



Choosing the Right Look and Feel for Your Practice

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As I am sure you have noticed, there is a whole lot more to being an entrepreneur than just having a great idea or being really good at that thing you do. If only it were that easy!

As a small business owner, you have to wear a variety of hats to make your venture function properly. Let's face it, some hats are best outsourced—especially when it comes to things that do not lie within your area of expertise.

One of the first things business owners hand off to an outsider is the development of a logo by a graphic designer, a college kid with a computer or a nine-year-old art student. We have all seen some spectacular designs created by the aforementioned, as well as some really scrappy work by each category. So what separates the good from the bad?

The first step is always keeping an eye out for work you like and finding out who created it. Or ask for recommendations from friends and colleagues. Once you get a few names, go to their website and check out their work. Is it diverse or do they appear to rep-

licate the same look and feel for all their clients? Once you have determined who you would like to work with, do a little prep work before your initial meeting. Prep work on your end will save you time and money in the long run.

I have long maintained that a designer is only as good as the direction they are given. That means great design lies in your ability to communicate your vision, your goals and the essence of your brand—not in a designer's ability to guess what you are looking for.

Meeting with a designer and saying something like "I'm thinking about something purple" is not enough direction to arrive at a design you will be happy with. If that is all you have got, a good designer will take the time to interview you and find out what drives your brand or they will ask you to complete a design brief.

What is a design brief? It is a project blueprint. A detailed design brief sets you and the designer up to create great design. It answers all of the questions a designer needs for the project and sets you up for cost efficient success.

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To Do

Before you meet with a logo designer, complete the answers to these questions:

- Who are you and what do you provide?
- What problem do you solve?
- What are the qualities of your business that competitors cannot easily duplicate?
- Who is your target audience?
- Who are your competitors?
- What tone or image do you want to portray?
- What key emotives/message you would like your audience to take away?
- Do you have a color palette preference?
- Does this project need to align with existing materials?
- Is there a particular style you like or dislike?
- Do you have a tag line?

Remember, the most memorable logos are clean and simple and translate well into black and white. This link will let you see the logos of the top global brands - <http://interbrand.com/best-brands/best-global-brands/2015/ranking>. 



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