timeinspace
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THE DESIGN PROCESS

Problems are best solved by following a series of steps, or phases, that lead to a solution i.e. a process. The design process begins when the designer receives an assignment; it continues until the solution is accepted and implemented. It s the supporting guide that lets the designer control the progression of a project from one phase to the next. It encourages the designer to examine the problem and cultivate an effective solution. The phases listed below are usually fundamental to solving a design problem, and may occur rapidly or over an extended period of time, and in a linear or circular movement.

one   problem definition
Develop a project brief. Define the problem and its parameters, including audience, tone, project goals and objectives, and any constraints such as schedule, budget and production limitations. HINT: Don't set the parameters too tightly. Always test the boundaries and limitations to avoid being locked in by conventional thinking.

two   research and information gathering
This involves gathering as much information as possible. Learn about the client's needs and current communication materials and strategies. Find out how designers have solved similar problems, survey the environment in which the design will function, check out competitors, consult with vendors.

three   concept development
EACH PROBLEM HAS MANY POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS. This is the biggie. Exploring multiple solutions and then develop the most effective one(s). Phases include:
brainstorming…Storm your brain. Whirlwinds. Tornados.
thumbnails…Little sketches. Very quick. Connecting what's in your head to what's on paper. You can never do too many.
roughs (variations)…Pick a few ideas that are working and explore. Are you still designing the original problem?
refinements…Choose one. You are getting close to the end.
re-refinements…Edit. Edit. Edit.

four   implementation
This involves showing a mock-up of the solution (also called **comps** *short for comprehensives*) to the client, gaining approval, and, keep your fingers crossed, on to production! Your presentation of the final solution should represent the final product as closely as possible i.e. stock, color, size, etc.

In music, literature, art and design, the creative process is a struggle with the unknown, an attempt to forge a solution to a new problem. The common denominator in all creative arts is the tyranny of the blank page and the challenge of creating something where nothing exists.
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