

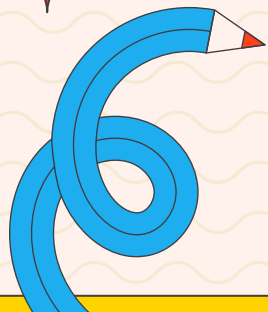


UNLOCKING THE FIRST PIECE OF THE CAREER PUZZLE

BEGINNING TO BEYOND

Kitti Horvath & Aga Rzesniowiecka

WOW





About Us



Agnieszka Rzesniowiecka

Senior UX Researcher,
Wise

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Kitti Horvath

Researcher,
Lightyear Financial

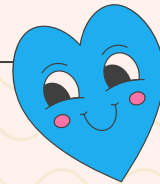
[LinkedIn](#)





What we'll cover

1. What role should I go for?
2. Where to look
3. Application process
4. Case studies
5. Interview prep
6. Accepting an offer
7. Finding a mentor!

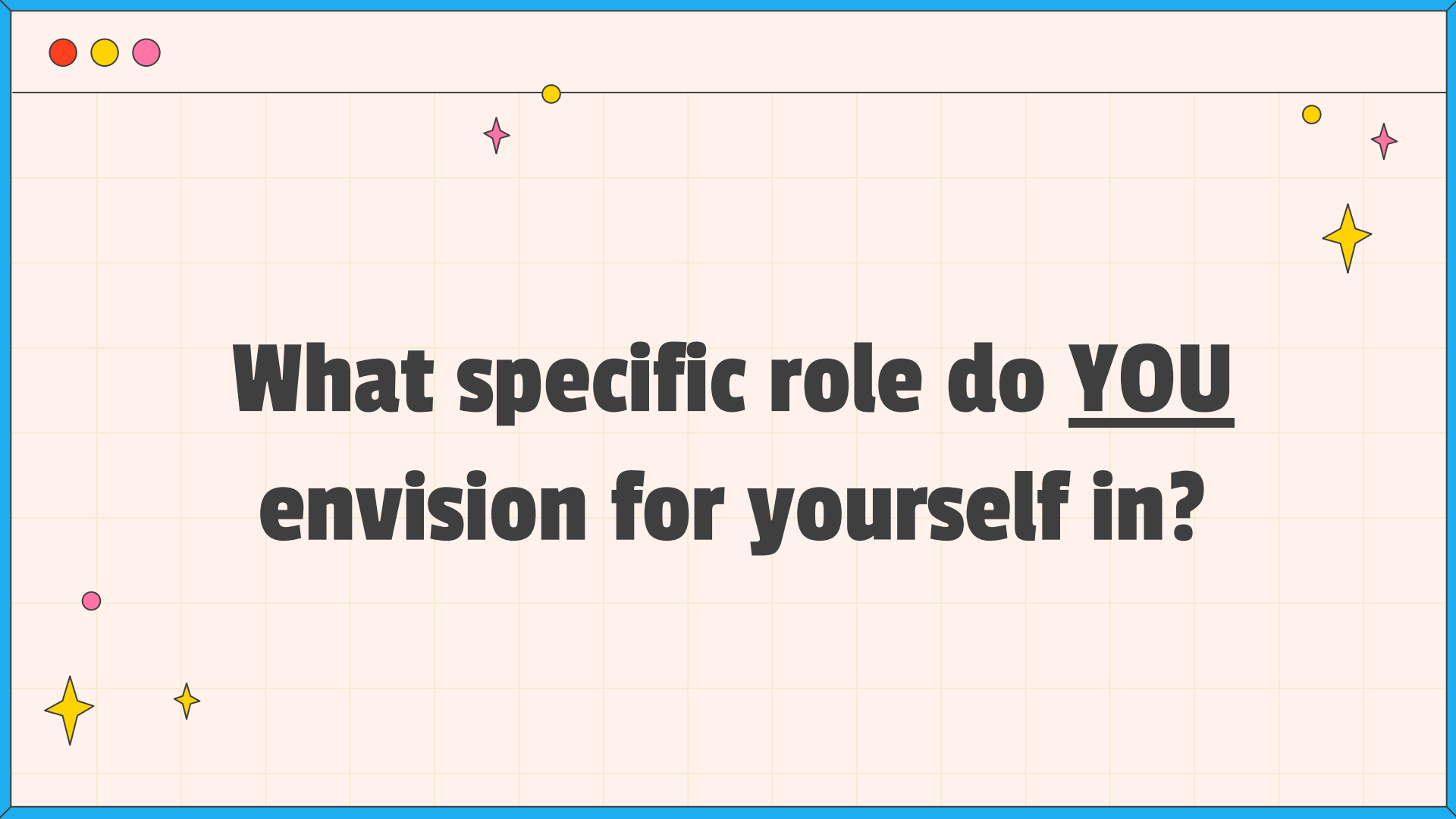


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01

**Choosing the
right role**



The image features a light beige background with a faint yellow grid. A blue border frames the entire scene. In the top-left corner, there are three colored circles (red, yellow, pink) resembling window control buttons. Scattered throughout the grid are several decorative elements: a yellow circle near the top center, a pink star near the top center, a yellow star near the top right, a pink star near the top right, a pink circle near the bottom left, and two yellow stars near the bottom left.

**What specific role do YOU
envision for yourself in?**



Have you thought about?

UX Consultant

