

UX Design Portfolio Presentation

Interview: Overview and Outcomes



The walkthrough tests four things:
presence, thinking aloud, pushback, culture fit



Heavily weighted round: 60–90 minutes
senior, 45–60 mid-level



Pipeline: intro call, walkthrough, design
exercise, cross-functional panel, offer



Strong candidates show problem framing,
2–3 trade-off decisions, honest reflection



Use this training as a preparation system,
not a memorized script



What Hiring Panels Actually Evaluate



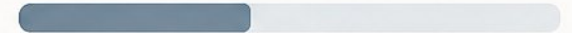
Outcomes and business impact carry the most weight



Problem framing, ownership clarity, decisions, and trade-offs follow



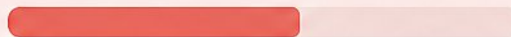
Panels discount the standard research → ideation → polished screens structure



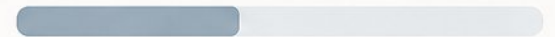
Self-awareness scores: name the trade-off, the reversal, the lesson



Red flags: vague "we" language, process theater, inflated outcomes



Panel role shapes the questions — craft, method, business, feasibility



Selecting Case Studies That Match the Role

- Curate ruthlessly: two to three deep case studies beat five shallow ones
- Weak projects drag down the perceived quality of your strongest work
- Score each project against the job's real capabilities — then lead with best fit
- Reviewers open the first case study slot far more than the others
- Invest most in the lead story; most candidates under-invest there



Structuring a Case Study for the Live Walkthrough



- Fixed narrative spine: hero summary, context, role, insight, problem, decisions, solution, outcome, reflection
- Hero summary in one paragraph: company, role, problem, outcome
- Decisions block wins or loses the round: 2–3 decisions, never 5
- Lead research with the insight that changed the direction
- Keep it scannable: 5–8 minutes, 1,200–1,800 words

Hero Summary



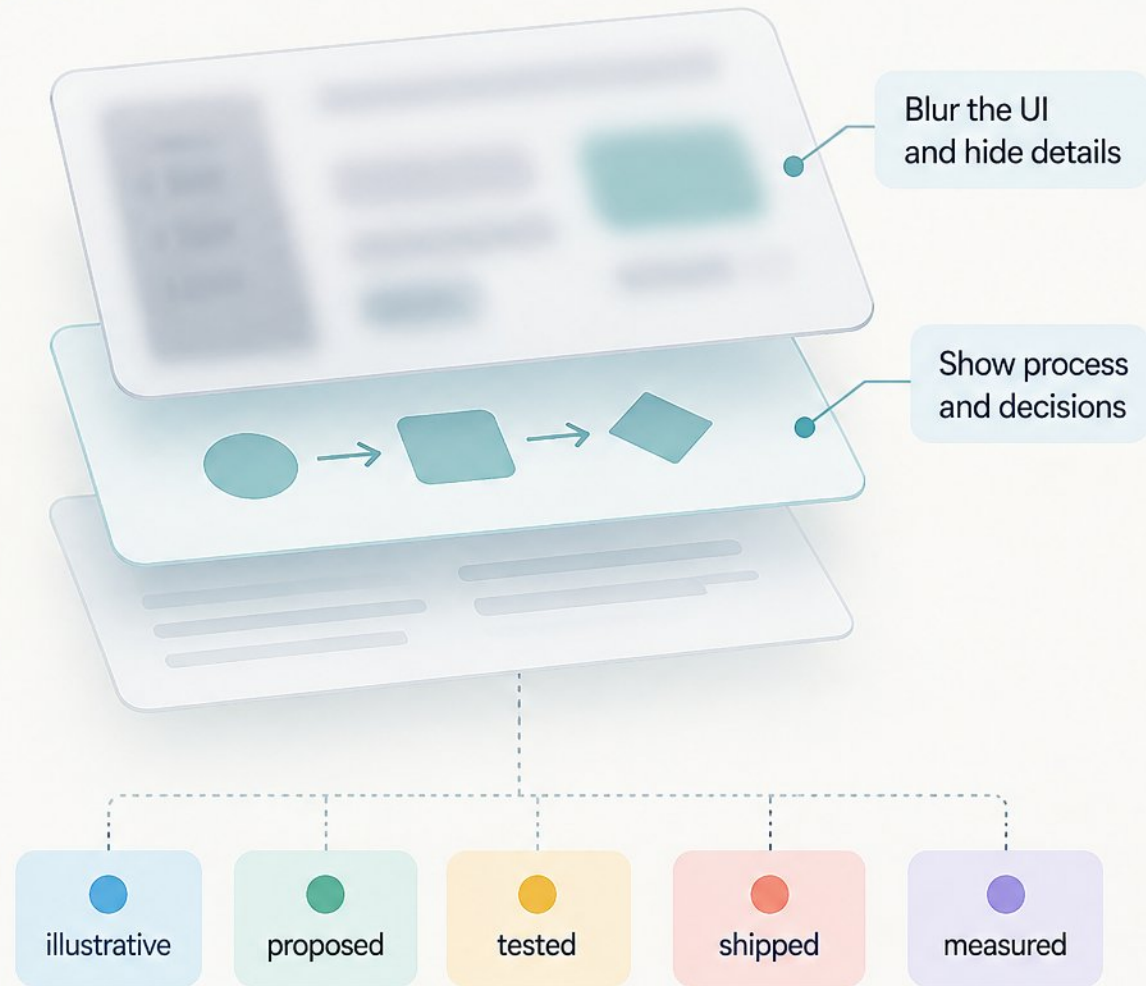
One paragraph: company, role, problem, outcome.

