

A photograph of two people from the chest down, standing against a bright blue background. The person on the left is wearing a green V-neck sweater over a pink collared shirt and an orange tie, with blue pants. The person on the right is wearing a yellow V-neck cardigan over a green top and a pink skirt. Both have their arms crossed.

JENNIFER WONG

# BECOMING A MANAGER SOMEWHERE ELSE

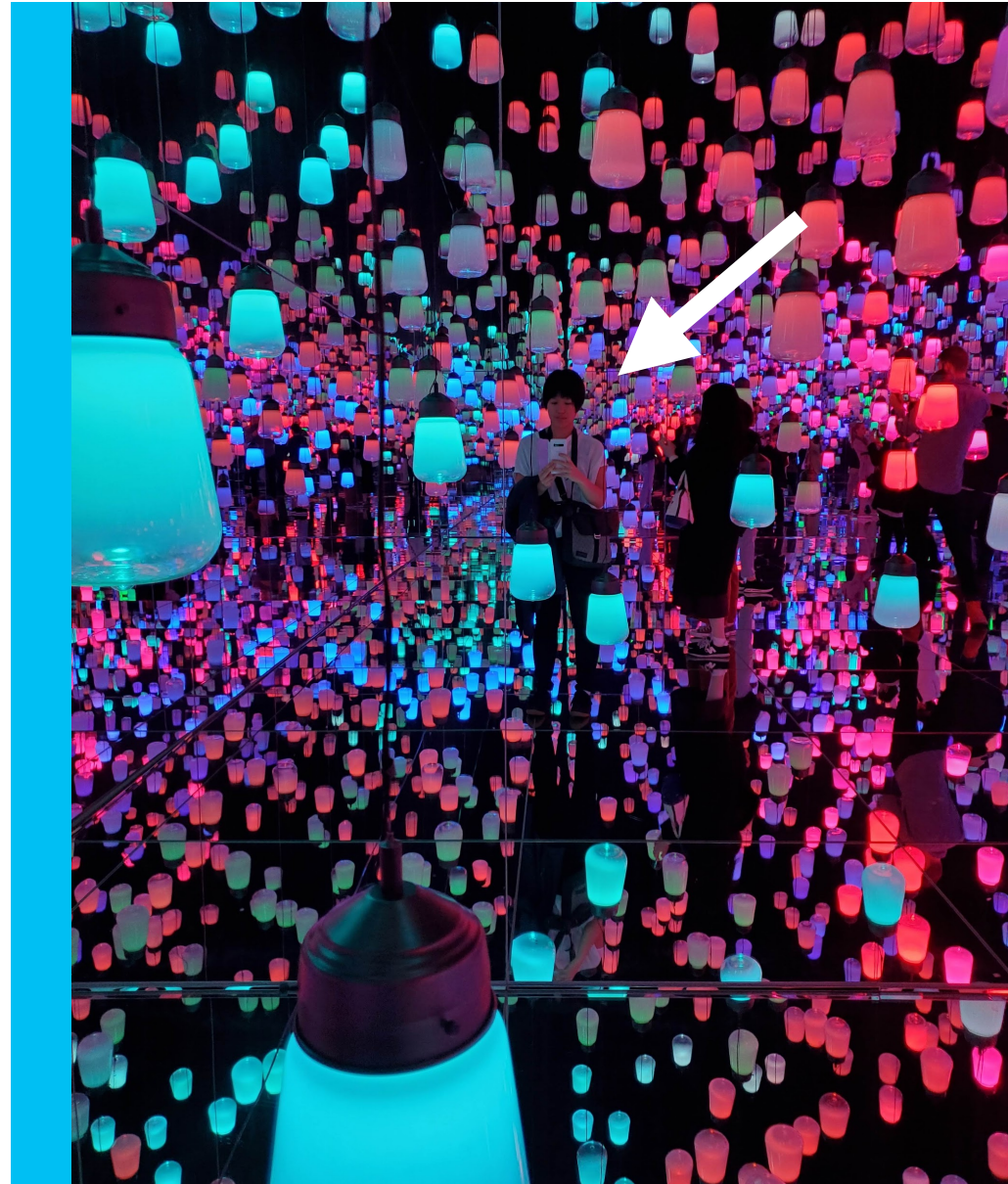
LeadDev ~~San Francisco~~ Oakland  
2022



○ HAI!

# IT'S A ME, JENN

- Engineering Manager
- CrowdStrike 
  - Almost two years
  - We're hiring!
- Last conf talk
  - ~3 years ago





**“DISCLAIMER!”**

**-JENN**



# BECOMING A MANAGER SOMEWHERE ELSE

## AGENDA

**My origin story**

**My journey: how I got here**

**My present: what it's like here**





[Oh God Cat GIF](#) By Abitan

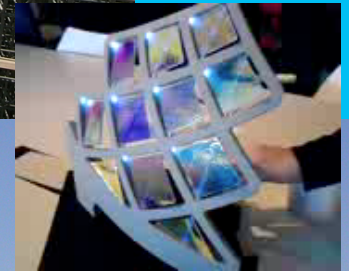
**LET'S GET STARTED!**



# MY ORIGIN STORY

# JENN'S CAREER TRAJECTORY

- Civil engineer
- Mechanical engineer
- Structural engineer
- Now what?





