software Product Strategy  Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University   Bachelor of Engineering in Electronics and communication   3.6/4.00 Aug 2010 – Jul 2014  Organizer – Women Engineers, Hyderabad • Speaker – Sanketika • Volunteer – Ignite Talks   Organized “Raise the bar” coding event</p>	
<p><b>SKILLS</b></p> <p><b>Business:</b> Product Planning and Design, Requirement Analysis, Product Strategy, Strong problem-solving abilities, Strong analytical and data visualization skills, Software Project Management, Cross Functional Team Management, Customer Research, Agile Methodologies, Project Management</p> <p><b>Technology:</b> Object Oriented Programming, Design Patterns, Java, .Net 4.5, Visual Studio Code, MVC framework, Bootstrap, HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript, JQuery, Machine Learning, React Native, Bootstrap, REST APIs, Web Services, Cloud based Services, SQL, MongoDB, Python for Data Analysis and visualization</p>	
<p><b>PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE</b></p> <p>Delaro Fungicide– The Climate Corporation (Seattle, Washington)   Technical Program Manager Intern May 2023 – Aug 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Led program's phase 2 planning by working across all technical (Product, Science, and Engineering) functions</li> <li>Detailed a proposal for Aerial Data Ingest for 'Delaro' 2020 for a projected <b>95% mark improvement in efficiency</b>.</li> <li>Established Project Governance Process for Climate Corp with a success rate of 90% teams incorporating the process</li> <li>Defined project management processes, tooling, and templates to improve operating model maturity of a scaling product.</li> </ul> <p>Advocate Portal (Client – Advocate Health Care Hospitals)   Technical Program Manager   People Tech Group Aug 2020 – Jan 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnered with Business leaders and stakeholders to gather product requirements and draft requirements document.</li> <li>Collaborated with UX designers to translate business requirements to technical requirements as per user experience standards.</li> <li>Partnered with dependent teams to build vision and strategy and defined feature prioritization.</li> <li>Partnered with engineering and UX design teams to develop, implement to lead team successfully to launch product.</li> <li>Facilitated broad collaboration with multiple stakeholders to drive process and communication improvements across dependent teams.</li> </ul> <p>Employee Data Management (Client - Microsoft, Hyderabad)   Senior Web Developer Aug 2018 – Aug 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivered highly responsive UI screens as a senior front-end developer.</li> <li>Collaborated with senior leaders of UX to optimize suggestive search, user navigation and accessibility to <b>increase usability by 30%</b>.</li> <li>Focused on quality for features and enhanced customer satisfaction by <b>2x through customer touchpoint and market analysis</b>.</li> <li>Established credibility and rapport with senior leaders of Microsoft to ensure high quality of deliverables for project.</li> <li>Researched and learnt accessibility coding and worked with core development team to provide highly accessible and responsive website and increased <b>acceptance rate by 50%</b>.</li> </ul> <p>Field Dashboard (Client- Microsoft, Seattle)   Software Engineer July 2015 – Dec 2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented carousel feature and Semantic zoom list view and enhanced its scope and <b>effectiveness in project by 2x</b>.</li> <li>Accomplished a custom list view for Semantic zoom against traditional list view to <b>advance efficiency and resources by 20%</b>.</li> </ul> <p>Atlas Webservices   Software Engineer   Bank of America, Hyderabad June 2014 – Apr 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented core features in Bank of America for products which handle business logic for Pricing for Home Loans.</li> <li>Implemented core business logic for home loan rates and calculations for Bank of America.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>PROJECTS</b></p> <p>Product Manager-CMU Jan 2023 – May 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyzing the existing search engine and suggesting improvements to create Knowledge</li> <li>Identified business value and defined success metrics to improve the existing business processes and operational efficiency</li> <li>Working closely with stakeholders to design and implement a product roadmap</li> </ul> <p>Program Manager- National Aeronautical &amp; Space Administration Sep 2023 – Dec 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritizing deliverables and milestones in collaboration with NASA Senior Data scientists</li> <li>Tracking project deliverables to detect anomalies in flights by developing predictive models using high dimensional aviation data</li> </ul>	

