IS IT YOUR FIRST TIME HIRING A DESIGNER?

Here are some tips, and some things you should know about how things are usually done!

STEPS

1. Decide upon your privacy expectations with your designer and whether or not an NDA (Non-disclosure agreement) is required.

2. Decide on what you want.
Have a clear list of deliverables you want when the project is over. If you don't know what you want, perhaps decide with your designer and have it in writing at the beginning of the project.

3. Decide on ownership of the project. Be prepared to pay more if you want the designer to relinquish all ownership and rights. Be very, very clear about this.

There are different levels of ownership that you might want to agree upon – the designer may sign away all rights (so they are not allowed to use the work for any future clients, in a personal portfolio, etc.), a designer may only be allowed to use this work for this client, but retain the rights and are able to include images in their portfolio, etc. The designer may not be able to show the work in a personal portfolio, but receive royalties every time the project is used. Decide on what you need for your project and ask for price differences between the levels if this is important. Rule of thumb: less ownership for the designer equals higher price-point. Note: A designer can always show the work after it has launched.

4. Ask for the designer's rate – either a flat rate for the project, or an hourly rate.

5. Ask for an agreed upon number of edits. Do not expect the designer to exceed the agreed upon number of edits. If you want an increase in edits, expect a fee increase.

6. Be prepared to pay more for a tighter deadline. Set a deadline and end of project.

7. Respond to emails from your designer. (Do not harass your designer with more emails/contact than appropriate)

8. Pay your designer on time.
Keep goodwill and maintain a good working relationship. In turn, your designer should always give you work on time, unless the designer has brought up that a deadline extension is needed. This should be brought up by the designer at least 1-2 weeks before the deadline. You should never know last minute that your work will not be ready, and your designer should never find out last minute that you cannot pay them yet.

9. Enjoy your custom work! Custom work is the best, because it's made especially for you and for your project. It's really amazing getting something done right the first time and that's super high quality.

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Things to keep in mind:

- The time it takes to make something is not necessarily an accurate representation of the worth/value of the final product. Designers train for years and years to be able to do make beautiful, quality work quickly.

- Try to choose a designer whose aesthetic or belief system fits with your own. If you want work done which conflicts with your designer's aesthetic taste or belief system, expect the possibility of your designer turning down your project (saying NO). Try to hire a designer that matches your project.

- Respect your designer's working hours. (Unless you agree upon specific exceptions, for example, if you live in different time zones, etc.)
- Always keep in mind your designer is an EXPERT. Take time to listen to their advice, feedback and taste.

- If your designer is a friend, realize you are entering into a business relationship – act accordingly. Treat them with the respect you might give any other freelancer you might hire.

- Most designers have a limit per week, per client of the amount of time they will spend on client communication (we need time to actually do the work, of course!). If you know you want a lot of communication, make this part of your agreement in the beginning. Expect to pay more if you require an exorbitant amount of communication.

- If you want custom, freelance work, you will rarely get this done for free. Even if you are a non-profit organization or a family member, it is rare that a designer will agree to do work for free. If there is a very small budget but you still must hire a freelancer, see if you can trade services or goods in exchange for the work. In order to survive as a creative young professional, most of us have to do so much free work that by the time we graduate college or university we simply cannot afford it anymore. By asking a designer to work for free, not only is it devaluing their work, but it is also making it harder for every other designer to be able to charge their reasonable rate.

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Hopefully this a helpful guide that gives boundaries to both client and freelancer! If you have any questions, concerns or you just want a movie recommendation, please don't hesitate to email me at: dcmailach@gmail.com or contact me on all of the social media.