

Reaction: Hot-Wiring Your Creative Process Chp. 1

This chapter is a great introduction to the components of a solid creative process. I have been in the design business for a while now and I agree with pretty much everything Cloninger says. I can say that in the past I have not always thought about the process before diving in, and it always resulted in slowing me down. I would either get stuck very easily, or even if I knew what to do next, I would not feel motivated to continue because I did not have a clear understanding of the big picture. This chapter reiterated what I have been learning the hard way: that good design necessitates thought put into organization and project management.

For me, the Predesign phase is equivalent to “Research” which is something that I never liked doing in school because it was almost invariably on topics that did not interest me. When thinking about designing websites, I have to try to remove the negative stigma research has in my mind, and to actually venture out into the world and conduct comparative audits and interviews with users. I’m still a bit apprehensive about doing it, but at least I no longer have to “convince” myself that it is worth doing.

The Design phase is typically the most challenging, but also the most rewarding. One particular challenge I face when designing interfaces is to ignore all the little details of iconography, typography, color scheme, and whitespace consistency and instead focus on creatively (and iteratively) solving the bigger problems. Every time I make a breakthrough in solving a design problem I’m reminded why I love the design field—it’s such a rush! Those distracting little details often end up changing during development anyway.

The Development phase is the most fun for me. Here is where I can tackle all those little details that bugged me during the initial designing, and each time one gets taken care of I know the project is a tiny bit more complete. When developing a website it’s actually quite common to revisit the design phase in between development, and even do some user research on chunks of the site, which then necessitate more design and more development. I like designing things that are meant for people to use, because I am given countless chances to refine my work for the benefit of others.

I have the least amount of experience in the Implementation phase, insofar as marketing is concerned. In developing websites there are quite a few things that go into this: How do we attract users? How can the site get better rank in search engines? How will the site scale with lots of users? Is it secure enough? These are questions that I often do not tackle directly, and would need the help of others. At least it’s very inexpensive to put the site online.

All in all a good chapter to start this book. I look forward to the rest that Cloninger has to offer. My favorite part was the quotation from Edward DeBono: a problem is “the difference between what we have and what we want.”