



Last Moment Tutions

How to Become UI/UX Designer

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Career in UI/UX Domain ft. Abhinav Chhikara

Interview Series : A new initiative by Last moment tutions to get industry knowledge and career path of different domains.

1. What does a UI/UX designer do?

- UI and UX are different fields but now-a-days it's done together.
- UI is User Interface design and UX is User Experience design. And in design, we're talking about apps and websites.
- For example: UI Design, look at the current YouTube interface..there's a description beneath the video and on one side there are comments, this is the UI, but not necessary it would've looked the same! Chats could've been beneath, description somewhere else, so why not this layout? Because, the current layout that we have is the most optimal one!
- Every little element has it's own focus, like the subscription button, why is it red? It's red so that people would notice it.
- So this is an UI..but normally we think that frontend developers do all these things but no. Web developers work or the implementation of the app, but the decisions..like what should be placed where, that's the job of UI developer.

- Here is a very funny example: Let's say, WhatsApp. Whenever we want to send anything to our friend's group but instead we mistakenly send it to our family group, what will you do? Delete it of course! So my friend once did the same mistake and in haste, instead of 'Delete for everyone' he clicked on 'Delete for me'. Now what? You're stuck. Can't do anything at all.
 - This is an example of bad UI. So now this situation where you deleted for me instead of deleted for everyone and all this things, who thinks about them? The CEO of WhatsApp? Of course not! The Web developer? No! But the designer does!
 - So such experiences zeroes down to the UX and now, the designer has to work on as to how he/she can take away this drawback and let the user accomplish their task.
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2. So, web developer is different right? They just execute while the decisions are being made by the designer? They both are different, right?

- Yes! Both are different.
 - People often get confused saying how designer and developers are different?
 - The thing here is, in college projects, a single student can be a developer, the designer of the project, everything.
 - But when we go to companies, specializations are required.
 - So there, if a single person designs, develops, it'll be more time consuming and even confusing as to what to focus on.
 - So companies have made this split that UI designers will design the apps and websites whereas the Web developer will convert it using HTML, CSS, JavaScript or any other frontend language.
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3. So I keep getting these questions that "I'm in CS/IT field, but I'm not inclined towards programming. So what career path should I choose?" So is UI/UX a good option for someone who doesn't like programming?

- Personally, in all of my UI/UX designing roles, I've never performed any programming, I've only designed.
 - But it's not like programming is present or not. There are some companies require programming, but not majority of them.
 - For instance, UI developer's role and UI/UX designer's role is different. UI developer has to code but not UI designer.
 - And this is a type of field where you don't need a college degree.
 - I don't have a design degree. I myself have hired so many designers when I was the Design Head at Unacademy and most of them, 90% of them, didn't have a design degree but they were self-taught.
 - They were from Architecture, Commerce background or other engineering fields and UI/UX is something that you can learn it yourself, you needn't have a degree, it isn't mandatory to not have a degree, but optional, and even if you learn by a degree, there's possibility that you might learn something more as an advantage.
 - Rest there's no hard and fast rule to have a degree.
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4. Suppose I'm in First Year or Second Year Engineering, how can I start with UI/UX design?

- So on my YouTube channel or even on the description of this video, there's a link, where I've made a list of Design Crash Course. So if you view that playlist, you'll get to know.
- Yet, I'll say, when you start with this, there will be too many definitions and concepts which are quite difficult to understand. Eg: Information architecture, wireframing, design process, etc.
- Even for tools, you'll get to learn about many tools.
- So first and foremost, you must learn the Design Tool.
- When I had started in 2010, everyone was using Photoshop, but right now, using Photoshop for UI/UX will only complicate it. Of course it's a very powerful tool, yet it'll complicate things.
- The tool you need to use is Figma. It's a pre-tool. It's available on browsers or any PC.
- Some people use Adobe XD which I personally never advice people to use. There's also, Sketch, which works only on Mac, but Figma is the main tool.
- One can start making screen, any website. But this is just step 1. Once you know that you have to use Figma tool, you know need to think HOW and WHAT you'll design, the basic ideas. This is where theory comes into picture.
- There are certain rules in UI design, eg: Rules of Android vs IOS, standard rules, patterns, practices etc.
- Coming back to the question, first, learn figma, later you can start exploring yourself.

