K.I.S.S. – Keep It Simple Stupid

Executive summary. There's power in simplicity. Harness the power to more efficiently communicate in-house and with your clients.

What's in a task? Each day we all show up to work and have to accomplish a task. There are usually two main components of a task:

- the **speed** at which it must be completed, and
- the **ease of use** of the information created.

This holds true in a letter, an email, a phone conversation, whatever.

The speed. If you're a contractor, you probably need things done yesterday – every day. And time is money because your crew is out there working at $10,000 per day which is $1,250/hour or $21/minute (you burnt $63 reading this article).

You really should be asking yourself, "what is the minimal amount of work I can do to satisfactorily accomplish the task?" What you're not asking yourself at the beginning of a task is "what can I do, beyond what is required, to extend the duration of this task to longer than I have, my team has, or my client has in either time or budget?"

The ease of use. Your completed masterpiece of a task may look great to you, but if no one else can interpret it, or it's too difficult to use, or it provides superfluous information, you've missed the mark. Your product is now deemed unsatisfactory. There is a certain degree of "you knowing more of what the user wants than the user thinks (s)he wants"; however, don't overdo it. When in doubt underdo it and then upgrade/expand your product later.

Bonus: precision/accuracy. We all want to do a job right, and accurately, but do you need to be 95% accurate in <u>one</u> hour or 99.99% accurate in <u>8</u> hours? As a

contractor, it's probably the former. As a bridge designer, the traveling public would probably prefer the latter (but only in 6 hours!).

My story. It's happened to me quite a bit where I have received more than I asked for at a later date than I asked for it, or expected it. As a contractor I wish that the doer of the task had moved onto the other hundred tasks on his/her plate, and as a consultant it becomes difficult to get paid by the client for the "excess" hours.

Work Safe!