

Adelaide, South Australia

Beyond Greener Things:

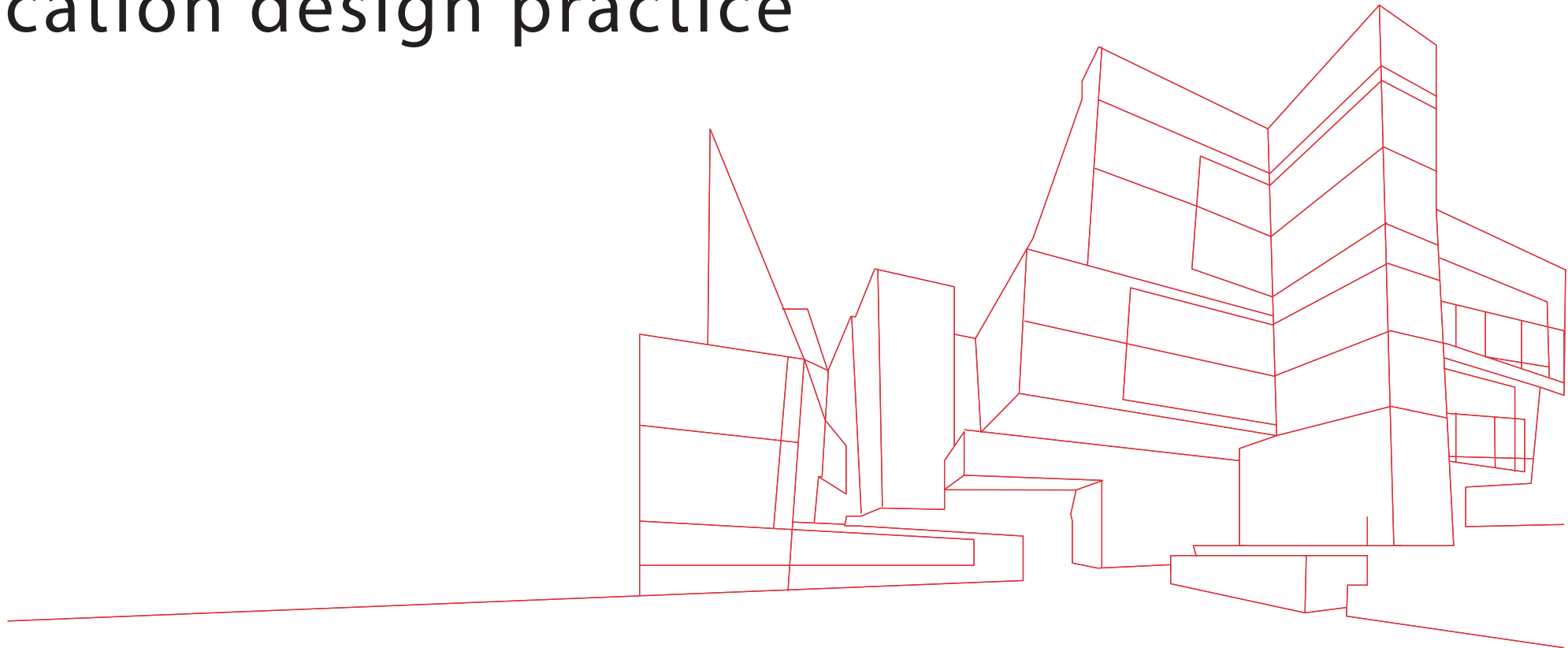
sustainability within communication design practice.