Decision Micro-Template

- ? Question
- :≡ Options
- ⚖ Trade-offs
- ✓ Decision
- ✗ Accepted cost

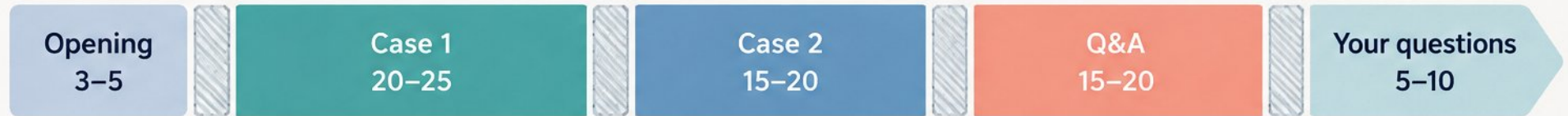
Handling Confidential and Non-Shipped Work

- NDA work is presentable: describe process and decisions, hide screens and numbers
- Genericise the product, blur the UI, use ranges instead of exact figures
- Relative outcomes work: “low double-digit completion lift” — offer details later under NDA
- Never shipped or no analytics? Report honestly, substitute observed behaviour, ticket themes, feedback
- Label every artifact: illustrative, proposed, tested, shipped, or measured
- Skip confidential work whose constraints make the decisions impossible to follow



Storytelling and Pacing Under Time Pressure

60–90 minute flow



Members interrupt every 2–3 minutes

30-minute variant



- 1 Hook each case study: project, why it mattered, problem, outcome in one line
- 2 60–90 min flow: opening 3–5, case 20–25, case 15–20, Q&A 15–20, your questions 5–10
- 3 Reserve 25–35% of total time for questions; members interrupt every 2–3 minutes
- 4 Script 25 min, deliver ~18 min plus ~7 min interruptions; finish 2–3 min early
- 5 Running long? Summarise the second case in 90 seconds and protect Q&A
- 6 Close each case with two minutes of specific reflection



Presentation Design and Visual Craft



One idea per slide; let real screenshots and whitespace carry the story



Decision slides: decision made, alternative considered, trade-off accepted — three bullets max



Annotate screenshots with callouts pointing to the element that matters



Slides are a backdrop, not a script: short copy, detail in speaker notes



Accessible deck: large type, strong contrast, captions, no live-prototype dependency