Product Manager

Content Designer



Service Designer

Human Factors Engineer

Data / Product Analyst



UX Research Scientist 🖱️

UX Architect

Behavioural Scientist

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One title, endless varieties





Choose your context carefully



Consultancy

In-house

Agency

Start-up

Scale-up

Big Tech



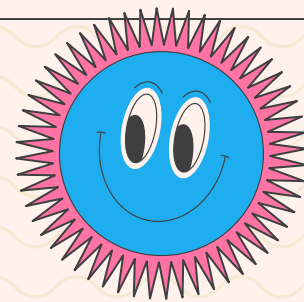
Now that you picked your apple...





02

Where to look





Many jobs are never officially advertised.

Follow the Head Researchers / Designers, VPs of Research / Design, and Principals, as well as UX recruiters.

The community is small, and sometimes roles are posted on LinkedIn before an actual application link becomes available.

Ask for a reference!

Most companies pay employees for referring a new hire who becomes successful.

Be respectful and curious about the company while asking.

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Our experiences with networking.

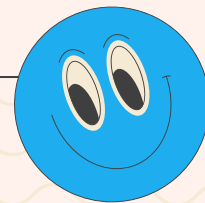


In our case, going to networking events was a waste of money and time. Majority of attendees are people also looking for their 1st job.



Instead, attend the UX conferences and learning-focused events where researchers/ designers go to learn from each other.