## JENN'S CAREER TRAJECTORY

- Customer support
- Web developer
  - About five years
- Now what?

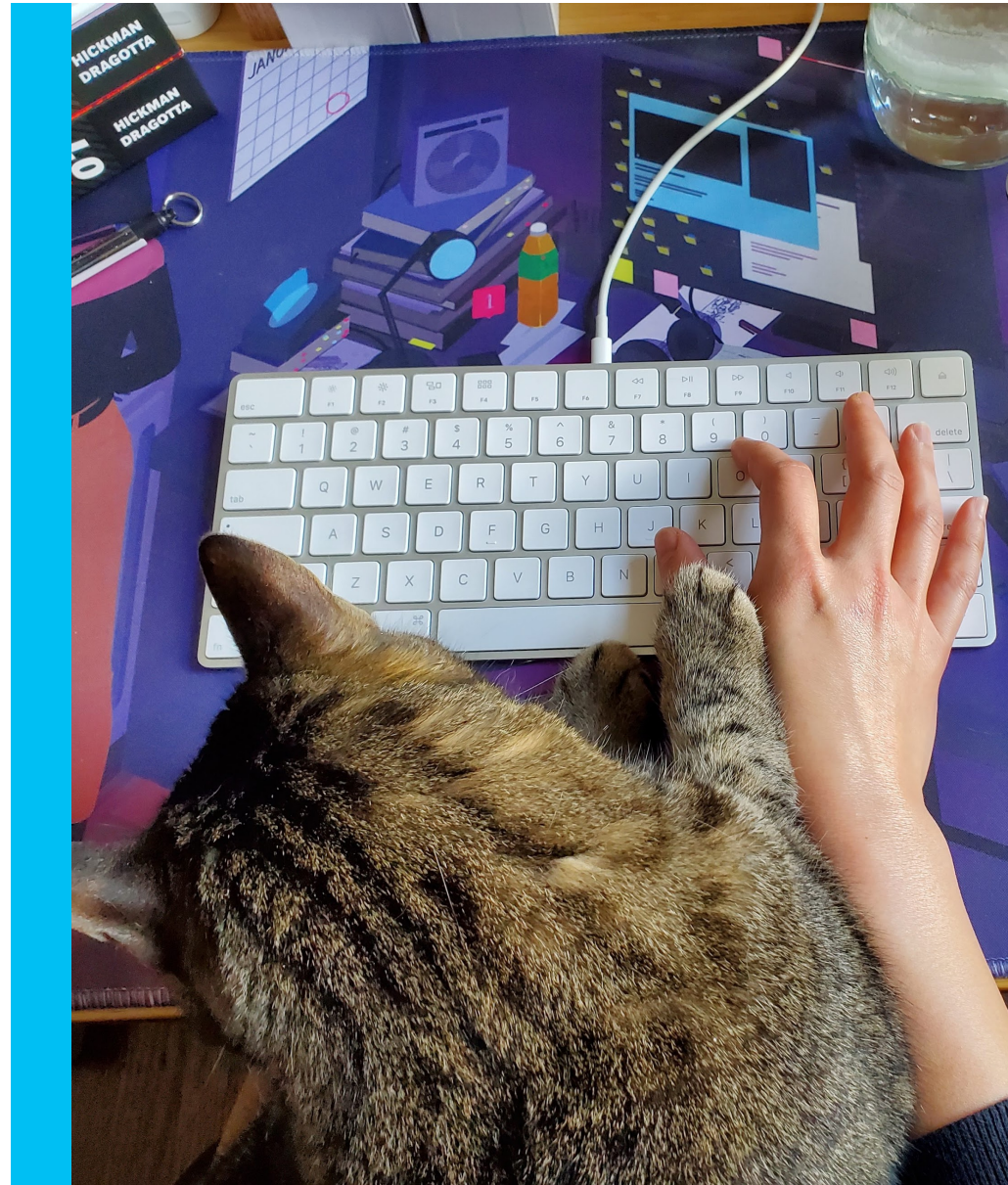


**MANAGEMENT MAYBE?**



# JENN'S CAREER TRAJECTORY

- Software engineer
  - Again.
  - Another three years.



# PANDEMIC

**15% LAYOFF**

**MANAGEMENT MAYBE?**





This is fine.

