

Design Statements

How to write your own design statements

'Design statements serve to present your intent, process and the context of your work in a personal way. They vary from addressing a specific piece to looking at your overall approach to design.'
(MCAD Learning Center Handout, pg 1).

Writing design statements is an opportunity to explore your design ideas and how to communicate and articulate your thoughts into sentences (1-2 max!). The trick to expressing your ideas well, write it as you say it and keep it simple.

This will then act as a way to describe and illustrate in words creating a visual language, which helps provide clarity and context to your work with both text and images. In addition to your sketches, consider the elements and principles you have used to create a certain look and feel. Essentially, this is what you are trying to convey. The idea being, to enhance and express your ideas in written form, extending your visual language.

Without a design statement to support your design concept, it looks a little unfinished and often feels a little unsupported.

Start to identify and examine how you have applied the elements and principles in your designs. Consider whether your designs have used a combination of colours, textures, tones, shapes and forms etc. Have you used repetition of lines to create rhythm and movement, injected contrast to create interest and a point of difference and/or have you considered balance for instance for your overall composition and created a sense of harmony? Is it functional and aesthetically pleasing? Ask yourself what was the direction, character, aesthetic you wish to convey for your client in terms of your design concept. What were the choices you made and your overall design intent? This design statement acts as a brief summary of your overall design intent.

The aim of capturing and expressing your design concept ideas are to truly visually define your concept. They must stand out and be obvious to your client. Your short sharp design statement could potentially really add to your design concept giving it the written reference to help further explain your design ideas. So, start by breaking down the elements and including them together with your concept ideas which, could then potentially read more like a design statement directly from a high end designer magazine. Don't forget to include some impressive design terminology. These will all help you to form more informed design decisions and produce really successful design solutions for your clients.

Keep reading and being inspired with your design writing as well as boosting your design vocabulary and the way in which you articulate your design intent. Well considered and appropriate design language used to explain your design intent will really help to sell your design ideas and overall concept.

The ultimate goal, a well written design statement can aid you in gaining approval for your design concept from your client and will lead to you retaining that design project and client for the final design phase and potentially future design projects.

So, just as you've invested significant time and energy into creating your design concepts, they must be backed up and supported by an equally glowing design statement!