Helen Chen (Jiayi)
CDMG 1111
Professor Goetz
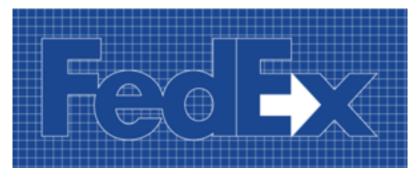
Logo History: FedEx

The FedEx Logo

The legendary FedEx logo was ranked as one of the 8 best logos over the past 35 years.The current FedEx logo was created by Lindon Leader in 1994. Lindon Leader studied at Stanford University and Art Center College of Design. After he got his degree, he started his career with the well-known graphic designer Saul Bass. Now Lindon is being recognized as a successful American graphic designer gaining worldwide attention for many of his work. Since 2001, Lindon has built his own firm called Leader Creative.

There was already 200 FedEx logos being created when reviewed by Leader. Lincoln Leader said "if you put a lower-case 'x' to the right of a capital 'E' (Ex) you can begin to see a hint of an arrow, though it is clumsy and extremely abstract. I thought that, if I could develop this concept of an arrow it could be promoted as a symbol for speed and precision, both FedEx communicative attributes". Once he began to settle on this idea of the arrow, he found that he needs to adjust the letterforms in order to make the arrow stand out.

The arrow in FedEx Logo

The logo needs to be bold and differentiating and able to seen from a far distance. With this in the mind, the team made orange more orange and purple less blue. Leader was studying Univers 67 (Bold Condensed) and Futura Bold for the logo. However, neither of them are suitable for creating the perfect arrow. In order to do so, Leader took the best qualities of the two typefaces and combined to make new letterforms. He connected the letters, changed the height of the x-height or made the lowercase larger in regard to the capital 'E' until the arrow seems quite natural.

Color differentiates different operating units

The fact that Leader chose to make the arrow subtle may cause people to not get the message at times but whether you see it or not, the FedEx logo is still powerful in both ways. Leader was asked multiple time why not making the arrow more visible like filling in the arrow but his thought was if, "punch lines that need to be explained are neither funny nor memorable". "The arrow was indeed intentional as a secondary design element, if the viewer sees it, it's a neat, interesting visual bonus. If the viewer doesn't see it, that's OK. It's still a powerful logo." says Federal Express Corp. spokesman Jess Bunn. Current FedEx has been organized and separated into many operating units, each has its own logo color but the 'Fed' always remains purple.

FedEx Logo Evolution

Federal Express: 1973–1991
(Federal Express was the original name and later got shortened to FedEx.)

FDX: 1978–1991

FedEx: 1991–1994

FedEx: 1994–present

Resource

http://logos.wikia.com/wiki/FedEx
http://www.thesneeze.com/mt-archives/cat_secrets_of_the_fedex_logo.php
https://www.fineprintnyc.com/blog/fedex-logo-history
http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2002/07/08/tem_arrow_in_fedex_logo.html
https://www.famouslogos.net/lindon-leader/
http://leadercreative.com/about/bio/