

DESIGN

APPROACH

01. NAIVE CONDITION = POINT OF NO RETURN

- a. Naivety is the best condition to think and reason freely.
- b. At the start, stop the urge to know more about the assignment. Do not jump onto it but take a distance instead.
- c. Unburdened, associative thinking is the start of everything.
- d. This valuable condition can never exist again as soon as you start research. It is a point of no return, there is no way back.

02. STATE OF MIND = UNIQUE EVERY TIME

- a. The fundamental state of mind is to be curious and hungry for new approaches and ideas.
- b. Every assignment is unique and therefore requires its own unique mental state.
- c. Radical thinking exposes hidden qualities of an assignment. Middle-of the-road-thinking kills every opportunity, every project; it is destructive to any creativity.
- d. Embrace so-called problems, so-called contradictions, so-called impossibilities: this is the rocket fuel that comes from dirty realism.
- e. The notion 'problem' does not exist; do not seek problems but instead go for opportunities and possibilities.
- f. The thinking process is radical and subjective (not scientific), which is a quality. Try to think different from other team members and any people outside the team.

03. APPLIED RESEARCH = 5%

- a. Reduce generic research, of which in the end only 5% will be used in design.
- b. Do not operate in generic ways (going for the full 100%) and then select findings afterwards, but act the opposite way: reflective, pro active and selective.
- c. Targeted research is required: focus on the 5%.
- d. Selection is vital; what combined information and data are distinct, valuable and powerful?
- e. Applied research creates focus, speeds up the process, is dynamic and acts as a turbo charger.
- f. Sketching findings by hand & brain and also in writing is essential. Combined sketching and writing makes you recognize and understand powerful combinations of information and data.

04. SELECTION & FOCUS = TUNING

- a. Powerful findings can be isolated and tested in cases; they need to have an undeniable logic.
- b. Do not stack all findings (site-related, urban, programmatic, historic, cultural, societal, technical, financial, etc.) like a Mount Everest and then step into a consensus triggered and uninspiring process.
- c. Instead, preselect one finding that can steer the mindset, can fuel the process and can carry the project. Mostly it is the tiny, unexpected and overlooked determinant.
- d. What to do next? The-order-of-things-to-process defines the result as a critical path; be cautious, every issue can help the next but it can also damage the process of imagination.

05. SCENARIOS = 360 DEGREES

- a. Obvious scenarios are boring and useless. They already exist.
- b. What if.....? scenario thinking is about logic that is surprising (new) and at the same time inevitable.
- c. Imagine you have a 360-degree lens on your head.
- d. By thinking ahead, defining what-not-to-do is more important than knowing what-to-do.

06. STRATEGY = A TIME MACHINE

- a. Strategy comes from scenario thinking.
- b. A project strategy is an undeniable, unescapable and new reasoning, which is more important than striving for a possible outcome in a more direct way.
- c. A strategy is like a time machine; it brings future conditions to our current era.
- d. It explains possible causes, effects and stakeholders that might look illogical in our current era.

07. BIG THEORIES KILL DESIGN

- a. Strategy + theory (approach) = concept.
- b. Do not sit on theories and do not try to apply big theories because they block design.
- c. A theory never is a start, it is the result; often it comes at the end, afterwards.
- d. Parallel thinking by explorations on different trajectories creates exponential results.
- e. Apply a pragmatic intelligence; embrace simplicity, the radical banal.

08. CONCEPT = PROJECT

- a. Concept has nothing to do with shape, style or how it looks like.
- b. A concept requires simple and powerful intelligence to have an inescapable logic.
- c. A concept develops itself through logic into design and will unveil and communicate the specific urban and architectural parameters of the project if the designer listens well.
- d. Urban and/or architectural outcomes are directly related to the logic of the concept.
- e. Concepts are not self fulfilling; a right concept grows stronger and develops itself further when criticized and tested by the designer.
- f. Produce in 3D. The computer is just a tool. Sketching and scale modeling (hand-brain communication) are often overlooked. Do not use a pencil (vague); with a pen the line is there or not, radical and clear).
- g. Writing is a way of sketching and approaching. If you are capable of explaining the concept in a narrative to others you understand the design. The narrative will adapt many times during the process in dialogue with the design.

09. DESIGN = RESEARCH

a. Design = not a result.

In fact it is an approach, a start.

Design = research.

b. Robustness through logic:

The design should withstand erosion.

Without any explanation by the designer the design should explain itself to outsiders and relate itself undeniably to the concept.

10. EXPLORE THE DESIGN

- a. A design is a new spatial condition to its designer.
- b. It is still unknown (what did we make? what did I make?) and it needs to be explored to be understood and further elaborated.
- c. A critical approach unveils embedded qualities.
- d. Try to think and review as an outsider or a critic, who has never seen the design or project before, to discover its added values.

11. INTUITION = A RAZOR BLADE

- a. Intuition is a highly underestimated sharp tool.
- b. Intuition can unfold in conditions where predetermination does not exist. In a situation of predetermination intuition has no chance.
- c. Intuition = an open mind + experience + curiosity + ambition.