

# KCAI: UX Design Class Presentation

## SLIDE 1

Introduction

## SLIDE 2

Who I am

About me

- KU
  - I got my degree in Visual Communication in 2017.
  - I pursued interests in web and digital design. I didn't know about UX at the time.
- Flory Design
  - I started at Flory Design in 2016 as an intern my senior year of college. I worked primarily in web design with WordPress. I realized that I loved focusing on the function of things and improving workflows.
- RAD
  - In 2018, I decided to start my own business to focus on larger scale projects, helping streamline companies' brand and strategy as it came to interacting with their users.
- Nukshuk
  - In 2019, I was ready for a more structured role rather than the ups and downs of being self-employed. At this point, I had transitioned solely into user experience. I was hired at Nukshuk, a startup company in the health, wellness and self improvement space.

## SLIDE 3

- At Nukshuk, we focus on helping people improve their lives through the power of habits.
- Our app provides the ability to create habits and check in to them each day.
- In addition, you can view weekly progress and analytics and connect with other people and share habits with them for accountability.
- We have additional SaaS products in the works as well that I've been excited to work on.

## SLIDE 4

In my role at Nukshuk, I've primarily experienced 2 different uses for UX.

- Redesigning existing interfaces
  - Improving workflows, minimizing confusion, improving visual design
- Developing new interfaces
  - Taking a workflow or set of workflows that are currently manual and making an application that can streamline the process

## SLIDE 5

Redesigning an existing interface

- While the process for both uses of UX design is similar, I'm going to walk through the differences as I've experienced them in my role at Nukshuk.

## **SLIDE 6**

Get familiar with the application

- You are not your user. But, to the extent that you can, become your user.

Interview other users

- What do they like? What is difficult? What is confusing?

Take notes

- Note things that make it difficult for a user to accomplish what they need to do.
- Take note of workflows that are confusing as well as workflows that are inconsistent. If two interfaces have a similar function, yet look different or use a different workflow, make a note to streamline and make them consistent.

When something doesn't make sense, ask questions

- If there's an element of the interface that doesn't make sense to you, ask questions to the original designers or developers, or current users.
- There may be a fringe case for which something was created.
- There may be a complex workflow that needs to be accomplished, but they didn't develop a good/simple way to do it.
- Most of the time, there's a reason for the choices they made, so don't just assume something needs to go away. Figure out what it's there for and then make it better.

Note visual choices that contribute to poor user experience

- The example I have for this was gray buttons. In the app originally, there was a lot of gray. Once someone checked into a habit, it would become gray. Other times, if there were multiple options, all the options would be gray except for the selected option.
- Myself – and a lot of other users – thought these grayed out options meant they were disabled. This created a lot of confusion.

Once you've gathered the information, start wireframing

- In many cases, if you're redesigning an interface that already exists, the function already exists. You just need to figure out a way to streamline it. In some cases, you may need to go back further in the process to journey maps and possibly even sitemaps, but most of the time, redesign problems can be solved with wireframes.

When you're designing in the real world, you will have to make compromises based on time and budget.

- I'll show you examples of how this has played out in my role at Nukshuk. If you want to talk more about this and how it contributes to your workflow as a designer, feel free to ask.

## **SLIDE 7**

How the app looked when I started at Nukshuk

- You can see an example of the grayed out state I was talking about on habit check in.
- Are there other things that jump out at you right away?

## **SLIDE 8**

UX design is iterative. You can design features and then end up changing the interface before the features are implemented, or after getting beta or user feedback. Sometimes, there's an ideal state to reach for, but small changes need to be implemented first due to company workflows, budget, development timelines, etc.

I wish I could show additional wireframes, but I do have these shots of different iterations of our Daily Check In screens in Sketch.

- I was confused – and other users were confused – by the NA button.
- We hoped to condense the size of the check in boxes to optimize room on the screen.
- We wanted to figure out how we could represent a completed state for habits. If I'm done checking in, maybe I don't want to see the habit anymore in my dashboard?
- Additionally, we have a feature called AUTO habits that allow you to complete your habit in the app. This works for things like meditation and journal entries. In the existing app, to access the meditation for example, you simply tapped on any white area. There were no buttons or instructions.
- The progress bar is an example of a time and budget compromise. We wanted to simplify the progress bar, but redoing a part of the app that already worked fine didn't make sense when compared to other more important features that needed to be improved.