Creator



jennz0r

Aisle Isle

MA-4723-2382-5142



Custom design

MO-7HQP-6L0R-H666

@jensimmons  
 @kadamwhite  
 @melchoyce  
 @vlh

# SOME KIND OF MANAGEMENT





# FRAMEWORKS

- jQuery
- React
- Meteor
- Backbone
- React
- Ember
- React
- AngularJS



Oh God No GIF By Abitan

# MY PRIVILEGE

## A(NOTHER) DISCLAIMER

# PRIVILEGE

- **Straight**
- **Cisgender**
- **Able bodied**
- **College educated**
- **Financially stable**



# 6 MONTHS

**FROM LAYOFF TO FIRST DAY ON THE JOB**









# MY JOURNEY

## HOW I GOT HERE

# WEIGHING MY OPTIONS

# LET'S TALK



"Khalid" by Stephen Lavoie | Credit: iRocktography, License: [Creative Commons](#)



2X2X2

**TWO CHATS PER ROLE**

# QUESTIONS

- What is your job like?
- How is your role different from being an engineer?
- What core skills are required?
- What questions have you been asked during interviews?
- What questions do you ask during interviews?

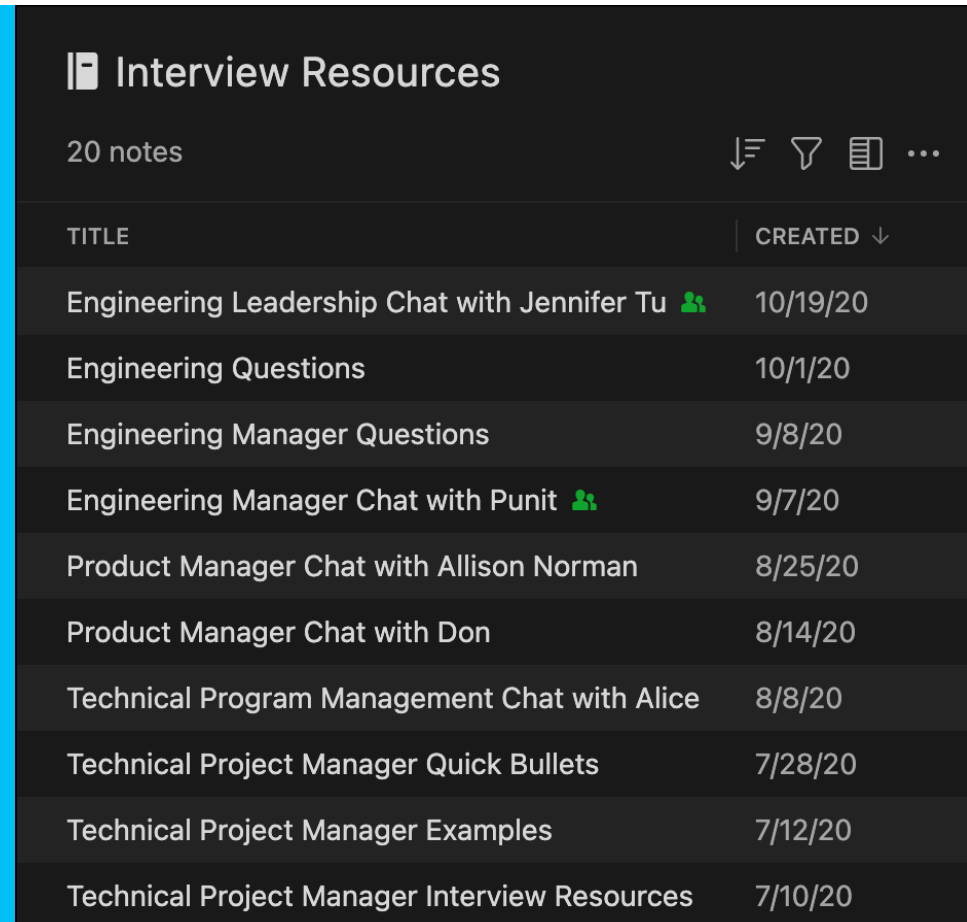


Oh God What GIF By Abitan

## NOTES FROM



# INTERVIEW RESOURCES

- Conversations from July to October



Interview Resources

20 notes

TITLE	CREATED ↓
Engineering Leadership Chat with Jennifer Tu 	10/19/20
Engineering Questions	10/1/20
Engineering Manager Questions	9/8/20
Engineering Manager Chat with Punit 	9/7/20
Product Manager Chat with Allison Norman	8/25/20
Product Manager Chat with Don	8/14/20
Technical Program Management Chat with Alice	8/8/20
Technical Project Manager Quick Bullets	7/28/20
Technical Project Manager Examples	7/12/20
Technical Project Manager Interview Resources	7/10/20

# KEY THINGS I WAS TAUGHT

- There are
-



# THINGS I LEARNED

- Prepare your answers ahead of time.
- Drive the interview
  - Ask your own questions!

**“I’M GOING TO RUN THIS INTERVIEW  
FOR THEM.”**

**- JENNIFER TU**

Art Cat GIF By Abitan



# TELL YOUR STORY

Ensure you emphasize the things that you want to emphasize!



