

David Farkas, UX Research, Product Management, & Strategy

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Professional Summary

Strategic User Experience (UX) Leader with nearly 20 years of experience building and leading high-performing teams in UX. Instrumental in expanding UX capabilities within Cisco IT, driving strategic growth and alignment with organizational objectives. Recognized for recruiting top talent, fostering mentorship, and promoting a culture of collaboration and continuous learning. Experienced with interdisciplinary teams in-house and with agencies. Comfortable navigating complex projects and delivering innovative solutions across diverse sectors. Passionate about driving business growth and representing the organization at industry events.

Key Strengths & Skills

Leadership: Collaboration, Prioritization, Product Management, Product Strategy, Product Vision, Public Speaking, Staffing, Talent Development, Team Management

UX Research & Strategy: Contextual Inquiry, Emerging Tech (AI), Experience/Journey Maps, Heuristic Analysis, Information Architecture, JIRA, Mixed Methods, Personas, Research Analysis, Scaling Research, Service Design, Strategic Planning, Transformation Design, UX Research, UX Strategy, Workshop Facilitation

Professional Experience

CISCO, Remote

UX Research Manager, 06/2022 to Present

- Recruited and onboarded three UX Designers leading a team of 10 UX designers. Established a new research practice recruiting the first four researchers.
- Partnered with product design, strategy, engineering, and business stakeholders to explore, define, prioritize, and validate internal seller-tool workflows.
- Championed promotion of three (of seven) direct hires in the first year, highlighting talent development and retention. Referred two senior team members to expand the leadership team.
- Improved alignment and efficiency through cross-functional partnerships with pre- and post-sales leadership.
- Implemented team-wide knowledge base (wiki) demonstrating research findings and providing self-service tools.
- Scaled ResearchOps, partnering with other teams including implementation of Qualtrics, User Testing, Optimal Workshop, and user satisfaction metrics.
- Implemented a biannual perceptions survey deployed to stakeholders to evaluate team's impact. The survey measured a 15% increase in positive sentiment and repeat engagement in the period between FY23 Q4 and FY24 Q2.
- Empowered 100% of designers to conduct evaluative research, resulting in a 50% increase in planning for generative research. This informed decisions, independent practice, and improved product outcomes.

GROUNDSWELL (formerly CollabraLink Technologies), Remote

UX Research Director, 06/2020 to 05/2022

- Optimized UX research for NOAA including mixed methods and evaluative research.
- Coordinated heuristic evaluation and design iterations for ServiceNow implementation, leading to increased efficiencies for service design and digital experience.
- Managed a team of three UX researchers, acting as product manager on teams of 5 to 15 individuals.
- Contributed to tech challenges and business development ranging from \$5M to \$50M value.
- Introduced a streamlined product vision workshop for distributed team collaboration.

Professional Experience, cont.

EPAM, Philadelphia, PA

Associate Director, 01/2017 to 06/2020

- Led teams of designers, researchers, and developers (up to 10 people) to complete mixed-methods research and strategy, then designed elegant solutions for clients in financial, real estate, and e-commerce sectors.
- Harmonized schedules and deliverables for global teams, resulting in improved collaboration, streamlined processes, and enhanced customer experience. Coordinated enhancements for Tier 1 and 2 Help Desk workflow and interface.
- Managed individual practitioners and coached through promotion cycle while adjusting to project priorities.
- Delivered impactful presentations at local, regional, and international community events. Engaged with attendees and enhanced organizational reputation and thought leadership.

Senior UX Designer, 03/2014 to 01/2017

- Performed qualitative and ethnographic research, designed information architecture, wireframes and prototypes while facilitating client strategy sessions and workshops.
- Planned and facilitated multi-stream research initiatives including pharmaceutical, financial services wealth management dashboards, and e-commerce platforms.

TAMMAN TECHNOLOGIES, Philadelphia, PA

Design & Strategy Lead, 01/2013 to 01/2014

- Recruited as the first UX hire to build, scale, and lead research and design.
- Developed a scalable process for integrating design with engineers in a Lean User Experience (LeanUX) environment.
- Co-developed client and internal products, utilizing iterative and qualitative practices that increased user retention including those in e-commerce ticketing services.

Additional Experience

Lead Designer, DELVE (formerly Bresslergroup), Philadelphia PA, 06/2012 to 01/2013

Lead Designer, CAPGEMINI (formerly Electronic Ink), Philadelphia, PA, 01/2010 to 06/2012

Designer, PNC BANK NA, Pittsburgh, PA, 07/2008 to 12/2009

Presentations & Publications

[**Collaborative Improv**](#), Published June 2019 (Presented: Free Workshops 2020-21, IAC 2020, DCUX 2019, AYCL Library(UIE), PixelUp 2019, PhillyCHI 2019)

[**UX Research: Practical Techniques for Designing Better Products**](#), Published November 2016, O'Reilly, Co-author Brad Nunnally (Presented at: IA Summit 2018, Online webinars, Abstractions 2019)

[**Heuristic Evaluations, Beyond the Academic Review**](#), 2015 (Presented UXIFY 2015)

Activities & Organizations

IxDA | Member, 2007 to Present

IA Summit | Volunteer, 2012 and 2014

PhillyCHI | Member, 2010 to Present; Officer 2011 to 2011

Education

Bachelor of Fine Art (BFA) in Design, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA

Bachelor of Science (BS) in Human Computer Interaction (HCI), Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA