

Narratives for Design

mfadt bootcamp 2014

The single biggest problem in
communication is the illusion that
it has taken place.

G Bernard Shaw

who gives a fuck about an oxford comma?

With the **Oxford Comma**:
We invited the rhinoceri, Washington, and Lincoln.



Without the Oxford Comma:
We invited the rhinoceri, Washington and Lincoln.



Literally

means *actually* or
without exaggeration.

When you say “I literally... ,”
it means you’re describing
something **exactly** as it happened;
you are being literal.

So, if you were to say:



Excellent joke!
I **LITERALLY** pissed
myself laughing!

This is what you are implying:



Excellent joke!
A large urine stain has
formed on my pants!

Or, if you said:

Voices

You know that ringing sound that you will perceive when you are in a very quiet area? Some people say this is an auditory-illusion brought about the ear's inability to detect frequencies below the threshold of the human senses. This is completely wrong. That ringing covers up something else altogether. If you are quick, patient, and maybe a little lucky, you will be able to hear past the ringing. What you will hear are voices whispering to each other. They will silence themselves quickly but with practice, you will become more adept at catching and interpreting what they are saying. You will hear things of the past, the present, and the future. However, you must be careful. Because there is no such thing as a voice without a body.

And when you start noticing them, they will start noticing you.





There is no one who hasn't observed that frequently the floor will fold in such a manner that one part of it rises at a right angle with the plane of the floor, and later the following part is placed in a parallel manner to this plane, giving way to a new perpendicular, and that this conduct repeats as a spiral or broken line up to an extremely variable height. Each one of these footholds, formed along the way by two elements, is situated equally higher and more forward than the former, a principle that gives meaning to the staircase since whatever other combination will produce a form perhaps more beautiful or picturesque, but incapable of translating the lower floor to the upper floor. Stairs are climbed from the front, since climbing them from behind or the side will result particularly uncomfortable. The natural attitude consists in maintaining oneself on one's feet, the arms loosely hanging at the side, the head erect but not so much so that the eyes stop seeing those elevated footholds immediate to the one that is being tread upon, and breathing slowly and regularly. In order to climb a staircase one commences by raising that portion of the body situated at the below right, covered almost always in leather or rubber, and almost without exception fits exactly upon the foothold.

Said part being placed upon the first foothold, and in order to abbreviate we will hitherto call it "foot", the equivalent part on the left is then removed (also called foot, but one must not confuse it with the aforementioned foot.) and raising it to the height of the foot, it is to be made to follow until it is placed upon the second foothold, upon which the foot may now may rest, and upon the first the other foot may rest. (The first footholds are always the most difficult, until acquiring the necessary coordination. The coincidence of the name between foot and foot make the explanation difficult. Be especially careful to not raise the foot and the foot at the same time.) Arriving in this manner to the second foothold, it is enough to alternate the movements until one finds oneself at the end of the stairs. One can easily leave them with a light blow of the heel that fixes it in its place, from which it shall not move until the moment of descent.

Julio Cortazar, instructions to climb a staircase.









If you can't explain your ideas to your grandmother in terms that she understands, you don't know your subject well enough.

Some architects, instructors, and students use overly complex (and often meaningless!) language in an attempt to gain recognition and respect. You might have to let some of them get away with it, but don't imitate them. Professionals who know their subject area well know how to communicate their knowledge to others in everyday language.



An effective oral presentation of a studio project begins with the general and proceeds toward the specific.

1 State the design problem assigned.

2 Discuss the values, attitude, and approach you brought to the design problem.

3 Describe your design process and the major discoveries and ideas you encountered along the way.

4 State the parti, or unifying concept, that emerged from your process. Illustrate this with a simple diagram.

5 Present your drawings (plans, sections, elevations, and vignettes) and models, always describing them in relationship to the parti.

6 Perform a modest and confident self-critique. Never begin a presentation by saying, “Well, you go in the front door here” unless your goal is to put your audience to sleep.



Introduction and Historical Background

Stating the problem to resolve

Quick explanation of technical difficulties

Simple models and graphics

Challenges and description

Presentation of the idea

Design start point

Result of ideas and problematics

How the design evolved

Explanation of final proposal

Advantages of the proposal

Name of project and inspiration

Physical test that backs up the design

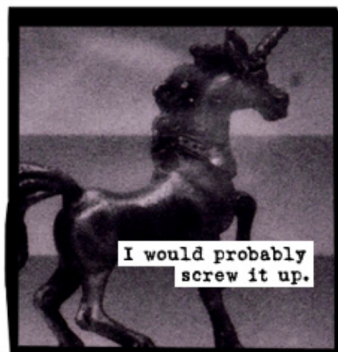


If I could have

e horne and j comeau



just one wish,



I would probably
screw it up.

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Don't get weird, but I'm not
really from the gas company.

e horne and j comeau



I just wanted to see what
your house was like inside.



It's nice!

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