

# How to get fabulous creative

Working with your designer  
to get great results

Where to begin, the “Steps”

Clarity

Rapport

Creative Brief

Your material

Understanding designers

Briefing

Working with a designer

Selecting a concept

Preparing your material

How to give feedback

Red flags

Strategies

Volunteer designers

and Pro-bono offers

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# The **steps** to develop a brochure, poster etc..

1. Define your

Strategy | Requirements | Audience | Call to action | Budget

2. Write a **Creative Brief**

3. Brief the **designer**

See if you can get some material to the designer at this stage

4. Designer creates **concepts**

5. You select a **concept**

(and maybe provide feedback on that concept)

# The **steps** to develop a brochure, poster etc..

6. Complete material (text, photos etc...) and get it to the designer.
7. Designer goes into **production**  
(develops artwork from the concept)
8. **Designer presents draft 1 of the artwork**
9. **Proof, check** provide feedback  
- the designer makes alterations
10. **Sign-off / go to final art**  
**Go to print – Go live – GO GO GO GO!**

But for

**Fabulous Creative**

You need

...**clarity** which gives **you** confidence  
and **great rapport** with your designer  
to ensure that you can openly discuss  
issues and that the designer stays  
**motivated** and continues to  
**enhance** your project at every point.

take some time to get

**Clarity**

about your requirements



# be clear

...who your **audience** is

...what you want their **out-take** to be

...be clear what the **coms problem** that you have

...know **what you are asking your audience to do**  
(your call-to-action)

...ensure that your stakeholders support you

# Clarity gives you **confidence**.

It helps you to:

- decide between concepts
- know that you have made the right decision
- stop asking your colleagues for advice
- give specific feedback to the designer
- stop the designer second guessing you
- know when you have **fabulous creative**

# Clarity gives the **designer** confidence in **you**

It helps them to:

- take you seriously
- trust you
- not see your job as a "production" job

Establish

**Rapport**

**Why? It's *mostly* about YOU again. You:**

...understand your organisation and sector

...have the context of the coms problem

...may even have empathy for your target audience

**Your designer doesn't have anywhere  
near your understanding of your world**

and it's a bit about **THEM**. They

...may have a preconception about your organisation

...might have begun developing an idea from the moment that you emailed them

...sometimes get enthusiastic for new work (just because it is new) yet don't maintain it

**Fabulous creative  
comes from the  
designer retaining their  
creative energy  
for your work**

# The Creative Brief



# Is a financial contract between you and the designer. It...

- outlines the deadlines and budget etc...
- defines the audience
- for an advertising agency, it states the '**single minded proposition**'
- outlines the **communications problem** (that you want solved)
- describes the "out-take" that you want created
- states the **call-to-action**
- **may** give some organisational background
- may have some of the material that you want in your brochure etc...

**But...**

**The designer may not read it  
(They are visual people)**

Show your **clarity** by cutting to the chase.  
Practice this in the mirror...

## The angry brief

The creative brief is handy,  
but your *briefing* is crucial

# Before your brief

- get **your material together**

- It's very powerful to have your content/material ready to show the designer
- Your photos, text, the call-to-action
- Ideally completed and signed-off

**Fabulous creative  
comes from the  
designer understanding  
your organisation and your  
material.**

# Understanding Designers

# They...

Want your work.

Are aiming to please you.

Are creatively motivated.

**Are sensitive people.**

Are visual people.

Are unlikely to know your sector.

Sometimes nervous about showing you their work.

**Get huge energy from creating.**

Lose energy when they lose ownership of their designs.



# Briefing your designer

- Face to face
- Don't read out the creative brief
- Discuss your brief  
**Discuss your comms problem**

**Briefing your designer**

**Don't solutionize**

**Working with a designer**

# They...

- aren't account managers.  
Your expectations *will probably not be* managed.
- are unlikely to have experience of your sector
- **don't want to let you down,**  
but may get confused / overwhelmed  
with your job

# You...

Are contracting an **EXPERT** who may not know anything about your organisation or its role or its sector to solve a communications problem that is serious enough for your organisation to pay money to resolve it

**fabulous creative  
comes from trusting  
the designer**

The **EXPERT** needs to be allowed  
to demonstrate their expertise

They need time...

...and you to leave them alone

...and not change the brief

For  
**fabulous creative**  
don't change  
the brief



# Selecting a concept

## Three concepts are presented to you. How do you choose?

- Think about what gave you clarity
- Is this concept "on brief"?
- What is *the out-take* that you want this design to evoke?
- Don't bring anything else into the decision
- Don't cherry-pick elements from different concepts and ask them to be combined

# Preparing your material

You've selected a concept and you now are getting the content ready for it

- **Meet and discuss your material with the designer**
- **If you have a selection of photos .... let the designer choose**
- **Don't change the concept to fit your material**

**Fabulous creative  
comes from  
bold imagery  
and concise text**

# How to give feedback

**1<sup>st</sup> DRAFT:** The designer comes back with the **1<sup>st</sup> draft**

Now you let the discussion about the design elements go

Its time for feedback about how your material fits into the concept

## 1<sup>st</sup> DRAFT:

### Examples of give GREAT Feedback

"That look of this photo [or any element] looks a bit awkward, what's your rationale for this?"

"I think that we can delete that element."

"How important is this element to in your design?"



# Examples of **SHOCKING** feedback

"I think that we need to add this [element] in."

"I really don't like that colour."

"We need to expand the demographics of audience that it will appeal to."

# Red flags!

Things that derail  
**fabulous creative**

## Red flags

Your text and imagery exceeds  
the space available in the  
concept that you selected

# Red flags

You:

- inadvertently brief the designer for multiple things
- are telling the designer where to put things / what to do – telling them how to design

The designer:

- has a preconception of your organisation
- is saying yes to everything that you say,  
– they don't understand you – may have lost interest

# Red flags

MY bug-bear with designers are:

- The **type** is too small
- The font is difficult to read
- Low contrast
- The **call-to-action** is not prominent

# Strategies

# 1. Stay with a good designer

Let them build an understanding of your complex world

# 2. Create a "working" set of brand guidelines

# 3. Ask for a mock-up of the concept

# Working with volunteers and pro-bono offers



# A pro-bono offer of creative work

1. Understand the motivations of a pro-bono offer
2. Don't give them anything important – **invest** in important creative material
3. Maybe aim for them to stretch your organisation's brand – see what some possibilities are

# Asking a volunteer for creative work

1. Don't give them anything important
2. Give them plenty of time
3. Cover some of their costs

# FINISH