Above you can see an example resume of a past student at CMU-SV. We wanted to share more examples of what can be included in a resume for both a new graduate vs someone with multiple years of experience in product management. Below you will find more examples to give you an idea/inspiration of what can be added to your resume. Each student has unique experience and our career services team is here to help. If you have questions, don't hesitate to schedule a time to meet with career services at: career-services@sv.cmu.edu

# EXAMPLE RESUME CONTENT FOR A NEW GRADUATE

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**Objective:**

Innovative and driven MS in Software Engineering graduate from Carnegie Mellon University's Silicon Valley campus, specializing in AI and machine learning applications. Seeking to leverage academic projects and internship experience in a product management role, bringing fresh insights into user-centric design and data-driven product development.

**Education:**

Master of Science in Software Management, Focus on AI and Machine Learning  
Carnegie Mellon University, Silicon Valley, [Graduation Year]

- **Projects:** Developed a machine learning model to predict user engagement, resulting in a 20% accuracy improvement over existing models.  
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science  
Undergraduate University, [Graduation Year]
- **Thesis:** "Leveraging AI to Enhance User Experience in Mobile Applications."

**Skills:**

- **Technical Expertise:** Proficient in Python, SQL, and machine learning libraries (TensorFlow, PyTorch). Strong understanding of cloud computing services (AWS, Azure).
- **Product Management Tools:** Advanced proficiency with Agile project management tools (Jira, Asana) and collaboration platforms (Notion, Slack).
- **Analytical Skills:** Exceptional ability in data analysis and visualization (Tableau, Google Analytics) to inform product decisions.
- **Communication:** Effective communicator, capable of bridging technical and business domains to drive team alignment and product vision.

**Experience:****Product Management Intern, [Tech Company/Startup Name], [Dates]**

- Led a cross-functional team to design and prototype a new feature, increasing user retention by 15%.
- Conducted competitive analysis and user research, contributing to strategic planning and product positioning.

**Certifications:**

- Product Management Certification (Pragmatic Institute)
- Google Analytics Individual Qualification

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# EXAMPLE RESUME CONTENT FOR AN EXPERIENCED PRODUCT MANAGER

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## Summary:

Dynamic Product Manager with 5+ years of experience, including a Master's degree in Software Management from CMU Silicon Valley, with a deep focus on leveraging technology to solve real-world problems. A proven track record in leading cross-functional teams to deliver innovative products that drive user growth and engagement. Looking to bring strategic vision, technical expertise, and a data-driven approach to a product management role.

## Education:

Master of Science in Software Management, Focus on AI and Machine Learning  
Carnegie Mellon University, Silicon Valley, [Graduation Year]

Bachelor of Science in Computer Science  
Undergraduate University, [Graduation Year]

## Skills:

- **Strategic Product Vision:** Expertise in market analysis, product lifecycle management, and user-centric design principles. Skilled in identifying opportunities for growth and innovation.
- **Technical Leadership:** Advanced knowledge of AI, ML, and modern development practices. Proficient in programming languages (Python, Java) and big data technologies.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Strong analytical skills, with experience in A/B testing, user research, and metrics analysis to guide product development and optimization.
- **Stakeholder Management:** Excellent at communicating with stakeholders at all levels, from engineers to executives, ensuring product alignment with business goals.

## Professional Experience:

### Senior Product Manager, [Tech Company Name], [Dates]

- Led the development and launch of [Product/Feature], resulting in a 40% increase in user engagement and a 25% growth in revenue within the first year
- Championed a customer-centric approach, integrating user feedback into product iterations, significantly improving the product-market fit.

