

Importance of self reflection in learning



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Abstract

Self reflection is one of the important phases of learning. As a good designer, self reflection is essential in order to be a great graphic designer. The artwork that I had chosen is the school magazine cover design of SMJK Nan Hwa, Sitiawan that I had done during my internship at SIN BOON BENG PRINTING SDN BHD. SIN BOON BENG PRINTING SDN BHD is a printing company that provides a platform for people to have their own customization design for their own printing order especially the government education department like the primary schools, secondary schools, high schools, colleges and others. The theme of the school magazine cover for this year was to revise from the past and learn something new. The concept of the cover design is to design the cover that suits their theme. Besides, the client also wanted the oriental feel in the cover design mainly because of the identity of the school. In this essay, I will be evaluate and examine myself through this artwork. This essay will be focusing on evaluating the influences on my design styles, design theories application, the design trends, appropriateness of the context, ethics and so on. Besides, I will also reflecting myself on the design works. I will explain the weaknesses and problems that I had faced in the design process. Each step of the design process will be explaining thoroughly in this essay.

Introduction

As a knowledgeable graphic design graduate without any personal reflection from time to time, is not compatible to be a great designer. Self reflection is a form of personal response to the experiences, situations, events or even the surroundings that happened around us. The reflective essay can be

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considered as a “ mirror” that reflects our own personalities and the growth process in us. This is very crucial to everyone especially a designer like us. Reflective essay helps to find out our own personality, ability, design style and others. It can be considered as a ‘ processing’ phase where thinking and learning take place and it will help us to be a greater designer in the future.

Therefore, the artwork chosen for this reflective essay is the school magazine cover design of SMJK Nan Hwa, Sitiawan for the year 2010. This artwork was produced during the fourteen weeks of internship at SIN BOON BENG PRINTING SDN BHD. As one of the member of SIN BOON BENG PRINTING SDN BHD, I was assigned to do the school magazine cover design for SMJK Nan Hwa, Sitiawan. This is one of the designs that I had given one hundred percent freedom in doing the design based on the client’s requirements which means I did the design individually.

Every time I start a design, I like to do some brainstorming and mind mapping for further idea generation. Since the school magazine’s theme is given by the school, I tried to find the denotative and connotative meaning of the theme. Besides, I also did some research on the layout design in order to do a better cover design for the school. I tried to refer to the resources of the company and also some previous design they had did for the school to gain some inspiration. Once I had done with the cover design, I showed it to my supervisor before it is shown to the client. I had done few designs for the school. The final artwork that had chosen is mainly because I was able to create the bond between the design and the theme. My supervisor and mentor had given me some comments for improvements during the design process.

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This assignment was actually quite challenging. This is because I need to think about the idea and concept all by myself. My supervisor and mentor just gave me some opinions and comments to improve my design. I was not given any guidance to do the design except the client's requirements. In this assignment, I had tried very hard to implement the knowledge that I had learnt in the university. After I did the design, the final artwork was email to the client and the client was quite satisfied about it.

Scope of study

This study focuses on evaluating and examines the reflecting process on my artwork. This report attempts to present a preview of developments and the involvement in the general area of design process development. Therefore it will address issues such as design methodologies, market's design trend, application of knowledge and others. The development process will be addressed through different features of case studies, design theories and methodologies in this essay. This study summarizes some of the information, as well as information from the previous artworks, in an attempt to illustrate the evolution of my design growing process. It reviews, as well, researches, knowledge and experiences that brought changes in my design career.

Objectives/ Aims of essay

Self reflection is a very important phase for everyone especially a young designer like me. It is highly beneficial to students' development and provides a great value in students graduated life. Those students who are well equipped and managed to done well during this phase probably might have a great success in their career life. It also prepared us to face the real industry working environment and make us understand other strengths and

weakness so that we can improve ourselves and prepared ourselves for a better future. Self reflective writing indirectly develops our critical thinking and making us to consider the comments or critics of our design so that we can improve about it. The objectives of self reflective essay are as followings:

To provide us an opportunity to practice, evaluate and examine our knowledge in our learning process.

Through self reflections, we are able to gain practical experience that is related to our course and yet enhance our basic skills that have been learnt in university through this self reflection session. Furthermore, through this self reflection session, we had a chance to implement what we have learned in the class and yet we are able to learn even more no matter in design sense or skills throughout this session.

To equip ourselves.

It is essential that every designer should cultivate self reflection in our design life so that our critical thinking, creativities and skills will be improved in the passage of time. Learning is a life-long process. Learning through our own mistakes and experiences even required more time and more difficulties because we need to evaluate ourselves and learn from our mistakes. It also helps to speed up the learning process of how our knowledge could be applied in the reality.

To develop our critical thinking and enhance our creativities.

Critical thinking is a mindset that is able to conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and/or evaluate information through observations, experiences,

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reflections, reasoning, or communications. Self reflections help to develop our critical thinking whereby we are able to process the information, comments or critics and accept it with ordinary mindset. We are able to accept every critic and listen to the comments around us. We are also able to analysis the comments and critics in order to improve ourselves for a better future.

Rationale of essay

The study of reflecting ourselves on the graphic design and multimedia field through previous artworks can be a learning paradigm in the higher level to enhance our knowledge and communication skills as well. This is not only basic education be learned by today's students but acquisition of learning skills and knowledge for gainful employment and full participation in country's society. The essay's goal is designed to help students improve academic competence, develop employability skills, implement a career plan and participate in a career pathway in preparation for post secondary education or careers in the graphic design and multimedia field after graduating. This goal can be achieved through the self reflection process that can guide and evaluate ourselves and try to learn from the mistakes. The output of this study is a source material that the teachers can assimilate and disseminate by diffusion and induction technique.

Problem Statement

In every design process, there are always many problems occurred during the design phase. I had several problems in designing the school magazine cover. The school had provided their own theme design in a circle shape and they requested to remain it. As the result, I had limited to do a circle design

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on the surrounding of the theme. As the logo design for the school theme is in white colour, I need to consider the suitable colours for the cover. Besides, the client requested to have the oriental feel on the cover and yet can bring up the theme. In order to solve the problems, I did a lot of research on the “oriental” at first. I also did the research on the theme of the school where it actually came from Confucius, to learn something new from the past.