Excerpt from our blog post on competency management

Step 2: Define what those key competencies mean in practice

What do those competencies mean in practice? We identified skills and actions showing someone has one competency or not.

General User Research:

- Explain the importance of user research, not just before designing the product but also during design and after deployment.
- Identify the needed research methods and create a research plan.
- Deliver research insights in a structured way to promote research and keep accessibility in the future (e.g. research system or any other method).
- Understand how to write a hypothesis and how to control and measure variables.
- Find the target group and recruit users from the target audience.

User Needs Evaluation

- Gain domain knowledge (competitor research, industry, cultural insights).
- Identify the best solution to summarize user needs and goals. Create personas or jobs-to-be-done sentences through interviewing potential users.
- Create a customer (and user) journey. Identify areas of improvement and communicate the journey to the rest of the company so they can understand where to add value.
- Plan and execute field research.
- Structure and conduct an effective interview that gets beyond the surface opinions (what users say) to reveal user goals (what users want).
- Report, analyze and present the discovery research results to the wider team.

Usability Evaluation

- Use established usability principles and guidelines to predict likely problems in user interfaces before testing (heuristic evaluation).
- Plan and execute usability tests (e.g. moderated vs. unmoderated test, lab vs. remote test).
- Record, analyze and present the data from usability tests to the wider team.
- Prioritize usability problems based upon evidence.

Metrics and Measurements

- Create a measurement plan according to the business and user goals (e.g. AARRR, HEART)
- Create surveys.
- Plan A/B tests.

- Understand how to implement effectively and the limitations of existing analytics. Cooperate with data analysts and developers during implementation.
- Analyze, interpret and report data from analytics, user surveys and customer support records.
- Pair metrics with qualitative data to understand users behavior behind the numbers.

Information Architecture

- Carry out a card sorting and tree testing; analyze the results
- Analyze a journey map to identify and construct an information architecture.
- Breakdown large IA changes into small and comprehensible deliverables based upon resource constraints

Prototyping

- Organize, structure and label content, functions and features using appropriate design patterns and create a screen flow.
- Explore multiple approaches to a problem before deciding on a solution.
- Create interactive, shareable prototypes to demonstrate and test a design solution.

Interaction Design

- Understand the benefits of different user interface models and use them appropriately (e.g. knowing when to force a user down a guided path with a wizard or modal, or when to let them go their own way).
- Use the correct component from the pattern library to provide affordances and shape the user experience, e.g. choosing the correct control for an interface such as segment controller instead of a radio button.
- Understand established and evolving standards as well as best practices for human-computer interactions, and express them in our design language.
- Simplify the user interface by using animations where appropriate.
- Understand the opportunities and limitations of the technology that will express the design solution, and work with developers to determine its implementation.
- Document requirements and explain the expectations around an interaction (specification for the developers).

Visual Design

- Use fundamental principles of visual design (contrast, alignment, repetition and proximity) to de-clutter user interfaces.
- Understand and use typography, icon, grid and color systems to lay out pages.
- Create illustrations that fit within our guidelines to reinforce and extend our messaging.
- Understand, use and evolve the common brand and design language and explain its importance (look and feel, moodboards, design guidelines).
- Create motion design animation.

- Collect and organize all the reusable complements guided by clear standards that can assemble to build any number of applications (Design System).

Writing

- Create and edit macro and micro copy.
- Understand, use and evolve the common content and writing style (tone of voice), and explain its importance.
- Manage multiple languages to make it understandable for translators and content team and users.
- Establish harmony between written and visual communication.

Client Management

- Plan and schedule work to prioritize and maximize delivery efficiency.
- Effectively explain and present the results of your team's work in a well structured way.
- Engage and maintain communication with stakeholders; manage their expectations.
- Promote the value of design thinking; grow the client’s user-experience competency.

Professional Cooperation

- Learn to make modifications in work methods, processes in case unexpected issues.
- Cooperate with other team members; constructively critique their work and collaborate for a common path.
- Promote and support the team’s ongoing professional development.
- Cultivate a team with strong interpersonal relationships (know and manage people).
- Simplify collaboration with developers in an agile way; provide specifications.

Business and Strategy

- Understand and support the client in business plan decisions; understand the business model and monetization opportunities.
- Explain the cost-benefit of user experience and design activities to the business and make suggestions how to measure and monitor their effects on their success.
- Feature prioritizatio;, support the client in product strategy considering the related impact and effort needed.

Development

- Web development (HTML CSS)
- Web development (Javascript)
- Android development
- iOS development

Workshop Facilitation

- Find the right method and tools; create a workshop plan for the product need and know how to modify when unexpected issues come up.
- Soft skills: Handle different personalities, time management, assertive communication, support the team decision.
- Effectively synthesize the information and push the participants towards their workshop goals (effective decision making and action plan).
- Ensure participants understand the workshop's outcome and take further actions.