Overview of the UX design interview process

Making it to the interview stage of the job search is exciting and a huge accomplishment. You've worked hard to make it this far!

When you begin the interview process, you want to be prepared for every point along the way. There are multiple steps in the process for landing a UX design job. Let's preview each one!
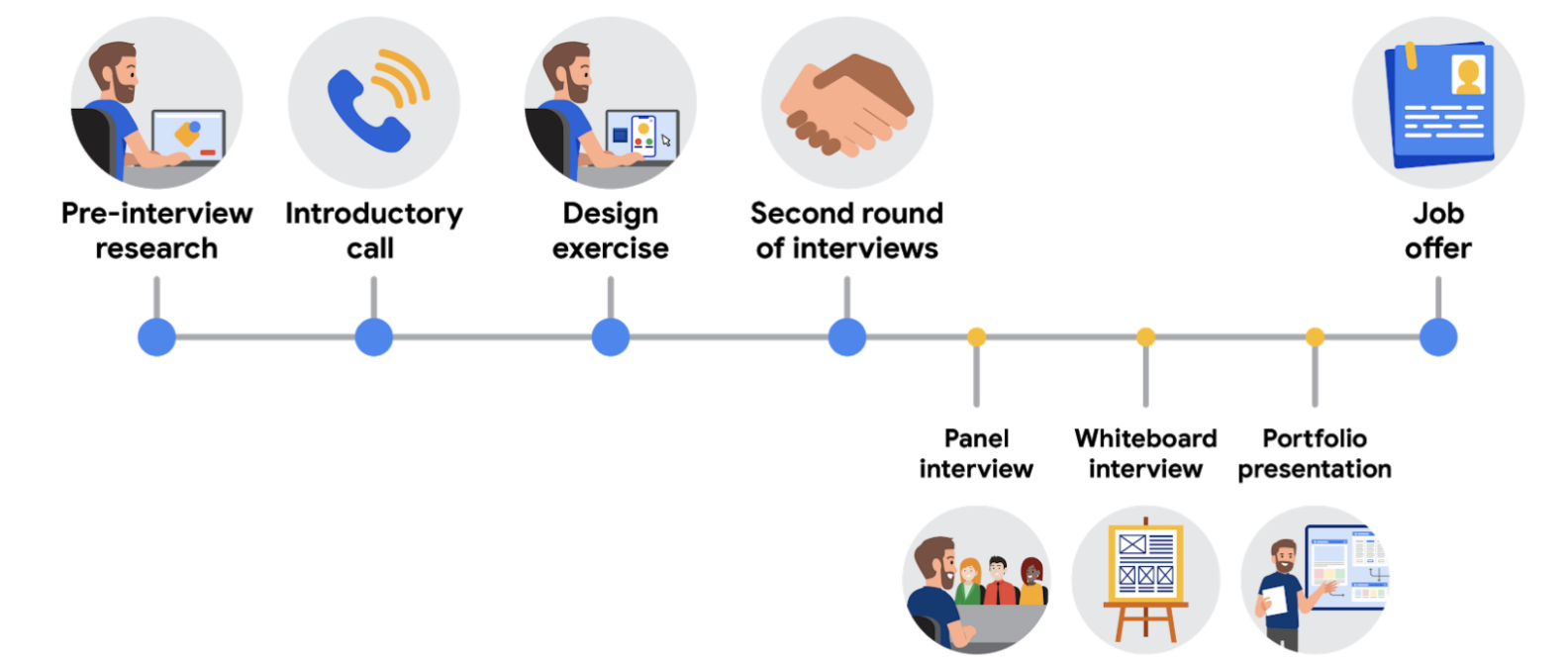
Pre-interview research: After you apply and before your first interview, you should conduct research on the company and the job. This is the first step in learning more about the role and preparing to answer interview questions. Plus, it's a good way to know whether you're a good fit for the position!

Introductory call or phone screen: The first interview is often in the form of an introductory call with a recruiter or hiring manager. The purpose of this call is to verify whether you meet the minimum set of requirements for the role.

Design exercise: You might be asked to complete a design exercise before your next interview. A design exercise is a prompt asking you to create a design that solves a specific problem, just like the Sharpen prompts you've been completing through the program! You'll usually conduct the design exercise from your own home and will have a certain amount of time to complete the exercise. We'll share more details about design exercises later in the course!

Second round of interviews: During the second interview, interviewers and hiring managers will explore your experience in more depth, so that the team you're applying to can understand how closely your background fits the specific role.

Panel interview: A panel interview is a type of interview that's common during the second round of interviews. You'll meet with a group of people at the same time to assess your skills and learn more about how you interact with a group of people.

Whiteboard interview: During the whiteboard interview, you'll really showcase how you work as a UX designer. This interview includes a practical demonstration of your skills in real-time for interviewers to understand your thinking process and overall abilities. If you were asked to complete a design exercise earlier in the process, you might not be asked to complete a whiteboard interview too. We'll share more details about whiteboard interviews soon.

Portfolio presentation: You'll present your portfolio website, explain your background in UX design, and talk about your case studies, including the user problem you were solving and your takeaways were from the process. We'll share more details about portfolio presentations later in the course.

Job offer: The final step of the interview process is the job offer. This is when the hiring manager asks you to join the team!

Advice from Google and beyond

Experienced career teams and recruiters have written a wealth of resources to help UX designers and others prepare for the interview process. Whether you're interested in exploring a job at Google or you're looking for a role at a smaller company, you'll find some valuable information. You'll learn to express how this program has prepared you for a role in UX design, what you've created for your portfolio or even outside clients, and what you'll bring to the role at the company. Check out these resources:

- Prepare for Your Google Interview: UX Design ↗. In this video, Googlers share targeted advice for the UX designers preparing for their first interview.

- How to get a job at Google, interview questions, hiring process ↗. In this article from Googler Don, you'll review the steps of the interview but from a different perspective.

- How we hire ↗. This extensive collection of materials from the Google Careers team outlines every step of the hiring process, from the job search, to the application, to the offer letter, and everything in between, including a deep look at how to prepare for interviews.

- How to prepare for a UX Interview: Tips from a hiring manager ↗. This non-Google focused article, from UX Collective, goes over the interview process in extensive detail, including some questions to ask and some questions to prepare to answer.

- UX Portfolios: Preparing for Interviews ↗. This video from the Nielsen Norman Group explains how to prepare your portfolio for interviews, since one of the most crucial steps in the process is presenting and defending your portfolio of work.

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