First jobs are hard – the field of UX research and design is no exception. We’ve created a guide of real-life Situations and Solutions for new UXers.

**Situation**
Common frustration expressed by new UXers in the field. We identified common Situations through interviews, observations, and surveys conducted with over 50 industry professionals.

**Storyboard**
Each Situation is represented by a comic that places the problem in professional context.

**Filters**
Controls to filter Solution Cards by Organization Size and Budget.

**Solution Cards**
Metadata – high-level information for rapidly determining if the Solution is appropriate

**Summary** – a short description of the Solution with actionable recommendations

**Expert quotes** – taken from interviews with practicing UX professionals, literature reviews, and survey responses

**Success rating** – number of users who applied this Solution and found it to be successful

---

**All Situations → Limited Research Budget**

Want to do user research but have no (or a very limited) budget?

Does this situation feel familiar to you?

Here are solutions we’ve sourced from industry pros:

**Filter Solutions by:**
Organizationsize → Budget →

---

**Prioritize Your Methods**

- Short-term tactic
- 8 out of 10 readers reported this worked for them
- No budget required
- Tends to work well in any organization

Maybe you’d like to do a deep ethnography – but if you have no budget you may want to adjust your method selection criteria so you can get a few quick wins under your belt.

“You have to be able to prioritize your methods. Maybe those quick surveys are more effective because you can get through more of them quickly and gain maybe the same insight. You have to really understand your toolkit.”

- Bryan, Product Designer at General Assembly

---

**Competitive Analysis**

- Short-term tactic
- 11 out of 12 readers reported this worked for them
- No budget required
- Tends to work well in any organization

Not only does competitive analysis allow you to sharpen your design skills by seeing what else is out there, it can also be fun (which helps). Documenting your findings along the way can help later when you need talking points for a presentation about why you chose one design over another. Understanding the benefits and drawbacks of other people’s designs can help you to better evaluate your own. Looking outside of the typical competitors can give you fresh ideas about how to improve your company’s product.

“As an agile environment I rarely have the time to do studies or look ahead anyway. It’s implemented before I get a study going, so there’s a lot of guesswork and looking at other products’ features.”

- Survey Participant, UI Designer at Large Corporation

---

**More Resources**

- 8 out of 10 readers reported this worked for them
- Did it work for you? Let us know about it.

- Methods cost table (DSL)
- Sample low-budget research plan (PDF)

---

**Problem Space**
The first year on any job can be both thrilling and terrifying – and the field of user experience research and design is no exception. While countless resources are devoted to teaching methods and landing a job, relatively little is available to help new UXers navigate and succeed in their workplace.

---

**Research**
Design research included reviewing literature, dozens of semi-structured interviews with established and aspiring UX professionals and educators, competitive review of existing online resources for UX professionals, and observing career panels and industry events.

---

**Design Concept**
Our aim was to design a convenient way for new UX professionals to get practical, context-specific solutions for common problematic situations from multiple perspectives. We wanted to make the solutions engaging for practitioners looking for both just-in-time advice and more narrative content.

---

**Evaluation**
We conducted three rounds of usability evaluations with a total of fifteen participants, using an interactive, online prototype. By using the Rapid Iterative Testing and Evaluation (RITE) method, we made improvements to our interface layout and information architecture during the testing phase.