Product Designer interview questions

This **Product Designer** interview questions profile brings together a snapshot of what to look for in candidates with a balanced sample of suitable interview questions. It focuses primarily on digital product design but many of the non-technical questions could equally well apply to a physical product designer interview. Similar job titles include UX Designer.

Product Designer Interview Questions

Methods for evaluating a designer might seem obvious. You just take a look at the work they've produced. Certainly a thorough review of their portfolio is the best starting point.

Setting them an assignment is equally important. Assuming that both of these are positive, the next step is to chat to them about design itself.

- Who are their role models?

- Where do they go for inspiration?

- How do they keep on top of current design trends?

- What's an example of great design (digital or physical)?

- What books/exhibitions/conferences or communities do they attend or admire?

- As a designer, what do they think is the most important aspect of their job?

What you're looking for is an interest in design that stretches beyond the boundaries of their own specialisms. Are they aware of and capable of thinking critically about the design decisions that surround all of us in our everyday lives? A great designer is thinking about improvements to these details.

Related: How to hire designers

Operational and Situational questions

The assignment

There are **two main approaches** to choose from.

One is a **specific assignment,** such as the creation of a user journey or an approach to address a specific user need.

The other approach is often referred to as **ideation,** in which the candidate is presented with a very general problem with little or no detail. They are then asked to generate as many ideas as possible. The next step is to design a possible solution based on this thinking. The indicators you are looking for are:

- Is your candidate fluent enough in ideas to fill up a whiteboard?
- Can they identify their own best ideas?
- Can they respond creatively to constraints and explore ideas that move beyond the obvious.

Operational questions

Portfolio review

- Talk to us about your studies; tell us about an aspect of your course that you found the most engaging.
- What's your current occupation/What are you currently working on?

- Take us through a couple of your favorite pieces in your portfolio. What was your design process for these pieces? What problems were you trying to solve? How did you make a certain design decision?
- To what extent do you "own" the work in your portfolio, and can you be specific about which aspects?
- How do you prototype your ideas? How do you know when you've got it right?
- Tell us how you put yourself in the mind of the user. What kind of research methods do you use when you're starting a new project.
- Tell us about a project that didn't go as planned and the reasons that led to it. How did you solve the problems that arose?
- Do you have a side project you'd like to talk to us about?

Role-specific questions

Technical Questions

What is your preferred development environment? (operating system, text editor, version control, preproccessors)

- Let's say you start a new project right now – which solution will you choose for adding icons to the interface?

- Can you describe the difference between progressive enhancement and graceful degradation?

- What existing CSS/Sass frameworks have you used locally, or in production?

- Are you familiar with BEM or SMACSS? What do you like/don't like about these conventions?

- How do you optimize a website's assets & reduce page load time?

More resources:

- Source and recruit Product Designers with Workable's [Boolean search cheat sheets](#).

Pro tip: Always include an assignment as part of the hiring process. Here are some additional questions to go through with the candidate once they have submitted an assignment:

• Talk through your design process and some of your decisions.

• What would you do differently if you had more time?

• What would you do differently if you were under a strict deadline and you couldn't meet the project scope? Which features would you prioritize?