DARNED GOOD

ADVICE

(for digital designers in Government!)

How to do Your Best Work
By 2 "seasoned" #GCDigital Practitioners

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1.
Remember: you are doing important work.

Welcome to a wonderful world!

The problems you will work on are some of the most complicated in the digital design field. If you can contribute to solving them, the impact will be felt all over the country, the world.

PIANO · VOCAL · GUITAR

Featured in the Touchstone Pictures Motion Picture "Good Morning Vietnam"

What A Wonderful World

Words and Music by GEORGE DAVID WEISS and BOB THIELE
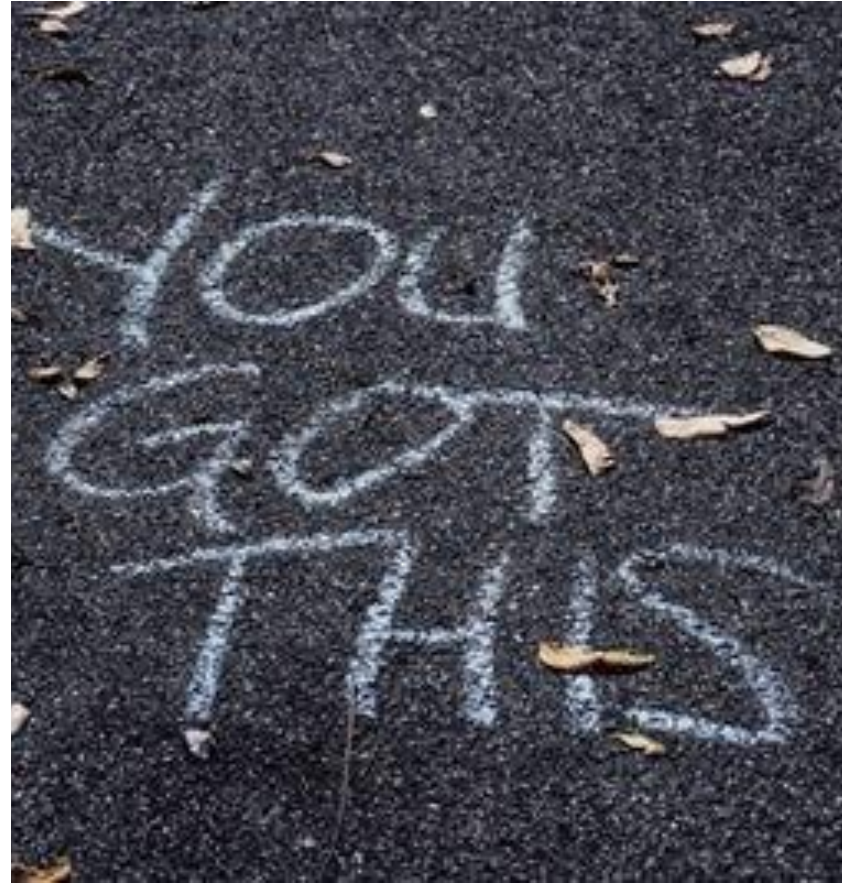Recorded by LOUIS ARMSTRONG

2.

Reach out and meet your community.

You are not alone.

Digital design in the Government of Canada can be...a little out of the ordinary. And that can feel very lonely at times. But, there are great people all over the Government to support you!

#GCDigital ;)

3.
A Perspective

In the private sector, the pressure for restructuring and renewal has come from increased competitiveness and the unforgiving nature of high costs. Many argue that consumers have become more demanding as they look for better service and quality at a lower price.

For governments, the pressure is for better service in the face of reduced revenues and mounting debt. Many consumers of government services appear to have lost their tolerance for bureaucracies. They feel they receive better service from banks, car rental companies, even supermarkets, which have transformed business with innovative information technology. The government increasingly appears to be out of date. Many want to know why they have to spend their precious time finding answers to their questions, after being bounced from department to department, when sometimes (not always) it is easier to get satisfaction from customer-hungry private companies.

"Why do I have to call so many places? Why do I have to wait so long? Why can't they solve my problem right here, right now?"

These are questions that governments must take seriously. Government must re-invent itself, as other institutions have had to do to survive. Government must fundamentally improve the way it administers its business and delivers its services.

4.

Know your GC digital design history!

History repeats itself.

You are not the first person try cracking the trickiest of digital design challenges.

