Information Design

Principals of Design: effectively using the principles of design to create random or directed movement, generally helps to clarify meaning in design work. The goal is to determine and establish a **visual hierarchy** of information in a layout, so the reader can easily absorb the content.

Define your focal point. Every design element in your layout should move the viewer's eye in the direction you want the viewer to read your content.

1. Repetition/Consistency/Rhythm Repeating design elements and consistent use of type and graphics styles within a document shows a reader where to go and helps them navigate your designs and layouts safely. Rhythm is created when one or more elements of design are used repeatedly to create a feeling of organized movement. Variety is essential to keep rhythm exciting and active, and moving the viewer around the artwork. Rhythm creates a mood like music or dancing.

2. Emphasis is the part of the design that catches the viewer's attention. Usually the artist will make one area stand out by contrasting it with other areas. The area will be different in size, color, texture, shape, etc. In design, big and small elements, black and white text, squares and circles, all create contrast in design.

3. Balance is the distribution of the visual weight of objects, colors, texture, and space. If the design was on a scale these elements should be balanced to make the layout feel stable. In symmetrical balance, the elements used on one side of the design are similar to those on the other side; in asymmetrical balance, the sides are different but still look balanced. In radial balance, the elements are arranged around a central point and may be similar.

4. Proximity/Unity In design, proximity or closeness creates a bond between elements on a page. How close together or far apart elements are placed suggests a relationship (or lack of) between otherwise disparate parts. Unity is also achieved by using a third element to connect distant parts. Unity is the feeling of harmony between all parts of the artwork creating a sense of completeness.

5. Proportion is the feeling of unity created when all parts (sizes, amounts, or number) relate well with each other. When drawing the human figure, proportion can refer to the size of the head compared to the rest of the body.

6. Alignment brings order to chaos on a piece of paper. How you align type and graphics on a page and in relation to each other can make your layout easier or more difficult to read, foster familiarity, or bring excitement to a stale design. Designs that try to cram too much text and graphics onto the page are uncomfortable and may be impossible to read. White space gives your design breathing room.