- Then you must start practicing, copying. Eg: Take a screenshot of a certain webpage, say Facebook, and try to recreate it. So when you try to recreate yourself, you'll get to learn the depth of the tools.
 - Like when someone tries to learn to play a guitar, he/she plays songs by other artists first, similarly, try to copy and learn in depth.
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5. So once a person has learnt the Figma tool and had practiced on it as well, what after that?

- OK so there are 2 things that can be done at this point:
- 1. Freelancing: One can start freelancing as there are many clients who are looking for web or app work.
- 2. Internships: One can apply for internships and I say it's a very good idea as there, you get to work with other designers. They are more experienced and you get to learn from there and that way you can learn faster.
- But the main question here is how can one get into internship? How to portray the skills?
- So when employers look out for interns, they check your "portfolio".
- What's a portfolio? Its a collection of your work wherein you can portray your skills and you can show your work in it.
- Because employers don't take the risk of hiring any person just like that. But if you have done projects on your own, you can get the confidence.
- Usually freshers have this nervousness and under confidence as they think companies need experienced people. But you need to work on conceptual projects yourself and try to make case study. So there must be 2-3 case studies in your "portfolio".
- OK so now, "Case study", to understand this term let's go back to the WhatsApp example, the UX drawback, this drawback becomes a problem statement. You need

to solve this drawback through your case study. 'How WhatsApp can delete the accidental delete experience' you can work on this case study, understand the problem and come up with a solution. There can be also another case study like a 'Report' feature, so that the Admins get notified about some wrong activity which other people in the group aren't comfortable with.

- So these are examples of case study, you can make screens on Figma for it as a solution.

6. So where can one upload his/her portfolio?

- The simplest way to do it is you can make your portfolio on 'Behance'. It is free of cost and it's just like operating Instagram.
- Other than that, many people publish their articles and case studies on medium.com.

7. How to pitch people on LinkedIn?

- So there are many people on LinkedIn for jobs so the competition is more. So according to me, the best approach is personalized approach.
- Let's say, if on LinkedIn someone posts an idea for a design, post an interesting idea through comment, something that can gain their attention.
- Another example, if someone posts something on LinkedIn and you get the idea of making an interesting case study from it, just like one of the people from my community..Kunal Shah, he once posted on LinkedIn that 'What if Spotify was for food' which means, what if Spotify would suggest you food based on your mood. Many people started commenting, "Haha, funny, xD" etc but 1 person took it up as a case study, designed the screen, the Spotify UI, and fulfilled the needs and posted it on LinkedIn. Kunal Shah saw it, shared it, and soon the guy started receiving job offers from companies.

- So such actions that make you stand out, you must think yourself!
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8. So the job path we know how to get it done, what about Freelancing in UI/UX, how to start off with that?

- There's this thing, that a lot of projects in your early career, is a big bonus.
 - If you're in college, obviously applying for a full-time job is not possible, and because of this, what people think that they have 3 long years in their hand, and for now, they can just chill.
 - But what you can do is, in those 3 years, you can make a portfolio for yourself which would ultimately increase the chances of you getting a job.
 - Hence people do freelancing, as it is temporary, 1 week project, 1 month project and you get paid for it! Paid for learning!
 - Typically, even on LinkedIn, if you reach out and decide on what project you can work on, how much time period and thus you can gain attention by working on Freelance Projects.
 - Apart from these, there are platforms like Upwork, but there's a lot of competition in Upwork.
 - So on Upwork, for 1 project you send 50+ messages to people. So for getting 1 project you need to apply for 50-100 projects and from them, 4-5 will revert back to you and then you can settle for 1 of them according to your criteria.
 - So you can try even there and there are other platforms too.
 - But keep in mind that your Portfolio holds great importance! So the more your portfolio increases, your chances does too!
 - Try on platforms and off-platforms as well. Try on LinkedIn, I personally have a discord server, even there you can get freelance projects, twitter, through friends, you can get projects from anywhere, this is how you can explore.
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9. But there is one drawback for many people, those who cannot communicate, put their self out there. Even though they have the talent, approaching people for them is quite tough. Ant tips on that?

