

Explorative Research and Praxis

A Practical Guide to Creative Briefing.

How to write or work with a creative brief.

When will you need to know this?

Whether you are a designer, a maker, an artist, a director, a photographer, a writer, a musician, advertising executive, TV producer, account manager, public relations professional, business person, the same basic principles will often apply.



Why do you need to know this?

Understanding what makes a good creative brief is key to an effective, original and well-crafted piece of communication. It saves time and money and ensures the outcome of any investment provides positive results.

The ability to strategically write, manage and resolve creative briefs is a useful skill to have in the communications industries



Why is the creative brief so important?

It is where the creative work comes from.

It's how creative work is evaluated.

It has the single most significant effect on the final creative outcome.

What should the brief be about?

The brief should set the scene.
You should assume ignorance.
It should give you background.
It should give you insight.



What you need to find out.

Is there any research available?

Ask for competitor activity and analysis.

What are the current market/social/cultural conditions? Ask for client anecdotes (they may help).

Start with the problem.

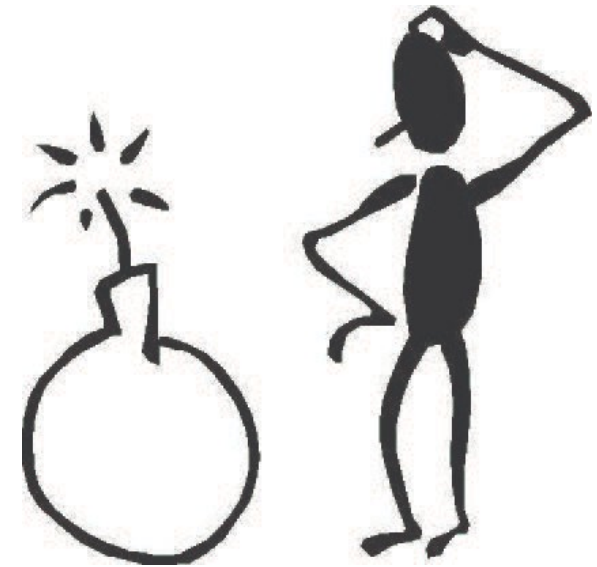
This needs to be kept simple. Is it pragmatic and clear?

Scrutinise the brief because if you do not understand the brief, you cannot properly solve it.

What are you trying to stimulate in your audiences behaviour?

What's influencing the outcome? What are the barriers?

What are the budget and time constraints



Then find out what.

What are you trying to stimulate in your audiences behaviour?

What's influencing the outcome?

What are the barriers?

What are the budget and time constraints? (these may be part of the problem)

The big objective



What is the desired response required from the work? What is required to happen?
What needs to change?

Consider the function of the communication.

Is the purpose of the work to:

Educate?

Sell?

Increase take-up?

Entertain?

Influence?

Provoke?

Change perceptions?

What needs to be produced?

ideas,
concepts,
layouts,
designs,
copy,
animatics,
finished illustrations,
print
advertisements,
digital ads,
storyboards,
scripts,
ambient
ideas,
an event, launch or roadshow.



What you need to know.

If the creative output is not predetermined this could actually be part of the brief - your input may be required for this - ask!