Build an understanding of what has happened in the past, so that you can overcome similar challenges in the future.
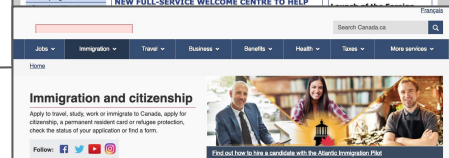
1996

2001

2003

2007

2014

5.

GC has rules for web design, but they are just the beginning.

- Standard on Web Usability
- Standard on Web Accessibility
- Standard on Web Interoperability
- GC Policy on Communication and Federal Identity
- Standard on Metadata
- GC Style Guide
- ~~Common Look and Feel 1 & 2~~

6.
It's all about "me".

- *Don't make me think*
- Google will tell me the answer
- I'm in a hurry

- How can I make them care about my work?
- Users should not rely on other sites for information
- I want them to know about our other services

7.

You might not have the right tool, but you can still design

The tool doesn't make the designer work, the designer makes the design.

There are many ways to get a job done, and many tools to support those approaches. Pick the tool that fits your unique context of design and do your best work with it.

But also don't forget to put in a request for your favourite tools ;)

8.

You can find users and test anywhere.

Just because your POR team says you can't send out that survey, doesn't mean you can't do user research.

Try to get feedback regularly. It will only build your confidence that what you are building is the the right thing for the people using it.

8.

Never forget about content.

9.

If you build it, they will provide feedback.

Modeling out your concepts are the only real way to get productive, valuable feedback that will he

10.

Loosen up your traditional design processes.

The Government of Canada is changing and digital design is changing (even though it may feel like it just got started).

The future of GCDigital is

Digital design ❤️ Agile.

11.

Only use your powers for good.

Designers have ethics to adhere to.

As a member of this community you have a responsibility to ensure that your powers are used for the good of the people using your things.

A Designer's
Code of Ethics

A designer is first and foremost
a human being.

is responsible for the work
they put into the world.

values impact over form.

owes the people who hire them
not just their labor,
but their counsel.

welcomes criticism.

strives to know their
audience.

does not believe in
edge cases.

is part of a professional
community.

welcomes a diverse and
competitive field.

takes time for
self-reflection.

12.

Small wins matter. Don't forget to celebrate them.

No matter how well researched your design is. How beautifully tight it is. How well it tests...It will never look or work exactly the same as you'd originally planned.

To stay sane you need to be able to find one little thing to celebrate in everything you worked on that releases.
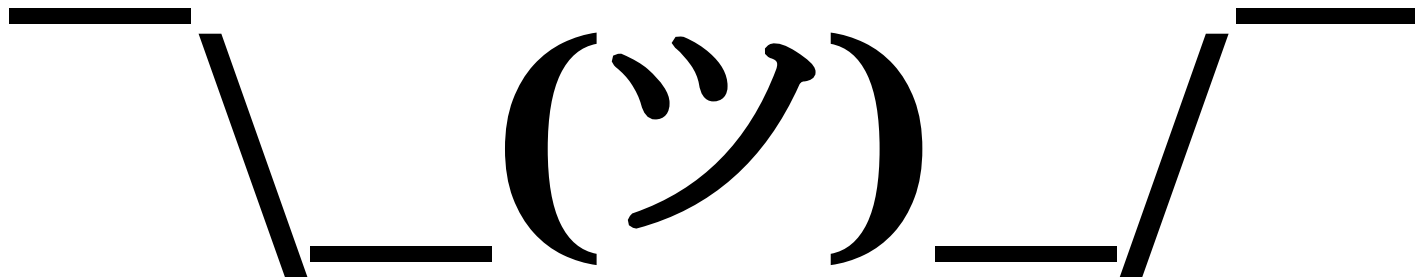
13.

Be curious. Be brave.

None of this is easy, but if you remember that you are doing the important work, you will find a way forward.

Never stop exploring and stand tall! You are doing a great job.

You know you have succeeded when they say..."*That's it???*"

¯_(ツ)_/¯

Bonus!

When you feel stuck, pick up a book ;)

We got our inspiration for this presentation from George Lois' book: Damn good advice for people with Talent.

You should get the book. It's awesome!

DAMN GOOD ADVICE

(for people with talent!)

How to Unleash Your Creative Potential
by America's Master Communicator

George Lois

PHAIDON