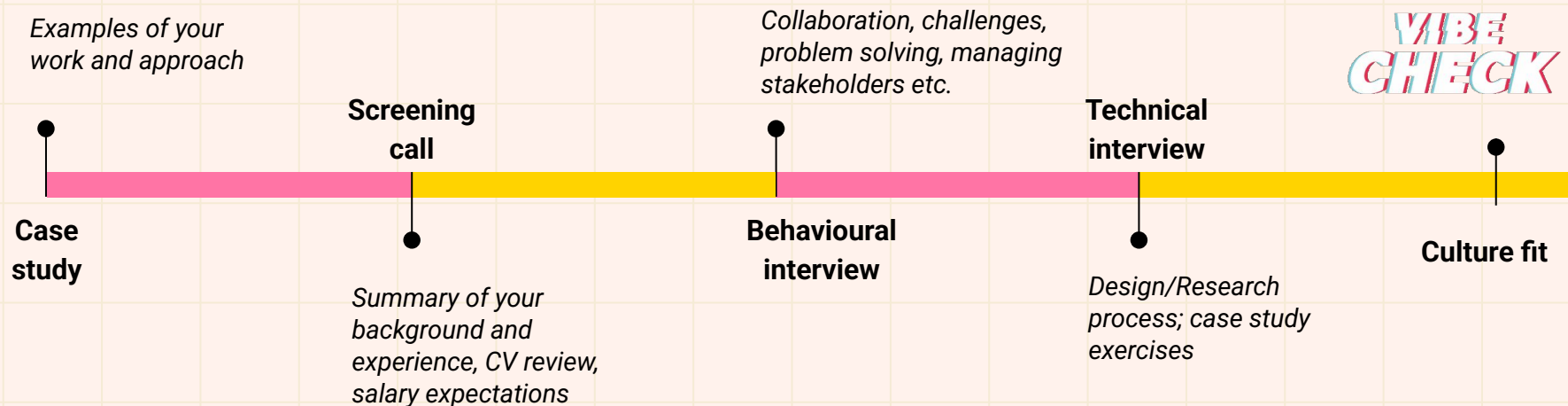
APPLYING

03



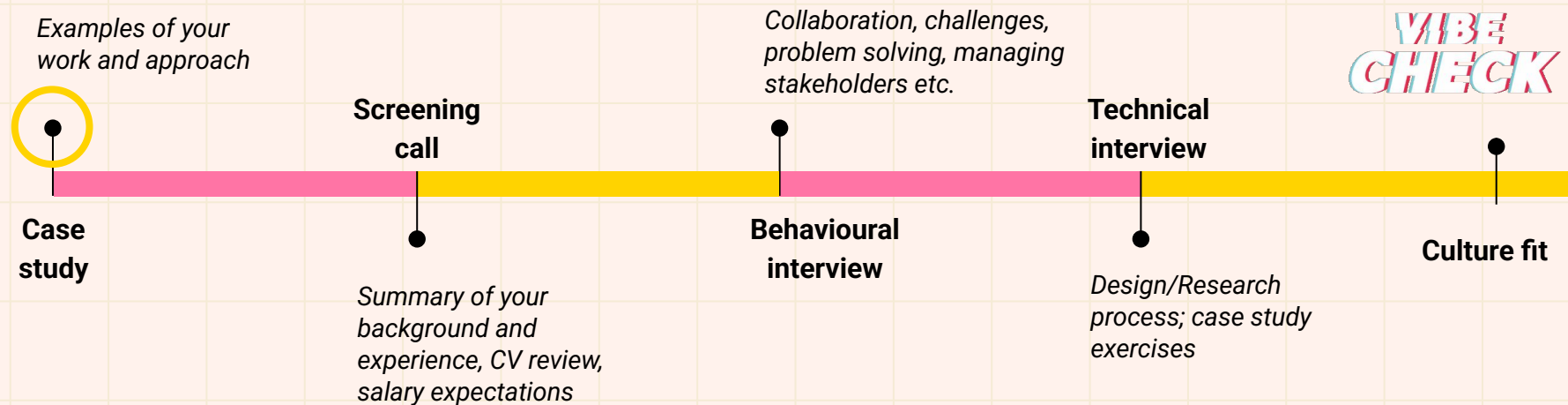


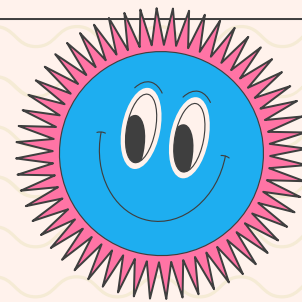
Typical process looks like...





Typical process looks like...





04

CASE STUDIES



What's a case study?

UX case studies are *examples of your design or research work*.



UXers tell **stories** in text and images to show **how** they handled problems and what was the impact. These should showcase your **skills** and **ways of thinking** to maximize your appeal as a potential hire.



We look for the following information:

→ CONTEXT

→ PROBLEM & GOALS

→ YOUR ROLE

→ SCOPE & CONSTRAINTS

→ THE PROCESS

→ THE CHALLENGE ⚠

→ SHARING INSIGHTS W/ OTHERS

→ IMPACT

→ REFLECTION



Bad

We did usability testing on the new checkout of the Wise mobile app and redesigned it to be better.



Good (*what, why, impact*)

WHAT

We monitored conversion and ran 2 usability tests on the checkout experience.

WHY

I chose this method to access the users' thinking and identify confusion points.

FINDINGS

Often, different products needed different shipping addresses, which isn't currently possible on this app.

IMPACT

As testing indicated this was a critical issue, we fixed it in the following sprint, which helped increase our conversion rate from 2% to 6%.



It's user experience.

Might sound obvious but often the user or user research isn't even mentioned in design portfolios!

- Include user research or secondary research insights (or even design heuristics) that informed your decisions.
- Ideally, include what impact the design changes had on the user and how you measured them.



