

BRIEFING YOUR DESIGNER

Why bother writing a design brief? Shouldn't your designer just know what to do?

You probably know more about your company than anyone. You know its history, its competitors, your marketplace, the things you like and dislike, those that have worked for your business in the past and some that haven't.

You'll also have a pretty good idea of the issues your company faces in today's market, the goals and objectives you've set for the coming year and more specifically what you think you need from your designer.

Design is a creative problem-solving discipline and thus to produce a really great piece of design that will deliver the results you need, you must first make sure that the designer really understands the problem.

That's where the design brief comes in. If you spend time creating a structured design brief then in almost every case your designs will achieve their business objective - it's like the old adage 'rubbish in rubbish out'.

So what is a design brief and what does it do?

A design brief is a detailed description of what you are setting out to do, whether it's to update your business card or to redesign your company's logo.

Given that design is a problem-solving discipline then it should start with a comprehensive understanding of the business problem that needs to be solved and developed into a written summary of the project stating the design objectives, desired outcomes, scope, deliverables, time line and budget.

Why is it so important?

Mainly because it defines the problem and explicitly what you (as the client) expect your designer to deliver. It also provides a benchmark against which you can measure effectiveness of the designs presented - are they 'on brief'. If the project should either start to change course and the scope and volume of work increases significantly, the brief can then be referred back to as a way of gauging additional budgetary requirement.

Who completes the design brief?

Ideally it should be a collaborative effort between you and your designer and all other relevant parties. Your designer may offer to attend a brief consultation and then complete the design brief for you. In most instances it is however more common for the client to provide the brief.

How do you write up a design brief?

We'd suggest you use a structured format, similar to the Kwik Kopy Design Brief template. You can of course opt for something more tailored to your requirements or simply follow a briefing checklist.

How long will it take me to write a design brief?

Generally they mirror the length and complexity of the project but are essential for every job. They can take the form of a short bulleted email or a bespoke briefing document and can take anywhere between 15 minutes to 2 hours or more to complete. Working with a designer who knows you well and knows your business can cut down on the time taken to complete the briefing process.

5 tips for briefing your designer:

1. **Always brief face to face** – it gives your designer the chance to ask questions, check assumptions and perhaps provide you with an alternate approach
2. **Involve all the decision makers** – ensure that your brief includes the key decision makers goals and priorities
3. **Be open to creativity but clear about taboos** – without becoming too prescriptive help your designer see how creative they can be with the project
4. **Plan for contingencies** – allow plenty of time to develop and refine the idea into a usable format
5. **Be honest in your feedback** – if you are struggling to like or understand the designs presented, refer to the brief and ask questions until you feel comfortable with the outcome.

Design brief template:

Write the perfect graphic design brief using our Kwik Kopy Design Brief Template
<http://www.kwikkopy.com.au/graphic-design/design-brief>.
For more information arrange a FREE design consultation.