- OK so there's this thing, that in India, a person who is giving us the project is considered to be very great, almighty type, and we tend to talk to them meekly instead of talking confidently.
- But we need to understand that it's not like they're giving and we're taking. It's an equal transaction, they're looking for someone who can solve their problem.
- And when the interview is taking place, its two-way, you need to analyze whether you want to work with the opposite person or not. If if they say no, you can 10 other people to talk to.
- But when you show desperation or something due to the thought of scarcity in your mind, it affects your communication too. And nobody wants to be in that situation.
- Stay in abundance of opportunity, like you must be confident enough that if this interview doesn't work out, you have opportunities at other places too from where you can choose yourself.

10. Like in other fields, are there levels in UI/UX designing too? Like post wise to say?

- As a freelancer, it's just UI/UX designer, that's a very common term and sometimes it's Product Designer, roughly they're the same thing, as the product they're talking about are the digital products.
- So if you're freelancing, roughly, that's the only term you need.
- But when in company, there are levels.

- When you join in initially, you're just a Product Designer, then you might get into Lead Product Designer, the Senior Product Designer, and eventually you can get into design management.
 - But if you're a beginner, there's no need of knowing all these as of now.
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11. Can you tell about the general average salary a UI/UX designer gets in India?

- So starting from the bottom, the least can be between 2-5 LPA (Lakhs per annum).
 - So if you're getting 2-5 LPA, that means your portfolio isn't that strong or maybe the company isn't that big yet.
 - Average is 5-10 LPA.
 - Let's say, you're applying for a startup, they'll pay you 6-7 or 8-9 LPA, and these I'm talking about freshers, and on the top, the best case scenario could be 10-15 LPA.
 - If you go for Ola, Swiggy, etc they might pay you 10 LPA, but of course the bar is higher over there.
 - So 10-15 LPA is on the high end.
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12. What you just mentioned was for freshers, but if the same person works for like 4-5 years, what after that?

- The starting salary affects your next salary, that's there.
- So if you've started off at 7LPA, the same company, after a few years, as an appraisal, could pay you 9LPA.
- But if you have your skills enhanced by then, you can switch and earn 12LPA too.
- So basically, your starting salary determines your trajectory.
- Besides that, with 2 years of experience, you can expect in the range of 12-15LPA, with 3 yrs of experience, you can expect around 20LPA, 5 years of experience, it gets

into 20-30 LPA range and after 5+ or 10+ years, there are people who are making crores even and when you get to that point, you're not just getting salary, but also stocks.

- And these companies are startups, which grow really fast and they have annual fundraisers too, so at that point, you get to earn 50LPA and some people even earn in crores.

13. Can you tell about the scope of this? Initially when you began, there wasn't much scope for it in India, but now one can get opportunities not just in India, but from all around the world. So what's the scope for UI/UX designing like?

- Currently there are so many startups.
- What we used to do on the Internet 5 years ago? There was no swiggy, one had to call to order food or even go themselves to get the order.
- Since Jio, the graph of Internet users has just kept on increasing. So right now, in India, there's a lot of Internet users coming online.
- There was a big response from cities of course, but now, even small cities are coming up and hence Indian entrepreneurs see an opportunity of making Indian products.
- Since market is increasing, there's an expand in Indian entrepreneurs too.
- Most of the Indians right now use global products, apps like WhatsApp, Facebook, etc which are designed by designers from US, Europe etc.

- Seeing those, even us, Indian designers, increase their standards as they know that we have to match the global, international standards and thus keep building our skills.
 - So there's a good scope for this.
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14. Can you give some interview tips for a Designing interview?

