

Working on ‘Small’ projects

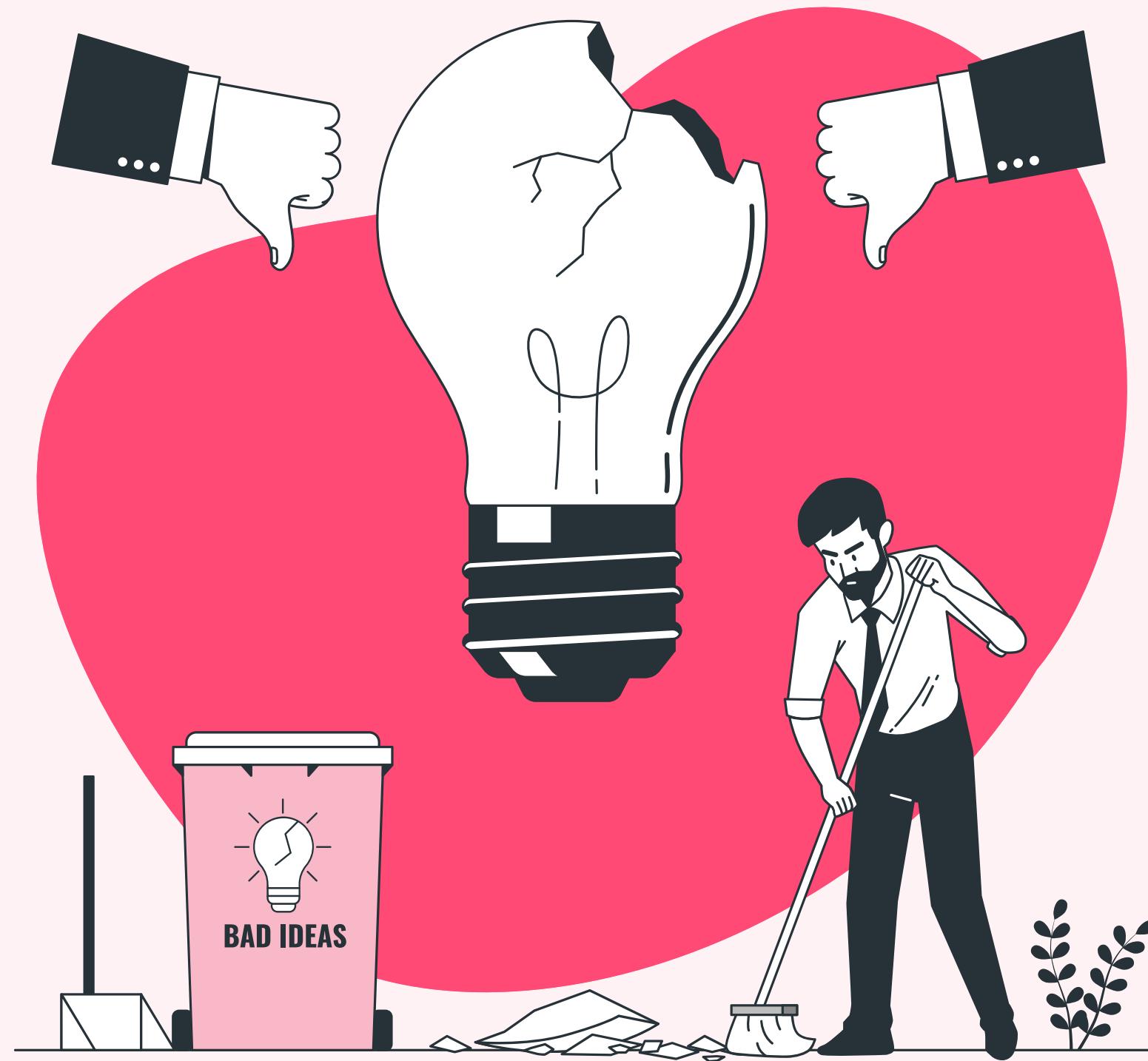
- **Landing pages** are standalone web pages created for marketing campaigns. This page requires the visitor to complete only one specific task.
- The effort and thought process for small and large crowdsourcing projects is the same, so designers shouldn't diminish their value by competing in low-priced contests.
- Creating a written contract will help you avoid unpleasant surprises from your client. Everything must be discussed before the contract is signed.
- A small project, on the other hand, can allow you to set up your portfolio, get your name out there, and build a network of clients.