Niki Wallace & Dr Robert Crocker
University of South Australia



Overview

Review of contemporary Australian
communication design practice

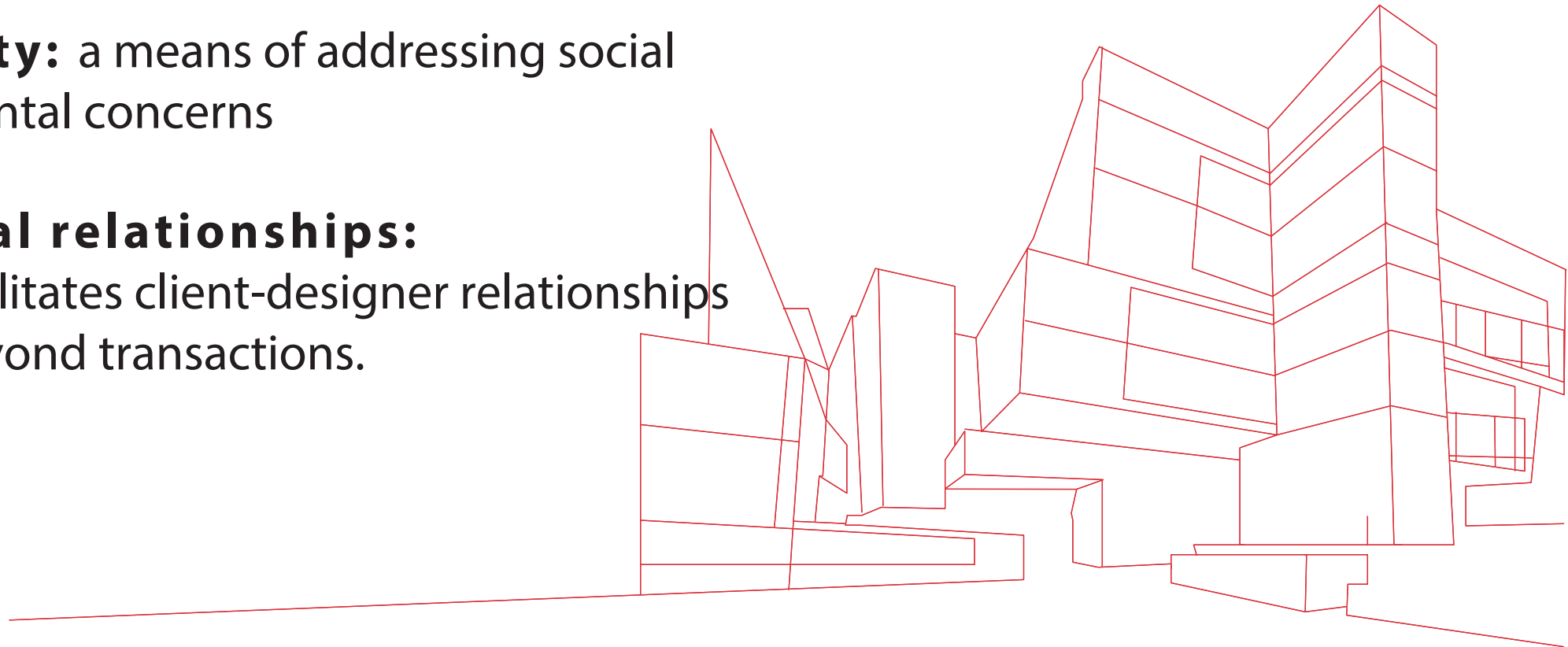


Definitions

Communication design: visual and verbal communication usually performed on behalf of a client spanning both print and digital mediums.

Sustainability: a means of addressing social and environmental concerns

Asymmetrical relationships:
Asymmetry facilitates client-designer relationships that extend beyond transactions.



