

Observe.ai Product Design Career Competencies & Levels

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Levels	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Job title	Product Designer I	Product Designer II	Senior Product Designer	Principal Product Designer	Senior Principal Product Designer
Career state	Early career	Experienced	Emerging leader	Leader	Seasoned leader
Years of experience	0-2	1-3	2-5	3-7	4-9+
Focus	Yourself At this level, you shouldn't yet have to think too much about having team-wide impact, but instead focus on developing your own skills.	Your working team Now that you're starting to settle in, you can grow your focus to helping your broader working team.	Your working team(s) At this level it's more likely you're juggling multiple projects across the pillar, and beginning to influence work more broadly.	The design org Here your scope starts to widen outside your core working team and projects and into the broader pillar.	The product org/company At this level, your work and practices start to set the bar and influence not only other designers, but the wider product org and company.
Example work	Design a form that lets users edit their moment configuration. Pretty scoped—assumes there is a workflow, and that the solution takes the shape of a form	Design the best interface for users to edit Moments. The solution could be a form, could be a WYSIWYG inline editor, could be a modal window.	Broad: Design a system for editing conditional logic across everything—Moments, AQA rule, User pilot, etc. Not just Moments, but the editing system should be flexible enough to work across the	Design a solution to increase the efficiency of users among your app. Maybe editing moments isn't even the right thing to focus on for our ultimate goal, maybe a LLM system would be better.	Identify the biggest product problem with your app/company/site and design a solution. At the highest level, the best designers drive the vision for a product.

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			entire Observe UI. Deep: Design a way to get users to want to update Moments. Here, the questions the designer is asking is why should users update Moments? And when? And how to best convey the value proposition?		

PRODUCT SENSE

1.1 Knowledge Product & Technology Domain Expertise	☐ Learn your product area ☐ Know competitors, their solutions, and our gaps ☐ You're building your knowledge of the competitive landscape by spending time with other tools (e.g. conducting audits).	☐ Know your product area ☐ Demonstrate proven knowledge of jobs, how competitors solve them, and where gaps exist ☐ Your industry knowledge and understanding of our users starts to deepen and guide your own work.	☐ Develop deep product and tech domain knowledge of the products you owned and the related products that serves the same persona, and how to solve its problems ☐ Your comprehensive knowledge of industry design patterns deeply impacts your work.	☐ Look beyond your domain to engage with Observe's wider product set ☐ You're an expert in Observe's product space; someone others on the team learn from and seek to emulate. You surface new trends, patterns, and tools to the team regularly.	☐ Be recognized as an expert in the broad domain of customer communications inside/outside of Observe ☐ You leverage your knowledge of the industry to define new patterns and norms when needed; your work has impact beyond Observe.
1.2 Vision Influence Product Vision & Strategy	☐ Understand the vision for your product ☐ Understand our company vision and strategy and the winning	☐ Show your work towards your product vision in alignment with your team ☐ Frame your work to	☐ Refine and improve the long-term direction of how your product evolves ☐ You're starting to	☐ Propose and execute company-level product strategy to resolve questions about the future of our products	☐ Define, influence, and build support for long-term product strategy that situates our future in the context of emerging tech and

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	strategy for your program ☐ You participate in vision activities by generating ideas and helping mock up/frame concepts.	relate back to the long-term goals of the product ☐ You assist PMs and more senior designers in bringing larger strategic vision work to life (e.g. by creating mocks, designing decks, and writing documents).	develop your own POV; you're trusted to own parts of a larger strategic vision, working independently or partnering with others to bring the vision to life. ☐ You proactively organize design sprints or other processes to further define vision if it's otherwise lacking.	☐ You set the vision for your area—solo or with another senior designer/writer—and it's inspiring and motivating to others. ☐ You advocate for your POV at all levels of the organization (e.g. to executives) and can leverage data, storytelling, and visual design to bring stakeholders along.	company growth ☐ You uplevel other designers' vision work, and are entrusted to drive vision for the broadest, farthest-looking projects in the organization. ☐ You help define what's next for Observe—as a product, a business, and a company.



RESEARCH & OBJECTIVE CLARITY

2.1 Objective Clarity Why are we building this? Why we design this way	☐ You ask good questions to understand who you're building for and why. You push for clarity and seek help if you don't get it. ☐ You're starting to flag dependencies and edge cases and question requirements when you're unsure how they support real user needs. ☐ Start all design work with a problem statement, goal, and context	☐ You build confidence in a direction with your eng/PM partners before acting. ☐ State clear problems based on research and data, align the team on them	☐ You drive your own team toward clarity on what you're building, why, and for whom. ☐ Practice first principles thinking to define problems ☐ Write project brief	☐ You handle very complex and ambiguous projects, defining requirements and prioritizing the most impactful workstream even in the face of multiple competing demands. ☐ Practice first principles thinking to identify new opportunities	☐ You set the gold standard for problem definition; your ability to frame and scope projects are consistently clear, thoughtful, and compelling. ☐ You coach other designers on prioritization, managing dependencies, and requirements definition. ☐ Apply first principles thinking to the entire problem space
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2.2 Research Planning, execution, synthesis, communication, validation on Qualitative and quantitative	☐ You're building your knowledge of the competitive landscape by spending time with other tools (e.g. conducting audits). ☐ You have a basic understanding of when and how to validate your work through research. ☐ You ask about success metrics.	☐ Understand the vision for your product ☐ You define the questions to ask and problems to explore. ☐ You're able to interpret metrics and make data-informed decisions	☐ You can do research to validate your own work if necessary. ☐ Data guides your work, and you're able to suggest and question how to measure your work's success.	☐ You know when data and research are missing, and garner them where appropriate to inform your work and the work of others.	☐ You partner with our leads in data and research to identify ways of improving Observe's overall practices around them.