# THANK YOU

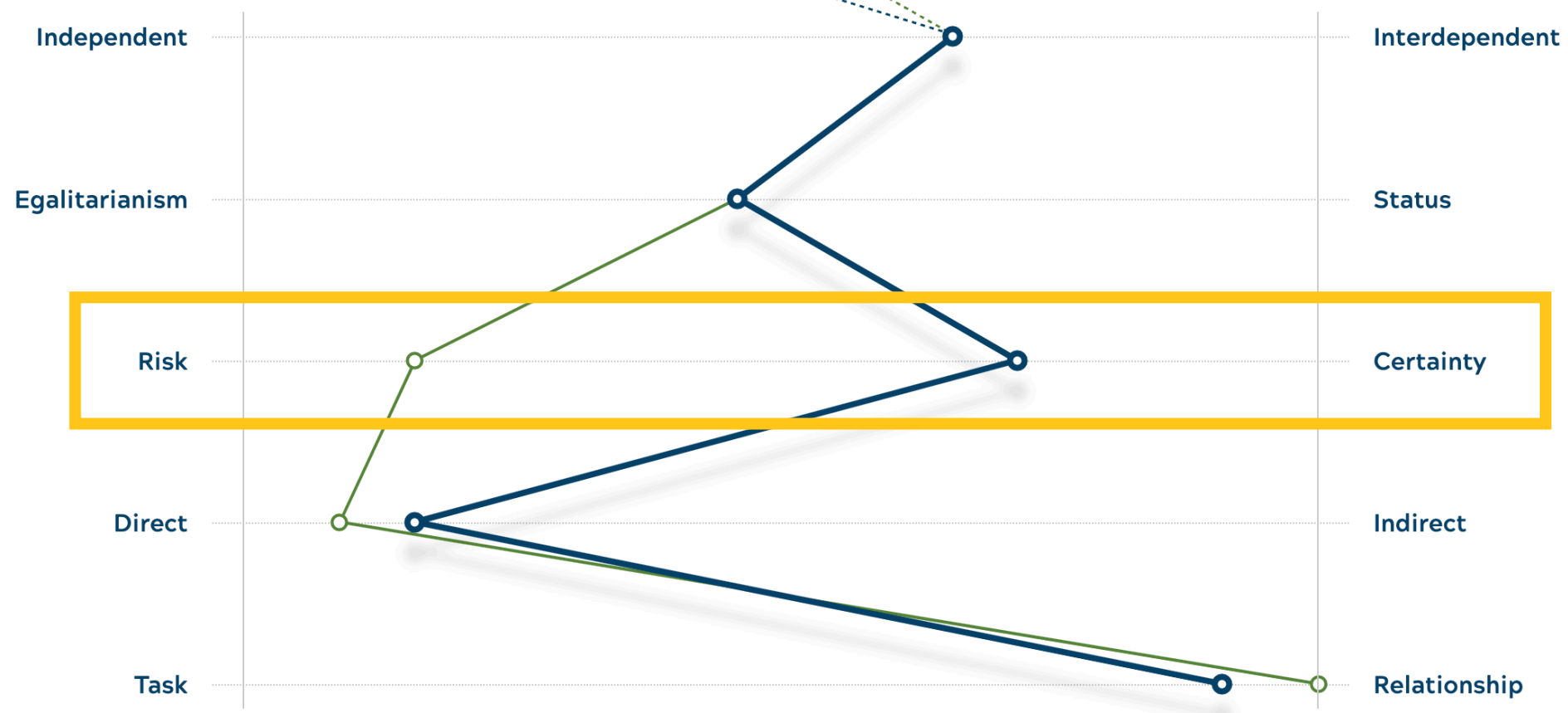
- Abby Y.
- Alice Y.
- Alicia L.
- Alli L.
- Allison N.
- Don W.
- Jennifer Tu
- Julia F.
- Michael S.
- Punit B.



MY PRODUCT MANAGER



ME



# GATHERING INFORMATION

**“DOCUMENT,  
DOCUMENT,  
DOCUMENT”**

**-JENN**

# JENN'S LONG LIST OF PROJECTS

- Company
- List of team members
- Timeline
- Success metrics
- Difficulties faced
- My involvement
- My impact



"Scene from the farce of 'Lofty Projects' (print)" by George Cruikshank is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).