## Achievements:

- Awarded "Product Manager of the Year" for leading a pivotal project that expanded the company's market share by 30%.
- Initiated and led a partnership with a leading AI research institute, enhancing product capabilities and setting a new industry standard for innovation

## Certifications:

- Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO)
- Lean Six Sigma Green Belt



# SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

## Planning phase

- Communication
- Negotiation
- Prioritization
- Requirement analysis
- Risk analysis
- Stakeholder management
- Scoping
- Scheduling
- Gantt charts
- Prototyping
- Competitive analysis
- Market research

## Execution Phase

- Risk analysis
- Tracking of tasks
- Stakeholder management
- Problem solving
- Resource management
- Feedback to team

## Monitor and control

- Tracking of metrics
- Stakeholder management

- **Broadened Skillset:** Beyond AI, soft skills like cross-functional communication, empathy for the user experience, and strategic thinking to navigate complex stakeholder landscapes.
- **Technical Proficiency:** familiarity with no-code/low-code platforms can be helpful in the PM role and also an understanding of cybersecurity principles as they apply to product management.

If you do have a software engineering background, that can be helpful in the PM space. Other product managers have experience in entrepreneurship or consulting which can be helpful. The product manager journey is unique so we recommend leveraging the Peer Career Consultants on the Career Services team to ask any questions about these skills below as well. The Peer Career Consultants have been in your shoes in applying to both intern & full-time roles so they are eager to help.

Here are more skills below to dig into while you are growing your product management skills.

## Technical Proficiency

- Fluency in Python, R, and SQL for manipulating large datasets
- Working knowledge of data visualization tools like Tableau, Looker, Power BI
- Understanding of statistical analysis & experiment design methods like A/B testing
- Ability to interpret results of predictive models and integrate outputs into products
- Functional knowledge of core machine learning frameworks (TensorFlow, PyTorch)
- Familiarity with natural language processing (NLP) and conversational AI capabilities
- Awareness of accessibility issues around AI systems and mitigation techniques



# SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES (CONTINUED)

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## **Product Development & Lifecycles**

- Hands-on agile software development processes and concepts
- Architectural patterns of modern distributed systems and microservices
- Diagnosing scalability & performance bottlenecks
- Designing fail-safe disaster recovery systems
- Building project roadmaps leveraging Agile, Scrum and Kanban
- Running design sprints and integrating rapid prototyping
- Conducting market research, developing positioning and messaging

## **Leadership Skills**

- Managing remote teams, leading with influence rather than authority
- Embracing diversity and creating environments of psychological safety
- Resolving conflicts through clear communication and fairness
- Achieving alignment via storytelling and inspirational vision
- Instilling culture of customer-centricity and product/market fit

## **Strategic Thinking**

- Analyzing markets holistically, accounting for adjacent spaces
- Mapping out competitive dynamics using frameworks like Porter's Five Forces
- Synthesizing technological, business model, regulatory and cultural trends

## **Websites**

- Read Glassdoor for each company interview to learn the types of questions to practice
- If you are interested in technical product management, check out these tips: <https://www.mariogerard.com/interview-questions-for-a-technical-program-manager-tpm/>

## **Books**

- Decode and Conquer: Answers to Product Management Interviews By: Lewis C. Lin
- Cracking the PM Interview: How to Land a Product Manager Job in Technology By: Gayle Laakmann McDowell and Jackie Bavaro
- The Product Manager Interview: 164 Actual Questions and Answers By: Lewis C. Lin



# CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Get internship experience if possible as it's always valuable to have relevant experience on your resume
- Having a graduate assistantship or teaching assistant role shows how eager you are to learn more outside your courses and your expertise in a specific area
- Build relationships with your peers and don't be shy to connect/ask questions with guest speakers who share about their industry experience in your courses.
- Don't wait until the last moment to get to know your peers or graduating classmates
- Along with classes, try to do an independent study or practicum to solve a real problem
- Get involved with student organizations and help plan and organize events
- Attend local conferences hosted in the Bay Area like ProductTank and Lean Startup Challenge. Conferences enable networking with experienced PMs while competing in case studies and prototypes.
- Keep an eye out for weekend hackathons in the Bay Area as well which are often posted on Eventbrite. They are great places for rapid validation of ideas through intense user testing and iteration on a collaborative team.
- **Diversify Your Experience:** Attend industry-specific meetups and virtual conferences, contributing to open-source projects relevant to product management, and publishing thought leadership pieces on platforms like Medium or LinkedIn.

