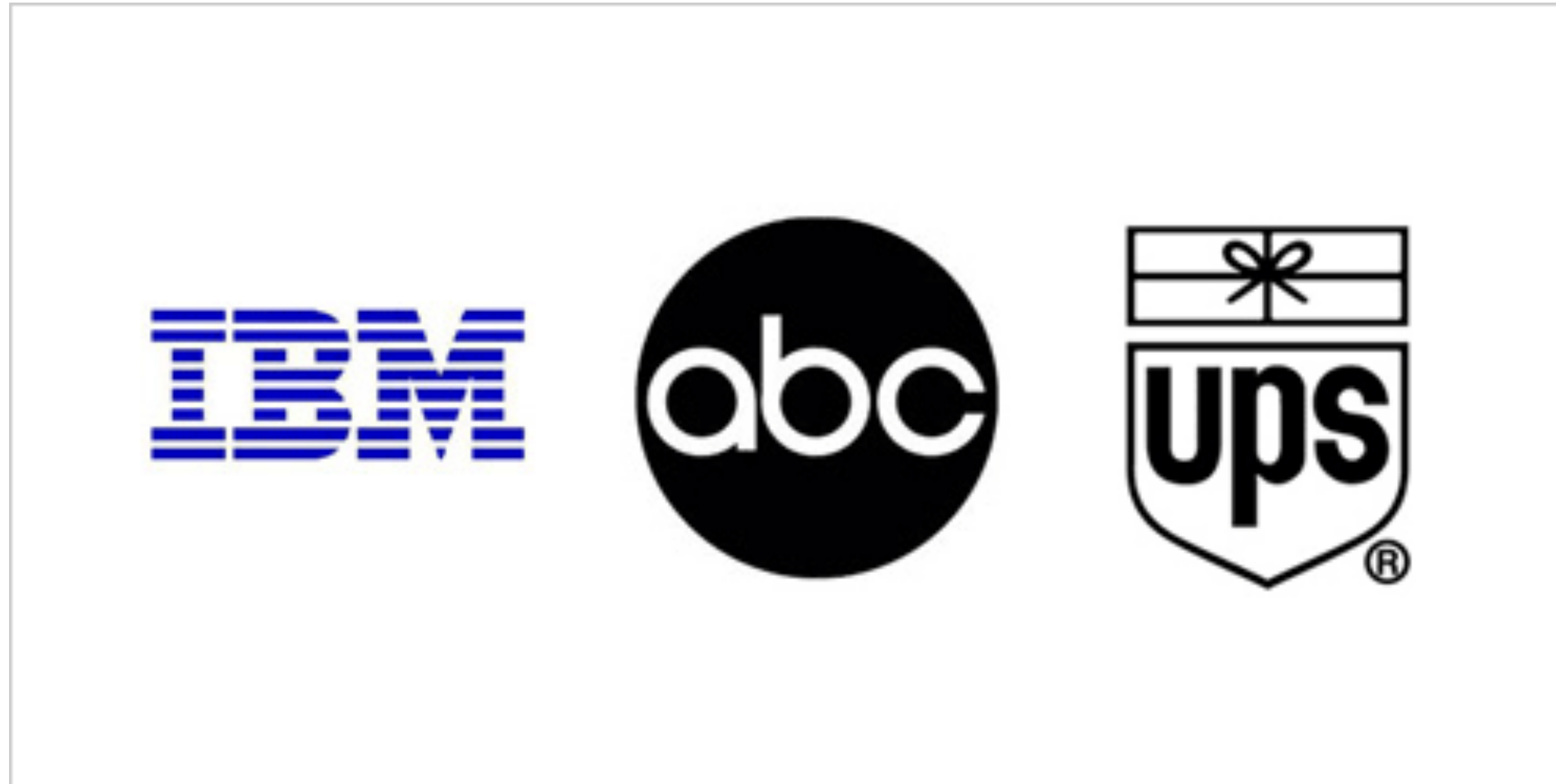


# What Is A Logo?

To understand what a logo is, we first must understand what the main purpose of logos is. The design process must aim to make the logo immediately recognizable, inspiring trust, admiration, loyalty and an implied superiority. The logo is one aspect of a company's commercial brand or economic entity, and its shapes, colors, fonts, and images usually are strikingly different from other logos in the same market niche. Logos are used to identify.

