

“WORK HARD AND LOVE THIS SH***.”



AARON JAMES DRAPLIN: UNORTHODOX GENIUS

Equal parts brilliant and brash, Pacific Northwest designer Aaron James Draplin is unapologetically himself in all that he does. If you haven't yet heard of him, take a moment Google search any of his videos and you won't be disappointed. Not only is he a fantastic designer, clean logos being his speciality, but he is also an—although unorthodox—credible motivational speaker.

After watching his presentation, “The DDC 50 Point Plan To Ruin Yer Career,” at Portland’s Creative Mornings, I found myself re-inspired and motivated to be in my chosen career field of graphic design. He reminded me why I love it and how, yes, sometimes design work can really suck

and there WILL be times I'll want to light my computer on fire and smash my mouse with the blunt end of a lamp; however, at the end of the day it's still a million times better than a lot of shitty jobs that other unfortunate sad sacks are having to go to day in and day out. In his words, “I've had those shit jobs and NONE of it compares to sitting on your ass all day clicking a mouse, so remember that shit you guys. Love this shit.” What's brilliant about Draplin is that he is able to talk to the talk and walk the walk. His designs are fantastic; they're simple, straightforward and in his way of describing, “cool as shit to look at.”

The company he founded, Draplin Design Co., maintains

his effort to keep design simple with enduring value. The DDC mission statement on his website is straightforward and clear-cut as well. “Work hard. Do good work. For good people.” This quote isn't specific to designers and that's just one element to Draplin's ramblings that make him so good. Anyone and everyone should apply that idea to their careers. This little snippet of advice is only one of hundreds that come from Draplin, I can only imagine, on the daily. His presentation that entertained me also gave me dozens of these snippets to remember and hopefully keep dear to me throughout my career.

Among the 50 points, the most memorable and import-

ant one to me was number 8, “Work With Yer Friends.” He told the story of his buddy who owned his own local hotdog stand, and was in some legal trouble due to copyright issues regarding his stand's logo. His friend had little time to come up with a new design and even less money to pay for it. So, Draplin decided to take the time and make his friend a kick-ass logo. He didn't make any money from it, and he

didn't get an insane amount of credit from a big company, but instead, he was able to make something for someone he cared about. He was able to

be a part of a project he was truly proud of. That logo for the small hotdog stand in Portland was what he said he thought about in moments of career reflection. I think that's a huge thing to remember, that the people we care about are the reason we're living and to not forget how they important they are amidst our deadlines and paychecks. If you have the opportunity and the patience to sit through the fifty minutes, I highly recommend checking out Draplin's highly creative and entertaining manifesto.