- Engineering and design interviews are different.
 - In a design project, they ask you about your case studies, like if you've created a chat app, the interviews ask you to explain to them the ideas behind the case study, why are certain things placed in a certain order, any particular intention behind that?
 - They ask you questions from which they get to know you're thinking process, the answers are subjective, but most importantly they want to see how well you put forth your ideas and explain your work, eg: If you have designed a YouTube screen and the interviewer asks you, "Why have you made the Subscribe button red? Why not any other color?" For this your answer can be something like "As red stands out in the screen, it catches attention and we want the viewers to subscribe to the channel."
 - These are the types of ideas expected by the interviewers.
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15. Can you state basic, common mistakes that people tend to do during Designing interview?

- The most common mistake that people do is that they aren't able to put forth their ideas well.
 - You have the screen ready, but you need to communicate it to the person who is sitting in front of you, articulate it, in such a way that the person starts getting visuals in their mind, the use of words, the tone.
 - Figma can be learned in just 2 hours and that's just the start.
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16. Just an out of the box question, but can you give some tips on how to improve communication skills?

- Practice. That's the key.
 - Talking with friends and all doesn't count in practice, as it's your comfort zone.
 - You need to step out of your comfort zone and start learning from there.
 - Take initiatives like starting your own podcast, wherein you can call guests, talk to them and that's how you learn to converse better.
 - You cannot just prepare in advance and speak, being in the moment, knowing the opposite person's reaction to the things you speak and then continuing the discussion, that's how you learn.
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17. Is Graphic designing and UI/UX the same?

- The similarity between them is that both need a portfolio to present.
- The difference is that their tools might be difference.
- Graphic designers can use figma, but they use Photoshop as it's better.

- The biggest difference is that, as a UI/UX developer, you can work only in companies but for Graphic designers, they can work in any company, any domain, doesn't have to be tech.
 - This is the reason why UI/UX developers are paid better as the growth of tech companies is fast.
 - Other than that, UI/UX designers stick only to apps and website, whereas, Graphic designers can work for posters, banners, social media, advertisements, etc.
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18. Is UI/UX developer a secure job profile?

- If you have the skills, then yes.
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19. Could I use GitHub for uploading my vase studies?

- Not really. Much simpler is medium.com or Behance.
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20. Tell us something about 10k design.

- So 2 years ago I started uploading these UI/UX videos on YouTube and I realized that the design schools in India aren't well equipped to teach UI/UX designs, as the UI/UX apps started emerging recently and the professors in UI/UX schools have worked way much earlier than that and right now UI/UX has become a developing, fast moving field.
- So my goal at that time was to create 10k designers, self taught designers in India.
- After YouTube, I opened my own community on telegram and now I've made my own discord community, link is available in the description of this video.
- So back then I was the Designing head at Unacademy, in fact me and my team designed the website and everything, that was a great experience for me as I got to know that people still need the experience and my YouTube was just not enough.

- So in January 2020, I quit Unacademy and took up 10kdesigner.com as a full time startup.
 - I do these 3 months, design, almost like a bootcamp type courses, wherein in 3 months you get everything needed to firstly build a portfolio and case study and then apply for a job.
 - We're doing the 2nd batch of it right now.
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21. When can one join your 10k designers batches?

- I would suggest to join discord, there you can get notifications and every week we have free free workshops too, we have interviews with many designers too.
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22. Average time needed to become a UI/UX designer?

- Figma you can learn in 1-2 days.
 - But within 3-6 months of proper, focused practice you can build your portfolio and get into internships.
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23. What according to you we should approach first?

Startup or MNC?

- There are more no. of startups and startups look into for freshers more than companies do.
- In company, there's a criteria but in startup, if you made a good impression on the head, you're hired.
- But one should not be picky about all this, startup or MNC, whatever opportunities you get, take them.
- Just that in startup, there's a speedy growth whereas in MNC growth is slow.

24. One final advise to all the students/designers out there.

- I would say, now that you're deciding your career, you're sitting on the driver's seat, not passenger seat.
- No one will tell you where to go or how to go, you have to take the lead.
- Research properly, everything is available on Google today, what you can't find on Google, ask your mentors, there are people putting up content on YouTube as well, ask them, they can help you too, but first, research on your own.
- So you're on the driver seat, drive on your own, people will be there to help you, but in the end, you have to do it yourself.
- Get used to self learning.

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