Common UI/UX designer interview questions

and their actual meaning

Screening questions

- What you've been up to?

  Where are you heading?

  [an informal way of asking for a short summary of what you've been working on in the last couple of years and why are you looking for a new role]

- Why are you looking for a new role?

  What type of company do you want to work for?

  What is your ideal position?

  [aspect A: they want to know if they have similar circumstances for which you would leave them, too; aspect B: they try to figure out if you'd be a bad hire no one could work with]

- What is your current role/responsibilities?

  What kind of project have you been working on (in the recent years)?

  [they want to hear that you're doing similar things that you'd be doing at their company, so you know what to do]

- Are you comfortable with hands-on tasks?

- What are you looking for in your new role?

  What is your ideal position?

  [they want to know if the circumstances and progress paths they can offer (or can not) would fit – they likely won't reveal]

- What salary are you looking for?

  [they have an exact budget range, candidates who fit into will be sent forward – numbers are rarely revealed by the interviewer]

- What is your current salary?

  [🚩 beyond boundaries: never give away your current salary! If the agent is pushing it very arrogantly but you still would like to proceed with the position, give them the same number what is your expected salary]

- Why are you interested in this role?

  [they want to know if you read the job spec and/or the company description at all… so just pick one line from their communicated brand values and repeat it back]

- Are you more of a UI or UX designer?

  [they want to know what missing skills they can cover with you, use percentage you're comfortable with to describe where you lean towards, e.g., 30% UI and 70% UX designer]

- Do you have management experience?

  [🚩 hidden responsibilities: if it's not a manager role and yet they're asking about experience in such field, they likely try to buy 2 workforces for the price of one and will give you extra responsibilities you won't be compensated for]

- Are you considering both contract and permanent positions or only one of them?

- Do you have a portfolio link?

- Can you send us your updated CV?

- There would be a small task for this position, I guess it's ok for you, right?

  [🚩 poor management: Homework is asked when the hiring managers have no clue how to select candidates, so they hire merely based on the amount of free work one delivers (they call it passion or enthusiasm). ***Also used to generate free ideas, very often without any hiring intention at all – such job scams are very common! ***]

- Do you have any question for us?

  [no question means no interest, if you like them, put out some technical questions, at least repeat the most important terms to confirm you listened]

Professional interview

- What do you know about our company?

  Have you checked our website/social page?

  Why did you apply to this position?

  What did you like about our company / What gets you excited about the company?

  Why do you want to work here?

  [they want to know if you're a serious candidate who knows whom he/she's talking to… so just pick one line from their communicated brand values and repeat back]

- Have you downloaded / registered with our product?

  What do you think about our website / How did you like our website?

  [🚩 free consultation: some interviewing team tries to gain extra insight about their product during the interviews, not rare that they present their most pressing design issues they couldn't solve to gain ideas from the candidates. The candidate whose idea is useful, will NOT be shortlisted, because that would reveal they used his/her idea]

- What are your key professional strengths? (please provide 2 answers with examples how they affect the outcome)

- What do you know about the role?

  [aspect A: they want to be sure the screening interview introduced the position properly and you're there for the right reason; aspect B: they want to know whether in your view you're a fit for the role]

- How did you get into your previous position?

- Tell us a bit about yourself / your background / ambitions.

  [they want to hear that you're a dedicated designer immersed in the profession, and not doing it because it pays better than working in a restaurant]

- Have you worked in an Agile environment?

- What is your greatest strength and weakness?

  [aspect A: they want to know if you're clear about your values, that's a sign of a person with strong work experience; aspect B: they want to be sure none of them would conflict anyone in the current team]

- What would coworkers say about you?

  [they want to hear that you were such an integrated part of the team, hence will be at their company, too, that you know how others see you]

- Why do you want to leave your current role?

  [***it's always asked in the screening call, it's a sign of unreasonable insecurity in their hiring process when asked again in the professional interview***]

- What is your salary expectation?

  [it's always asked in the screening call, when repeated during the professional interview they likely want to double check you're in their budget at all]

- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

  [they want to be sure you're looking for the same carrier path they can offer – very rarely revealed]

- What do you like to do outside of work?

  [🚩 beyond boundaries: this question steps beyond the framework of a professional interview, you're going to be judged as a person. Be very careful with what you share about yourself!]

- Why should we hire you?

  [🚩 power game: this is a classic rat-racing question, openly calling you replaceable and pulling you into a toxic self-worth proving circle, at the same time revealing that they pick based on personality instead of competence, not recommended to proceed with such company]

Behavioural interview

[🚩 poor management: If you're a UX designer you know that the followings, notoriously referred as behavioural questions, are in fact attitudinal questions, requiring a lot of time to recollect and a great rapport to be shared. None is available during a job interview. Instead, they push most candidates to create stories on the fly, while most hiring managers judge based on their very own personal preferences. Not a good sign getting these questions in an interview.]

- Tell us about a time when you simplified a complex situation or problem. What made you seek out a simpler approach?

- Tell us about a time when you were unsatisfied with the status quo. What did you do, how and why?

- Tell us about a time in the past when you've owned a process end-to-end.

- Tell us about your feedback style (both giving and receiving feedback). Give us a specific example.

- Tell us about a time when someone disagreed with your ideas/projects? How do you deal with being backed into a corner?

- Tell us about the time when you worked with a difficult person.

- Tell us about the time when you persuade someone.

- Tell us about the time you created a goal and achieved it.

- Tell us about the time you have managed conflicted priorities.

- Tell us about the time you disagreed with someone.

- Tell us about the time you surpassed people's expectations.

- Tell us about the time you had to handle pressure.

- Tell us about the time you had to learn something very quickly.

Portfolio review

- Walk us through one of your projects.

- In your opinion, how should a good design process start? Why?

- Why did you design it in this way, why is this box e.g., here and not there?

  [they want to know you had rationales behind the design decision, instead of guessing. Tell them honestly if you can't remember such details anymore.]

- What would you change on that design now?

  [they want to hear that you care what comes out of your hand]

- What is your ideal role in the product development process?

  [they want to see if it's the same position they have for you – rarely revealed]

- What tools do you prefer to work with and what do you love about them?

  [they want to know you're adaptable and open to learn new tools if they use different ones]

- What product design principles or philosophies have most influenced your career and how did they change your thinking?

  [they try to measure the level of your theoretical background]

- Introduce your work flow.

  [they look for overlaps with their workflow]

- What is your best/favourite project and why?

  What accomplishment are you the proudest of?

  Describe your most challenging project?

  [they try to measure the level of complexity and type of product you're comfortable to work with]