# ONE PROJECT EXAMPLE

- People:
  - 3 BE, 2 FE, 1 Designer, 1 PM, 1 Support Eng
- Timeline:
  - Determined multiple timelines dependent on solution
  - Short term and long term preferred solution
- Success metrics:
  - “Time to First Load” was halved
  - API response time improvements (without third-party tooling)
- Extras:
  - Super vague project that grew out of one ticket
  - Required collaboration between several teams and functions

## Members

### 1. Existing A

#### Work

- FE: Refactor
- FE: Update
- FE: Update
- FE: Update
  - Upda
  - Thes
- BE: Add pag

#### Pros

- Not as much
- Operational
- User perceiv

#### Cons

- FE continues
- FE needs a
- FE needs a
- User perceiv
- Users will st

#### Open Questions

- The member
  - Curre
  - quer
  - If we
  - API b
  - addre
  - Actio
  - What
  - and p



**PUT ME  
IN A BOX**

# CATEGORIES OF TPM SKILLS

- **Business Analysis**
- **Communication**
- **Documentation**
- **Process**
- **Unblocking**

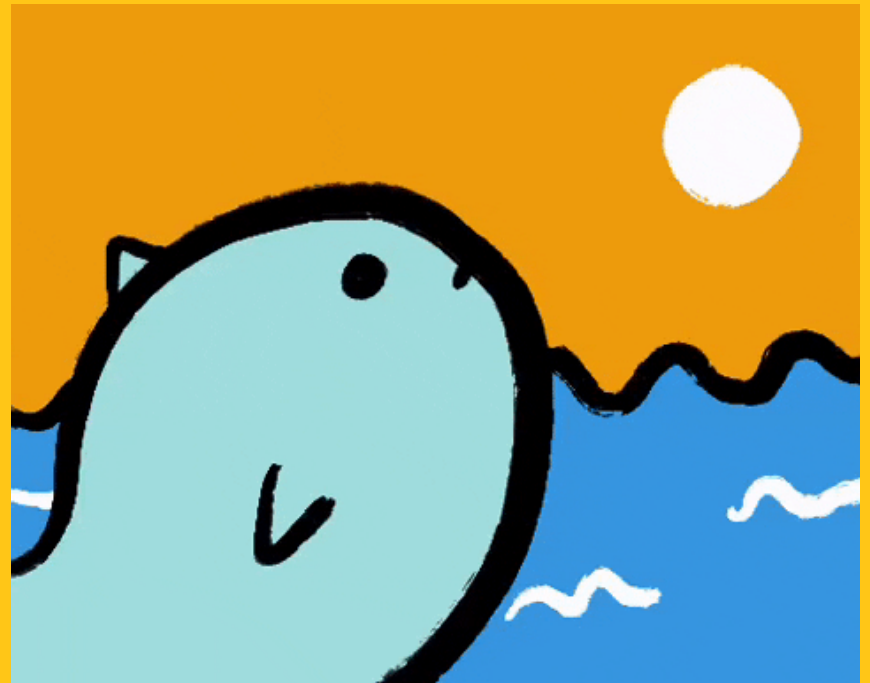
# CATEGORIES OF ENG MGMT SKILLS

- **Consensus Building**
- **Documentation**
- **Hiring & Recruiting**
- **Leadership**
- **Project Management**
- **Strategy & Roadmap**



# CATEGORIES OF PM SKILLS

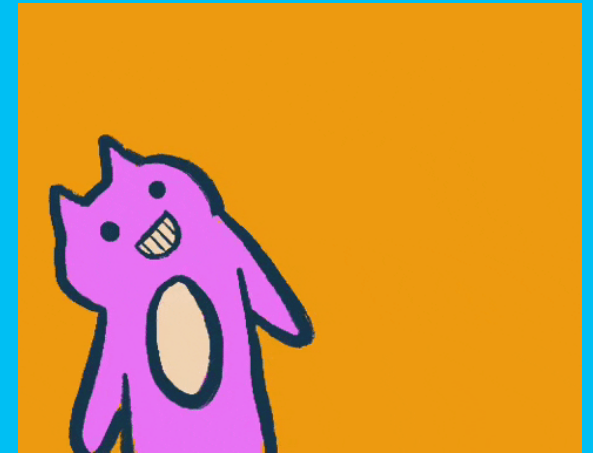
- I gave up.



Oh God No GIF By Abitan

**“EMBRACE:  
‘AM I WHAT THEY’RE LOOKING FOR?’  
‘DO I AGREE WITH WHAT THEY’RE LOOKING FOR?’”**

**-JENNIFER TU**



# RESUME WRITING



Search

2020

LeadDev

- 2014 >
- 2015 >
- 2017 >
- 2018 >
- 2019 >
- 2020 >**

- Wong, Jennifer - Resume 2020
- Wong, Jennifer - Resume 2020 M
- Wong, Jennifer - Resume 2020 PM
- Wong, Jennifer - Resume 2020 PM / PgM
- Wong, Jennifer - Resume 2020 PM 18F
- Wong, Jennifer - Resume 2020 PM 18F
- Wong, Jennifer - Resume 2020 PM copy



**“DO I HAVE THAT SKILL?  
HOW CAN I ACQUIRE THAT SKILL?”**

**-JENN**

## About the role

As a UX Engineering Manager at CrowdStrike, you'll be responsible for the workload management, recruitment, wellbeing, and professional growth of your team members. You'll help foster an open and collaborative environment and support systems to help your team succeed in their roles. You will work with a talented and dedicated team to build and maintain the user interface for the Falcon platform to provide our customers with a high quality user experience that customers around the world use 24/7 to protect their systems from the most sophisticated adversaries.

