timeinspace
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THE BRIEF: WHAT IT IS

The brief is a summary of a project as perceived by the team members (both client and creative). Briefs are used as a communication tool; they should affirm a project's goals and any aspirations, the audience, the timeline and the budget. Many projects (creative and otherwise!) get underway without a clear sense of expectations between the folks requesting the project (client) and the folks delivering upon it (designer), resulting in lost time and expensive rework. A brief is the best way to clearly lay out a framework for the creative team. The process can be driven by either side—client or designer—but both sides need to agree on the brief before work can commence.

Preparing the brief is an essential step that initiates the design process. It begins with a detailed review of information provided by the client. Questions should address initial and long-term concerns, as well as responsibilities and expectations. Everyone involved with the project will adopt a certain amount of responsibility; it is wise to establish what is required early in the process to avoid confusion when something is needed. The designer is not expected to know everything, but is responsible for asking the client to fill in any missing pieces. The designer should never make decisions based on assumptions; collaboration with the client is critical.

Primary goals and messages of the client and the project need to be clearly defined before moving on to the next stage—research and information gathering. Any restrictions (such as the budget) must be identified. A schedule should be established which includes imperative dates, such as concept and design presentations, as well as deadlines and delivery.

When developing a brief, it is critical to consider the role of the viewer. The client and the designer must identify to whom the project is directed. Understanding the target audience shapes the direction of the design and dramatically influences the end result. It is helpful to define general characteristics of the viewer, including age, geographic location, and general likes and dislikes. The designer must also consider how the viewer will interact with the piece, so that a format can be selected that will allow the design to meet the communication needs of the viewer. The viewer, although not an active participant in the design process, will define most of the designer's decision making.

Check these sites out:

feltandwire.com/2011/02/08/the-creative-brief-10-things-it-must-include

adcracker.com/brief/

aiga.org/mastering-the-creative-brief

A man said to the universe:
"Sir, I exist!"
"However," said the universe,
"The fact has not created
A sense of obligation."
STEPHEN CRANE