## **SLIDE 9**

This gives you an idea of app features that were put on the back burner as we work on other parts of the project that take precedent.

Reasons to make design compromises include:

- What items will be most beneficial to the company's monetary success?
- What items will be most beneficial to user satisfaction and retention?
- What high ticket items take the most or least amount of time to accomplish?
- How will the value of the application improve if these changes are made?
- Does the added value outweigh the added cost?

## **SLIDE 10**

Developing a needed interface

- The process for developing a completely new interface is similar, but more in depth than simply redesigning an existing interface.

## **SLIDE 11**

Start by thinking through the intended use of the app. Who is it meant for? Whose workflows are you trying to improve?

- Interview your target user. Ask about their pain points. What part of their existing process is difficult? What do they wish could be simplified or automated? What parts of their process are necessary, but take the most time away from what they consider to be their "important" work?
- Take notes. Note all the functions that are needed for the application.

- Once you have a good feel for your users' needs, create a spreadsheet or a list of all the functions and categorize them hierarchically. What functions naturally go together?
- Once you've explored this list, develop a journey map of sorts. Figure out how your user will expect to get from point A to point B.
- Create a sitemap to determine an ideal general structure of the application.
- Start wire framing and creating iterations in your software of choice.

As I show you the next few parts of my process, I've got bits and pieces of my process, but since the application I'm working on is still in development, I can't show it in its entirety.

### **SLIDE 12**

This is an example of creating a hierarchy of application functions. It's blurry because it's part of our under construction SaaS products, but you can get the general idea.

- For example, I've grouped access levels. Wordpress is a good example of an application that grants different access levels and privileges based on their level. So here, I've bulleted the different functions that different levels of users should be able to access.
- I have Analytics and I've bulleted the different functions that fall under Analytics.
- I've used color coding to designate similar functions.

### **SLIDE 13**

Here are a couple examples of journey maps and flowcharts. This first example on the left is a journey of the sign up process. I've taken into consideration both the user's expected flow as well as the information that we as a business need to collect.

On the right is a simple example of a process I'm working on to help users send feedback in the app. We would like users to check our FAQ first. If they can't find what they're looking for, then we would provide options to streamline their feedback process and the response that our team receives.

### **SLIDE 14**

This is an example of a bigger flowchart – not part of Nukshuk. This is part of the Skygram app project I developed and this flowchart outlines almost the entire app.

### **SLIDE 15**

After creating journey maps and flowcharts, I created a "sitemap" of sorts. This helps to take the more subjective "this is what I want to accomplish" and turn it into a more concrete "this is the basis of the application that will do that."

### **SLIDE 16**

At this point, I take a destination on the site map and start wire framing it. As you wireframe, take into consideration both the sitemap (how will I help a user navigate from this destination to another destination on the map?) and the functions outline (how will the user interact with this interface to accomplish the necessary function?).

## SLIDE 17

Wireframes don't need to be pretty. I usually start out with hastily drawn ideas, similar to putting something down in a sketchbook. It helps me get ideas out fast. Once an idea is on paper, I can determine whether it's actually a good idea and if so, how to refine and move forward with it. Once I feel comfortable with an idea, I'll draw it out more carefully or start iterating with the design in Sketch.

## SLIDE 18

This is an example of Sketch iterations on the Weekly Progress interface in the app.

## SLIDE 19

More iterations and an example of design compromises being made due to time and budget constraints.

## SLIDE 20

Important things to always remember when you're designing:

### Accessibility

- Colors
- Type sizes
- Button sizes
- Accessibility is not about making a product for someone who is disabled. Accessibility is about *making your product better* so *everyone* can access it.

### Research

- This includes front end research of users as well as research once a product is created so you can improve it.
- This also includes learning from the experts
  - I wanted to know whether to have a red asterisk next to required fields or spell it out or only mark optional fields. There are a million articles about that.
  - There are a million articles about button states and whether you should disable buttons or remove them.
  - These are the types of things experts have already researched. Learn from them so you don't have to reinvent the wheel.

### Maintain a design system

- Definitely don't have time to dive into this, but I've included a great podcast in the resources page for you to listen to and there are lots of online resources and articles about design systems.

### Human interface guidelines

- Apple and Android both have interface guidelines that they have researched and defined as best practices. This includes everything from button states to colors to button and font sizes... You should become VERY familiar with these. These are the design "Bible," so commit them to memory as best as you can

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That's all I've got. Thank you for having me. Feel free to ask questions!