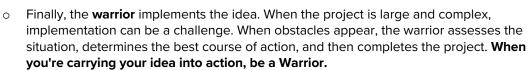# week::two
Creative Process & Design Research

Four Roles in the Creative Process

In *A Kick in the Seat of* the *Pants*, Roger von Oech identifies four distinct roles an individual plays in the creative process:

- o First, the **explorer** learns as much as possible about the problem. Research is crucial. Ignorance of a topic may result in a superficial solution, while finalizing the first solution envisioned often results in a cliché. **When you're searching for new information, be an Explorer.**

- o Second, the **artist** experiments with a wide variety of solutions, using all sorts of combinations, proportions, and materials. **When you're turning your resources into new ideas, be an Artist.**

- o Third, the **judge** assesses the work in progress and determines what revisions are required. Rather than discard an underdeveloped idea, the judge identifies its potential and determines ways to increase its strength. **When you're evaluating the merits of an idea, be a Judge.**

- o Finally, the **warrior** implements the idea. When the project is large and complex, implementation can be a challenge. When obstacles appear, the warrior assesses the situation, determines the best course of action, and then completes the project. **When you're carrying your idea into action, be a Warrior.**

— Roger von Oech via *Launching the Imagination* by Mary Stewart pg 115.

Seven Characteristics of Creative People* (*not a checklist)

Receptivity
- o Creative people are open to new ideas and welcome new experiences.

Curiosity
- o A good designer brings an insatiable curiosity to each project.

Wide Range of Interests
- o With a broad knowledge base, a creative person can make a wider range of connections.

Attentiveness
- o Realizing that every experience is potentially valuable, creative people pay attention to seemingly minor details.

Connection Seeking
- o Seeing the similarity among seemingly disparate parts has often sparked a creative breakthrough.

Conviction
- o Convinced of the value of their ideas, they tenaciously pursue an independent path.

Complexity
- o To be fully effective, a creative person needs to combine the rational with the intuitive.

The Design Squiggle

About from its Creator:

o "The Design Squiggle is a simple illustration of the design process. The journey of researching, uncovering insights, generating creative concepts, iteration of prototypes and eventually concluding in one single designed solution. It is intended to convey the feeling of the journey. Beginning on the left with mess and uncertainty and ending on the right in a single point of focus: the design." — *Damien Newman, creator of the Design Squiggle*

Design Research

Why do Research?

o Graphic & multimedia design work have a purpose—research helps define that purpose and gives us a set of criteria on which to judge the effectiveness of a design.

o For a designer/creator, the problem-solving process begins when a client requests help or the designer identifies a specific need. (Stewart, p.130)

Some Questions to Ask

o What is needed?

o What is the message?

o Who is the target audience?

o What are the specs of the project?

o What is the budget?

o Is there a deadline?

o Are there any existing graphic resources?

Methods

o Interviews

o Questionnaires

o Thumbnails

o Model making

Convergent Thinking

Defined

o Involves the pursuit of a predetermined goal, usually in a linear progression and using a highly focused problem-solving technique.

o The **end** determines the ***means***.

Advantages

o Clarity

o Control

o Focus

o Efficient

o Similar to Scientific Method

Most Effective When

- o   The problem can be defined
- o   The problem can be solved rationally
- o   The problem must be solved sequentially
- o   Firm deadlines must be met

Process

1. Define the problem
2. Do research
3. Determine your objective
4. Devise a strategy
5. Execute the strategy
6. Evaluate the results

Divergent Thinking

Defined

- o   In Divergent Thinking, many different ideas are generated in a short period of time and very early in the process.
- o   The ***means*** determines the ***end***.

Advantages

- o   More inventive
- o   Problem defined much more broadly
- o   Generates new ideas
- o   Is spontaneous and free-flowing
- o   Moves beyond preconceptions

Most Effective When

- o   The problem definition is elusive or evolving
- o   A rational solution is not required
- o   A sequential work method is unnecessary
- o   Deadlines are flexible

Process

1. Receive or create the "problem"
2. Begin work immediately
3. Clarify/refine your objective
4. Clarify/refine a strategy
5. Execute the strategy
6. Evaluate the results

Sources: *Launching the Imagination: A Comprehensive Guide to Basic Design*, Stewart, Mary. (2006); *A Kick In The Seat Of The Pants*, von Oech, Roger (1986); thedesignsquiggle.com. Newman, Damien.