sustainability

IF IT'S NOT PART OF THE
BRIEF

THEN IT'S NOT PART OF THE
THINKING

Quote: Designer EPD3
Graphic: Niki Wallace

I DON'T KNOW HOW
FUNCTION I'D

IF I WASN'T

selling

* SOMETHING *



I DON'T KNOW HOW

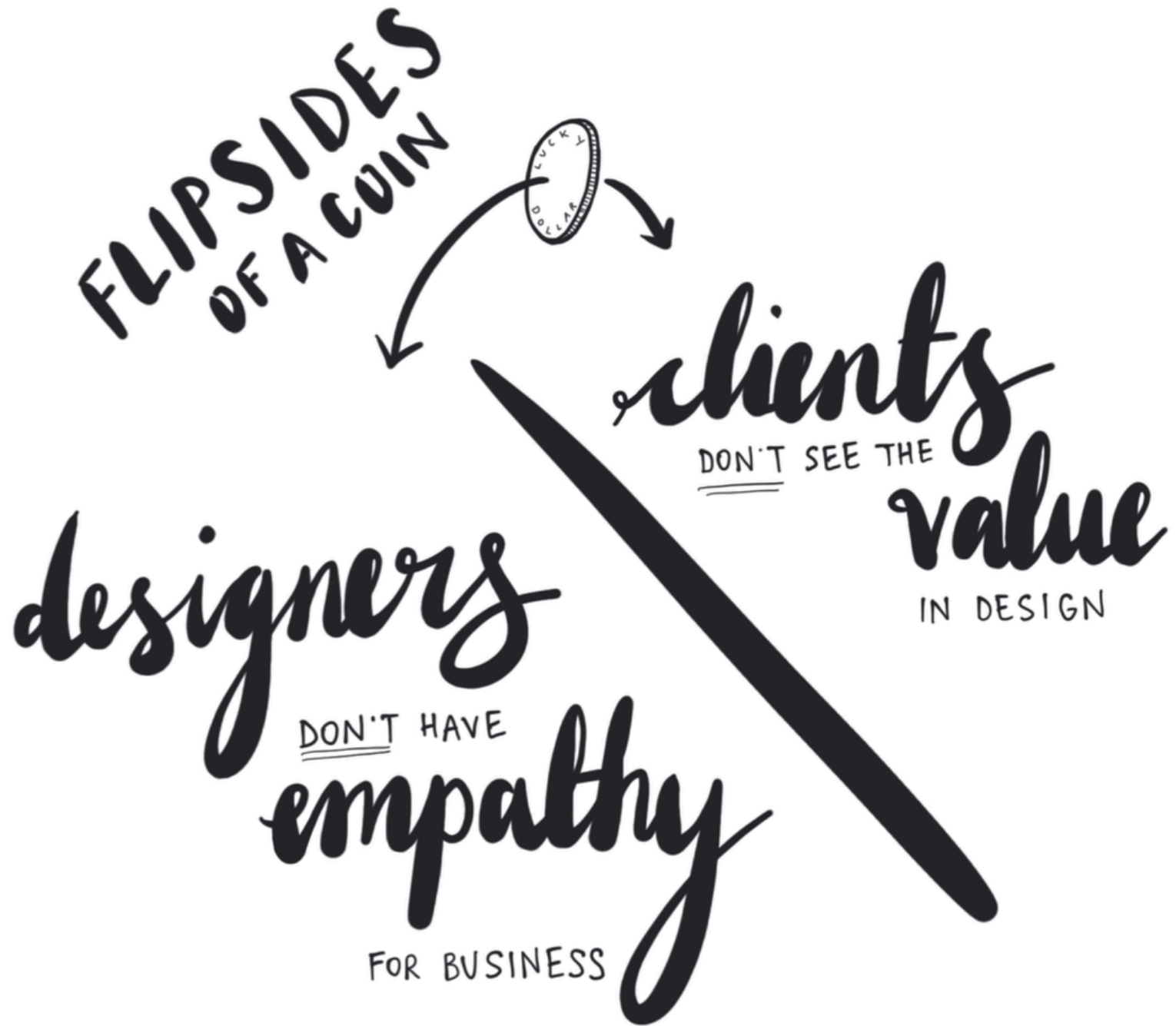
I'D MAKE

money



TO BE HONEST.

Quote: Designer PPD4
Graphic: Niki Wallace



Quote: Designer CDD1
Graphic: Niki Wallace



Quote: Designer CDD1
Graphic: Niki Wallace



Theoretical framework
Graphic: Niki Wallace

PRINT
& DIGITAL
DESIGNERS &
CONSULTANTS

DIRECTORS,
SOLE PRAC. /
FREELANCERS,
EMPLOYEES

AFFILIATED
VS
DISCONNECTED

INTER-
NATIONALLY
RENOWNED

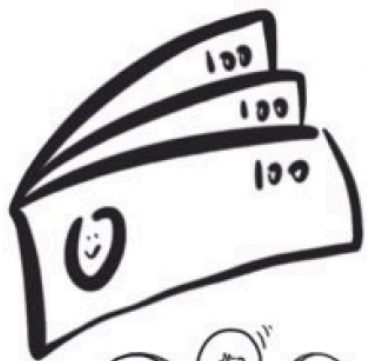
SUSTAINABLE
GURU

Participants
Graphic: Niki Wallace

MANY DESIGNERS
struggle

IT IS ALL ABOUT THE BUSINESS BUT NOT NECESSARILY

WITH A TENSION THAT EXISTS BETWEEN ETHICS & AESTHETICS...



money

BEING TREATED LIKE AN EXPERT PROFESSIONAL IS STILL HIT 'N' MISS.

