

Karen Stevens

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SUMMARY

Seasoned manager with over 20 years' experience in software development. Skilled in multi-disciplinary employee management across international lines, with a passion for employee career development, resulting in high employee satisfaction ratings.

Experienced with agile methodologies and other lifecycle models. Self-starter who appreciates innovation (6 patents), process improvement, flexibility, and versatility. Experienced in many job families, including product management, program management, and more.

EXPERIENCE

Technical Director, Gearbox Publishing, 11/2022 – 8/2023

- Created CVAA and European Accessibility Act compliance documentation for Embracer Group subsidiaries
- Created and presented pitch decks for potential new products
- Evaluation of game milestones using a variety of criteria, such as legal compliance

Director of Accessibility, Electronic Arts, 10/2020 – 5/2022

- Company-wide evolution of previous EA Sports Accessibility Lead position, with all prior responsibilities expanded and additional headcount for a business analyst, quality designer, user researcher
- Directed overall strategy, documents, schedules, and roadmaps for game accessibility at EA
- Worked with first parties on accessibility platform features and certification requirements
- Oversaw cost and feature analysis of potential third-party tool and service solutions

EA Sports Accessibility Lead, Electronic Arts, 8/2017 – 10/2020

- Managed EA Sports Accessibility Team, including a consultant, writer, engineer
- Managed sprint schedules, long-term road mapping, executive reports, pitches, press
- Analyzed games and provided disability-related recommendations for EA Sports
- Created feature briefs and roadmaps for EA Sports titles, such as Madden NFL, FIFA, NHL
- Collaborated with legal to ensure titles followed government regulations, such as CVAA
- Pitched and launched ea.com/able website to better fulfill alternate game interaction needs
- Engaged with customers directly via twitter, ea.com, email, conference talks

Madden NFL Software Engineer / Product Owner, Electronic Arts, 6/2013 – 8/2017

- Accessibility features, product owner & developer, i.e. colorblind support, game element resizing, haptic feedback options to aid totally blind players, etc.
- Product ownership included feature briefs, scheduling, long-term planning, design
- Augmented UI cross-team architecture effort, bringing together presentation, UI, graphics
- Performed variety of shader work, significant support to character skin, monoliths, banners
- Ownership of graphics disk space usage, graphics memory; creator of related tracking tools

Software Engineer, Microsoft Corporation, 5/2005 – 4/2013

- Tech Lead for multi-platform Xbox Avatar development, including web and mobile
 - Led international team, worked with local teams for large-scale cross-team collaboration
 - Specified overall architecture, interfaces, design, user requirements
 - Managed software engineer headcount
- Tech Lead for all 11 games that shipped with Windows 7
 - Includes Minesweeper, Solitaire, Hearts, Spider Solitaire, FreeCell, Chess Titans, Mahjong Titans, Purple Place, Internet Spades, Internet Checkers, Internet Backgammon
 - Created team's work/feature schedule; collaborated on requirement creation
 - Implemented majority of DirectX UI; also worked on game play
 - Orchestrated both cross-team and international collaboration during entire lifecycle
- Game Developer, Project Spark, Xbox 360, Xbox One, Windows
 - Graphics developer, focusing on particle effects, materials, lighting, character creation pipeline
 - Content pipeline tools support, Maya, 3ds Max, Granny, Havok, C++, XML, HLSL
 - Placeholder artist; creating meshes, characters, animations, particle systems, skyboxes, materials
- Miscellaneous Projects
 - Xbox platform code development for Kinect-enabled dashboard
 - Created DirectX shipped sample, including a performance tools tutorial
 - Created new/updated PIX for Windows DirectX Shimming detours for DirectX11 support

Software Engineer, Guidant Corporation, 6/2003 – 4/2005

- Tool development for implantable medical devices, such as pacemakers

EDUCATION

- Master of Engineering, Software Engineering, 5/2003, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University
- Bachelor of Science, Computer Science, 5/2001, Michigan Technological University

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- Patent author with 6 granted patents, detailed at <http://KarenStevens.com>
- Repeated top-rated speaker at the Game Developers' Conference, detailed at <http://KarenStevens.com>
- Top manager satisfaction survey score, leading to 2022 manager award nomination
- Won 2018 EA company-wide "Inspire the World to Play" award
- Won 2017 EA Tiburon Studio Innovator award

SKILLS

Accessible Design, Adobe Acrobat, Adobe Photoshop, Agile Methodologies, Automation, Benchmarking, Budgeting, Business Analysis, Business Planning, Communication, Confluence, Cross-Platform Development, Data Analysis, Employee Career Development, Executive Pitches, Gantt Charts, Google Docs, Google Sheets, Hansoft, Inclusive Design, Innovation, Jira, Leadership, Legal Compliance, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Office, Microsoft Word, People Management, Pitch Decks, Presentations, Problem Solving, Process Improvement, Product Development, Product Management, Product Vision, Program Management, Project Management, Public Relations, Risk Analysis, Road Mapping, Scheduling, Scrum, Software Development Lifecycle, Software Engineering, Spreadsheets, Strategic Planning, Strategic Thinking, System Requirements, Technical Leadership, UML, Universal Design, User Experience Design, User Experience Research, Waterfall Model, Workflows