

# Mike Long

Design Director / Bainbridge Island, WA, USA

+1 (512) 671-0974  
mike@mikelong.design

## Shortcut

1 yr 5 mos

Director, Design  
May 2021 – Sep 2022

Functional Leader of Design Department at Shortcut, which included Product Design, Brand Design, and User Research. Reported to CEO

- Drove initiatives across Marketing, Product, and Engineering to build a coherent and consistent end-to-end user experience to increase Shortcut's product-led growth and compete with Jira, Linear, etc.
- Introduced brand perception research initiatives and brought insights back to the company. Implemented the insights to evolve our brand and make it more appealing to prospective customers.
- Doubled activation and conversion through a more effective product onboarding experience using no-code/low-code techniques.
- Developed a department-wide career ladder for ICs and managers. As a result, the design department had the highest employee retention (excluding involuntary leave) across the company, even though costs remained flat.
- Built a cross-functional design system team and launched a public-facing design system site that improved designer-to-developer hand-off so that teams could deliver more customer value per development sprint.
- Elevated User Research to the leadership level by creating a Head of Product Insights role with an additional researcher headcount, allowing researchers to drive organization-level initiatives across Sales and Marketing while product team researchers drove initiatives with feature development teams.
- Created and filled two specialized roles: Design System Lead and Growth Design Lead to ensure the right people were in the right seats.
- Attracted and hired Product Designers with deep experience in SaaS and consumer products to help give Shortcut a competitive advantage through a better user experience than Jira.
- Created a usability testing standardization framework and self-service model for usability testing so that user research could focus on strategic projects. At the same time, development teams could get direct feedback on their work without any user research resource constraints.

## GitLab

1 yr 5 mos

Manager, Product Design  
January 2020 – May 2021

Led a team of 7 designers who worked across eight cross-functional teams.

- Enabled 20+ teams to release on a steady and frequent cadence by leading iterative and experiment-driven practices, such as organizing and facilitating cross-team/cross-functional user experience design workshops.

- Collaborated closely with Product and Engineering leaders to improve culture and processes after a rapid 600% headcount growth across product, engineering, and design.
- Mentored designers on best practices, such as engaging early and often with Product and Engineering.
- Identified critical usability issues and collaborated with teams to test and deliver improvements for a better overall user experience as measured by the System Usability Scale score.

**Sabbatical**  
Apr 2019 – January 2020

World travel, adventure, and story development for a sci-fi/fantasy epic inspired people to start a mindfulness practice.

**Pivotal**  
4 yrs 8 mos

Manager, Product Design  
Aug 2014 – Apr 2019

- Led a team of 6 designers and researchers across multiple offices.
- Led the Pivotal R&D design practice through rapid growth from 75MM ARR to over 750MM ARR within four years.
  - Grew the headcount across multiple offices from two to twenty product designers, including user research.
  - Collaborated with over 20+ stakeholders and 60+ teams to ensure optimum staffing across multiple offices.
  - Owner of the end-to-end hiring experience.
  - Coached and mentored direct reports into higher career levels
  - Hired and staffed research roles.
  - Organized and facilitated remote design critiques.

**Neo Innovation**  
9 mos

Advisor, PM, Designer  
Dec 2013 – Aug 2014

- Led client engagements with enterprises adopting experiment-driven innovation methods.
- Product Manager and Designer on fast-paced business model validation projects.
  - Advised clients (designers, developers, and executives) on experiment-driven innovation.

**ThoughtWorks**  
4 yrs 4 mos

Lead Consultant & Designer  
Aug 2009 – Nov 2013

- Product design consultant working with Fortune 500 companies on mission-critical projects. Domains included:
- Enterprise developer tools
  - Consumer finance
  - Air Travel

**Advisor**

I help early-stage startups build their founding design team.

**Mentor**

I'm an ADPList and Springboard mentor, working with individuals starting their design careers.