Paul Rand, one of the world's greatest designers states that "a logo is a flag, a signature, an escutcheon, a street sign. A logo does not sell (directly), it identifies. A logo is rarely a description of a business. A logo derives meaning from the quality of the thing it symbolizes, not the other way around. A logo is less important than the product it signifies; what it represents is more important than what it looks like. The subject matter of a logo can be almost anything."

# What Makes A Good Logo



A good logo is distinctive, appropriate, practical, graphic and simple in form, and it conveys **the owner's intended message**. A concept or “meaning” is usually behind an effective logo, and it communicates the intended message. A logo should be able to be printed at any size and, in most cases, be effective without color. A great logo essentially boils down to two things: great concept and great execution.

# Logo Design Process

“Some wonder what’s so difficult about creating a good logo. They’re small, they look easy to do, so no problem, right? When you only see the result of a designer’s efforts, the logo creation can look like it was a simple task. But it’s not. A logo takes thought and creativity, and many elements combine to make a good one.” (via [Harrison Mcleod](#))

When creating a logo, follow a process that ensures the final design meets the needs of the clients. Below, we have listed the typical process that professional logo designers follow. With practice, you will no doubt develop your own.



# Design Process Step by Step

## **Design brief.**

**Conduct a questionnaire or interview with the client to get the design brief.**

## **Research.**

**Conduct research on the industry itself, its history and competitors.**

**Problem-solve first, design later.**

## **Reference.**

**Conduct research on logo designs that have been successful and on current styles and trends that may relate to the design brief. Follow trends not for their own sake but rather to be aware of them: longevity in logo design is key.**



## **Sketching and conceptualizing.**

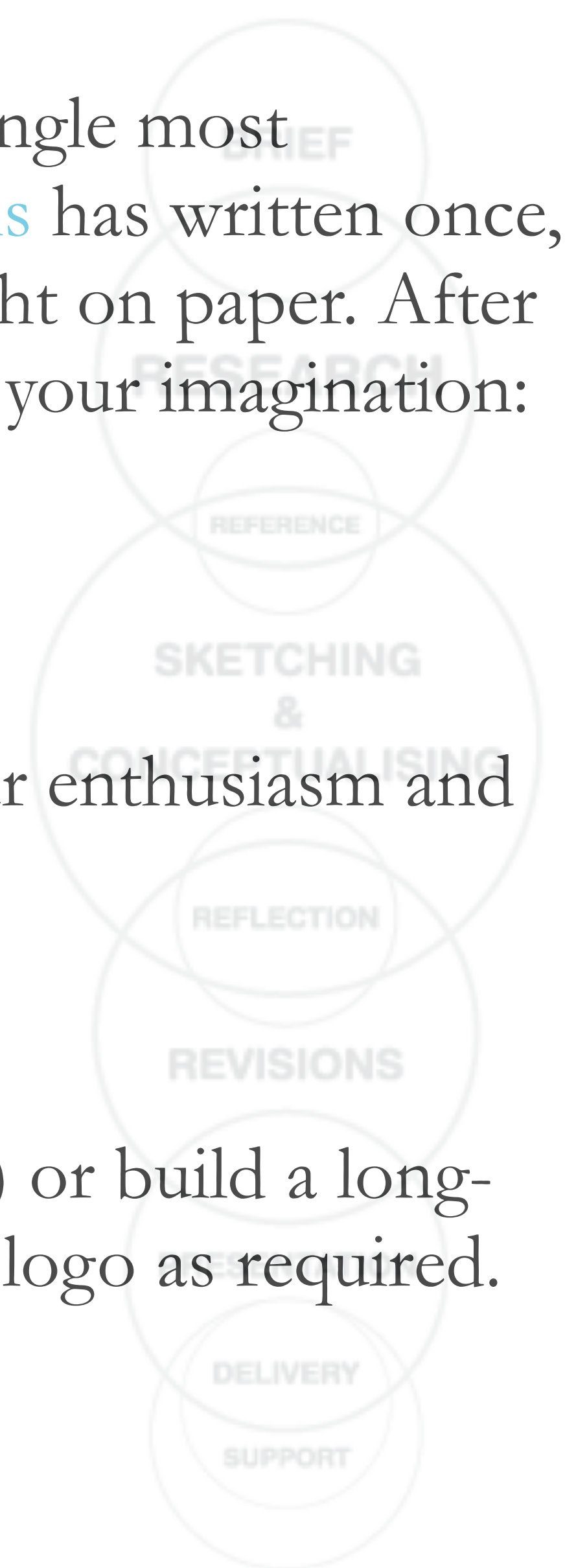
Develop the logo design concept(s) around the brief and your research. This is the single most important part of the design process. Get creative and be inspired. As [Dainis Graveris](#) has written once, “sketching isn’t time-consuming and is a really good way to put ideas in your head right on paper. After that, it’s always easier to actually design it on the computer. Sketching helps to evolve your imagination: once you understand it, you will always start from just white paper.”

