

5.1 Briefing the designer

It is the project manager's/director's responsibility to ensure that the core ideas and concepts created by the project team are accurately and effectively presented by the graphic designer. Getting the best graphics input to a project starts with appointing a graphics specialist with the right experience and the ability to work within a multi-disciplinary team. A clear project brief, setting out as far as possible what is expected and when, and the budget for each stage, will provide the basis for a good working relationship between the graphics specialists and the rest of the project team.

The expectations and requirements of the commissioning body or client also have to be taken into account. The project brief should have included any particular requirements for the graphics output. If possible, the graphic designer should be involved in agreeing the budget so that unrealistic expectations are not later disappointed, or found to have a detrimental impact on other parts of the project. Once the brief has been agreed it should be adhered to. Any necessary changes should be agreed and budgeted for as quickly as possible.



It is also important that the graphic designer is managed by one person, if not the project director, then a named individual. All members of the project team should work through that nominated person. Provided the designer has been given a clear brief as to what is required, the team should have confidence in the designer to produce output in an appropriate format and of an appropriate quality.

At the same time, urban design is a creative process and the final output is a consequence of the constructive relationship between all members of the project team. The essence of a successful project team is that all members are able to propose and challenge ideas. The graphic designer can help to sieve-out superfluous information and refine ideas to present them more clearly.

Watchpoints

Whether client or designer there are a number of points that jointly need to be resolved from the outset:

- Establish the brief and scope of work.
- Devise a method for producing the work.
- Define the outputs (i.e. list of products).
- Establish the program and deadlines for completion of key graphics products.
- Calculate and agree the budget (including a contingency).
- Ensure that any significant variations to the brief are costed and resources allocated.