Our JavaScript framework is Ember, but if you've used React, Angular, or Vue.js, you'll feel right at home, and we'll help you get comfortable with both Ember and our codebase. Since we only support evergreen browsers, we can push the boundaries of what's possible on the web platform while working with truly massive amounts of data. Our ideal candidates are sensitive to the needs of the users and love to find solutions in a unique and dynamic problem space.

We're a highly collaborative, friendly, inclusive and diverse group that prizes collaboration over competition. We provide opportunities to learn new skills, mentor fellow engineers, and contribute to the direction of both the team and the products for which we're responsible. We work in a distributed, remote-first, high-trust environment where you manage your own time and have the flexibility to balance your work and personal life.

<Product Group Description>

## What you'll be doing

- Lead a team of engineers building web application UIs written in JavaScript using Ember.js
- Manage team workload, project resourcing & coordination in a fast-paced, highly distributed environment.
- Support wellbeing of team members - providing support & guidance focused primarily on resourcing, progress, and soft skills. Gather feedback from others, provide coaching as needed & in collaboration with senior engineers to advance team member skill sets.
- Lead and coordinate recruitment process from initial contact to offer
- Maintain visibility into the product roadmap and share that information back to other managers and team members.
- Participate in team activities, such as quarterly roadmap planning, to prioritize projects on the roadmap based on availability of humans to do the work and business objectives that need to be met.
- Have fun solving difficult problems

## What you'll need

- Strong engineering track-record focusing on front-end development & technologies (JS/CSS/HTML) and modern frameworks and approaches.
- Experience mentoring & supporting people and teams with empathy & professionalism.
- Experience tracking and managing multiple projects.

## Bonus points

- Knowledge of and experience with technical teams, cybersecurity, and startups strongly preferred.
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- Have fun solving difficult problems

## Resourcing, Remote work

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- Have fun solving difficult problems

## Leadership/Communication, Consensus Building

## What you'll need

- Strong engineering track-record focusing on front-end development & technologies (JS/CSS/HTML) and modern frameworks and approaches.
- Experience mentoring & supporting people and teams with empathy & professionalism.
- Experience tracking and managing multiple projects.

## Bonus points

- Knowledge of and experience with technical teams, cybersecurity, and startups strongly preferred.
- Experience in remote-first environments.
- Experience or familiarity with Ember.



# ENGINEERING MANAGER

## Software Engineer

- Referred and interviewed over a dozen candidates
- Helped shape interview processes for frontend candidates
- Liaison between Frontend and Backend teams, strategizing and building logical, sustainable API patterns
- Started and managed project for internal application Performance assessment and tracking using Honeycomb and Segment across entire engineering team
- Wrote extensive documentation for onboarding processes, (using third-party tooling, integrating services, and debugging one's development environment)
- Built out user interfaces and FE functionality on Enterprise Permissions for Groups, Spaces, and Connections
- Implemented Frontend Styleguide with best coding practices and linting for entire Frontend team
- Co-lead Accessibility Working Group
- Ran all Frontend Team meetings, making format more efficient and educational, and establishing knowledge sharing across durable teams

**Hiring & Recruiting**

**Consensus, Documentation**

**Technical Expertise**

# PRODUCT MANAGER

## Software Engineer

- Liaison between Frontend and Backend teams, strategizing and building logical, sustainable API patterns
- Started and managed project for internal application Performance assessment and tracking using Honeycomb and Segment including writing out long-term roadmap & strategy
- Wrote extensive documentation for onboarding processes (using third-party tooling, integrating services, and debugging one's development environment)
- Built out user interfaces and FE functionality on Enterprise Permissions for Groups, Spaces, and Connections, experimented iteratively with features using Launch Darkly, and helped prioritize scope to maintain timelines
- Implemented Frontend Styleguide with best coding practices and linting for entire Frontend team after running FE engineering opinions and satisfaction survey
- Co-lead Accessibility Working Group
- Facilitated all Frontend Team meetings, making format more efficient and educational, and establishing knowledge sharing across durable teams

**Strategy**

**Process**

**Consensus, Communication**

**“ALL THOSE SKILLS ARE NECESSARY  
FOR ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT.”**

**-FUTURE JENN, THE ENGINEERING MANAGER**

# CATEGORIES OF ENG MGMT SKILLS

- **Consensus Building**
- **Hiring & Recruiting**
- **Leadership**
- **Project Management**
- **Strategy & Roadmap**
- **Business Analysis**
- **Communication**
- **Documentation**
- **Process**
- **Unblocking**



Cartoon Watching GIF by Abitan

# LATHER, RINSE, REPEAT

**ADJUST YOUR PROCESS**



**PREP YOUR OWN MOCK INTERVIEWS**

# SOME SUGGESTIONS

- Write your own questions
  - Pull from conversations you've had
  - Pull from interviews you've had
- Ensure you have (multiple) concrete examples for your answers
- Reuse examples if necessary
- Consider both positive and negative experiences
  - Focus on what you learned and how you applied that knowledge in the future
- Write a list of your own questions to ask



[Cat Think GIF](#) by Abitan

# GAINING THE SKILLS

# ASK FOR ROLES OR PROJECTS

...that emphasize skills you don't yet have.

