Module 4 Response Paper

"Part of becoming a great designer is learning when to break the rules and when to follow them, as we will demonstrate here." A great way to start out an article, I think that so much of the design world feels like rules when really it is all guidelines on what could look best in the sense of communicating an idea.

Icons that are well designed have good form, aesthetic unity, and recognition and can be worked on in that order; they can start with a general form and then through an iterative process, come together to be something even greater.

- Form - underlying structure of an icon and how it is made
  - Primary geometric shape
- Aesthetic Unity
  - Common attributes shared between items like px size, corner rounding, stroke size, etc
- Recognizability
  - Not only refers to recognition of the object being represented but recognition to the icon set

Using these three ideas through our whole process can help us create beautiful icons. The process is:

1. Start with a grid
   a. 32x32px
   b. 2px "no go zone" padding
2. Simple geometric shapes
   a. This can get the basic elements and shapes
   b. Follow the grid
3. All angles, curves, and corners should be mathematically precise
   a. Don't freehand or eyeball it
4. Align the icon to the pixel grid
   a. Introduce visual hierarchy without detracting with too much variety
5. Consistent design elements
6. Use details and decoration sparingly
   a. These can take away from the actual idea you are trying to convey
7. Make it unique