## **Reflection**

Take breaks throughout the design process. This helps your ideas mature, renews your enthusiasm and allows you to solicit feedback. It also gives you a fresh perspective on your work.

## **Revisions and positioning**

Whether you position yourself as a contractor (i.e. getting instructions from the client) or build a long-lasting relationship (i.e. guiding the client to the best solution), revise and improve the logo as required.

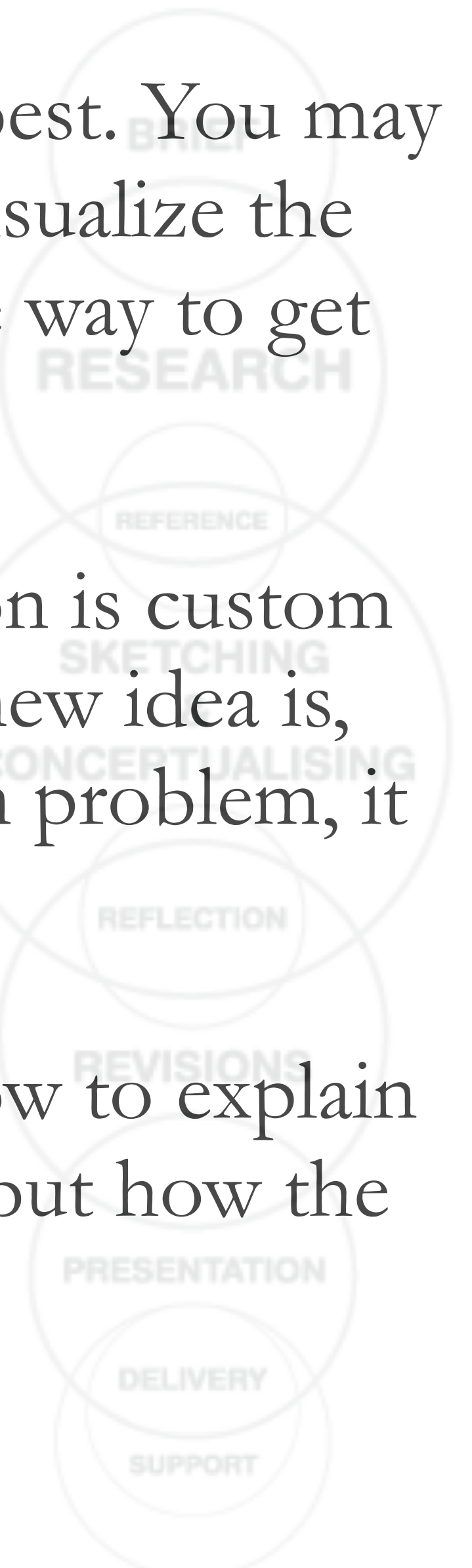


## Presentation

Present only your best logo designs to your client. PDF format usually works best. You may also wish to show the logo in context, which will help the client more clearly visualize the brand identity. Preparing a high-quality presentation is the single most effective way to get your clients to approve your designs.