## Building Technical Proficiency

To complement coursework, students should work on open source projects in cutting-edge domains like blockchain, artificial intelligence, and quantum computing. Contributing code and interfaces for these breakthrough systems equips with next-generation proficiencies expected from technical product managers. If you have the time during the summer, obtaining certifications in security, cloud infrastructure, and UX design will also help incorporate these considerations through all planning stages.

## Cultivating Strategic Thinking

Students aiming to excel as product managers should regularly attend public forums and speaker sessions held by industry pioneers in the region. Learning from the wins and setbacks of those building history-defining companies like Apple, Netflix, Google trains instinctive strategic thinking and entrepreneurial grit. Conducting user research interviews and ethnographic studies by engaging people at the region's bustling tech campuses and marketplaces also provides invaluable insights into consumer behavior patterns and emerging needs.

Immersing oneself in the Silicon Valley ecosystem as a CMU student by utilizing these avenues enables the acquisition of well-rounded proficiency expected of visionary product management leaders driving tech innovation.



# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

## Practice Before Your Interview

- Behavioral and situational questions require a lot of practise with the STAR framework. This article is helpful for understanding how to get started with this technique: The SAR Method for Product Management Interview Questions (<https://productschool.com/blog/product-management-2/the-sar-method-for-product-management-interview-questions>)
- Follow the companies you are applying to on LinkedIn, go to the “About” and “Posts” section of the employer LinkedIn pages and read about all the latest updates before you speak to the hiring manager.
  - This specifically helps when you’re asked if you have any specific questions for the interviewer.
  - Making use of this time to talk about the latest product news that the company is working on will display your interest to the employer.
- Learn more about the company’s mission and values, their culture, work style, team goals, etc.
- Always be prepared to give suggestions on how they can improve their product



The first round interview is usually a phone interview with the recruiter to understand your background, experience and interest in the role. The second round is usually a more detailed phone interview round with the hiring manager asking experience-based, behavioral and case study questions. This might vary from company to company. There may be more rounds of phone interviews with additional team members before the onsite. The last round is an onsite interview and they may give you a case study to research and present during the interview and multiple rounds with the VP and senior members of the team. Always come ready with questions for your interviewer in each interview round.

As a CMU Silicon Valley student gearing up for product management interviews, it's crucial to adapt your preparation to the rapidly evolving tech landscape. Here are some key areas to focus on:

**1. AI and Machine Learning:** With the exponential growth of AI applications, interviewers will expect a deep understanding of how these technologies can be leveraged in product development. Be prepared to discuss real-world examples of AI-driven products and how you would approach integrating AI capabilities into a product roadmap. Practice explaining complex AI concepts in simple terms and be ready to address ethical considerations surrounding AI deployment.

**2. Cybersecurity and Data Privacy:** As data breaches continue to make headlines, companies are prioritizing security and privacy in their products. Familiarize yourself with the latest cybersecurity best practices, such as zero-trust architecture, and be prepared to discuss how you would incorporate security features into a product's design. Additionally, understand the implications of data privacy regulations like GDPR and CCPA and how they impact product decisions.

**3. Remote Collaboration and Leadership:** With remote work becoming the norm, interviewers will be keen to assess your ability to lead and collaborate effectively in a virtual environment. Prepare examples that showcase your experience in managing remote teams, facilitating virtual workshops, and using collaboration tools like Miro and Figma. Highlight your communication skills and strategies for building trust and alignment in a distributed team setting.