CRAFT

3.1 Visual Look and feel, Information architecture, layout, icon, illustration, visual usability/ accessibility, visual storytelling	☐ You reference industry patterns in your work and are building your knowledge of Observe's design system. ☐ You explore multiple solutions for problems, leveraging our design system for components and styles. ☐ Your designs strive for consistency with patterns throughout the product.	☐ You explore a wide breadth of visual design options and articulate trade-offs with each. ☐ You use industry patterns but know when something doesn't work and can be pushed further. ☐ You are building your understanding on where our system can flex to accommodate certain needs.	☐ Your work has few visual polish and visual usability issues. ☐ You consider all constraints (like responsive design and localization). ☐ Your work is thorough and complete when it comes to all visual details	☐ You work is thorough and complete with edge cases fully thought out—being a role model of accuracy and precision. ☐ You consider how your work and patterns can be utilized by others ☐ You are the owner for the design system of your focus area and effectively partner with the design systems team on the standards.	☐ You see gaps in how our visual system works and help uplevel it. When necessary, you define new patterns and changes to the underlying system ☐ Your peers look to you for your help and guidance on visual design, and you regularly offer feedback to improve work outside your own. ☐ Your visual design principles define the personality and emotional perception of Observe.
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3.2 Interaction Flow, workflow, interaction usability/ accessibility, interactive prototyping, motion/animation	☐ You start to prototype your ideas to bring work to life and illustrate flows more clearly. ☐ You're eager to learn new tools and practices to improve the fidelity of your ideas.	☐ You go beyond click-through prototypes and incorporate animations and transitions across various interactions. ☐ You are familiar with common industry interaction patterns and reference them in your work. ☐ Your prototypes start to feel more like the "real thing" and are higher fidelity overall.	☐ You prototype fluently and quickly and you get helpful feedback from collaborators with them. ☐ Your work is thorough and complete when it comes to all interaction details (like hover/focus and keyboard shortcuts).	☐ You prototype with intentionality and know when to utilize prototypes to effectively communicate your ideas. ☐ You are well-versed in common industry interaction patterns and their nuances across platforms. ☐ Your prototypes help teams make business decisions	☐ Your interaction work defines the bar not just at Observe, but in the SaaS industry. ☐ Your peers look to you for guidance and feedback on improving their interaction work, and you proactively spot interaction issues and offer corrections. ☐ You create frameworks and prototypes that inspire other people to do the same.
3.3 Design Systems Program management & architecture of design systems	☐ You operate within a well-defined part of a complex system given documentation, and you ask for help when you need it. ☐ You methodically investigate or audit part of a system, and summarize findings. ☐ Know the fundamentals of system design ☐ Talk with colleagues affected by your work	☐ You ask about success metrics. ☐ You consider edge cases when designing for complex systems. ☐ You document part of the complex system and onboard other people. ☐ Start solving inter-connected problems in our products	☐ Your designs are holistic and consider complex cases of existing systems. ☐ You are comfortable collaborating with engineering and PM to understand a system completely and improve it. Own/fix complex design and FE technical debt ☐ Evolve our products to be better and simpler	☐ You aim to simplify and unify systems when appropriate to tame complexity—you can justify exceptions to the system and understand/explain their consequences. ☐ You proactively bring up Design System improvements opportunities across Observe.	☐ Your work defines and documents new complex systems for others to use, while retaining systemic simplicity. ☐ You see connections between sub-systems (e.g. grid and typography) and can lead projects to bring them together. ☐ Define the future UX architecture of Observe's products

