

A Guide to Help You Prepare for Your User Researcher Interview at Flipkart

Flipkart is at an exciting stage of evolution. With our roots into e-commerce, we are now expanding our wings to seek newer horizons. We stay committed to empowering our customers through awesome shopping experiences but we're also pushing the boundaries of user engagement through offerings like Videos, Games, Feeds, etc.

As the Flipkart User Research team (OneDesign), we are the torchbearers when it comes to expansion and transformation. We partner with other teams, such as Product Design, Product Management, Business Development, Marketing, Branding and Market Insights, to solve tough problems for the large spectrum of our customers. We are a team of talented researchers and user advocates from across creative and analytical fields, solving India-specific problems with a knack for creating meaningful and delightful user experiences.

We have researchers from top design schools like IDC, NID, Srishti, and Symbiosis, as well as from some international design schools. Most of our researchers have published papers and are considered industry experts in their respective fields.

USER RESEARCHER (UXR)

A User Researcher plays a crucial role in guiding Product Designers, Product Managers and Business teams to build the right user experiences. He is a user advocate who represents user pain points and "Aha!" moments. He is someone who can empathise with the consumers, as well as can work with Product Designers and Product Managers to convert user requirements into desirable and successful products. As a part of a multifaceted team, he is expected to sport various hats and find solutions to tough challenges.

OneDesign is a flourishing team of about 100+ designers under 3 main job families - Product Design, User Research and Creative & Copy Design.

In the UXR job family, we have both managerial and IC streams that stay common till the foundational level (Researcher 1, 2, 3 and Lead) and then split into two separate but interdependent paths. For the managerial stream, the roles are Research Manager, Sr. Manager, Director, and Sr. Director; and for the IC stream the roles are Principal Researcher, Sr. Principal Researcher, Architect and Sr. Architect

Interview Process

Phase 1: Pre-onsite Interview

- Exploratory Discussion
- Technical Phone Screening

Phase 2: Onsite Interview

- Research Portfolio Presentation
- Research Planning and Scoping Exercise
- Domain Understanding O1
- Domain Understanding O2
- Team Fitment
- Culture Fitment

PHASE 1: Exploratory and Phone Screening Rounds

ROUND 1.1: EXPLORATORY DISCUSSION (30 MINUTES)

This is the stage when you'll be interacting with your potential Hiring Manager. As soon as your CV is shortlisted, your recruiter will set up an exploratory discussion based on your availability. The intent of this round is to understand your past experience, expectations and aspirations for the future.

This round is typically conducted over phone/Hangouts. Please ensure that you're comfortably settled in a quiet space for a fruitful discussion. You will be expected to introduce yourself, your past work experience, strengths and aspirations in this round - be concise, clear and prepared.

Take this opportunity to ask as many questions as you want in order to get a holistic picture of the role. Make sure that you clearly understand the charter, scope, kind of work involved in the role offered by us. Have a constructive and open discussion on your eligibility, aspirations and other concerns that you possibly have.

Note: Exploratory discussion with the Hiring Manager depends on a case-to-case basis. Your recruiter will walk you through the detailed hiring process.

ROUND 1.2: TECHNICAL PHONE SCREENING (60 MINUTES)

Before you come for an onsite interview, you'll have a discussion with one of your potential peers. This is a technical screening round which is primarily focused on past work experience, role-eligibility and a few problem-solving questions relevant to the role you're being interviewed for.

This is a telephonic/Hangout discussion. You can expect questions about your past experience, major projects that you've worked on depending on the role you're being evaluated for. The interviewer may deep dive into one of your projects that you have executed in the past to understand your strengths and weaknesses.

Please ensure that you are available for the call in a quiet place. Be well-versed with everything mentioned in your resume. Have a brief introduction of your experience ready. Go in-depth if interviewers ask you details about anything specific.

As a User Researcher, you'll be coherents for understanding business requirements, defining research methods, sampling user cohorts, planning and scoping field study, as well as reporting the findings in a highly dynamic and collaborative workspace.

