



## HOW TO<sup>®</sup>

Write a design brief

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### **A common definition of design is that it is a problem-solving activity.**

The purpose of a design brief, therefore, is to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the problem that needs to be solved by your design company through visual expression. It should focus on the main aim and the specific objectives of the design project, on design deliverables, rather than on its aesthetic or creative aspects, which are the responsibility of your design company.

It is against this written document, constructed in partnership between the client and the design company, that the effectiveness of the design solution can be measured.

A design brief is not the same as a proposal document, which is usually submitted to the client by the design company in response to the former's written request for one. Both documents, however, can be incorporated into the design brief, once the design company has been awarded the project.

No two design briefs are the same. There are, nonetheless, certain questions that should be asked in the development of most briefs. Here are some of them.

- Why are we doing this project?
- Why are we doing it now?
- What specific outcomes, or results, do we expect from this design project?
- Who are we designing for? Do we have a single target audience, or multiple audiences?
- Who are the client's key organisational stakeholders in this project?
- What are the phases of this design project?
- How much time should be devoted to each phase?
- What will each phase cost?
- Who are the client's competitors?
- Who will approve the final design solution?
- What criteria will be used for this approval?
- How will the design solution be implemented?
- How will the results be measured?

The time invested in a well-considered, well-constructed design brief yields great return. It is a road map through the design process. It allows you to track your project, from the creative stages through to implementation, as well as providing a tool for measuring the results of the design project. Finally, it acts as a reference document for similar future projects.