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4.1 Communication Written, verbal, and interpersonal skills	☐ You're responsive, pleasant, and proactive in your communication across all channels. ☐ You present your work in design reviews clearly in a way others can understand. ☐ Your design documentation is easy to follow, and you participate regularly in conversations at the team level.	☐ You're growing your storytelling abilities; your presentations have a clear narrative, good context setting, and you're building your skills at leading meetings confidently and effectively. ☐ Your written communication is clear and concise.	☐ You present work with solid rationale and confidence. ☐ You lead meetings effectively, and could represent Observe well externally. ☐ Your written communication is compelling and clear. ☐ You're growing skills at conflict resolution.	☐ You're a strong storyteller and able to influence and persuade at any level of the organization (e.g. to executives). ☐ You're able to communicate candidly and kindly, and build rapport with all kinds of work partners—even difficult stakeholders. ☐ You coach other designers on written, verbal, and interpersonal skills.	☐ You're an exceptional storyteller, and able to uplevel other designers in this area and the team as a whole. ☐ Interpersonally, you de-escalate conflict effectively and can smooth out thorny projects and push teams to alignment.
4.2 Process Expertise Efficiency, feedback & building processes	☐ You share work regularly and ask for feedback on your working style and on the work itself. ☐ You triage feedback on your work and ensure follow-ups. ☐ You work to resolve situations when you're not looped in at the right times. ☐ Work with others to get unstuck	☐ You have a clear process: it's easy for work partners to know your priorities and predict the cadence of your work. ☐ You're starting to work more independently. You know how to manage bandwidth, and speak up if your plate is full. ☐ You triage feedback diligently; nothing falls through the cracks.	☐ Your process is adaptable and efficient. You generate and maintain momentum. ☐ You handle feedback thoroughly and gracefully, and know when to change direction vs. staying the course. ☐ You're becoming proficient at managing stakeholders and regularly work without close oversight. ☐ Run meetings with owners, agendas, action items, and followups	☐ You influence processes at the team level, and delegate well. ☐ You handle high volumes of feedback on your own work effectively. ☐ You're a role model for stakeholder management, effectively managing executive involvement when necessary.	☐ You coach other designers on their process and uplevel the team as a whole. ☐ You help create and influence our feedback culture at the company level. ☐ You coach other designers on stakeholder management, especially with executives. ☐ You able to observe any product dev related process gap and able to initiate new processes

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4.3 Impact Influence quality & measure impact	☐ You're building an understanding of the business and its goals. Your work aims to solve key user problems, and you're starting to connect your work to business goals. ☐ You follow up post launch to assess your work's impact and effectiveness. ☐ You file bugs when you spot quality issues.	☐ You understand how your work contributes to the business and prioritize accordingly. ☐ You address post launch issues and make suggestions to improve your impact. ☐ You host bug bashes for your projects.	☐ You help drive roadmapping and planning conversations and have a deep understanding of how your work connects to business goals. ☐ You work with appropriate urgency, consistently pushing projects forward. ☐ You file bugs not only for your team but for other teams as well to prioritize quality.	☐ You push to make the highest impact possible with your work, and you can make a successful business case for it. ☐ You have greater confidence to make UX strategy and decisions, while you are maturing your decision making process ☐ You start to take on projects outside of your core responsibilities. ☐ You help your product area with overall improvements to its quality control to be sure work is high quality and reliable.	☐ You help others understand the business. ☐ Your UX strategy and decisions have a high chance to be correct , with strong process and rationale. ☐ You identify opportunities for design to create new value for the business and garner resources to act. ☐ You own the bar for UX quality at Observe.



BEHAVIOR

5.1 Leadership Mentorship, ability to influence and drive change	☐ You are coachable and observe how your manager and senior peers are giving actionable feedback.	☐ You routinely help other designers/writers on the team grow, through your feedback or through skill shares. ☐ You offer suggestions on how our product and processes can improve and help implement solutions.	☐ You're starting to uplevel other teammates skills through more formal coaching and mentorship (e.g. interns or more junior designers/writers). Others actively seek your feedback, and listen to your guidance. ☐ You drive initiatives that	☐ You lead by example—never hesitating to get your hands dirty (e.g. riffing where helpful and guiding others toward action). ☐ You've implemented and sometimes defined team processes like critiques and team meetings.	☐ You're a leader at Observe, with impact on the business and culture across the organization. ☐ You uplevel other designers' leadership skills, building more design leaders within the organization.
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5.2 Value & Culture Building design oriented culture. Embody We, Own, Grit, Agile, and Customer First			improve our team's workflows and the lives of other designers.	☐ You are regularly sought out for mentorship even outside your team.	
	☐ You volunteer to help out with team programs, like hosting ice-breakers. ☐ You participate in company culture activities	☐ You suggest and implement team culture improvements. ☐ You help plan team cultural initiatives, like offsites.	☐ You're an owner of our team culture, suggesting new rituals and activities to bring us together as a team. ☐ You participate in some hiring activities, like interviewing candidates and design exercises. ☐ You are nominated by your colleagues to represent one or more of Observe's values.	☐ You represent design as a leader to the rest of the organization, by giving feedback on process and culture ☐ You actively participate in hiring, whether through interviewing, sourcing, or suggesting improvements to our processes. ☐ You are nominated by your colleagues to represent the majority of Observe's values.	☐ You represent Observe externally whether through conferences, blog posts, or other channels. ☐ Your work and presence attracts top talent to the organization; some people join Observe because they're excited to learn from you. ☐ You are referenced frequently as an example of Observe's values.