How to prepare for the round

- It would be wise to spend some time over your own projects and noting down your own perspective on what you've learnt, what you liked or disliked in each of them, and how would you change things given an opportunity.
- Note that the interviewer might have worked in a similar (or contrasting) space, and may have an independent perspective. Be prepared to brainstorm with them for about 45 minutes to an hour.

Note: If you do well in this round, depending on your level, you'll be sent a design exercise to complete offline before we consider you for an onsite interview.

PHASE 2: Offline Design Exercise

ROUND 2.1: RESEARCH PORTFOLIO PRESENTATION (FOR RESEARCHER 1 TO LEAD RESEARCHER) (60 MINUTES)

This is showtime! You'll be interacting with your potential hiring manager or peers in this round. In this round, you're required to showcase your thought process and skills in different research methods. You'll need to take the interviewer through how you plan a research, as well as how you report the findings. You'll need to pick up 1 or 2 of your past projects that demonstrate the entire user research process. You can bring in your laptop or share your portfolio in the form of a PDF, PPT or an interactive website.

You'll be assessed on your presentation skills and storytelling, quality and speed of delivery, depth and breadth of your craft work, your acumen in understanding user problems and translating that into research findings. We would also try to understand your stakeholder-management skills when you worked on these projects and the type of team you have managed/worked with.

Ensure that you pick a project that you've worked extensively on in the past. It's good to give an overview of all projects, but refrain from presenting too many shallow projects.

ROUND 2.2: RESEARCH PLANNING AND SCOPING EXERCISE (FOR ALL LEVELS) (60 MINUTES)

You will be interacting with the senior members of the OneDesign team.

How do you approach a research problem? How do you break it down and go to the heart of the matter? How do you arrive at plausible insights? This is what we would like to understand in this round.

This is a freestyle research planning round where we analyse your thought process. You may use whiteboarding, scenario building, design thinking, or any other methodology/tools/aids of your liking to demonstrate your thought process and approach the selection of research methods selection.

The problems discussed will be generic in nature, such as finding insights on what people think about new app layouts, new-age payment systems, metro route maps, etc.

The focus in this round will be towards assessing your thought process in defining the right research method, user sampling, duration of research and your approach towards report insights.

How to prepare for the round:

- Demonstrate the 5 design thinking phases in your interview.
- Be creative, innovative and empathetic towards users and solutions.
- Show creativity and agility to come up with multiple solutions. Don't stick to one solution and try to justify it too much.
- Ask enough questions to identify corner cases and big goals.
- First go into wide thinking before narrowing down on a solution.
- You may use Design Thinking, Gamification or other established problem-solving methodologies.

ROUND 2.3: DOMAIN UNDERSTANDING - O1 (DIRECTORS AND ABOVE) (60 MINUTES)

In the highly collaborative environment at Flipkart, a designer is a vital member of the team who has to partner closely with key stakeholders across the organisation.

Among an array of counterparts, a researcher has a greater degree of overlap with a Product Manager (PM) because they solve problems as a unit. With PMs focusing on the business and feasibility, and the researcher bringing in the user psychology, desirability and delight angles, the two work as a closely knit team. This round is focused on finding a synergy to co-solve a research problem.

This is a working session where a PM is going to bring in a problem and the candidate is expected to bring in his expertise to arrive at a research method, matrix, user segmentation, etc. You might be expected to do research for designing a ticket booking system, Google Street View, etc. You should be able to define the research strategy, come up with multiple methods and finally an appropriate solution. The key role of a researcher is to bring in the user angle and narrow it down to a solution based on a well-reasoned criteria.

You will be assessed on:

- Ability to identify the root problem with context to the relevant cohort of users by asking the right questions.
- Lead the process of research definition by a structured approach.
- Ability to come up with multiple research methods and narrow them down to an appropriate solution.
- The business impact of your research suggestions and approach.

How to prepare for the round:

- Clarify the research statement and do not assume solutions or even problem statements.
- Ask enough questions to identify corner cases.
- Be prepared to address further complexities that were initially introduced in the problem statement.
- Do not get biased by tech choices in your solutioning.

ROUND 2.4: DOMAIN UNDERSTANDING - O2 (DIRECTORS AND ABOVE) (60 MINUTES)

Business is the key driver for any organisation. With the expertise of using consumer psychology into desirable product experiences, a researcher is a key ally to his business counterpart.

