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Matt served as U.S. Deputy National Security Advisor from 2019 to 2021. In that role, Matt coordinated the full spectrum of national security policy. Before that he served as the NSC's Senior Director for Asia, where he led the administration's work on the Indo-Pacific region, and in particular its shift on China policy.

Before his White House service, Matt spent the late 1990s and early 2000s in China as a reporter for Reuters and The Wall Street Journal. He then fought in Iraq and Afghanistan as a U.S. Marine during three combat deployments between 2007 and 2010. Following active duty, Matt ran Asia research at Davidson Kempner Capital Management, a multi-strategy investment fund in New York.