A design brief is one of the foundations upon which a successful design project is built. It is a fundamental communication channel for your designer and a clear consolidation of your project’s objectives and desired outcomes.

what is a design brief?
Designers use design briefs to understand their client’s goals, the scope of the project and issues that may arise.

You can use it as a tool to clarify the need and direction of your project and how its success will be measured. But most importantly, a design brief will ensure that all parties involved fully understand the objectives, audience, and expected results of the project from the outset.

what is in a design brief?

> Project title
> Company profile
  > Who are we?
  > What do we do?
  > Where do we do it?
  > How are we seen in the market place?
  > Where do we want to go?
  > What is the perceived personality of the company?
> Key project personnel
  > Who is the project manager?
  > Who will kick the project off?
  > Who will approve the work?
  > Who will approve payment of the invoices?
  > Who will evaluate the success/failure of the project?
> Project objectives

> What do we want to achieve?
> Who is the target audience and what hot buttons do we need to focus on?
> What are our branding issues that relate to this project?

> Scope of work

> Critical dates that need to be considered.
> What is our budget for the project?
> How are we going to evaluate the success and failure? Identify KRA’s.
> You can also include information that will help a designer understand your company and the context in which the project will be run.

> Issues

> Explanation of internal approval process.
> Technical Constraints.
> Environmental requirements.
> Computer system.

> Procedural requirements

> Contractual.
> Approval.
> Financial.

> Design examples you like, or find relevant to your project

> Current relevant company marketing materials.
> Websites.
> Brochures.
> Annual Reports.
> Advertisements (Print, TV and Digital).
> Posters.
Of additional value is the opportunity for you and your designer to meet the CEO, key business development person or other senior manager in your organisation. This helps the designer by:

> Hearing first hand their vision for the company.
> Understanding any specific hot buttons or any issues of concern they have.
> Creating greater awareness of your project in the company.

Of course, wouldn’t it also be useful to have a checklist covering the key issues mentioned in this document that you could use for each project you do to help you manage the briefing process?

We’ve created a checklist for developing your design brief. This is included as separate page you can print out and use time and again. But remember every design project has a number of unique elements and considerations, so make sure you add anything that is specific to your project needs.
design brief checklist

- Title
- Company profile
  > Who/what/where
  > Corporate identity/image/personality (conservative? adventurous?)
  > Market share/perceptions
  > Company vision
- Project Objectives
  > Your project goals
  > Proposed medium
  > Who is your target audience
  > Hot buttons/key messages
  > Branding issues
- Project Management
  > Identify Project manager
  > Identify sign off authority
  > Schedule and budget
  > Additional information about the project: context, marketing material
  > Identify key performance indicators and evaluation process
- Procedures and Issues
  > Contractual arrangements
  > Approvals process
  > Technical limitations
  > Computer system
  > Environmental requirements
- Additional support material
  > Examples of company work or marketing materials etc

NOTES __________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

design brief checklist © Idaho Design & Communication