- **Work with your manager.**
- **Ask what skill you should learn and why.**
- **Ask to be the tech lead of that next project.**
  - **Or ask for training to get you there.**
- **Check in regularly! Opportunities aren't always immediately available.**

# OR DON'T ASK...

**Become a scrum master!**

**Lead that “guild”!**

**Mentor that stranger!**

**Update interview processes! Write the docs!**

**Build consensus by asking the right questions!**

**Shape that meeting!**

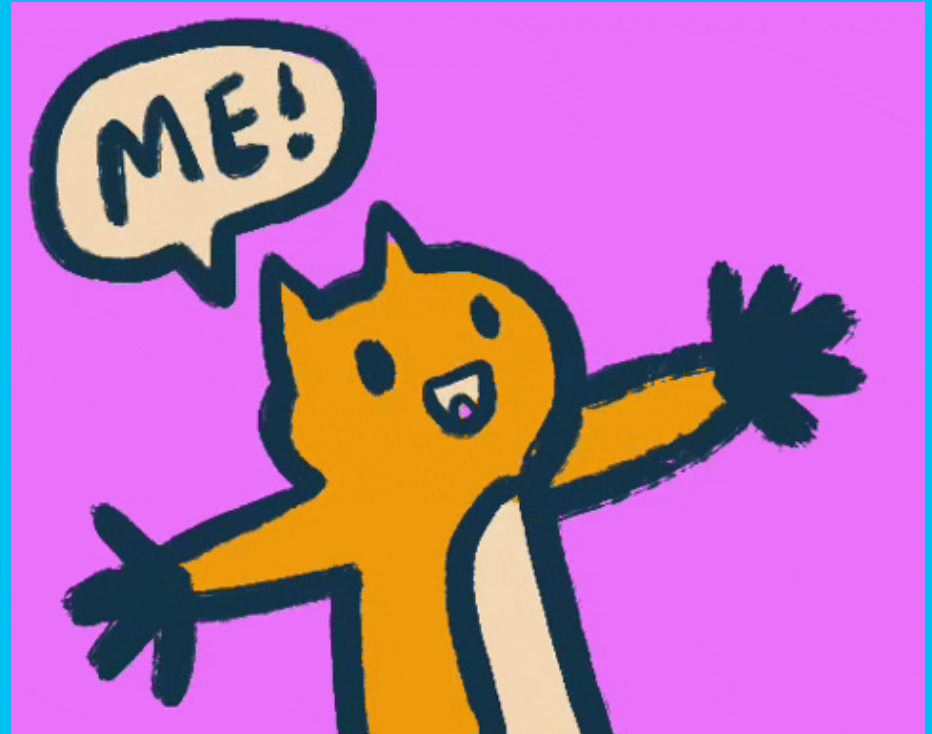
**...UNTIL SOMEONE SAYS TO STOP**



# THE INTERVIEWS

# ALL THE INTERVIEWS

- Architectural design
- Technical engineering interviews
- Peer manager screen
- Fake 1-1
- Singular chat with CEO
- Culture interview with other functions



[Hands Up Dance GIF](#) by Abitan

# WRITE THE DOGS

**KEEP TRACK OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**“IF I CAN DO IT  
SO CAN YOU.”**

**-JENN**



[Moving Black and White GIF](#) By Abitan

# MY PRESENT

## WHAT IT'S LIKE HERE





# ENGINEERING MANAGER



[Well Done Wow GIF](#)  
By Abitan

I did it!

On Dec 7, 2020.

Celebrating Jan 1, 2021  
with sparklers.



## ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT CONS

- “Typical” day
- Many more gray hairs 🧓
- Measuring your own success
- Context switching
- Dropped into a “trouble” team



[Angry Cat GIF](#) By Abitan

 Pinned Tweet



**jennzOr**

@mybluewristband



Engineering management is like...

Choose two:

- \* Recruiting, interviewing, hiring
- \* Keeping reports happy and fulfilled with career path
- \* Managing projects and sustaining engineering
- \* Maintaining technical expertise

But also, we expect you to do all of them.