# INTERVIEW PREPARATION (CONTINUED)

**4. User-Centric Design and Accessibility:** As products become more inclusive and accessible, interviewers will evaluate your understanding of user-centric design principles and accessibility standards. Be ready to discuss how you would conduct user research to uncover diverse user needs and incorporate inclusive design practices into the product development process. Familiarize yourself with accessibility guidelines like WCAG and be prepared to explain how you would ensure a product is usable by people with disabilities.

**5. Silicon Valley Industry Trends:** During interviews, demonstrate your knowledge of the latest trends dominating the Bay Area tech scene, such as the rise of neobanks, the global chip shortage impact on hardware products, the evolution of social commerce, and the increasing prominence of health tech. Stay informed through resources like The Information, TechCrunch, and the Andreessen Horowitz podcast.

**6. CMU Silicon Valley Projects:** Highlight your CMU Silicon Valley projects and the unique skills and insights you gained. Be prepared to discuss how you applied cutting-edge technologies like computer vision or NLP in your projects and the real-world impact your solutions could have. Interviewers will be interested in understanding your thought process, technical proficiency, and ability to innovate.

## Interview Tips -

- Mock interviews - do plenty of mock interviews. Have sample answers ready for most commonly asked behavioral questions.
- Timing your response - stick to 3 minutes at max for responding to any behavioral question. If you end up finishing your response earlier, end with a question to the interviewer if they would like to know more.
- Scenario-based Questions: Interviewers may ask situational judgment tests that evaluate decision-making and prioritization skills in complex scenarios, reflecting the multifaceted challenges PMs face today. Make sure you practice these questions with Peer Career Consultants, a recent alum who is a PM, or mentor.

## Resources to help you prepare -

- Your own experience in past PM interviews is helpful but if you are completely new to PM interviewing, connect with CMU-SV alumni on CMUUniverse (<https://cmuniverse.peoplegrove.com>) (or students returning from their PM internship) to learn about their interview experiences.
- See books and websites under “Skills and Competencies” and additional interview prep sites are: <https://www.tryexponent.com> and <https://stellarpeers.com> (There's new helpful interview prep websites every year. Ask your go-to Career Consultant for suggestions too.)
- Compare the job responsibilities on the job description and prepare situational based questions
- [The Top 10 Product Manager Interview Questions \(And How To Answer Them\)](#)
- [Airbnb Product Manager Mock Interview: Increase Airbnb Bookings](#)  
*The first video walks through various categories of PM questions and how to answer them in general, and the second video is a mock interview that tackles a specific product design question.*

## Sample behavioral questions

*There will be additional technical/analytical/design questions related to the specific product domain of the company/team that the student is interviewing for. Students should familiarize themselves with the interviewing team's and their competitors' product offerings and think about potential improvements/optimizations.*

1. Why do you want to join this company?
2. Why are you interested in being a program/product manager?
3. Give me a situation where you had a strict deadline and limited resources. How did you deal with it?
4. Have you ever had a conflict with someone in your team? How did you handle it?
5. Tell me about a time where you did not know much about a domain area when you joined a team. What were your next steps?
6. Tell me about a time where you failed and what you learned from it.
7. Why do you want to join this team and what interests you?
8. Where do you see yourself in 2 - 5 years?
9. What part of your previous role did you like and not like?
10. What would an ideal job and work environment look like to you?
11. Why do you think collaboration is important?
12. Have you ever set up a team's processes from scratch?



# NETWORKING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Identify what companies and domain areas you are interested in. Proceed with meeting people from the industry to learn more about their roles and responsibilities at various companies. Correspond your past experience with what is expected from the roles and work on filling those gaps. For example, if you don't have experience being a product manager, ensure you lead a team project in a course as a product manager to get some experience. Also, if the job description asks for experience with roadmaps, create a roadmap for a course project or offer to be a PM for a friend who has a start-up. Be creative in gaining PM skills!

