



Interview Guide | Product Management

Welcome

Thank you for your continued interest in the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. This document provides an overview of your next day of interviews. We appreciate the time you've invested in our interview process and are excited to have you meet the team!

Please review our [Candidate Journey](#) to learn more about CZI, our culture, and [how to prepare for a Zoom interview](#). If you require additional accommodations, have questions, or need support on the day of your interviews, please contact your Recruiter or a member of the Hiring Experience team. Someone from the team will ensure you are taken care of and that your experience is smooth.



1:1 Interviews

You will meet with 4-5 of our interviewers - some potential teammates and some cross-functional team members - for 45 minutes each. You will mostly meet with one interviewer at a time but there may on occasion be an additional team member observing the interview, we use interviews to help calibrate our interviewing team. At some point during your visit, your Recruiter will meet with you to touch base.



Lunch & Breaks

Breaks will be scheduled after 2-3 interviews and if you're interviewing with us during the hours of 11:30am through 1:30pm we will schedule a lunch break. This will be your opportunity to take a mental break, stretch, use the bathroom, grab a snack, etc. Of course, if you need anything at any point during your interview, please let your interviewer know. Your comfort is important to us throughout your interview experience.



Questions

During these meetings, the questions our interviewers ask are not meant to quiz or stump you. We are more interested in how you think and would overcome roadblocks so we want to encourage you to think out loud and share your thought process along the way. If something seems unclear, feel free to ask clarifying questions.



You are likely to encounter the following interview types:

1. Product Thinking
2. Cross - Functional Collaboration
3. Product Execution
4. Career & Competencies

Product Thinking

For this interview, you will demonstrate how you identify opportunities for new product areas and make decisions about product direction. We want to understand how you structure your problem solving approach, starting with an open-ended ambiguous question and narrowing down to a roadmap and initial concept. What are the key factors that you consider? E.g. market dynamics, user research, metrics.

We'll be looking to understand:

- How you identify who to build for, what to build, why it's important and how
- How you articulate the vision and value proposition of the product
- How you use frameworks to explain thinking and rationale
- How you demonstrate user empathy and intentional design choices
- How you use research from the field to inform decision-making

These questions don't have a correct answer or a definitive end point. Rather, they give you the chance to demonstrate how you handle complexity and make decisions.

Cross - Functional Collaboration

A strong product manager would need to collaborate with technical and non-technical members to drive the development of products. The purpose of this interview is to evaluate your ability to collaborate with cross-functional team members.

Product Execution

For this interview, you will demonstrate how you define, build, and test a solution for a hypothetical product. We want to understand how you frame the value proposition for a user, identify a problem to solve in the user journey and a goal to measure, and evaluate possible solutions.

We'll be looking to understand:

- How you set the right goals for products and measures against them
- How you identify, frame, and evaluate tradeoffs
- How you identify root causes, brainstorm solutions, and find ways to test solutions

These questions don't have a correct answer or a definitive end point. Rather, they give you the chance to demonstrate how you handle complexity and make decisions.

Career & Competencies

CZI values experts in their respective function but we also seek to hire employees that align with our core values: Build for the Long-Term, Be Daring & Humble, Learn Fast, Stay Close to the Real Problems, and Collaboration is the Tool.

Our Career & Competencies interview gives candidates an opportunity to highlight their experiences and perspectives in these areas through behavioral style interviewing. We believe that teams composed of people with diverse experiences will allow us to create better solutions and relationships with the communities in which we serve and help us advance our goals under each of the initiatives.



General Tips for Interviewing

Think out loud

It's not just about the end solution. What we care about is how you are thinking about a problem and the approach you are taking to get to a destination. Bounce ideas off of your interviewer. Break down the problem out loud. Share what parts of the problem you're struggling with. By communicating your thought process, you are also giving the interviewer the opportunity to correct any misunderstandings and provide high-level guidance.

Understand the problem

If you don't fully understand the question, ask! Take the time to fully understand what is being asked before jumping in.

Don't forget about edge cases

Once you have a solution, make sure it can handle most, if not all, edge cases.

Take a moment to consider alternative approaches

It can be helpful to consider multiple approaches and then choose one. You could choose based on time/space complexity, ease of implementation, extendability or something else! That said, sharing how you're thinking about these trade offs with the interviewer is really helpful.

Be yourself

Tell us what you're passionate about and what drives you. We want to learn about you and the perspective you bring to CZI. The best tools are built by diverse teams, so we want you to bring your authentic self to the interview.

Stay focused and positive

Don't worry if your solution is not perfect on the first try. Don't let that throw you off your game during the interview. We hit roadblocks everyday - it's about how you navigate them that makes the work fun.

Bring your questions

Do your research on us and think about what motivated you to engage with CZI. This is your opportunity to interview us as well. We value curiosity and want to answer your questions.

We Are Not Looking For.....

Ability to respond to stress

We recognize that interviewing can make someone nervous and not able to perform to their full ability. We are not trying to trick you, intimidate you, or otherwise place added stress on you just to see how you respond.

The perfect solution

Our questions are designed to be complex. We don't expect you to come up with a brilliant, optimal solution in 45 minutes. Rather, we look for how you develop and communicate your approach problems and product spaces. At the same time, don't rush into the first brute force solution that comes to mind; we do like to see that you can develop multiple approaches and compare them to choose the best one.