

Northern Virginia Community College
Loudoun Campus

ART 131-Fundamentals of Design 1
Monday & Wednesday, 7 - 9-15 pm

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RECIPE FOR SUCCESSFUL DESIGN

STRATEGY SESSION

Every design project requires research, work and focused creative energy. The visual communicator works in collaboration with a client (teacher in classroom setting). Our role is to provide solutions to visual communication problems. We work for an audience, not for ourselves. We also work with printers, copywriters, photographers, illustrators and art directors, editors, marketing experts, industrial designers, interior designers, film directors, web designers, animators and architects.

Every design has three major components: Subject, Form and Content known as organic unity.

Organic Unity is a finished and total completeness—an inseparable dynamic interrelationship between subject, form and content. The artist is motivated by feelings about the subject (the “what”). The artistic elements—line, shape, and so on—are manipulated to create form (the “how”, in the work which will in turn produce (the “why”) that parallels the artists feelings. In so doing, the artist attempts to make all parts of the work mutually interactive and interrelated as they are in a living organism.

Each of these components asks a question.

Subject asks “**what**”—person, place, thing or form

Form asks “**how**”—elements and principals of organization

Content asks “**why**” –the psychological or emotional properties felt or implied

The designer can use the flow chart to formulate Organic Unity.

FLOW CHART

The flow chart is a calendar of events that should contain the following information.

1. **Strategy session**
2. **Objective statement** (born out of strategy session)
3. **Brainstorming/Mind Mapping/Concept Mapping**
4. **Research** (born out of strategy session, objective statement & brainstorming/concept-mind mapping.
5. **Thumbnails** (born out of research)
6. **Design Production/Roughs** (born out of thumbnails)
7. **Comps** (born out of roughs or first attempts at imagery)
8. **Final Project** (born out of all previous steps in flow chart)

Strategy Session: (useful for more advanced projects in course)

The strategy session is useful for establishing an objective statement.

Objective Statement:

1. The objective statement expresses the key messages expressed in the design-- facts, information, desired personality or image and position in the market.
2. The objective statement is a narrative or written description of the solution to the design problem.
3. The objective statement should answer the following questions:
 1. What is the purpose or function of the design?
 2. Who is the audience?
 3. What is the competition and marketplace?
 4. What message needs to be communicated?
 5. What kind of personality should be conveyed?

BRAINSTORMING:

Everyone understands problem and is in agreement with the way it is worded.

Give a time limit

There must be no criticism of ideas

Make a list of anything and everything related to your subject. This session conjures up ideas. All ideas are written down and nothing is trivial

Your lists should start out with at least 100 ideas or words.

Create new list of ideas or words from original list.

Repeat these processes until you have working ideas in progress or you have exhausted all possible solutions to the problem.

List can be categorized.

The final list should be narrowed down to five main ideas.

Criteria for judging best out of five:

1. Write down five criteria for judging the best of five ideas. The criteria starts with the word "should"
2. Vote on the best of five and then the one that has the most votes is the main topic for your mind map.

These ideas can then transfer over into a mind map.

The mind map will help visualize the main ideas.

This process can be repeated indefinitely until the idea is manifested or exhausted.

MIND MAPPING

Mind Mapping allows us to use words, images, and color in an effort to engage the right side of our brains in what is normally considered a left-brain task: organizing information.

Tony Buzan developed the concept of putting your central idea right in the center of the page. Your main points then radiate outward from the center. Each one of these points sprouts its own branches and twigs. This star-like pattern of ideas is known as Radiant Thinking. Instead of creating typical linear outlines, why not become a radiant thinker.

1. Start in the centre with an image of the topic, using at least three colors.
2. Use images, symbols, codes and dimensions throughout your Mind Map.
3. Select key words and print using upper or lower case letters.
4. Each word/image must be alone and sitting on its own line.

5. The lines must be connected, starting from the central image. The central lines are thicker, organic and flowing, becoming thinner as they radiate out from the centre.
6. Make the lines the same length as the word/image.
7. Use colors – your own code – throughout the Mind Map.
8. Develop your own personal style of Mind Mapping.
9. Use emphasis and show associations in your Mind Map.
10. Keep the Mind Map clear by using radial hierarchy, numerical order or outlines to embrace your branches.

Concept Mapping

A concept map is a way of representing or organizing knowledge. However, a concept map goes beyond the typical outline in that concept maps show relationships between concepts, including bi-directional relationships. Usually a concept map is divided into nodes and links. Nodes represent various concepts: and links represent the relationships between concepts. Words are used to label the links in order to more explicitly depict relationships. Concept Mapping can be used along with mind mapping. The two can become an organic system for mapping out ideas.

RESEARCH:

The next step is research. The team will find materials, information, and visuals about the subject. A good researcher uses many different types of information sources.

1. Play! Find visuals related to your subject. Try cutting or cropping them and putting them back together in a different way.
2. Photocopy them in strange or unusual ways. Add textures and combine images.
3. Thinking: Go do something else. Think about it for a few days before going back to thumbnails. This helps you to think "outside the box"—your head!
4. Visuals: Look at other designs related to your subject in magazines, on the web, go to the movies, look at package designs, and go to a museum or gallery.
5. Opposite: Think of the wrong answer.
6. Reverse: Change directions if the current one is going nowhere.

THUMBNAILS:

This phase involves thinking with pen in hand. Small thumbnail sketches about the size of a large stamp—50-100 help to develop the concept.

DESIGN PRODUCTION/ROUGHS:

The design involves how you put all the elements together. You have developed your strategy and concept and now its time to put it all together into small sketches know in the industry as roughs.

Roughs:

This is the step where concepts are explored. This is not the time to refine your design. Develop the concept only to where ideas can be clearly visualized. Choose your best thumbnails and refine them on a larger scale

Comps:

Comprehensives or mock-ups are a finished piece of artwork. We will be exploring our final comprehensives on the computer using Illustrator and Photoshop.