

## MY UX STORY & RESEARCH JOURNEY MAP

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### Problem Statement

Mid-career job changer (with backgrounds in exhibit design and graphic design) seeks to pivot industries. She's immersed herself with self-education methods rather than returning to college. She hopes to gain an entry level UX Researcher/ Designer position.

### Challenges

1. How to understand the new industry and its terminologies and buzzwords.
2. How to obtain the necessary skills required for an entry-level position as a UX Researcher/UX Designer.
3. How to acquire the necessary skills to create a portfolio to showcase talent without a formal degree.
4. How to overcome a hiring managers' assumption that she is not qualified or is unwilling to begin a position "at the bottom" because of her age or advanced educational backgrounds and must be too expensive to employ.

### Solutions & Gains

1. Browse job listings in UX and the surrounding careers of UI, IA, and front-end.  
**Value:**
  - Terms and listed buzzwords provide the foundation of what to type into a search engine (i.e. Google) to learn more.
2. Read books used in current HCI and UX college programs.  
**Value:**
  - Fat-reads (reading books and unfamiliar terms within them) provide familiarity with concepts and terms for a deeper dive. The books provide a common knowledge base and language to relate to, and work with, others who have formal degrees or are seasoned industry workers.
3. Take online classes about UX & UI and watch related industry YouTube videos.  
**Value:**
  - Gives a path of the process and steps in a visual and auditory way with examples that can be practiced beyond "book knowledge."
4. Join and attend Meetups in the Ann Arbor and Detroit community related to UX, design, Agile, and front-end. Be an active participant.  
**Value:**
  - Keeps her as a familiar face to the local industry.
  - Gives her insights to area companies and what they do/seek.
  - Provides more timely and current recommended resources to expand.
  - Creates the opportunity for social engagement and mentorship.

5. Post an article to Linked-In every weekday

**Value:**

- Expands her skillset and Linked-In connections
- Creates a social media presence
- Allows her to share and mentor others around the world
- Grows her understanding around business and industry articles

6. Listen to industry podcasts

*Boxes and Arrows Podcast, DesignBetterCo: Design great products, In Conversation with UX Magazine, O'Reilly Design Podcast – O'Reilly Media, Syntax – Tasty Web Development Treats, UI Breakfast: UI/UX Design and Product Strategy, UXRadio, and UX and Growth Podcast*

**Value:**

- Creates alignment and talking points when encountering other like-minded industry professionals.
- Creates the opportunity to share resources with others even being new to the industry.

7. Attend workshops, lectures, and conferences by volunteering to help at them

**Value:**

- Showcases dedication for continued learning and philanthropy.
- Shows dependability and quick adaptation to learning on the fly.
- Provides the opportunity to attend expensive conferences for free.
- Creates an opportunity for connection and listening to other's stories.

8. Create a case study by using herself as a persona to map actionable steps for obtaining her goal.

**Value:**

- Creates the start of an actionable knowledge base and portfolio.
- Clearly defines the steps and attributes needed to reach her goal.

9. Take online classes and workshops in HTML5 and CSS3 to build and design an online resume and portfolio to post her practice and path.

**Value:** Gives her a basis for understanding and empathizing with other facets that she would work alongside.

- Gives her a way to share her path and portfolio online with perspective hiring companies.
- Shows her ability to learn while creating an actionable outcome/project.

10. Learn industry UI software (Sketch, Adobe XD, AEM, InVision, etc.).

**Value:**

- Provides a necessary hard-skill used in the industry.
- Allows her to visualize her projects to others.

11. Participate in the 100 days of design UX challenge.

**Value:**

- Creates practice
- Gives her a way to visual represent thinking process and final outcome methods that can be shown at an online portfolio.

## 12. Participate in the 50 days of UX/UI challenge

### Value:

- Creates practice
- Gives her a way to visual represent thinking process and final outcome methods that can be shown at an online portfolio.

## Completion

### Volunteered at the following events:

- Agile and Beyond Conference – being Agile with web and mobile projects in business (May 2018)
- Intermitten – a diversity and inclusion technology conference (July 2018)
- Detroit Design Summit – digital marketing conference (Sept. 2018)
- AIGA Design Decipher – research and teaching of design and UX (Sept. 2018)

### Learned from the following classes:

- Front-end Bootcamp pre-work, Grand Circus (May – June 2018)
- FreeCodeCamp classes on HTML and CSS (June-July 2018)
- Java basics weekend course at Grand Circus Detroit (Aug. 2018)
- Ed2Go: Beginning HTML5 and CSS3 for web design (July - Aug. 2018)
- Ed2Go: Intermediate HTML5 and CSS3 for web design (Aug - Sept. 2018)
- Udemy course: Become a UX Designer | Learn the Skills & Get the Job
- Udemy course: UX & Web Design Master Course: Strategy, Design,

### Actively attending and contributing to the following Meetups:

- Ladies that UX
- Detroit User Experience
- Ann Arbor A11y
- Metro Detroit WordPress Meetup
- LaDev
- Detroit Women in Tech

### Creating new portfolio website of work

- Updating: [www.kcandy.com](http://www.kcandy.com)
- Creating new site: [www.UXkris.com](http://www.UXkris.com) (Summer 2019 launch due)