AI – when to use it? Our take

- Don't use it for:
 - your first draft!
- You can use it to:
 - evaluate your case study from the point of view of whoever might read it (recruiter, UX manager)
 - ask to identify any gaps or missing pieces
 - ask to evaluate the tone of voice (Chat GPT, Grammarly)
 - check typos (e.g. Grammarly)



Bonus tips



Real > Fake

Real project tells us way more about how you address problems

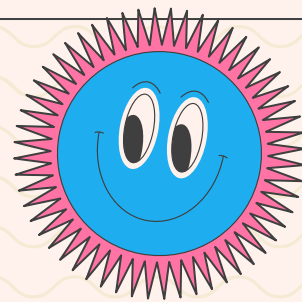
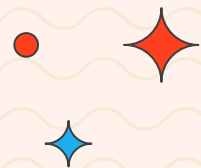
Use ~I~, not ~we~

Tell us about your role and what you did in the project

Highlight collaboration

Communication and collaboration are often the hardest parts of the project!





05

INTERVIEW PREP





Typical process looks like...





Screening call & Behavioural tips

Pitch yourself!

Create a strong summary
on your CV & your story

Stalk interviewers

Read their blog, listen to
their podcast etc.

Know what you want

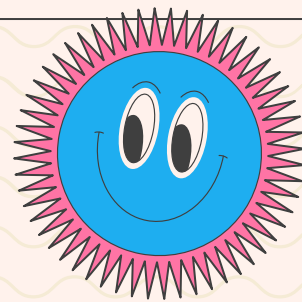
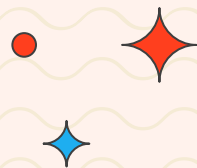
Think about how you want
to grow in the future

Use the STAR method

Rehearse your answers
ahead of time

Follow-up

Send a thank-you note to
the recruiter!



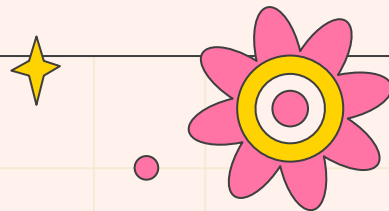
06

**Accepting an
offer**





Things to ask before accepting



How will you be mentored / supported?



Is the role hybrid, remote, or office-based?



What's the onboarding process like?



What are the learning and training opportunities?



What's the team structure?



What does success look like in this role? E.g. KPIs

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Get familiar with typical UX salaries

Certain companies publish a report each year...

[Zebra People Digital Salary Survey 2023](#)

Glassdoor is good, but often inaccurate!

Always negotiate

There is usually room to negotiate 20-30% more than the first offer.

No company will rescind the offer because you negotiated!

What might be a significant salary increase for you is often peanuts to the company.

Thank you email

Maintain contact throughout the interview stages.

Do not forget to express your excitement towards the end!



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Is it too good to be true?



Melissa Hausner

Job Opportunity

Dear Nick,

Hello, Trust you are doing well today??

I am sharing with you an exciting opportunity as INTELLI-SHOP is seeking Part-time / Full Time Brand Assessors / Private Shoppers to evaluate customer/consumer service in our various locations.

They pay Three Hundred \$ per assignment and you could get 1 or 2 assignments in a day and 5 to 10 In a week, which means you could make Thousands weekly, without disturbing your daily job or activities.

Each shopping task take less than 15 minutes of your free time

It is a flexible job you can do locally without colliding with your daily job/activities?

I've been working with them for more than nine months and it has been a good experience earning up to \$1,500 extra weekly income.

Kindly read more and find the secured registration form extension below to apply...

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aMh9dGxP8jHz-Q0kKbHYt_OZHcF6NNGc/view

Your resume has been reviewed for the : Data Specialist which has a starting pay of \$35.00/hr. We are impressed by your background and your qualifications make you an excellent candidate for this role.

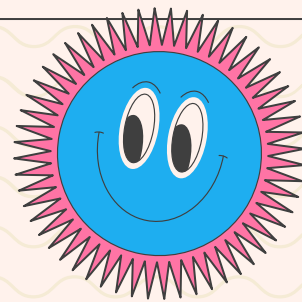
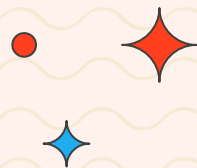
You have been shortlisted for an online interview with the Hiring Manager, Jacob Bishop Via Microsoft Team Chat following his link address (Let's chat on Microsoft Teams! This free app lets us collaborate and stay connected.

