

Learn about UX design portfolios

Start a UX design portfolio

Start to develop a personal brand and online presence

Practice networking

- Video:** Network and find a mentor  
5 min
- Reading:** Develop a UX design network  
20 min
- Video:** Overcome impostor syndrome  
4 min
- Reading:** Learn more about overcoming impostor syndrome  
10 min
- Video:** Catherine - Conquer impostor syndrome  
4 min
- Practice Quiz:** Activity: Practice networking  
1 question
- Discussion Prompt:** Ideas for networking  
10 min

Week 5 review

## Develop a UX design network

Networking is an important part of finding your first job and building your career. Knowing the right people can help you learn more about UX design, explore areas where you might want to grow, and even open doors to job opportunities.

You may also find a mentor. A **mentor** is someone in your field who gives you advice about your career. A mentor is often someone who has many years of experience in their field, so they're a great source of information for a less-experienced designer.

With all of this in mind, let's review some places where you can start creating your professional network and find a mentor!

### Where to meet professionals

#### Online

To network with professionals, you need to know where to look. Social media is a great place to start. LinkedIn is one of the most popular online platforms for meeting people in your field, and it's designed to help professionals build a network. LinkedIn has groups for professionals in the same industry to connect and discuss relevant topics. Try joining these groups and getting your name out there! To get started, check out this [group](#) [↗](#) for UX designers on LinkedIn.

Twitter is another place where many UX designers network. Start by following some UX designers whose work you like. You can also join the conversation by checking out #uxdesign or #ux.

In addition, platforms like Dribbble and Medium are built specifically for designers to discuss UX design and share their work with the design community. Using these sites is a great way to get involved in up-to-date discussions on UX design and meet people along the way.

#### In Person

There are lots of opportunities to network in-person.

- Networking events are a great way to meet new people in your industry since everybody's there with the same goal - to network!
- Lectures or seminars are great networking opportunities because there's usually time provided to chat with other attendees.
- Get to know peers in UX design classes, like this certificate program! You can meet your fellow classmates through the discussion forum.
- Join a UX-focused meet up, like [these](#) [↗](#) virtual and in-person events set up through the Interaction Design Foundation, that are free to attend and open to everyone.

Any opportunity you have to meet new people is a chance to network. You never know, the person standing in line with you could be a senior UX designer with a job opportunity!

### How to reach out

Imagine you've been joining online communities for UX designers, and you found the profile of a professional that you'd like to speak with to learn more about their career. What should you do? Well, here are some pro tips for reaching out to professionals online.



### Fill out and update your profile

UX designers are more likely to respond to your message when they see that you're a real human who's interested in UX design. Having a fleshed-out profile, complete with a link to your portfolio, gives them a good idea of who you are.



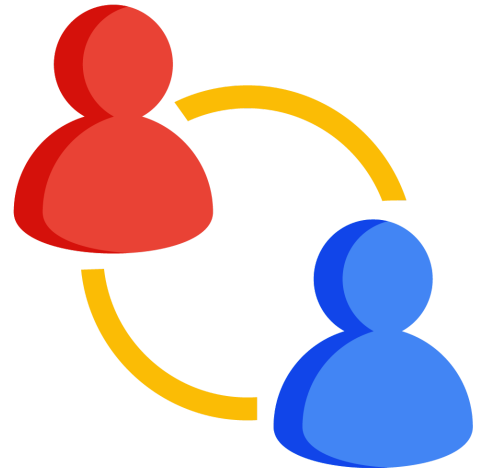
### Introduce yourself with a personalized message

You're looking to make a personal connection. Write a sentence or two about yourself and try to add something that the other person can connect with. Let them know that you're new to UX design and looking to learn from a more experienced designer.



### Keep it short

Most people are less likely to read a very long email or message from a stranger. Keep your message concise and to the point.



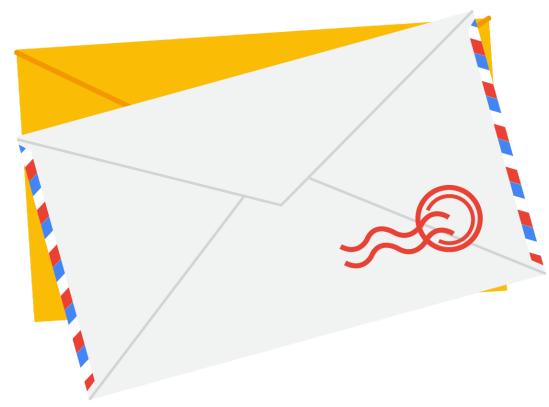
### Don't ask for a job

Don't expect to get a job from networking right away. Instead, focus on creating genuine connections with UX designers to help you learn more about the field. Getting a job referral from someone may come later in the relationship.



### Be clear about what you want

While you shouldn't ask someone for a job right away, you can be clear about what you want out of the relationship. If you want to know more about a position at their company, what it's like to be an interaction designer, or tips to improve your portfolio, say that!



### Say thank you

You should always thank the person for taking the time to read your message.

Putting in the time and energy to expand your network leads to connections that could be valuable to you now and in the future. You never know what opportunities could spring from a new connection! Remember too, that you can always return to the people in your network to review your portfolio once it's more developed.

If you want to learn more, check out these [10 templates for LinkedIn messages](#) [↗](#), which you can tailor to fit your own personal story. These cover almost all of the scenarios where you might want to reach out to someone for the first time.

Use your newly refined networking skills to find a mentor (or two) and some peers to bounce ideas off of. You can do that both online and in person by following the tips outlined in this reading. You've got this!

#### Mark as completed