Understanding non-designer feedback

- ‘**Make it pop**’ means the design is lacking a strong emphasis point
- ‘**Make it modern**’ means your design is outdated.
- ‘**Make it warmer**’ means the design's atmosphere or "vibe" is out of touch with the company's vision.
- Modern, fun, creative, vibrant, all refer to the way the site looks and its impact. It signifies the site's atmosphere and impact in general.
- Clients will point out any gaps in functionality, but if you get only a few phrases that are hard to translate into actions, your design is bad, so you should improve your skills.

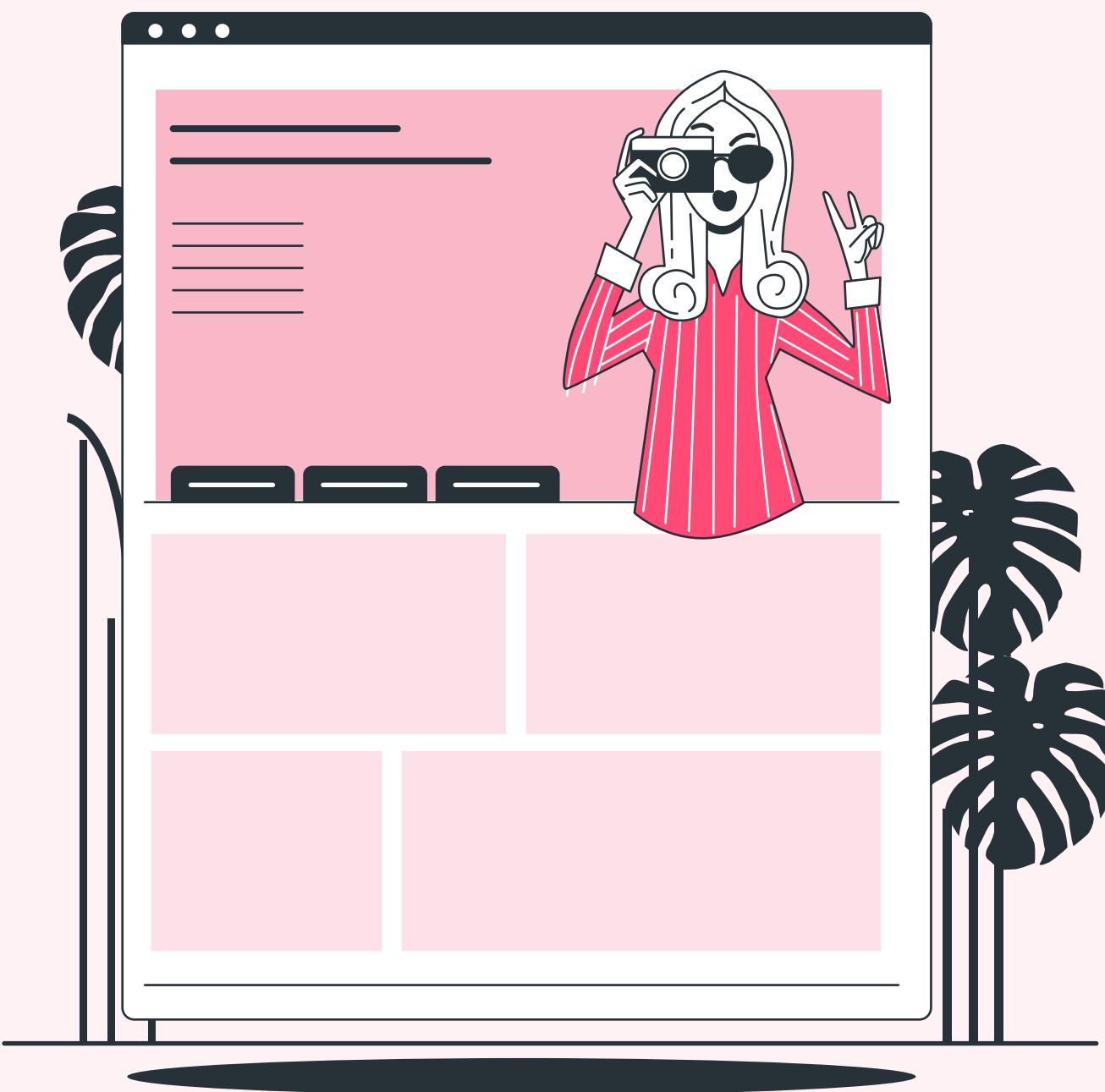


The pitfalls of your imagination

- Do not rely entirely on your imagination.
- It's better to keep things simple than to complicate them.
- Before you get creative with something, ask yourself if it's been done before. Have you seen something similar on popular sites? If not, then chances are it's a bad idea.
- Set up the foundation of your design based on inspiration.
- Master the basics before coming up with "out of the box" ideas for your design.

Understanding contrast

- Important design elements must be highly visible and easy to read, otherwise the user's experience will be poor.
- Keep your text layers simple and aim for maximum contrast rather than trying to make them look flashy.
- To avoid clashing, keep the contrast low between site elements.
- Always check your design at 100% zoom level in order to avoid creating oversized elements.





If you use freebies

- Read the user license on each and every website you download a freebie from.
- Find out what makes a freebie great, and see which of its elements you can adapt into your design, so as to avoid relying completely on the freebie itself.

Optimizing your layers panel

- Having your layers named will make it easier to search through your layers as other designers and developers can easily understand what you did and can easily identify what they're looking for.
- Another advantage of an organized layers panel is the ability to reuse elements.
- As a general rule, you shouldn't create a group for one layer only.
- Groups should not be styled with layer styles.
- Groups that are not in use should always be collapsed.
- The group preview should be a small thumbnail, with 'Clip Thumbnails' set to Layer Bounds. This will make your layer more visible.
- Delete unused layers to keep your layer panel organized and to keep the file size as small as possible.
- Layers and folders should not be locked or linked.





Dummy content

