



# Medium Editorial Guide: What We're Looking For

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*Last updated: Mar 20, 2019 by Laura Palotie*

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Hexagon's Medium publication welcomes a variety of content from the world of UX (be it about design, research, content strategy or project management). You can write your piece in a variety of formats, from event recaps to op-ed pieces: see below for guidelines on each of our article types.

Our editorial voice strikes a balance between informative and friendly, while fostering Hexagon's core mission of community. Stories covering inclusiveness, mentorship and women and non-binary folks in UX are especially welcome. Our pieces should be equally valuable to members of Hexagon and those who have never heard of our organization.

Have an existing piece that would be a good fit for Hexagon? See our [submission guide](#).

Article types:

## 1. Roundup: best-of

This monthly feature showcases a "best of" list from the world of UX, all centered around a common theme. Its intention is to be a bite-sized resource for UX professionals. The style should strike a mix between entertaining, informative and educational: picture yourself sharing inspiring discoveries with your fellow designers, researchers, or content strategists.

**Some ideas:**

- UX pieces from the Web
- Short UX tips shared by professionals from the field. These can be:
  - Spoken by speakers at chapter events

- Tips around a given theme, conducted as mini-interviews
- UX resources. These can be:
  - Programs
  - Books
  - Seminars
  - Educational content
  - Etc.

Roundup guidelines:

- **Even if the list represents your opinion, write your piece in the third person.** For inspiration, take a peek at New York Times film reviews (particularly A.O. Scott's)! The voice and perspective is always there, but the writer rarely says "I" or "me." [Example](#).
- **In addition to a suggested headline, provide a standfirst** that gives the reader a quick snapshot of what they should expect in the article.
- **Stick to 120 words or less per item**
- **No exclamation points (!)**
- **Keep your list between 5-7 items** to ensure it remains "bite-sized" in length and structure
- **If you're quoting someone directly,** stick to the below (Associated Press) style: attribute the speaker by their last name, and put the comma inside the quotation marks.
  - **Example:** "There's no such thing as a silly question," Smith says in her article.
- **And speaking of quotations,** if you describe someone's perspective, philosophy or approach, provide either a quote or a concrete example to help bring it to life for the reader.
  - **Yes:** Smith's perspective into work-life balance is encouraging. For example, she says she never looks at work email on the weekends.
  - **No:** Smith's perspective into work-life balance is encouraging. It gives all of us ambitious folks hope!

For inspiration, see:

- [Fast Company](#)
- [Creative Boom](#)

## 2. Chapter Lead spotlight: "My UX Journey"

These stories, featuring a chapter lead sharing UX career insights, are presented in a "question and answer" (Q&A) format. While they should highlight the scope

and diversity of perspectives within Hexagon, they also shouldn't feel too self-congratulatory or internal in tone. These pieces should offer an engrossing read to everyone interested in UX.

**Profiling a member of the Hexagon community who's not a chapter lead?** You can follow the same guidelines outlined below.

Spotlight structure:

- Stick to the following structure in your piece:
  - **Headline:** "My UX Journey, Vol [XX]: meet [FIRST NAME, LAST NAME]"lo
  - **Standfirst:** 30-50 words: introduce the series and a key insight from your interviewee
  - **Short intro:** What does your interviewee do? What has been their favorite memory or most enriching part of Hexagon?
  - **Questions** (each indicated with a "Q"):
    - How did you get started in the User Experience space?
    - How would you describe the UX community in your area?
    - What's a typical day for you?
    - What's the best piece of advice you've gotten about working in UX?
    - What's something you wish you had been told when you started your career?
    - What has been the most valuable or enlightening mistake you ever made?
    - What gives you professional inspiration?

Spotlight style and process guidelines:

- **Stick to 500-700 words for the Q&A section**, and 900 or less for the full article
- **Keep the answers in first person**, in the voice of the interviewee
- **You can conduct the interview** in person, on the phone or by email. Edit answers for clarity and grammar.
- **Ask interviewees for a few photos** of them outside of the office: traveling, participating in a hobby, relaxing, hanging out at a favorite local spot...
  - You can also add royalty-free photos of city locations (see [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com))
- **After you've edited the interview:**
  - Send the piece to the interviewee for a quick fact-check
  - Save the article to Medium as draft
  - Share the draft link with [fionayeung@google.com](mailto:fionayeung@google.com); she'll create visuals for the piece
- **No acronyms** ("Engineering" rather than "Eng").