AT THE END OF IT ALL, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT THE

STRATEGY IS, APART FROM SERVING CUSTOMERS

\$\$\$\$

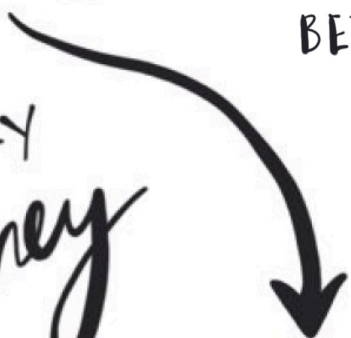
IT'S ALL ABOUT MAKING

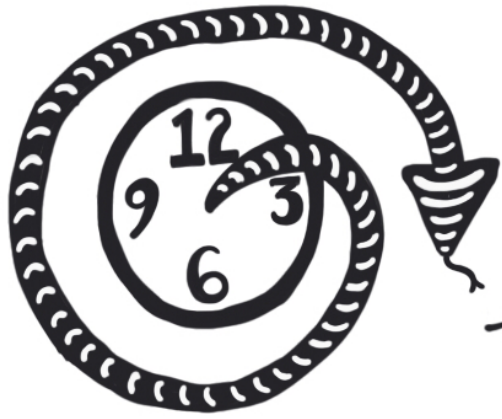
money



THERE ARE MULTIPLE ECONOMIES IN PRACTICE

EVERY PROJECT IMPACTS THE BUSINESS





THERE ARE ALWAYS TIME CONSTRAINTS!



I'm known for ignoring
DEADLINES

A LOT OF
PROJECTS
HAVE

unrealistic
DEADLINES



THERE'S LOTS OF
CHAMPAGNE TASTE
ON A
BEER BUDGET



MOST PRACTITIONERS

DON'T [IN MY VIEW]

HAVE AN

ethical



IF YOU DON'T HAVE ONE THEN

the grey area IS WHERE YOU LIVE

I AM PROUD of the WORK THAT I DID

but

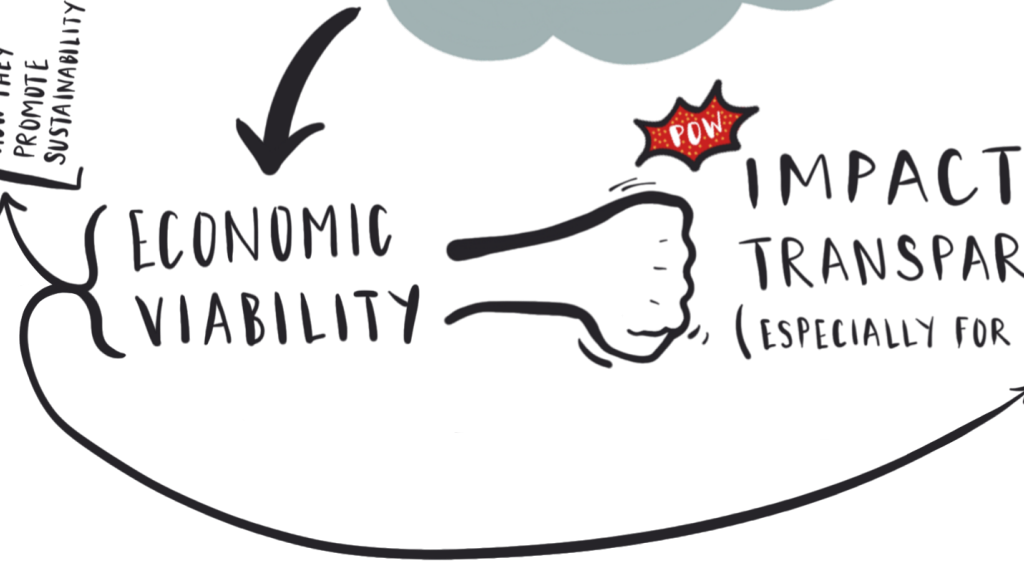
I WASN'T PROUD OF BEING PARTNER TO *THAT PROJECT*

LIMITS HOW THEY PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

ECONOMIC VIABILITY



IMPACTS TRANSPARENCY (ESPECIALLY FOR SUPPLIERS)



