

DESIGN

127. Design Is ... Everywhere!

"Everything is design."—from Richard Farson, *The Power of Design: A Force for Transforming Everything*

"Design" means the string of gorgeous products from Apple or OXO or Herman Miller or John Deere. But it applies equally to the "presentation" of the training course you are about to deliver. And "design mindfulness" is at the heart of the new purchasing process about to be unveiled—in a 20-person organization. And it's the soul of the reception area in a 3-person accountancy; and the very heart of the Formal Reports that same accountancy delivers. Hence, if you are serious about design, among other things:

- (1) It becomes part of *every* (e-v-e-r-y) project, tiny to grand, in *every* (e-v-e-r-y) department.
- (2) *Every* project has a formal "design advocate."
- (3) *Everyone* is encouraged through example to become "design minded." (And it's part of their formal evaluation.) (Everyone = General management to housekeeping at the hotel, Managing Partner to receptionist at the accountancy or consultancy.)
- (4) Design is always considered on five dimensions: (a) usability, (b) simplicity, (c) aesthetics, (d) "Cool"/"Wow"/"Gaspworthy," and (5) EXCELLENCE.
- (5) *Every* work space is a living example of Excellence in design—it sings "our song."
- (6) Design EXCELLENCE applies to *every* business process as much as to *every* product.
- (7) Design per se is explicitly addressed in *every* written work plan.
- (8) While design is not always "free," design-mindedness is not a cost item—and EXCELLENCE in design applies at least as much at the "low end" as at the luxury end of a market.
- (9) Design Reviews are part of *all* project reviews.
- (10) If you are a/the Big Boss, there should be a ... Chief Design Officer ... who lives in the "power corridor" with the Chief Financial Officer, Chief Marketing Officer, etc. (If you are a "little boss," there should be an appointed "design champion" whose collateral duty is to represent the "design view" in all the unit's work product.)
- (11) "Design-mindfulness" or "EXCELLENCE in design" should (must!) be part of the organization's Core Values Statement.
- (12) Design per se should be directly and indirectly part of *all* training programs.

128. Is It "Lickable"? Steve Jobs says that the definition of a superbly designed product is one you ... "want to lick." BMW advertised a new model car as ... Radically Thrilling. Economists agree that inducing people to re-open their wallets is a major part of the cure to the recession. And I claim it all boils down to the right kind of hammer. A hammer you ... want to *lick*. A hammer that is ... *radically thrilling*. And a hammer that ... induces you to make an expenditure that you hadn't intended to make. That is, my Tuf-E-Nuf hammer. This gorgeous little hammer, actually the ... Tuf-E-Nuf Mini Striker Stubby Claw Hammer ... is a true innovation, even an *earth-shattering* innovation. (By my lights.) The head looks like and has the heft of a regular heavy hammer. But the full-diameter handle is only five inches long, half the

normal length. And the grip is great, up to the standard of the easy-to-hold OXO kitchen tool line. The net result is the ability to maneuver in tight spots while retaining almost all the power of a full-size hammer—and, as a bonus, owning a piece of sculptural art! I ended up buying six of the bloody things for Christmas presents last year—including, Christmas spirit be damned, one as a present to myself, which I use as a paperweight or bookend when not whacking nails!

So:

Great *design* rules!

Innovation is king!

Functionality scores!

Lickability and *Radically Thrilling* are the standards worth shooting for!

(And ... there is more to design—and life—than iPods and iPhones!)

129. Design Sign: Can You Get There from Here? The closest I've come to being late to a speech was attributable to ... lousy directions. It was at a big convention center—it ran for blocks and blocks. The driver and I puzzled at the directions—and the client's cell phone was not receiving. I finally picked a place, got out, and started hunting. Literally 25 minutes later, fit to be tied, I made it to my destination. It got me thinking: Directions, signs, manuals are life's blood, in this case and more or less in general. And most directions-signs-manuals are, well ... pathetic.

But, these guides (directions-signs-manuals) ought to be ... Works of Art (damn it). ... Plusses rather than Minuses ... Full-scale Members of the "Value-added" Package. They should top the charts on dimensions such as these:

Clear!

Simple!

Engaging!

Beautiful!

And: Breathtaking! (Why not?)

130. Love + Hate = Design Power. Design is all about ... emotion. Moreover, it's *not* about "liking" something—or "disliking" it. Design's ... awesome power ... comes precisely from the fact that it is about unvarnished emotion, about ... LOVE. And ... HATE.

I LOVE LOVE LOVE the simplicity of the controls on my Black & Decker coffeemaker. One switch: ON. Or: OFF.

I HATE HATE HATE (HATE HATE) the THREE devices it takes to control my satellite TV and DVD player.

That's design.

Love!

Hate!

Ultimate power tool!

(Applies to ... absolutely everything!)

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