

A decorative grid of small, light blue dots arranged in a 5x6 pattern in the top left corner.

We Are

A large, light blue circle that serves as a background for the word "Braintrust".

Braintrust

A large, dashed light blue circle that encircles the word "Braintrust".



# EXPERIENCE



# Braintrust

Talent Screener

Presentation

# Talent Screening

## Viewing the résumé

- Before I look at the portfolio, I usually look at the résumé to establish some baseline expectations:
  - How many years of experience do they have?
  - Any formal design education?
  - Any companies or agencies I'd recognize?
  - How are they positioning themselves? (Interaction designer, visual designer, etc.)
  - Any job titles or responsibilities that seem overstated?
- Based on the résumé, I'll look at the portfolio to challenge possible biases, look for clues to questions I now have, and get a more nuanced picture of what type of designer this person might be.
- Did they treat their portfolio like a design problem? Too often, designers don't think about their portfolio as the solution to a design problem. Did they build it themselves? Extra points for building it themselves and no points if the portfolio doesn't work has issues, mistakes, etc.



*Braintrust is an elite and unique platform without an elitist attitude. We are looking for the best of the best. Make sure you keep this in mind when reviewing candidates and portfolios.*

## Viewing the portfolio

- Did they communicate their understanding of the problem they were solving? Very few people do this, and it sucks. It sends the message that they were either lazy, not user-centered (where the "user" is the person looking at the portfolio), or that they value the wrong things about design: making pretty things and not solving problems through clear communication.
- Did they understand if and why their solution was successful? Success can be defined a number of ways: meeting the goals originally laid out, improving on a key metric, recognition by the press or users, etc. Can they be self-critical and assess the outcome of their work? Can they communicate what makes something effective?
- Do they have at least one case study to walk you through their process and how they solve design problems? This is critical and necessary.
- What was their contribution as part of a bigger team? This is especially tough if it's a bigger project where other designers played a similar role. It's great to know how much collaborative work someone has done, and it's even better to know that a person can gracefully share credit with their peers.
- Do you like their work? What are your thoughts, etc.?

# Talent Screening

## What we are looking for in a portfolio

- Representing breadth and depth – full span of design
- Good design work
- Focus on the user and the stakeholders
- Storytelling
- End-to-end design process
- Project roles and leadership
- Design craft
- Scope of work
- Results and impact
- Design of the portfolio



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## What type of Designer is this?

- Visual/UI Designer: Likely the lowest word-to-pixel ratio of any designer, and the greatest use (and misuse) of trendy type, color, and visual effects. They can make your homepage hum and your buttons sparkle, but can they create a consistent and comprehensive brand and visual system?
- Web Designer: Comes off as a real all-rounder. They've most often worked at agencies or freelanced. Mentions their front-end skills and visual design skills, but might be bluffing on their UX chops. Have they tackled more challenging, stateful, and conditional interactions, or have they just built content sites?
- Mobile Designer: They usually work closely with user experience (UX) designers and user interface (UI) designers to apply their designs to mobile interfaces. Their main focus is on native mobile applications, but they also must be able to create designs for mobile and hybrid apps.
- Product Designer: A product designer is responsible for the user experience of a product, usually taking direction on the business goals and objectives from product management. While companies can always benefit from a product designer, they play a particularly important role during key stages of the product development lifecycle.

# Talent Screening

## Things to consider:

- The best designers solve problems, not just make things pretty. We all know this, but the hard part is exhibiting this in a portfolio. Be it a logo or Mobile app, a concise summary of the context with a run through of the process and a sprinkle of the final beautiful pixels is the perfect combo for me.
- Portfolio sites are great for community and showing work but fail to communicate personal brand. I love seeing a designers Dribbble/Behance profile, but only after they have grabbed my attention from a personal site/portfolio.
- Don't make me download anything. There is nothing more annoying than clicking a link, only to have to search for a PDF later.



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## Talent Screener Questions To Ask the Candidate:

- What is your proudest professional accomplishment?
- What 3 technologies/software packages do you consider yourself to be strongest in?
- What technology/software do you consider yourself to be weakest in?
- Can you tell me and or show me your design process or how you solved design problems?
- What project/work are you most proud of?
- What goals do you have professionally?
- Is there anything keeping you from accepting a job or project?



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**THANKS  
FOR TAKING  
THE TIME**