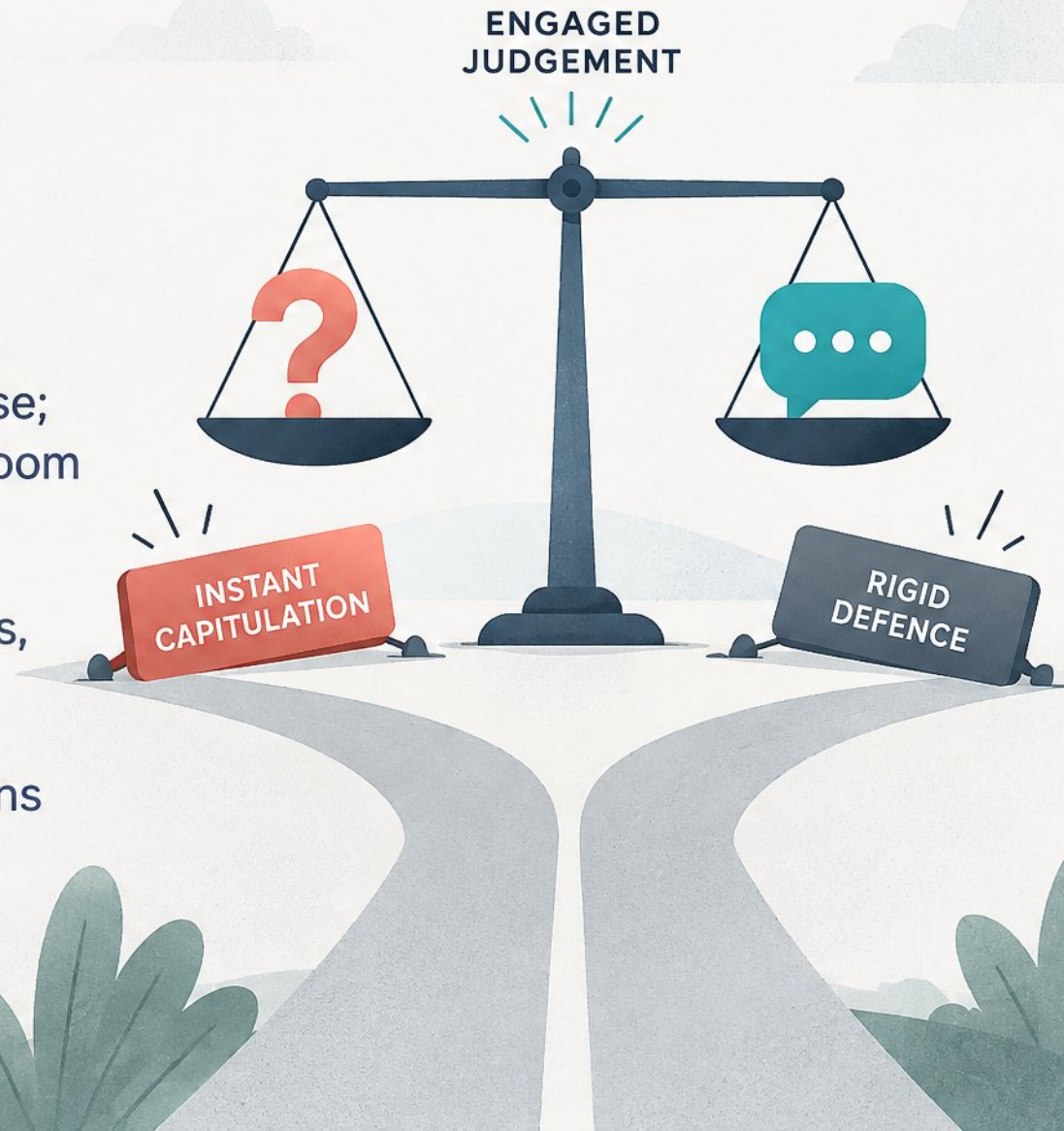


Use tooling you can click through without thinking; keep local copy plus PDF backup



Answering Questions and Handling Pushback

- Prepare the predictable set: hardest decision, what you'd change, stakeholder conflict, metrics
- Answer pattern: acknowledge specifically, state your assumption, engage, then revise or hold
- Collapse and blind defence both lose; engaged judgement converts the room
- Surface your own limits first — compromised research, cut features, unmeasured metrics
- Close with 2-3 substantive questions on team rhythm, hard decisions, and failure risks



Adapting to Role Type, Panel, and Format

Same case study, different emphasis



Product Design

- Tailor emphasis by role: product wants framing and delivery, research wants method



Research

- Tailor emphasis by role: product wants framing and delivery, research wants method



Design Systems

- Cross-functional panels test how you brought other disciplines into decisions



Leadership

- Leadership roles: frame the business problem before the design
- Name the cross-functional moment explicitly in each case study