This round is focused on exploring your research acumen while solving real-world problems. The idea is to get your perspective on how you will use research to help business in its objectives. The format here is generally whiteboarding and the output may vary from a framework level tenants to key-work flows of the proposed solution.

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How to prepare for the round:

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- Do not get biased by tech choices in your solutioning.

ROUND 2.5: TEAM FITMENT (60 MINUTES)

The intent of this round is to evaluate your team fitment based on your experience, interests and strengths demonstrated across other rounds. In this round, you'll be interacting with your potential team leader/hiring manager who will try to get to know you better in order to make an informed choice that we hire the right person for the right job.

The interviewer will try to understand your aspirations, inspirations and motivations, self-awareness, leadership ability, stakeholder management, strengths and weaknesses, etc.

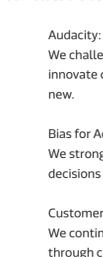
You can also expect questions around some of the competencies which you would have been evaluated for in previous rounds. Think of this round as a summary of all the discussions that you have had during the day.

ROUND 2.6: CULTURE FITMENT ROUND (60 MINUTES)

We are a proud community of Flipsters. All our decisions are deeply rooted in our values, and they have made us into what we are today - successful and confident. Our core values define our identity and form the basis of our actions and reflect in everything that we do at Flipkart. These values enable us to shape the desired organization culture in which each Flipster can thrive and be at their best.

In this round, you are being evaluated for your cultural fitment at Flipkart. The round is meant to assess whether you would be a good fit in the world of Flipsters or not. There are no right or wrong answers. Be honest and think thoroughly before you answer. There may be questions around your past experiences, career aspirations, hypothetical scenarios, your strengths and weaknesses, etc. We highly recommend that you invest some time in preparing yourself for the interview.

- Read up about our values and what makes you a great fit for us
- Be honest about your success and failures
- Invest some time in preparing yourself for the interview
- Be candid and help us understand you better



**NERVOUS?
DON'T BE.**

HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR A SMOOTH INTERVIEW:

Be prepared:

Needless to say, we want to hire the best talent. Prepare well, understand what we do as a business, the position you are interviewing for, learn how your role will contribute in achieving our vision and brush up your basics as much as possible. At Flipkart, we strongly believe that our highest leveraged time should be applied to hiring and helping onboard the absolute best talent that we can scout around the world.

Pique our interest:

Tell us something about yourself that prompts us to know more about you. Flipkart is a great mix of people with various talents and skill sets and so, we'd like to know how and why you stand out from the rest.

Think things through:

We don't necessarily look for absolute solutions. Instead, we'd like to know how you approach a problem. Therefore, make sure you think through your answers. It's okay if you need a few minutes to collate your thoughts. You can help the interviewers understand your thought process by thinking out loud.

Be authentic and candid:

Nobody is perfect. It's okay to openly admit past failures - if any. At Flipkart, we place intent and commitment over success. And, being honest about yourself will help us identify those traits in you.

Show your passion:

It's not an interrogation, it's a discussion. Blend in a lot of passion and energy in your interactions. Ours is a fast-paced and challenging workplace and therefore, there's no room for someone who takes it slow.

Ask questions:

We are open to all kinds of questions. It's the easiest way to get to know each other better. So, ask away!

Understand how we work:

Get yourself acquainted with our values: Audacity, Bias for Action, Customer First and Integrity. Our values are deeply rooted in all our major decisions at Flipkart.

Audacity:

We challenge established standards and keep pushing the boundaries. We innovate continuously and find disruptive solutions. We are fearless in trying anything new.

Bias for Action:

We strongly believe in taking initiative and driving results with impact. We make speedy decisions and believe in failing fast.

Customer First:

We continuously strive to understand our customers' needs. We validate our success through customer actions. We go deep into customer issues and resolve the root cause.

Integrity:

We strive to do the right thing, in the right way, at all times. We do not compromise on our values

If you are someone who believes in these values, and you're able to exhibit these values, you are a great fit for us. Reflect on your past experiences and prepare yourself well before the interview. Spend some time on identifying instances from the past when you exhibited these values.