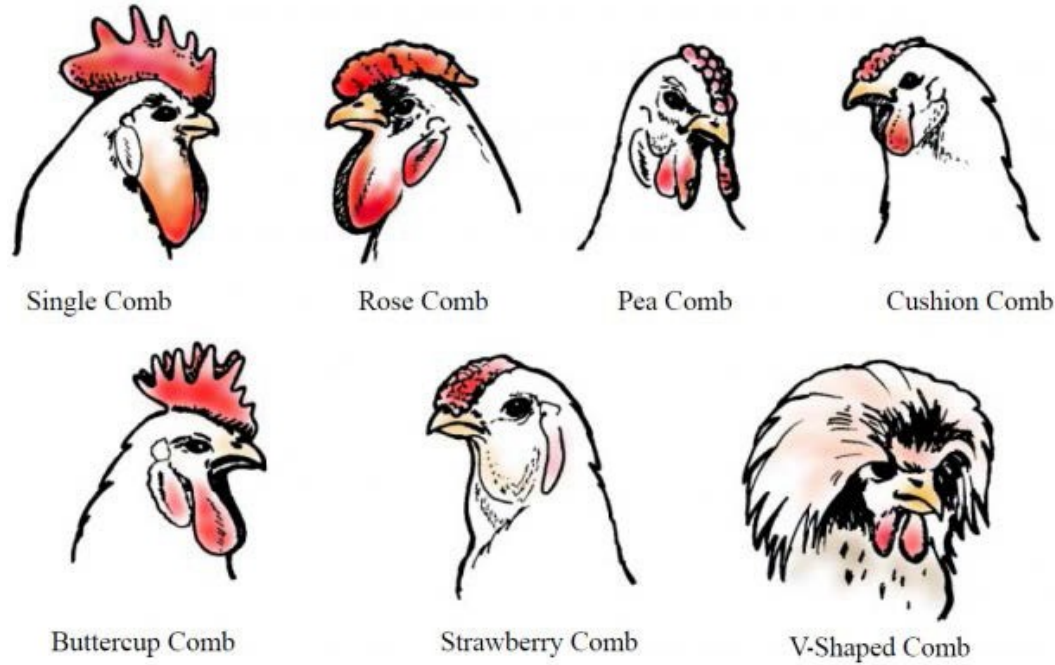
Before you start you need to know proposed platforms, sizes, dimensions or length (digital files for web/email, illustration, moving image or audio).



You may be part of a 'bigger picture'.

Your part in the work may not be the only element so is there any other imagery or content that you need to be aware of?

Is it existing, supplied, bought, to be newly created (if so by whom), supplied by third parties and if so what are the budget and timings?



Formats

This needs to be precise and economic.

Highly finished visuals, roughs, a written proposal?

How is the work going to be delivered to the client - boards, jpegs, pdf, powerpoint, by email, in person?

(Try to present the work in person wherever possible.)



Aimed at this audience ...

Who is going to see this creative work?

It needs to be as specific as possible for the best result. Ideally it should be based on real evidence. If it is anecdotal— that's fine, you just need to know!

... who think this

You need a snapshot of their mind.

What perception are you trying to influence or change?

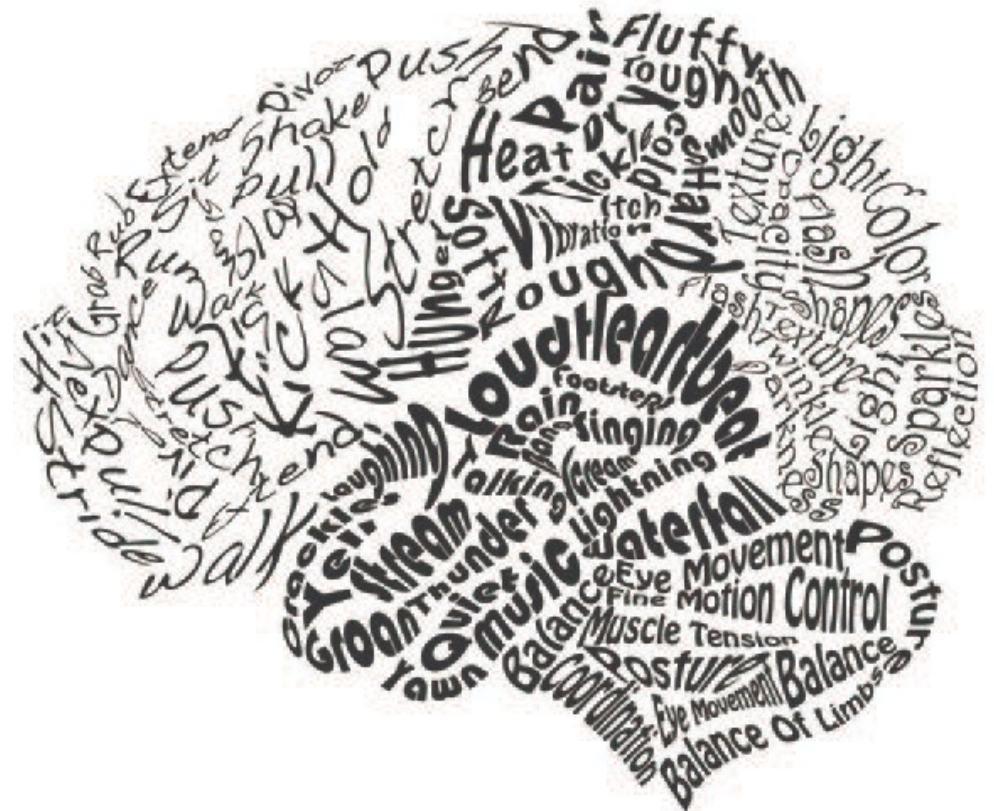
What is currently influencing their thoughts and behavior?

