Advertising Project Prompt One – The Creative Brief

15% of Grade: 5% individual participation, 10% final product delivery

Developing the Creative Brief

When creating a brand-oriented campaign, it is not enough to understand the product or service and say, “this is great!” It is essential to target the precise problem and objective of the client. Some clients may have multiple objectives, and the creative brief is a means of focusing on the key message, prioritizing layers of messages, and communicating to the client that your agency understands its role in the strategizing and execution of a clear and effective campaign.

*Remember*: while a good campaign delivers a clear, memorable **message** to a desired **audience**, it also reflects the desired **voice** and **tone** of the company offering a product or service. Have you ever really thought about the ‘voice’ of a particular company you admire? You will likely trace that voice and attitude to the advertising you’ve seen and heard.

What goes into the Creative Brief

In your creative brief, you will be soliciting answers from the client in order to better define their marketing problem to be solved. As outlined on page 66 of The Art of Advertising, a strong creative brief should be able to answer the following types of questions:

1. Why are we advertising at all?
2. What is the advertising trying to accomplish?
3. Who are we talking to? (Rank if there are multiple, intended audiences)
4. What do we know about them that will help us?
5. What do they currently think?
6. What would we like them to think?
7. What is the most persuasive idea we need to convey?
8. What is the main thought we need to communicate?
9. Why should our audience believe us?
10. What is the best way of achieving this? Media to be used… Placements of message…
11. Creative Guidelines
12. Executional Guidelines

Your creative brief will respond to these questions, and consider the creative and executional guidelines the unique agency has to offer.

This will be accomplished in the following steps:

1. Prior to your informational meeting, research the client. How long have they been around? What is their overarching mission? Then, research the client’s current marketing strategies to see how they seem to be broadcasting their message. What is the client’s voice? Do you have a clear sense of the client’s voice?
2. Unofficially poll your peers to determine how they feel about the service, what they know, and what they think. This will be very useful in the meeting as some clients may not know how they are perceived by their potential audience. Some will know but it is great to come to the meeting with this information in mind – remember, you guys have an ‘in’ with the consumer here.
3. Conduct a professional meeting that covers the questions above. Remember that during discussions, people often answer multiple questions at once, and people deviate from point without meaning to. Don’t expect to get straight answers, surveying 1-12, expect digressions, so designate note-takers in your group to make sure to get everything the client says down. The client will often answer a question/questions out of order. So, have someone in charge of moving the conversation/inquiry forward, know who the meeting leader is if things hit a stall, and assign principle others to take note of what is actually being said. This keeps confusion at bay and will not fluster the client.
4. After the meeting, you then gather as a team to synthesize the conversation into the questions needed to be addressed in the list. So, don’t get flustered yourself trying to organize the material in the meeting. No time for that!
5. Write a letter of thanks to the client for her time; here is an opportunity to follow up with any particular question/s you would like to clarify before you go forth with the actual writing of the brief. Take this step after you guys have debriefed the meeting, gone over the material thoroughly, and are all on page with what you do and do not understand. This minimizes back-and-forth emails to the client that waste her time.
6. You will draft a creative brief that is visually-designed in a simple, easy to read fashion. Attached to the creative brief will be a distribution plan, one that outlines the deliverables agreed to: print ad, :60 PSA, etc. This will be approved by me to ensure you guys are not trying to accomplish too much in the course of the semester. But at minimum, expect a print ad or poster, a :60 spot, some form of social media strategy and/or possible web re-imagining. The first draft is due on **Tuesday, 9/15.**
7. You will peer review your draft in-class on **Tuesday, 9/15**
8. You will teacher review the creative brief in-class on **Thursday, 9/17.**
9. You will deliver the creative brief to clients no later than **Friday morning, 9/18**, 9 am. The brief will be delivered in .pdf form. It will be delivered by email along with a short letter of introduction and a polite request that you receive feedback by **Friday, 9/25**, but that if there any concerns or revisions she would like to discuss to feel free to contact sooner so that you might revise it to her approval, particularly if the message is in any way off-target. **Remember to copy me on this email.**
10. Post a copy of your creative brief under T-square, under the name of the Marketing Strategy coordinator.
11. THIS LAST ASSIGNMENT IS FOR THE MARKETING STRATEGY COORDINATOR ONLY: You will then go about drafting the creative brief chapter of the StyleGuide. This is a 1000-1250 word essay that 1. Reflects on the process of creating the brief, i.e. research/information gathering from peers and the client, execution of the brief itself, and any lessons learned, things that you and your teammates would do differently given another chance at doing it, etc. The reflection will also discuss the deliverables agreed upon. This reflection will be accompanied with the creative brief and distribution plan, attached, but not part of the word count. This written assignment is due on October 6th, on T-Square. This is a draft that I will peer review, so that you can polish it for the final turn-in at semester’s end, presentation time. There is a portion of the grade given to this draft, 5% out of the 20%.