“Canned presentations have the ring of emptiness. The meaningful presentation is custom designed—for a particular purpose, for a particular person. How to present a new idea is, perhaps, one of the designer’s most difficult tasks. This *how* is not only a design problem, it also pleads for something novel.

Everything a designer does involves a presentation of some kind—not only how to explain (present) a particular design to an interested listener (client, reader, spectator), but how the design may explain itself in the marketplace... A presentation is the musical accompaniment of design.



## Delivery and support

Deliver the appropriate files to the client and give all support that is needed. Remember to under-promise and over-deliver.



# 5 Principles Of Effective Logo Design



Simple

Memorable

Timeless

Versatile

Appropriate



# 1. SIMPLE



Simplicity makes a logo design easily recognizable, versatile and memorable. Good logos feature something unexpected or unique, without being “overdrawn.”

*While in college in the mid-'70s, an instructor introduced me to the [K.I.S.S. Principle](#) of design, which translates as: Keep It Simple, Stupid. It does convey a very important design consideration. Simple logos are often easily recognized, incredibly memorable and the most effective in conveying the requirements of the client.*

*A refined and distilled identity will also catch the attention of a viewer zipping by signage at 70 miles per hour, on packaging on the crowded shelves of a store, or in any other vehicle used for advertising, marketing and promotion. Remember, the basis of the hugely effective international branding for the world's largest shoe manufacturer is a very simple graphic swoosh.*

*— Jeff Fisher*

## 2. MEMORABLE



Following closely on this principle of simplicity is that of memorability. An effective logo design should be memorable, which is achieved by keeping it simple yet appropriate.

*Surprising to many, the subject matter of a logo is of relatively little importance, and even appropriateness of content does not always play a significant role.*

*This does not imply that appropriateness is undesirable. It merely indicates that a one-to-one relationship between a symbol and what it symbolized is very often impossible to achieve and, under certain conditions, objectionable.*

*Ultimately, the only mandate in the design of logos, it seems, is that they be distinctive, memorable, and clear.*

*— Paul Rand*

### 3. TIMELESS



An effective logo should be timeless. Will yours stand the test of time? Will it still be effective in 10, 20 or 50 years?

*Leave trends to the fashion industry. Trends come and go, and when you're talking about changing a pair of jeans or buying a new dress, that's fine, but where your brand identity is concerned, longevity is key. Don't follow the pack. Stand out.*

*— David Airey*

## 4. VERSATILE



*I like to work first in black and white to ensure that the logo will look good in its simplest form. Color is very subjective and emotional. This can distract from the overall design – say if you saw your logo in all red, that color may be the first thing that you respond to and not the composition of the design elements. I will not even consider submitting color suggestions to a client for review until they have signed off on a final black and white logo.*

*— Patrick Winfield*

An effective logo works across a variety of media and applications. For this reason, logos should be designed in **vector** format, to ensure that they scale to any size.

Ask yourself, is your logo still effective if it is printed...

- In one color?
- In reverse color (i.e. light logo on dark background)?
- The size of a postage stamp?
- As large as a billboard?

One way to create a versatile logo is to begin designing in black and white. This allows you to focus on the concept and shape, rather than **color**, which is subjective in nature. Also keep in mind printing costs: the more colors you use, the more expensive it will be for the business over the long term.

## 5. APPROPRIATE



How you “position” the logo should be **appropriate for its intended audience**. For example, a child-like font and color scheme would be appropriate for a logo for a children’s toy store, not so much for a law firm.

*A logo doesn’t need to say what a company does. Restaurant logos don’t need to show food, dentist logos don’t need to show teeth, furniture store logos don’t need to show furniture. Just because it’s relevant, doesn’t mean you can’t do better. The Mercedes logo isn’t a car. The Virgin Atlantic logo isn’t an airplane. The Apple logo isn’t a computer.*

— David Airey

*Should a logo be self-explanatory? It is only by association with a product, a service, a business, or a corporation that a logo takes on any real meaning. It derives its meaning and usefulness from the quality of that which it symbolizes. If a company is second rate, the logo will eventually be perceived as second rate. It is foolhardy to believe that a logo will do its job immediately, before an audience has been properly conditioned.*

— Paul Rand