IT CAN'T

JUST BE A FEW TICKS



IT HAS TO BE THE

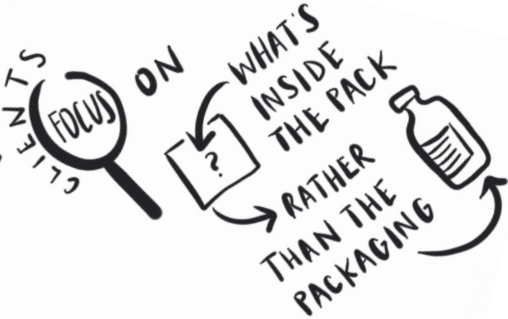
BEST

of the

BEST

environmentally

DRIVEN BY THE CLIENT

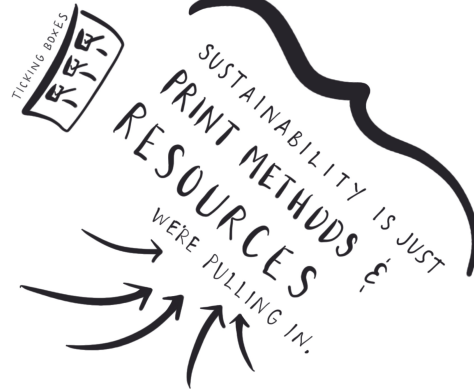


I don't really think it's considered at all!

NOT BY MY WORKPLACE IN PARTICULAR

IT'S NOT A priority FOR US,

IT'S NOT



“WHEN IT COMES TO SUSTAINABLE DESIGN, I'M NOT REALLY SURE, I GUESS I THINK IT'S JUST...
RECYCLED PAPER & VEGETABLE INK
AND THAT'S AS FAR AS IT GOES
I DON'T THINK THERE'S ENOUGH KNOWLEDGE TO ACT ON.

NO AMOUNT OF

design

WILL REMOVE THE

FLECK

FROM RECYCLED STOCK.



strategy

IS THE
BEDROCK
OF

SUSTAINABILITY



OUR MOST

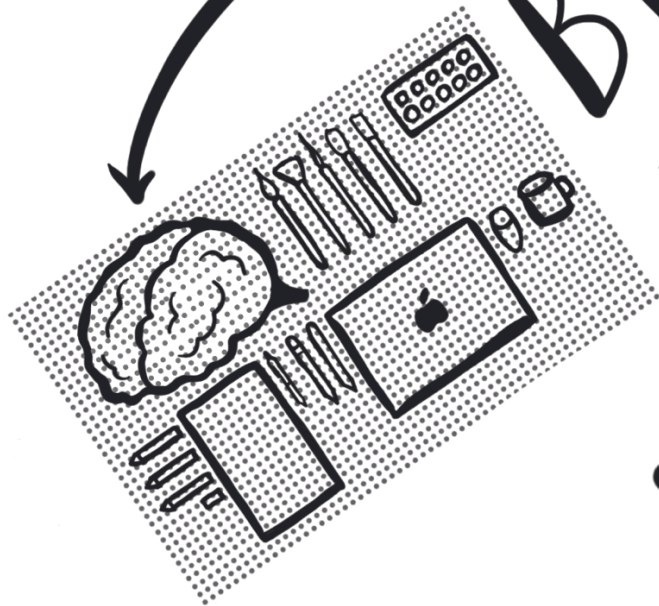
valuable tool

IS OUR

BRAINS

STRATEGISE

IT'S NOT
less AESTHETICALLY } DRIVEN
IT'S JUST STRATEGICALLY }
more



OUR ABILITY TO

RELATIONSHIP
DYNAMICS CAN
IMPACT

everything

CLIENTS ARE
IMPORTANT
BUT SO IS THE *end result*



THE
MOST IMPORTANT
THING IS TO
BUILD A

RAPPORT



WITH THE
CLIENT

AND GENERALLY
THAT'S DONE THROUGH
LISTENING



collaboration

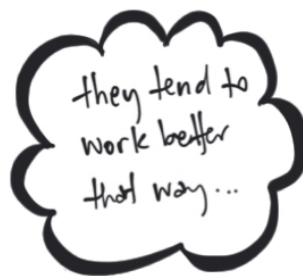
IS THE

key



WE SOMETIMES
COLLABORATE IN
THE STUDIO BUT
NOT MUCH AND
NOT WITH OTHERS.