- Make sure there is as much real content as possible in your design, rather than dummy text. It creates a good impression on clients.
- If you can come up with a catchphrase or slogan for your headlines and subheadlines, that will be most effective.
- Images of the product can be taken from Google or from competitors' websites for presentation purposes.

Logo design

- Designing logos should be one of your skills.
- On the other hand, if you have no idea and don't make any money from your web designs, you should put logo design on the back burner and focus your efforts entirely on web design.
- In the meantime, you can talk to someone who specializes in logo design and partner up, thus relieving most of your stress.
- Be careful not to act like you're the client because that will end badly.





Tips to speed up your design process

- Become familiar with all the major hotkeys.
- Get a fast mouse with programmable buttons and set them for things such as going back or minimizing all windows.
- Set your browser to download everything to your desktop, then organize it properly and when the project is over, delete what's not needed.
- Name and group your layers, and use the search feature built into the layers panel.
- If you have two or more design ideas for the same area, execute them all and compare them side by side to see which one looks the best.

Choosing the right project

- Explore all categories of web design to find the category that you are most passionate about, then work on projects within that category.
- In order to take on bigger projects, you should build an impressive portfolio. This will show potential clients that you are qualified.
- Take into consideration your experience, lifestyle, finances, and current work situation when choosing a project.





How to deal with clients

- My recommendation is to charge by the project since it is easier for the client to accept. You can also multitask across multiple projects to speed things up.
- You should be able to deconstruct the quote based on the project, your skill level, deadlines, etc. If the client is still unhappy with the quote, then the client isn't right for you. Don't negotiate, just move on.
- Protect your work by not releasing source files until you're paid or have a contract, and watermark your drafts.

How to grow as a designer

- Enroll in different courses and read design-related articles.
- Getting better requires continuous effort to find relevant sources of information to improve your skills, along with some aha moments.

