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Describe your overall duties/responsibilities as a Program Manager:

I work for Microsoft Managed Desktop which is a cloud-based service that brings together Microsoft 365 Enterprise that provides expertise on deploying, managing and securing PCs, and focuses on bringing users the best modern experience. A key responsibility is to set the vision for the 'what', 'why' and 'how' that needs to be built and working with my Software Engineer counterparts to get the product shipped. I also represent the voice of the customer to ensure that the features and products my team ships meet their needs every step of the way. This is done through creating technical specifications for feature requests and understanding what the core problem is we are trying to solve for.

Explain the skills/abilities that are required for being successful in your role:

Being a successful Program Manager requires a variety of skills as it is a highly collaborative role that has me working with individuals from across the company. A key skill that is a must in my position is leadership; being able to lead a team with no direct authority and influencing

the direction of your feature/product. Additionally, communication is key to ensure the voice of the customer is heard and that I am accurately communicating back to the team. Finally, not only do I need to understand 'what' needs to be created but also deeply understanding the 'how'. Although I am not coding day-to-day, I still am able to create proof of concepts/prototypes for my feature.

What advice would you give to students who are considering majoring in Computer Science & Engineering?

Being a CSE student does not necessarily mean you have to become a Software Engineer. Work with your strengths and explore other opportunities that you think are better suited for your passion in the field. Getting a degree in CSE means more than just that you can code, it develops the foundation of technical knowledge that will help you begin your career and the ability to continuously learn and adapt. Participating in student organizations, working on your own personal projects and taking on internships are all great ways for you to learn what you enjoy doing and what path you see yourself on for after graduation. Overall, just be curious!