I DO PREFER IT WHEN
MY DESIGNERS WORK



they tend to
work better
that way...

↳ independently



DESIGNERS
ARE
so far down
THE FOOD CHAIN

THEY'RE NOT EVEN
AT THE SAME TABLE



I MIGHT BE
AT THE TABLE



LOOKING AT
references

IS A
short cut

WHEN TIME IS

TIGHT



but

YOU MAKE
THEM INTO

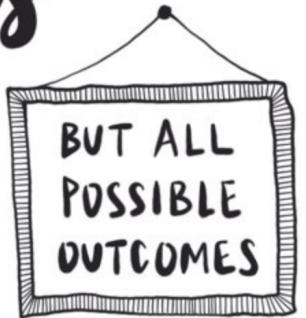
YOUR OWN THING

time constraints



- ✓ DESIGNERS WORK OVERTIME
- ✓ PRESENT LESS CONCEPTS
- ✓ DESIGN IS LESS RESOLVED (I.E. NOT AN AWARDWINNER!)
- ✓ LESS DESIGNERS WORK ON IT

so
many
variables



AWARDS

USED TO BE MORE

important

TO ENSURE THAT THE
CLIENTS KNOW THAT WE
ARE AT THAT TOP LEVEL.

PEOPLE

WIN AWARDS

FOR THINGS THAT AREN'T PARTICULARLY

original

I FEEL LIKE

awards

ARE REALLY
REALLY

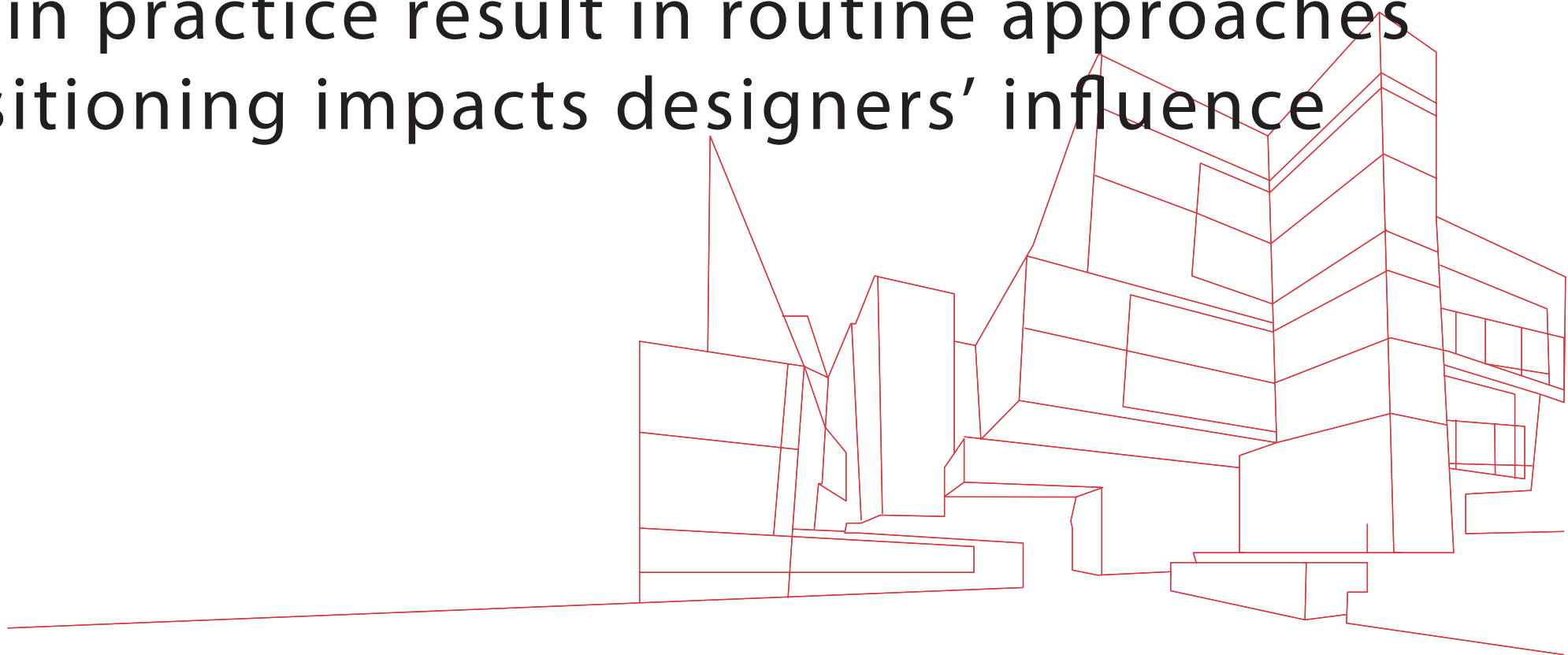
important.

