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Share, Compare, and Plan

Context

Personal Anecdotes

My area of interest is the design process.

In my last presentations, I wrote about how I love being able to be involved in each step of creating a product/project and seeing it come to life, from start to finish.

I realize now that my passion is in the interaction between people to pull their strengths and weaknesses during the process of collaboration and see the bigger picture, rather than designing/making a product/project. I believe that this ultimately results in a better, more human-centered outcome for both the client and the team.

Topic

I see researching the design process as a potential topic because, with this understanding, we can create more beautiful, functional, and effective design.

This topic has a variety of vantage points (see questions below):

- Historical Context
 - How has the relationship/collaboration changed with the development of technology and the shift toward online?
 - Is the design process something we've created in steps to make it more accessible?
- Methodologies
 - If given the same problem, how do different people solve it? Why? What is their process?
 - How does the designer effectively approach their craft? Why are there these systems in place for that purpose?
 - How do designers know what a client wants/needs?

- What factors of communication are necessary to be successful in design? Why?
- User
 - Why do we make decisions the way that we do?
 - Do you have to know where you are going to get somewhere?
 - What would it look like if there wasn't a process?
- Conclusions
 - Is design moving toward convergence? Why?
 - Are trends/fads the result of this?
 - What is the role of education regarding this?
 - Methods, concepts, techniques
 - How has their process changed with education? Why?
 - Why is it up to the designer to define meaning?
 - Why did they choose to pursue design?
 - Are the results skewed by the processes that we widely accept?
 - Does progress mean improvement?

It is important because our contribution to projects that address our needs has a meaningful impact on the world we live in.

Challenges / Opportunities

Some possible challenges I face are:

- Narrowing my topic
- Not jumping the gun and trying to employ methods too quickly
- Having assumptions
- Predicting an outcome
- Focusing on the end result/outcome and its form
- Including the skills I want to engage

Some possible opportunities I can identify are:

- To involve others to collect data
- Using this research to inform my career interests

Importance

Skills

The skills that I would like to exercise in developing my idea include:

- Organization

- Planning
- Research
- Analyzing
- Collaboration
- Managing
- Interaction between people
- Creativity
- Going out of my comfort zone

Steps

To narrow my idea even further and understand the scope of the topic, I will determine the type of research I need to do by starting with the context.

I can start with sources that I know of and have easy access to such as online articles, books and publications, videos, [podcasts](#), and docuseries. There are two books I'd like to start with: *Steal Like an Artist: 10 Things Nobody Told You About Being Creative* and *Burn Your Portfolio : Stuff They Don't Teach You in Design School, but Should*. There is a Netflix series called *Abstract: The Art of Design* that I think lends itself well to my topic. However, I do think that there are many forms of multimedia I have yet to explore.

The next phase is primary research. I have a list of people that I think would agree to be interviewed that include previous professors, Parsons students, previous bosses, and people in the industry. However, I would like to ask for other options outside my range that would provide fascinating insights. I would also want to interview non-designers — people in technology and business to compare and contrast the opposite perspectives.

Reflect

Connection to Reading / Video

In the reading, it struck me that the author wrote how “[accounts of falsehoods] reflect a misunderstanding of knowledge that focuses too narrowly on what goes on between our ears.” While the article cited this in the context of Trump administration propagating information and fake news, I can see how this applies to my research as well. It is important to research both sides of a topic because if you look at only one side, then your research has a bias to only confirm facts that support your conclusion. Your focus is too narrow, and therefore you might have a misunderstanding of what the knowledge represents. For example, data is not always considered fact. It is not only important to see what the data shows, but also how the data was conducted, collected, and analyzed. A question they pose is, “can you rehearse the astronomical

observations and calculations that led to that conclusion?” You may see if the data supports or opposes the hypothesis, but not expecting an outcome.

In the video, the narrator talked about decision making and the types made on “auto-pilot” or logical and rational. I found it interesting that they mention how we make many of our decisions on “auto-pilot”. But from what I’ve seen of the design process, it is in fact the opposite. The decisions tend to be very deliberate. But both “auto-pilot” and decisions thought through are connected to the emotion that they inflict. I believe design is intended to make you think more deeply about the subject. I don’t think that “auto-pilot” can take over these types of decisions. But the importance of design is when you do take into account biases toward or against a design decision.

What I’ve Changed

At first, when I chose the topic of process, I thought about it from the perspective of an internship at a design agency. I already had the steps of where I was going and what my product would look like. My observation was that there are areas of the business — large returning clients and small startups with a lot of potential for growth. However, the process between designer and client for these projects was riddled with challenging problems. They were working with an old-fashioned model for the small startups and couldn’t scale up their operation. This motivation is not only from one experience but rather something that I’ve noticed talking to other freelance designers and Parsons students as well.

Now, I’ve evolved from that narrowed approach. In my last presentation, I created multiple thought bubbles. The first one included all of my trained responses of what I was supposed to say when given a word. But, I was able to come up with questions that fascinated me and considered angles that were new. The outcome is unclear, but I believe it can garner a great understanding of why designers work the way that they do.

As a result of this exercise, I’ve learned that I can have a short term plan of what direction I am going in and what my next step is. However, if I already consider the outcome or form then that guides my research instead of the vice versa.