

Designer Handover Template

A structured handoff for when a designer leaves, so their context leaves with a plan instead of leaving with them.

1 Ownership Metadata

What is expected: Complete, factual information establishing who owned the work and who takes over.

Why it matters: Ownership ambiguity causes dropped work and accountability gaps.

Designer name

Role

Pods / squads

Manager

Last working day

Handover start date

Handover end date

Primary successor(s)

2 Scope of Responsibility

What is expected: A comprehensive list of everything owned, influenced, or informally carried.

Why it matters: Unwritten responsibility disappears the moment someone leaves.

2.1 Products / Features

Product / Feature	Status	Business Goal	Design Maturity	Notes

2.2 Design Systems & Assets

Asset Type	Name / Link	Ownership Notes
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Asset Type	Name / Link	Ownership Notes

2.3 Cross-Functional Touchpoints

Function	Name(s)	Nature of Collaboration
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3 Work Inventory

What is expected: An honest snapshot of all work states, including unfinished and risky items.

Why it matters: Missing work guarantees rework and slows delivery.

3.1 Active Work (Must Be Picked Up)

Item	Link	Current State	What Remains	Priority	Deadline / Dependency
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3.2 Parked or Deprioritised Work

Item	Reason Paused	Conditions to Resume
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3.3 Completed but Fragile Work

Item	Why Fragile	Known Risks
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4 Design Rationale & Decision Log

What is expected: Clear reasoning behind major decisions and trade-offs.
Why it matters: Without rationale, teams relitigate decisions or undo them blindly.

Problem Statement	Options Considered	Decision Made	Rationale	Trade-offs

5 Known Risks & Design Debt

What is expected: Transparent disclosure of compromises, shortcuts, and unresolved issues.
Why it matters: Hidden debt compounds and explodes later.

Category	Description	Impact / Notes
UX debt		
Accessibility		
Research gaps		
Technical constraints		
Stakeholder / political		

6 Research & Insights

What is expected: Transfer of validated learning, not raw data.
Why it matters: Relearning wastes time and undermines confidence in design.

Research Item	Method	Key Insights	Invalidated Assumptions	Links

7 Stakeholder Reality Map

What is expected: Practical insight into stakeholder incentives, friction, and working styles.
Why it matters: Most failures are political, not design-related.

Stakeholder	Role	What They Care About	Friction Points	How to Work With Them
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8 Tools, Access & Locations

What is expected: Verified access transfer with zero dependency on the departing designer.
Why it matters: Locked files silently stall teams.

Tool / Repository	Link	Ownership Transferred	Notes
Figma			
Confluence / Notion			
Miro			
Jira			
Research repositories			
Other platforms			

Confirmation: all files are accessible without my account. ☐ Yes ☐ No

9 Recommended Next Actions

What is expected: Clear, prioritised actions for the next owner.
Why it matters: Momentum prevents paralysis after transition.

First 30 Days

Action	Owner	Expected Outcome

60 Days

Action	Owner	Expected Outcome

90 Days

Action	Owner	Expected Outcome

10 Final Advice to the Team

What is expected: Judgment and pattern recognition that files cannot capture.

Why it matters: This is where experience transfers.

Things to protect

Things to kill

Things to double down on

11 Sign-Off

What is expected: Explicit confirmation that the handover is complete and accurate.

Why it matters: Formal closure prevents future disputes.

Departing designer name

Date

Receiving designer / manager

Date