Panel composition



Format considerations



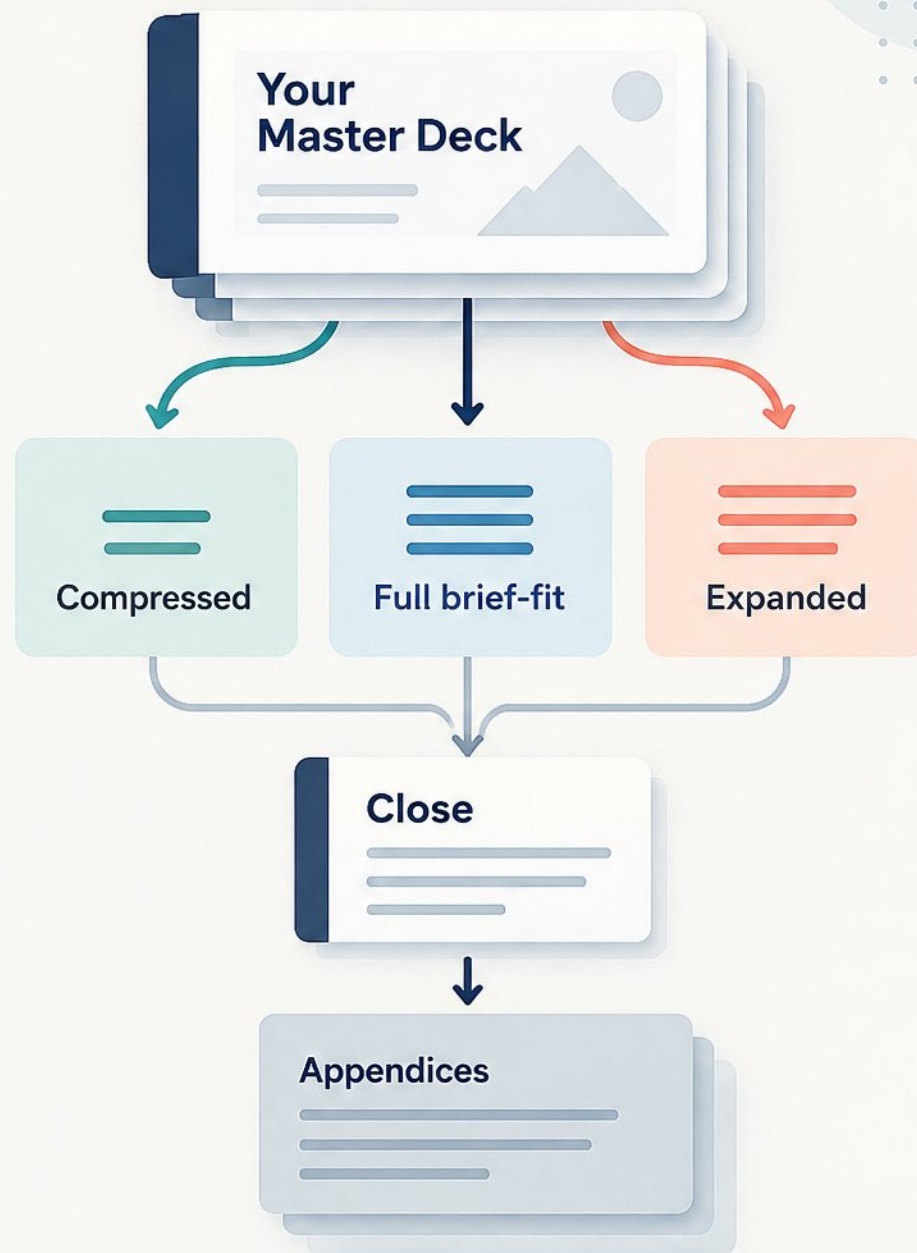
Executive audiences: less content, more depth, lead with business context



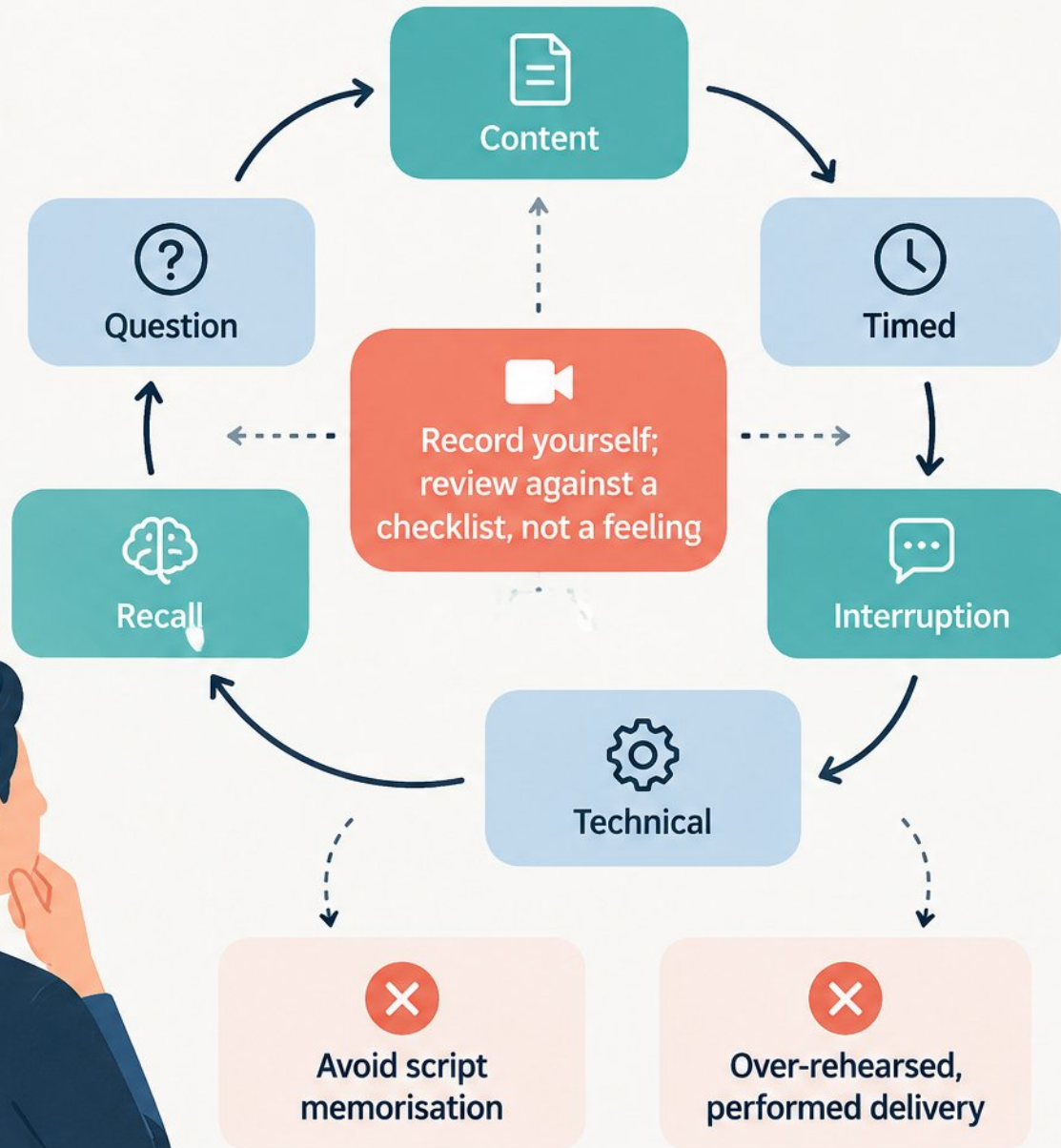
Remote: 30-second audio check, test the actual screen share, pace slower

Building Your Modular Master Deck

- One core deck with clear sections — not a new deck per interview
- Rehearse three paths: compressed, full brief-fit, expanded
- Keep appendices after the close: research detail, alternates, systems
- Visible agenda, section dividers, numbered slides for graceful recovery
- Prep logistics: local deck, PDF backup, no-tab notifications
- One-page summary and project index for panelists



Rehearsal Loops and Useful Feedback



- Rehearse in layers: content, timed, interruption, technical, recall, question
- Record yourself; review against a checklist, not a feeling
- Avoid script memorisation and over-rehearsed, performed delivery
- Get mixed feedback: design peers plus non-designers
- Ask for simulated design-lead follow-up questions
- Work backwards: two weeks narrative, one week questions

Common Traps and How to Avoid Them



Process worship:

frameworks as scaffolding, not content — three real decisions beat twenty paragraphs



Methods montage:

show a method only when it changed the direction



Chronological narration

buries the story — front-load the hardest decision



Aesthetic-only rationale

misses the link to user or business goals



Fifteen minutes of research,

two on decisions: edit toward insight



Filler projects and vague "we" language

dilute your strongest work

Your Preparation Kit and Next Steps

1

Build the kit: modular master deck, one-page portfolio summary, project index

2

Score your two strongest case studies against the weighted rubric

3

Fix the lowest two sections — outcomes and decisions carry the most weight

4

Run the 30-second reviewer scan on mobile and desktop

5

After each interview: log the hardest questions, tighten, repeat



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