Possible Interview Topics

with A. Michael Shumate, author of

Logo Theory

How Branding Design Really Works

Michael can adapt his responses to both long and short versions to fit different interview time constraints.

(I take identity design very seriously but I don't take myself too seriously. For instance, my professional speaking website is Grand-Poobah.com. A Grand Poobah is someone who assumes authority where he has none. That's what I always told my students to call me. If I can't convince you with my logic, there's no reason to listen to me.)

What makes this book different from other books on logos or logo design? It's not a logo catalog that shows hundreds of logos; it's not a book of case studies about different identities; it's not a book about how different identities were developed or their applications to signage, stationery, vehicles and other marketing collateral.
(short version answer takes 2 minutes, long version is funnier but takes 6 minutes)

How did you get started on this book? Many designers follow trends or try to start them. Are there principles that transcend fad or fashion, in other words principles that are evergreen, immutable and permanent? (short 2 minutes, long 4 minutes)

⭑ **What is the purpose of graphic design?** To communicate the client's message
(short and long 2 minutes)

Give me an example of an unchanging principle of design. Color contrast depends on value, not hue or saturation.
(short and long 3 minutes)

Professional, Prima-Donna or Artsy-Fartsy
That's the title of the first section of your book. What's the difference between those?
(short 2 minutes, long 5 minutes)

⭑ **What is the purpose of Corporate Identity?**
Just like a cowboy's brand: to instantly recognize whose cow is whose (short and long 2 minutes)

What are some identities that are decades old and still look contemporary?
Westinghouse (1960), Screen Gems (1965), Shell (1971), IBM (1972), Apple (1976)
(short 2 minutes, long 6 min.)

What is BYC design? (Because You Can)
(short and long 2 minutes)

What is JTBD Design? (Just to be Different)
(short and long 3 minutes)

What are the four different concepts for corporate identity? Of the millions of logos ever created there are only four kinds of concepts. Why is that important? Can it help a designer?
(short and long 5 minutes)

You say there are Seven Deadly Sins of Logo Design; give us one example (two, three, etc.).
1) Must be able to work in black only; 2) Lack of Mass; 3) Poor Contrast; 4) Wayward or incongruent parts; 5) Overlapping elements; 6) unrefined elements; 7) Thin lines, Tiny elements.
(varies: 1 to 3 minutes each)

What are some famous fails in recent logo redesigns? Xerox, Continental/United Airlines and AT&T (short 4 minutes, long 8 minutes)

What do you say to people who think your ideas are retro, passé or just old fashioned?
Look at the practice of designing "responsive logos" or avatars or favicons.
(short 3 minutes, long 6 minutes)

⭑ = Essential points for any interview

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