

Interview with Mr. Ryan Nebeker

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Interviewee: Mr. Ryan Nebeker, Senior Project Manager at Tango Analytics

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Interview:

We began by discussing Mr. Nebeker's background. Mr. Nebeker studied at Brigham Young University for his undergraduate BA, and majored in Japanese. Afterwards, Mr. Nebeker studied at the University of Minnesota - Carlson School of Management, where he earned his Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Management Information Systems. After completing his education Mr. Nebeker was a Project Manager at NEC Solutions where he was able to utilize his education in Japanese to communicate with the offshore Japanese Dev. Team. Later he was a Project Manager at Tririga, where he was a part of creating a Workplace Management Solution for the FBI. Afterwards, he was a Project Manager in IBM Global Services, where he implemented enterprise software solutions. He later became a Senior Project Manager at ValuD Consulting LLC, where he was in charge of implementing IBM's TRIRIGA IWMS enterprise application software. He is now a Senior Project Manager at Tango Analytics.

We then discussed what project management was and what it entailed. Project Management is centered around the idea of seeing a project from start to end ensuring that it happens within time constraint and stays within the allocated budget. Mr. Nebeker related it to the snowball effect — you will start off with one small project but once you complete it and show your skills you will get another larger project and so on so forth. Eventually, with more and more successful projects under your belt you can build your reputation and can get closer to executive positions. Project Management also comes with its risks, as if a project fails the project manager is responsible, but with great risk comes with great rewards as Project Management has more lateral movement than many other jobs.

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We also discussed what skills would be helpful to have as a Project Manager. Mr. Nebeker mentioned that some key skills and characteristics include organization, delegation, and being analytical. Organization would be important when working on projects, large or small, as there are often many moving parts that have to work in sync to ensure that all constraints are met and are done in a timely manner. Delegation is a useful skill and imperative to completing a project, as there is not enough time for a single person (the project Manager) to complete every part of a project by themselves; they must be able to delegate to ensure that every part is completed by the deadline. Analytical skills are important because the Project Manager is managing a large machine in theory with multiple people and multiple components, and they must be able to find and reduce inefficiencies and make risk assessments to ensure that the project stays within its constraints.

After having a thorough discussing about project management, we moved towards talking more about technology. We discussed his thoughts on where technology was headed, Mr. Nebeker pointed out 3 main technologies: Artificial Intelligence, RFID, and modified reality (AR, VR, and MR). Mr. Nebeker was interested in Artificial Intelligence's ability to help with analytics and machine learning and the impact it could have on big company acquisitions. He also mentioned the potential of modified reality as it is redefining entertainment, but also could have a major impact in enterprise applications like warehouse management.

Overall, talking to Mr. Nebeker was a great experience as it exposed me to an alternative path that could be taken with a computer science background that was more towards the management side and not the development side.