

Hi P—Priya Desai—

twelve years is a long time to spend anywhere, but somehow with you it feels like twelve years of momentum rather than miles on a clock.

You arrived in 2014 as a Product Owner with a backpack full of notebooks and one burning question: “What problem are we really solving?”

We learned quickly that wasn’t a rhetorical question.

It was a compass.

And, fittingly, we’re giving you an actual one today—engraved, so you can’t hand-wave your way out of directions anymore.

2017 was the year you convinced half the company that “Nova” was not only a code name but a destiny.

Nine months later, one million users agreed.

You said, “We’ll earn it the unglamorous way—one customer problem at a time.”
We did.

And you quietly shared the credit like it was free refills.

By 2018 you were a Product Manager, then Senior PM in 2019, but titles never caught up to the size of your shadow.

You built our roadmap ritual—equal parts therapy session, truth serum, and plan—and somehow made it feel obvious.

Then you started the quarterly customer council, and suddenly our debates got shorter and our answers got better.

Funny how listening works.

I can’t not mention the “brb, saving a launch” saga.

You changed your Slack status, disappeared into a war room with two engineers, a QA lead, and an increasingly emotional stack of pizza boxes.

Forty-eight hours later, rollout back on track.
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Postmortem written so clearly it became required reading.

My favorite line from it: “We didn’t lose time; we spent it learning faster.”

Classic P—no drama, just delta.

What I admire most isn’t one launch or one ritual—it’s your values, worn in like good running shoes:

Customer obsession, even when it meant saying “not yet.”

Candor with care, the kind that cuts fluff but never people.

A bias for action that made “later” feel like a foreign word.

And the way you empowered others so thoroughly that half the team now asks your question before you do.

Outside of work, we all learned to spot you by your hobbies:

Long-distance runs before most of us found our keys.

Sourdough experiments that turned half the office into crumb critics.

Travel photos that made our offsites look like film sets.

And an ongoing chai tasting tour that, frankly, should have had a loyalty card.

So here’s to your new chapter—retirement, with your definition of rest:

May your race routes always have shade,

your sourdough always rise,

and your camera always catch the golden hour.

May every trail you pick be as intentional as the roadmaps you drew for us.

And may that compass—and the race bib holder the team picked out—remind you that you still set the pace, just on your terms.

P, thank you for the standard you set and the questions you taught us to ask.

We’ll miss the voice that starts meetings with, “What problem are we really solving?”—

but we know you’ve already helped us solve the most important one:

how to keep going, the right way, when you’re not in the room.

Congratulations, Priya.

Run well, rise often, and don't forget to look up at the light.

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