Design Brief

A design brief is a management planning document that specifies what a project has to achieve, by what means, and within what timeframe. It is a short, concise statement typically developed in cooperation between the sponsoring organization (the client) and the designer or designers. The brief is a document of discovery, revealing matters that may or may not be well understood by the organization and the designer. There are various formats for design briefs, but the following format is the one that we will use for this course.

Front Matter

Title Page
Table of Contents

1. Organizational Profile

Description of the Organization & its history

- Name of the Organization
- Description of its purpose and specializations
- History of the Organization and its development

Market Position

- Evaluation of the organization, its services and products, and brand in relation to its competition and within the industrial or organizational sector—what are the strengths and weaknesses of the organization.
- What is the market niche of the organization and how the organization fits within its sector

Current situation—what is happening to bring about the need for this project

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2. **Problem Statement**

Description of the presenting issue(s) of the organization and the problem identified for this project

3. **Goals or Objectives of the Project**

What do we expect to be accomplished?

Who is the project intended to benefit? Internal or external audience: primary, secondary, tertiary

Constraints to be faced in the project

Risks to be considered in the project, balanced by potential benefits

Desirable features to be considered in the solution—tentative list, serving merely as a beginning point for the design work. This is important for understanding what the expectations and culture of the organization may be. If not explicitly stated, at least consider what the style, language, and atmosphere of the organization may be, because these may be unspoken constraints to be managed in the design work. Any benchmarks?

4. **Timeframe and Schedule of Work**

Identify milestones to be met

5. **Budget Estimate for the Project**

This is important in a commercial project but is not entirely relevant for a class project. Nonetheless, give this consideration, identifying personnel, materials, and any other special needs, such as travel, equipment, or services anticipated.

6. **Summary & Conclusion**

**APPENDIX**

Supporting Materials

This may include materials provided by the organization—reports and other documents—or research materials discovered in the preparation of the brief. Probably not needed in a course project, but give this some consideration, since it may indicate the depth of your background research.