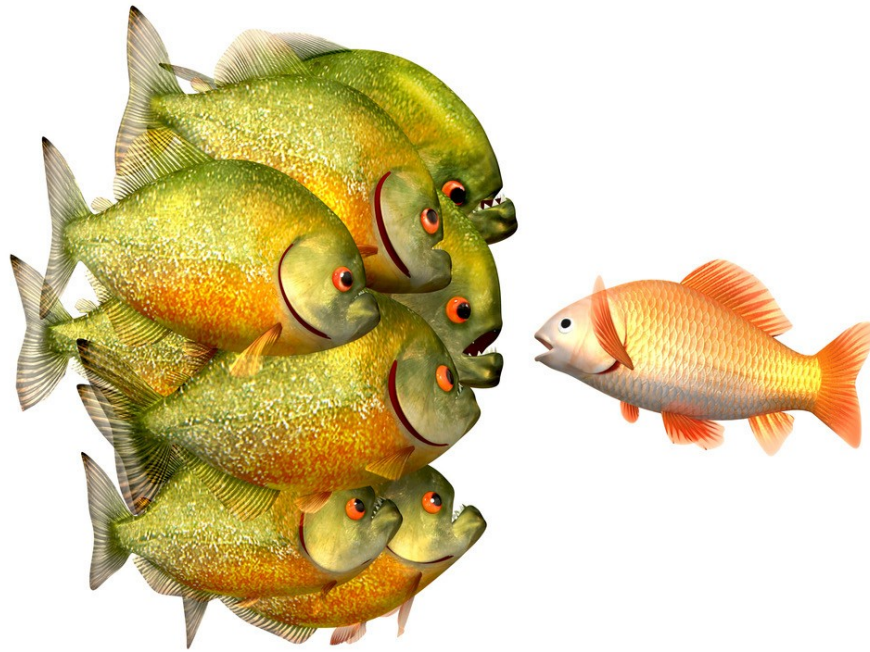
Are these influences:

Rational?

Emotional?

Economic?





