James Gottschalk

Senior Engineering Manager

PERSONAL DETAILS

Denver, CO

404-944-5844

James@jamesgottschalk.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Results-driven Engineering Manager known for taking on and transforming diverse engineering teams into high-performing, growth-focused units. Expert in cross-functional strategy and alignment, partnering with Product, Design, and QA to define and accelerate high-impact delivery roadmaps. Highly adept at people-first leadership, including comprehensive coaching, career development, and process improvement to foster high-trust, technically excellent environments.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Senior Engineering Manager

CallRail | Atlanta, GA | Apr, 2025 - Present

- Functioned as a transformative Engineering Manager across multiple, distinct teams, swiftly defining new team strategies and driving cross-functional alignment with Product, Design, and QA to accelerate delivery of high-impact features and strategic initiatives.
- Served as Engineering's AI Strategist, navigating an ambiguous landscape to conduct cross-functional diligence and define a roadmap for the strategic adoption of AI tooling, reducing technical debt and improving code quality.
- Established and published engineering standards and guidelines for Generative AI tool usage, clarifying approved vendors and aligning AI-assisted code production with security and intellectual property governance requirements
- Represent Engineering in company-wide OKR planning and review process, clearly communicating team progress, challenges, and needs to executives, product, and cross-discipline stakeholders.
- Serve as hiring manager for multiple open roles: screen hundreds of resumes, coordinate and conduct interviews, and make final hiring recommendations to grow a diverse, high-performing team.
- Provide mentorship and career coaching to developers of varying experience levels, resulting in improved retention, internal promotions, and increased team engagement.

Engineering Manager

CallRail | Atlanta, GA | Nov, 2022 - Apr, 2025

- Managed a Platform/SRE team responsible for building and maintaining reliable cloud infrastructure and developer tooling, ensuring uptime and scalability for core business services.
- Implemented team processes for effective project delivery and on-call management, enabling better prioritization and operational stability.
- Regularly coached and developed engineers, facilitated cross-team collaboration, and championed continuous improvement across engineering practices.

QA Analyst, QA Manager, and QA Architect

Big Nerd Ranch | Atlanta, GA | Aug, 2019 - Nov, 2022

Promoted through a series of progressively senior roles, from the company's first QA Analyst to QA Manager and Quality Architect, as the QA practice rapidly expanded.

- Hired as Big Nerd Ranch's first-ever QA professional, establishing QA as a core practice and building out a successful, fully billable QA team that grew from a single resource to 10+ members supporting multiple client projects.
- Designed and implemented QA best practices and agile testing processes across diverse web, mobile, API, and hardware projects, leading to measurable improvements in product quality and client satisfaction.
- Developed and maintained the QA career progression framework, providing clear growth paths and fostering professional development for direct reports.
- Led all aspects of QA team hiring, onboarding, training, and management—screened hundreds of resumes, conducted interviews, and mentored team members, directly contributing to team expansion and retention.
- Partnered with sales and technical leadership to make QA a key component in digital product development projects, representing QA capabilities on technical sales calls and helping secure new business.
- Completed advanced management training, strengthening conflict resolution, coaching skills, and driving a positive, collaborative team culture.