Use this link to download the app and also join my chat: (<https://teams.live.com/j/invite/FAANasbf3J4NUjfhQM>). Add him to your Microsoft Team Chat buddy list and message him.

During the interview, you will have the chance to learn more about the role and to develop a deeper understanding of our company's objectives.

We look forward to having you on the team.

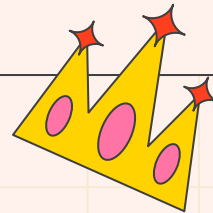




07

Settling in





Find a mentor!

Outside your team

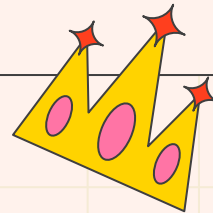
Provides objective advice and expands your network!

Vibe check

It takes time to find the right person - do not be afraid to say no!

Hold on for life

Mentors can follow you through variety of roles and companies!



Where to look?

Hexagon

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/hexagonux/posts/?feedView=all>

UXPA Mentoring

<https://uxpa-uk.org/development/mentoring/>

ADP List

<https://adplist.org/>



Q&A





Appendix





WHAT 3 THINGS HELPED **KITTI** THE MOST?



01

Practice Interviews

Thorough preparation to interview questions & pilot runs with friends



02

A “mini” study

Generative research about the company/ product I applied for



03

Questions!

Asking **tons** of questions about the role, team, company culture etc.





WHAT 3 THINGS HELPED **AGA** THE MOST?



01

Case study

Demonstrating research knowledge, dealing with challenges, and critical thinking

02

Business know-how

Knowledge of how agile, cross-functional teams, sprints, stand-ups, and success metrics (e.g. conversion, MAU)

03

Studying the company

Going through the 'about us' section, any news / rankings etc; mentioning this in the interview



THE CONTEXT

What's the product or service? Who are the users?

THE PROBLEM

*Why did you work on this? What were the knowns and unknowns?
Business and user needs? What was the goal of the project?*

YOUR ROLE

How did you lead or contribute? Who were your stakeholders?

**SCOPE &
CONSTRAINTS**

Timelines and budget/scope restrictions that affected your decision making

THE PROCESS

What did you do? Why? What methodology did you use and why? How did you collaborate? How did you manage time?

THE CHALLENGE

What didn't go to plan? How did you adapt?

**SHARING THE
INSIGHTS**

How did you make sure your research resonated in the right way with the right people?

THE IMPACT

*What was the impact / business outcome?
How did you influence it? How did you measure it?*

REFLECTION

What did you learn? What would you do differently next time?



Don't use 'we'!

It's confusing to the employer.

- *Use 'I' for all activities you participated in*
- *Use specific roles to describe any collaboration (e.g. I worked with a designer, analyst and a project manager) to give more context*
 - *You can also what you'll mean by 'we' at the beginning of the case study.*



Consultancy

Job: designers are often “sold” as researchers and vice versa

Remit: broad but shallow

Reporting: inward (to your company) & outward (to your clients)

Culture: competitive (everyone tries to get the “best” projects)

Salary: high

Impact: indirect impact

Work-life balance: overtime expected

Travel: plenty, often

In-house

Job: usually embedded in one team; mentorship easily available

Remit: 1 company, usually 1 product

Reporting: internal; conferences

Culture: depends on company values

Salary: depends on industry

Impact: direct impact

Work-life balance: *check Glassdoor*

Travel: relocation opportunities

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Agency

Job: you undertake projects under client’s supervision

Remit: broad and deep

Reporting: inward (to your company) & outward (to your clients)

Culture: fast-paced, collaborative

Salary: usually lower than in-house

Impact: direct impact

Work-life balance: varies week to week

Travel: depends on client location



Company size

Start-up

Job: Wearing many hats

Hierarchy: Flat structure

Culture: Flexible, Fast

Salary: Low, but with equity

Impact: High impact work

Work-life balance: None

Scale-up

Job: More defined, specific

Hierarchy: Developing reporting

Culture: Flexible, Fast

Salary: Higher, with equity

Impact: High impact work

Work-life balance: More balanced

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Big Tech

Job: Often hyper-specialised

Hierarchy: Clear chain of command

Culture: Corporate

Salary: High, with equity and perks

Impact: Often relatively small

Work-life balance: Good