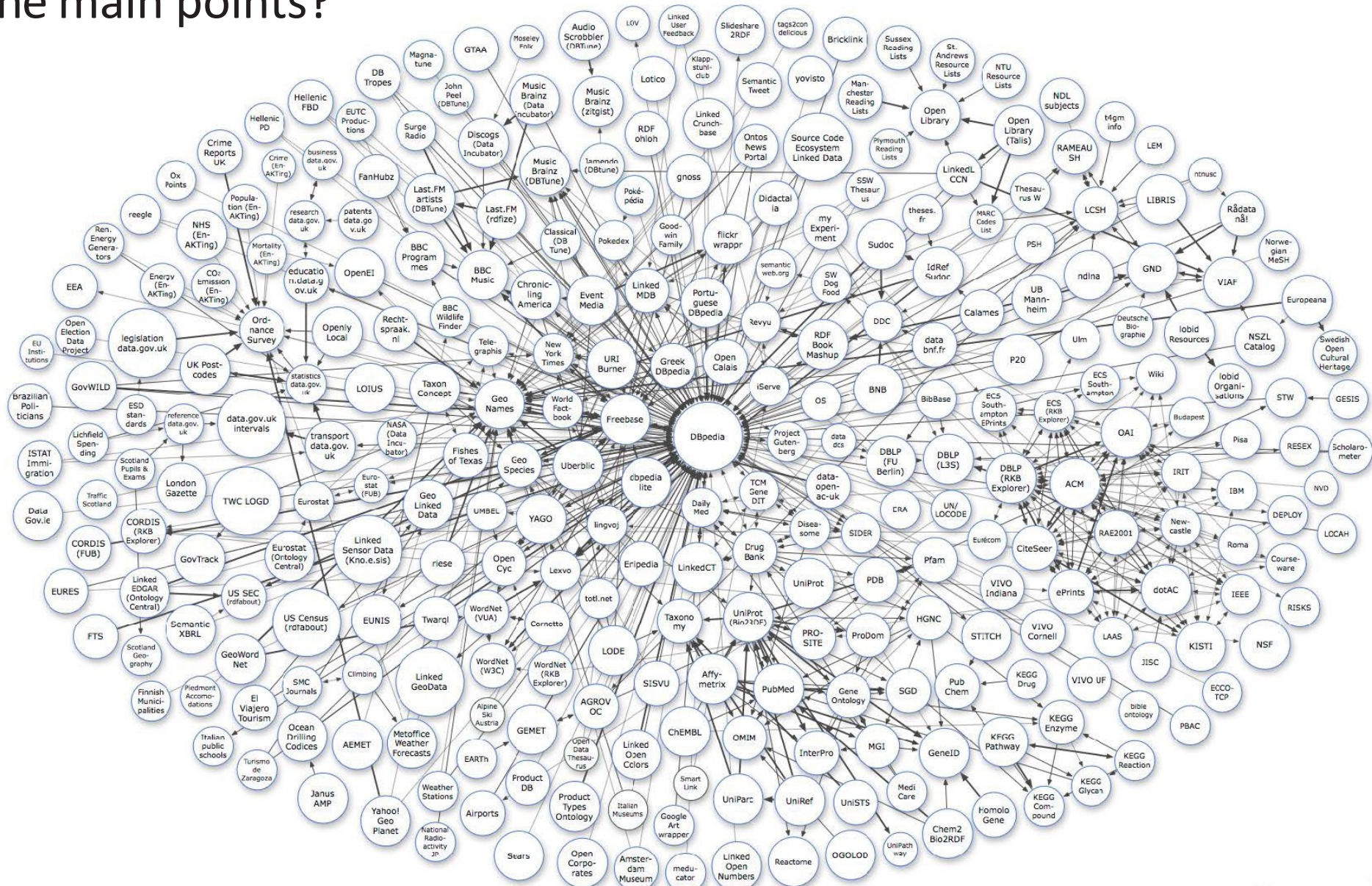
So what do you want to persuade them to do?

What are you replacing their old perceptions with in order to make them think differently? What do you tell or show them that is new,

to make them do something different?

What do you want them to think or do in

The main points?



**... or by communicating
one single point.**

The more points there are - the weaker the solution.
So if there are many points can they be drilled down into one? Discuss and negotiate these points with the client.
If there has to be lots – create a hierarchy.
Include mandatory requests from the client - or challenge them!

Always Include a call to action.



The most effective and
memorable creative work
is always single-minded.

Create a proposition.



This is the **MOST IMPORTANT** part of a brief.
What is the single most important thing to say?
It should be the conclusion to everything else that's
been written in the brief.

**To create the best and most
inspiring proposition.**

It needs to be single-
minded. A sentence should
suffice.

It should inspire.

In this tone

This affects the whole look and mood of the communication. How you say something changes the meaning.

Language and image have infinite nuances.

Tone will help you exploit an idea to maximum effect.

Be brave. Use humour or be outspoken if necessary (but not just for the sake of it!).