10:35 AM · Apr 26, 2022 · Twitter Web App

 View Tweet analytics

**245** Retweets   **49** Quote Tweets   **2,227** Likes





**jennz0r**

@mybluewristband



Games you can look forward to as an engineering manager:

- \* Calendar Tetris
- \* Career ladder Frogger
- \* Slack messages Asteroids
- \* Ownership Pong

And among all of those, **Surprise Boss Levels™!**

10:12 AM · Oct 12, 2022 · Twitter Web App

 View Tweet analytics

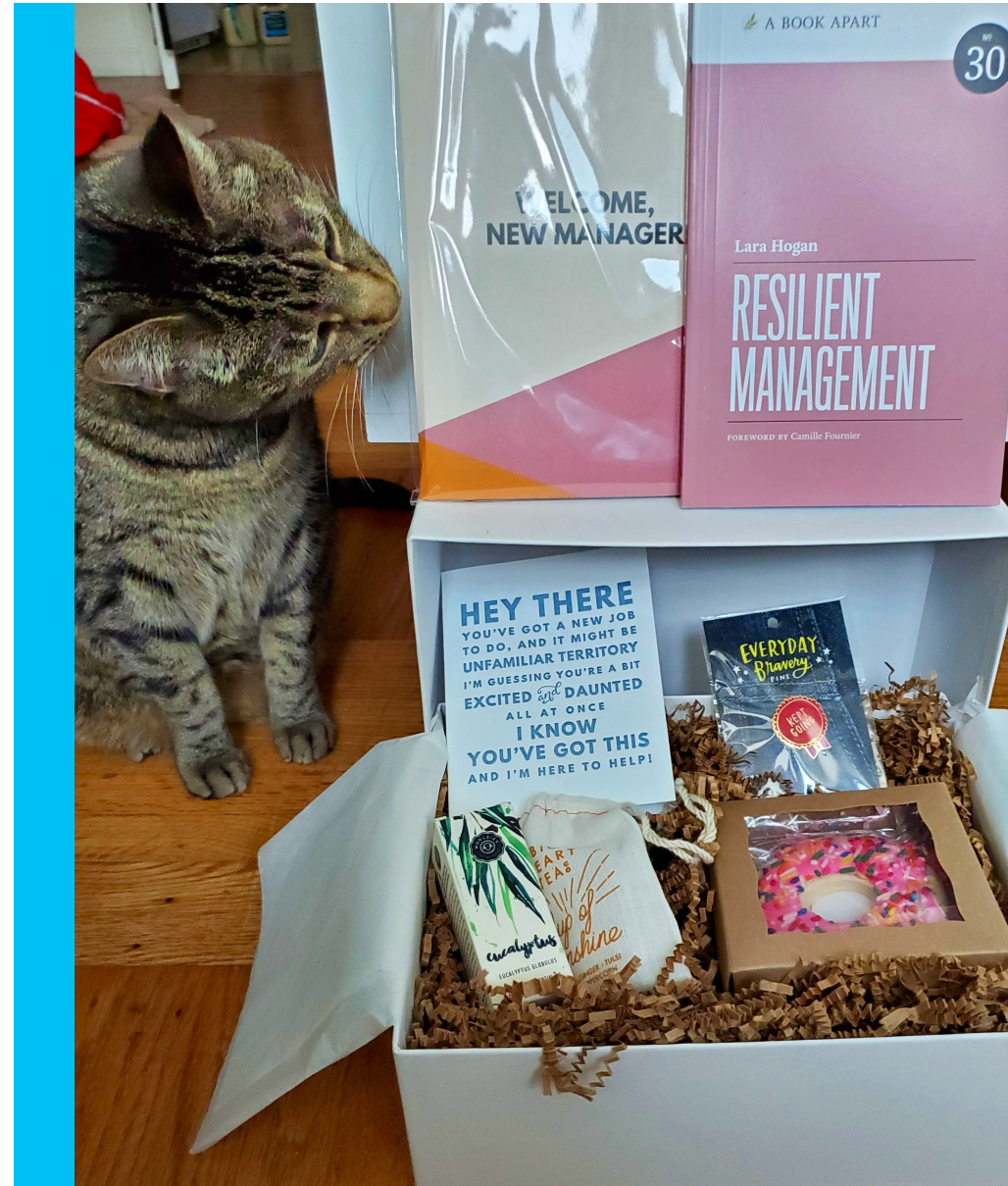
**3** Retweets **28** Likes





# ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT PROS

- Cool stuff in the mail
- Building an entire team
- Promoting people
- Learning from, collaborating across the company
- Solving integrated teams problems
- Setting meal budgets 😂







# Engineering Manager Jennifer Wong on Leading with Empathy and Fearlessness

January 28, 2022 | People and Culture Team | People & Culture



The year 2021 was a big one for Jennifer Wong: It marked the first full year she was in a new role, at a new company, in a new industry. Not only that, it was her first official management role too. After years of working as an engineer, Jenn decided it was time to lean into her potential as a leader and accepted an engineering manager position at CrowdStrike.





WE STOP  
BREACHES

THANK YOU, CROWDSTRIKE! ❤️





[Love You Goodbye GIF](#) By Abitan

**THANK YOU!**

Jennifer Wong  
*CrowdStrike*

@mybluewristband

[linkedin.com/in/  
jenniferewong/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jenniferewong/)