## Networking Tips -

- LinkedIn - actively network and form connections. Read articles, posts and content from creators on LinkedIn. Form a view/perspective on the content and articulate with comments. This will help strike a conversation if you would like to connect with the author and want to connect further about the topic.

**LinkedIn Optimization:** Ensure your profile prominently features your CMU Silicon Valley credentials, specialized projects, and any relevant work or internship experiences. Join and actively participate in groups like Product Management and Silicon Valley Tech Network. Follow companies you're interested in, and engage with their content. Utilize the Alumni Networking Tool on LinkedIn to connect with CMU graduates in product roles, specifically targeting those in your desired companies.

**Reddit Communities:** Dive into subreddits such as r/ProductManagement, r/tech, and r/cscareerquestions for insider advice, AMAs (Ask Me Anything) with industry professionals, and job postings. The r/ProductManagement subreddit is particularly valuable for discussions on breaking into the field, study resources, and industry trends.

**Professional Forums and Slack Channels:** Join specific Slack communities like Lewis Lin, Exponent, Product Alliance and forums like Mind the Product, Products That Count, and Product Manager HQ. These platforms often host live Q&As, workshops, and networking events with product leaders from top tech companies.

- WellFound - there are plenty of opportunities posted on WellFound with an option to apply and send a personalized message to the hiring manager. Have a structured message ready expressing your interest in the role and the company. Add these folks on LinkedIn as well!
- Grace Hopper Conference - attend if possible as it's a great place to apply for PM roles
- Product School - offers two annual career fairs that are frequently free to students. Check out their website (<https://productschool.com/>).
- If you are interested in being a PM at a start-up, keep an eye out for start-up focused conferences





# NETWORKING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

If you feel lost, reach out to your go-to Career Consultant and Peer Career Consultants at CMU-SV. They are amazing resources and will help you reach out to the right people for guidance.

## Community Engagement

- 1. CMU Silicon Valley Speaker Series:** Actively participate in the CMU Silicon Valley's Speaker Series, where tech leaders from Silicon Valley share insights. This is a direct channel to ask questions and follow up for informational interviews.
- 2. Tech Meetups and Conferences:** Utilize platforms like Meetup.com to find local Silicon Valley product management and tech innovation events. ProductCon, Mind the Product, and the Silicon Valley Product Management Association events are excellent for networking. Attend these with the aim of meeting both peers and industry veterans.
- 3. Open Source Contributions:** Platforms like GitHub and GitLab host open-source projects where you can contribute to real-world product development, showcasing your skills to a broader community. Look for projects under organizations like Mozilla and Apache, which are known for welcoming new contributors.



## Enhancing Your Network

- 1. Informational Interviews:** Leverage your CMU network to set up informational interviews with alumni working in product roles at tech companies. Prepare specific questions that reflect your understanding of the role and the company's products.
- 2. Engage with Content:** Share and comment on industry-relevant content on LinkedIn and X. Writing articles on Medium about your learnings and projects can also position you as a thought leader among your peers.
- 3. Volunteer for Tech Events:** Many conferences and meetups look for volunteers, offering a behind-the-scenes look at event management and an opportunity to network with speakers and attendees. Often when you volunteer, you can attend the conference for free.
- 4. Product Management Competitions and Hackathons:** Participate in competitions like Product Hunt's Makers Festival or hackathons, which can be great for meeting co-founders, mentors, and showcasing your skills to potential employers.
- 5. Mentorship Programs:** Programs like The Product Mentor and Women in Product offer mentorship opportunities that can connect you with experienced product managers for guidance and support.

As trends shift in product management, remember to be a lifelong learner and be eager to dig into new areas to expand your interests. Our career services team is here for you. Reach out to your go-to Career Consultant and Peer Career Consultants at CMU-SV. They are amazing resources and will help you reach out to the right people for guidance.