- **No exclamation points (!)**
- **If the interviewee mentions a company, institution or product**, add brief context on what the group does
  - **Example:** "I work as a UX Researcher at Tinkerform Innovation Labs, which focuses on innovation projects with startups."

For inspiration from around the web, see:

- [Vanity Fair](#)
- [Inc.com](#)

Hexagon examples:

- [Meet Prakrithy Pradeep](#)
- [Meet Cinthya Mohr](#)

### 3. Event recap

Recaps from chapter events around the world give us a chance to share learnings and takeaways from Hexagon loop **on insights or lessons from speakers rather than descriptions of the atmosphere or audience** – "the event was a great success" usually provides little value to a busy reader.

Guidelines:

- Stick to 800-1000 words
- In addition to a suggested headline, provide a standfirst that gives the reader a quick snapshot of what they should expect in the article.
- **Provide a few photos of the event** (speakers in action, crowd reacting) so readers can get a sense of its vibe through pictures.
- **If the event consists of several topics, you can split the article into shorter sections.** Provide a subheader for each section within the article.
- **Include a caption for each photo** that offers context for the photo and tells us who is pictured ("Lisa Smith shared her tips on getting started in a design career").
- **In most cases, write your recap in the 3rd person.** This helps maintain a feeling of inclusivity for readers who may not be familiar with Hexagon.
  - **Yes:** About 50 local members of the community attended the event
  - **No:** Our event was a smash success
- **If the event included a panel or a talk, focus the majority of your write-up on that.** This expert content is likely to be useful for readers both inside and outside of Hexagon.
- **Provide direct quotes from speakers or panelists** ("Remember to always ask questions," Smith said.).
- Refer to speakers/panelists by their last names

- **Avoid exclamation points, and use adjectives sparingly.** Opt for showing over telling (avoid "Smith's speech was fantastic").
- **No acronyms** ("Engineering" rather than "Eng").
- **If you include links to further materials or speaker websites,** tell readers what's behind it what's behind a link ("Smith also writes a blog on her spare time")

For inspiration, see:

- Billboard.com
- Slate

## 4. How-to/editorial

These offer you an opportunity to share your expertise on an area of UX, be it a handy way to measure the quality of your content or a more holistic approach to the creative process. Get started by thinking about advice you wish you had been told, a common dilemma encountered by UXers, or a new design approach you'd like to share with the community. These can be written in the first or third person, but always back up your claims with evidence.

### Some ideas:

- How to apply the Sprint methodology to a one-hour meeting
- Five essential design tools for content strategists
- The benefits and pitfalls of user surveys
- How to incorporate storytelling into project work
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### Guidelines

- **Stick to 500-1000 words**
- **In addition to a suggested headline, provide a standfirst** that gives the reader a quick snapshot of what they should expect in the article.
- **Possible formats:**
  - A list of 3-7 tips, devoting a section and a subheader for each tip (see Fastcompany.com example #1 below). Think of each item on the list as a more extensive version of what you'd offer in a roundup (story type 1).
  - A piece written in op-ed style, focusing on a singular "thesis" or perspective ([see an example](#))
- **Favor practical pieces of advice over generalities**
  - **Yes:** "Jot down likely audience rebuttals during the first run-through of your presentation."

- **No:** "Assertiveness helps in a meeting with high-level stakeholders"
- **Back up your claims with quotes, data, or meaty real-life examples**
  - "I consult my #TomorrowList, which I write the night before. This list simply spells out my top three priorities for the day, in order of importance. I try to tackle the hardest problem that requires the most energy and creativity first, to get it out of the way." (Chris O'Neill, Evernote's CEO, on [Fastcompany.com](https://www.fastcompany.com))
  - "According to the American Psychological Association, workplace stress costs American companies an estimated \$300 billion annually." ([Time.com](https://www.time.com))
- **Avoid exclamation points, and use adjectives sparingly**
- **No acronyms** ("Engineering" rather than "Eng").

For inspiration, see:

1. [Fastcompany.com](https://www.fastcompany.com)
2. [Fastcompany.com](https://www.fastcompany.com) (1st-person by Chris O'Neill)
3. [The New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com)