Nikita Gokhale

Product and UX · HCI lecturer

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Authorized to work in the US · No visa sponsorship required

SUMMARY

I've spent three years teaching HCI, UX and web design to more than 360 bachelor's and master's students. Before that I led a three-person team as product manager on an AI travel planner, from 30 user interviews to a working prototype. I'm looking for a product manager or product designer role where research, scoping and clear communication all matter. Computer engineer by background.

EXPERIENCE

Lecturer, HCI, UX and Web Design · California State University, East Bay · Hayward, CA — Jan 2024 – present

- Teach HCI, interaction and UX design, and web design to 360+ undergraduate and graduate students so far.
- Rewrote the Web Design II syllabus around user-centred design, accessibility and SEO.
- Run studio critiques and coach students through Figma, prototyping, HTML, CSS and JavaScript until their portfolios are ready to send. Average portfolio scores rose 40%.

UX Consultant (contract) · Civiqa · San Francisco, CA — Oct 2023 – Jan 2024

- Reviewed and reworked the website's main user flows with the founders.

Junior UX Designer and Researcher · The Why Labs · San Francisco, CA — Nov 2022 – Apr 2023

- Mapped the team's work as trauma-informed service blueprints, cutting internal roadblocks by 25%.
- Built interview, synthesis and analysis templates that cut research collection and sorting time by 30%.
- Designed a toolkit CSU East Bay interaction design grad students use to evaluate their projects consistently.

PRODUCT PROJECTS

HODO, AI travel planner · Product Manager and UX Researcher · MA thesis — Dec 2021 – May 2022

- Led a team of three from research to a coded prototype with a working AI recommendation model in three months.
- Interviewed 30 travellers and a few travel agents. Found that 86% wanted to plan their own trips but hated the research, which shaped the whole product.
- Scoped the MVP to seven features, and cut day-by-day itineraries, bookings and maps.
- Ran 8 moderated usability tests and shortened the recommendation flow from three steps to two.
- Wrote the product docs, planned the sprints and pitched to the thesis panel.

AIzunes, AI music app for AIzheimer's caregivers · Solo project · CSU East Bay — Jun 2021 – Dec 2021

- Reviewed nine dementia and brain-training apps and worked with a long-time caregiver as a research partner.
- Narrowed a broad idea to music therapy, which caregivers could test safely without involving patients.
- Got IRB approval, then designed, tested and coded a prototype. It builds playlists from the patient's birth year and logs reactions for their music therapist.

EDUCATION

MA, Interaction Design · CSU East Bay · 2022

MS, Computer Science · New York Institute of Technology · 2019

SKILLS

Product: discovery research, MVP scoping, prioritisation, sprint planning, product docs, presentations
Research: user interviews, surveys, usability testing, competitive analysis, service blueprints, synthesis
Design: interaction design, user flows, wireframes, prototyping, accessibility, visual and campaign design
Tools: Figma, Framer, Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, Procreate, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Bootstrap

ALSO

California Arts Association (Bay Area Marathi theatre): costume design lead for *Tughlaq* (2025), poster design for all of the group's productions, and acting in three or more plays a year. Diploma in Bharatanatyam after 13 years of training.