Timings

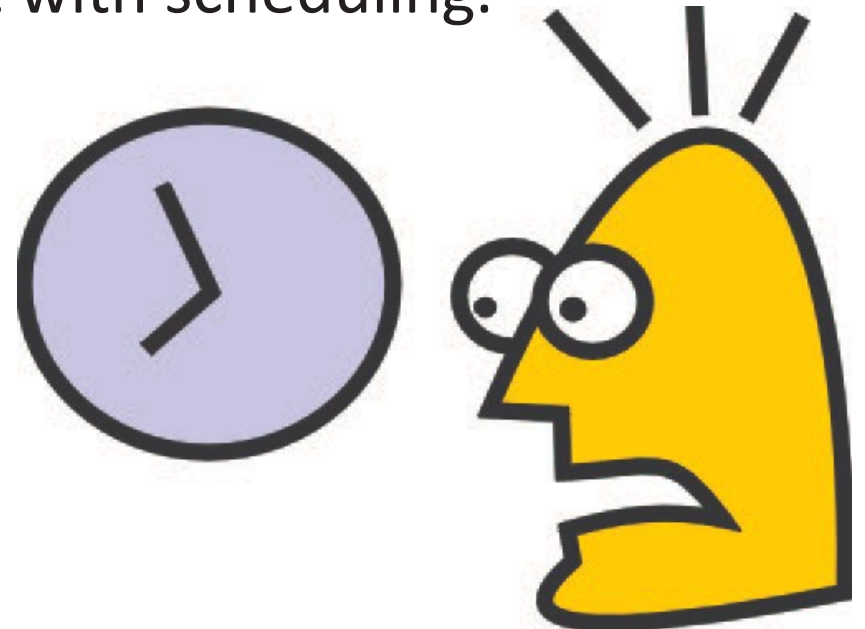
They need to be realistic. They need to be specific.

Match this with the requirements.

As a general rule: the more time, the better the job.

Realistic timings avoid the mistakes that come with rushing jobs Timings help you and the client with scheduling.

Timings create a shared awareness.





Additional Information

Are there any brand guidelines to follow?

Is there any other relevant material you need to see? Ensure you are supplied with the all files you require (logos, pictures, text).

Advice from D&AD for briefing creatives.



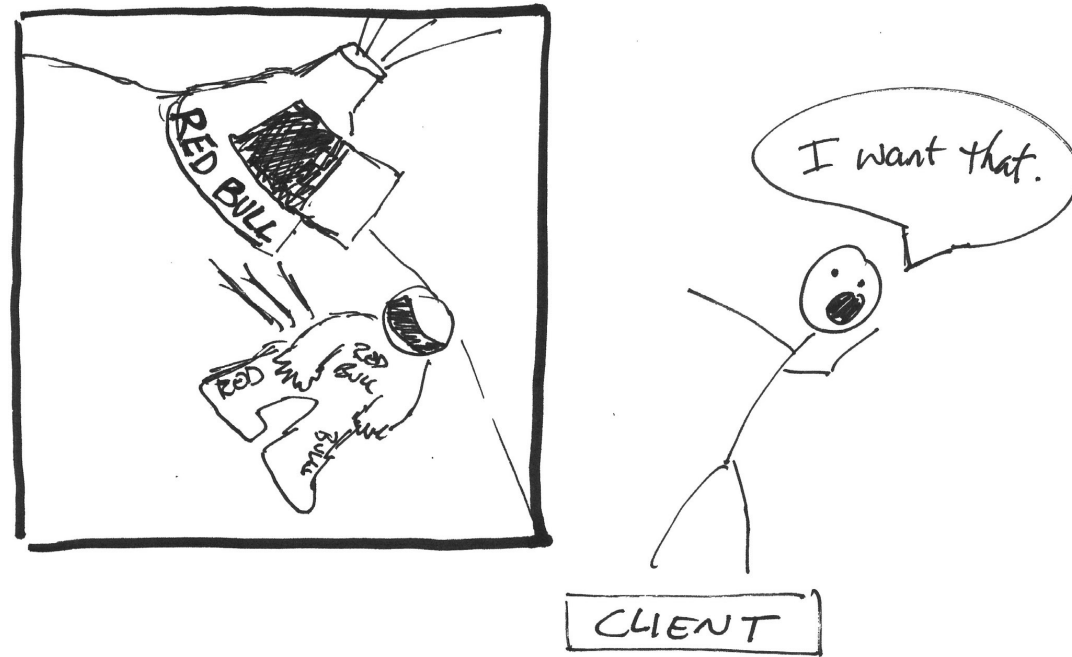
Kit Altin / CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER, THE GATE LONDON



And if you do just one thing ...

Always, always, always be
transparent.





Don't forget the client ...

Has the client signed off the brief?

For major projects they should always approve it. It saves time, confusion and unhappy clients. It removes the risk of wasting time/resource.

It influences the work and clarifies the response. It commits the client to the brief. It unites the client and the creative.

And finally ...

Take ownership of the project.

CARE!



Any questions?

Next lecture:

(Wednesday 5th May is cancelled)

Wednesday 12th May

**The advertising
commercial production
process**