I WOULDN'T BE WHERE I AM TODAY
WITHOUT AWARDS.



Returning to the problem

Design activity is accelerating consumption
Tensions in practice result in routine approaches
Weak positioning impacts designers' influence



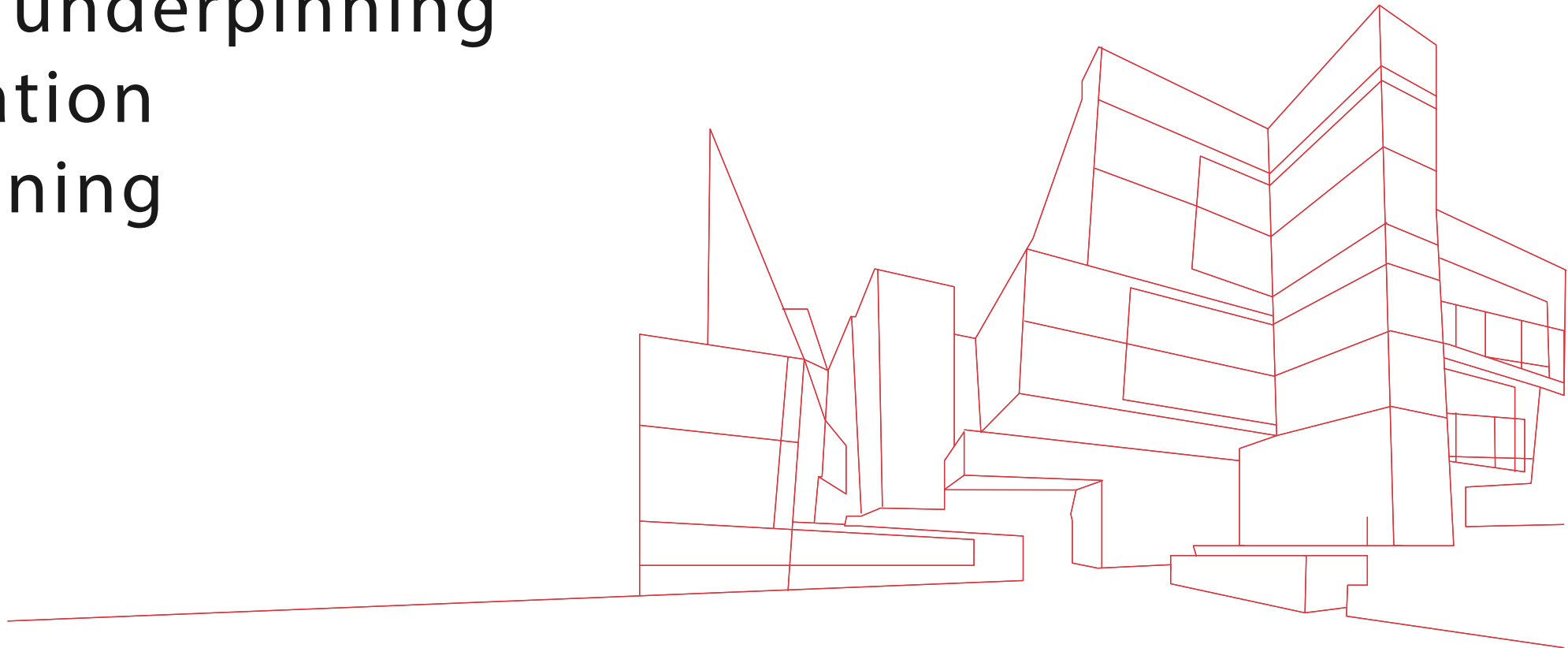
Towards a solution

Trans-disciplinary approaches

Strategic underpinning

Collaboration

Repositioning





SHOULD BE

INVISIBLE &

UNIVERSAL

Quote: Designer CPD6

Graphic: Niki Wallace