

# Six reasons why work is rejected

 By Sid Peimer

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You get the brief - you do the work - you show the work and you get either a yay or a nay... Your work is probably of a high standard, so when it is rejected you feel the pain acutely. However, if you know the secret sauce, the frequency of rejections should decrease markedly and so should the term 'Oh well, back to the drawing board'. I can just sense that sinking feeling as you drive back to work.

## Don't take it

Here's the problem: you're taking briefs. They should never be taken; briefs are there to be discovered. You are not there to answer the client's brief - you are there to solve the client's problem. There's a big difference. Things like "We're going into print," should be a red flag. That does not allow you to get to grips with the problem. We often ask ourselves what do we need to do to sell the product, when sometimes it's better to ask why people don't buy (more) of the product. Surely if you provide an answer, there must be a question?

That's why work gets rejected so often - it does not answer a question. There is no problem, so the 'solution' is either liked or disliked by the client - whatever takes their intuitive fancy. Granted, the more seasoned the client, the more accurate their intuition, but you're now depending on the client for the right solution.

## Heed this

Here are six warning signs that the work is going to come back:

1. You are determined to find a magic bullet insight that will result in breakthrough communication. The reality is that good advertising does not depend on an insight - it depends on persuasive communication. Advertising is neither art nor science; it is persuasion.
2. You use terms like LSM 8 - 10. That's like saying people are made up of 80% water. There are other demographics that can be read on your database. We have computers - use them.
3. You include copious amounts of information. That's all very well, but as the saying goes "I wrote you a long letter, because I never had time to write you a short one".
4. There's just no cohesive theme - it's exactly what the client said plus a whole lot of background information which shows how much work you've done. A good brief is like a good map - it points out only the things you need to orientate yourself.
5. There is no problem to be solved. You just wax lyrical about the brand and dammit, everyone should know how great it is, and if they did, they would buy it.
6. There are already media suggestions in the brief. That's OK - it's nice to be called in to do a TV ad. But you're there to provide value and who knows, if you really get to grips with the problem you could sell the client on additional value adds? Margins are tight enough as it is, and when you suggest something proactive, you're the one who now dictates price. And that's a nice position to be in - for a change.

## A brand new day

When last did you have a Brand Day with your client? I'm not talking about a review (which is non-billable); I'm talking about putting together an insightful and fun programme to get everyone aligned with the brand. People issues are often the bane of your client's life, and with a dash of creativity you can help ease the burden. And it doesn't come out the marketing budget either - it's training.

Sid Peimer is a freelance strategist resident at [www.stratplanning.com](http://www.stratplanning.com). Besides Comstrats overnight, he can also

**facilitate exciting Brand Days.**

## ABOUT SID PEIMER

A seasoned and insightful executive with multisector experience in roles as diverse as senior management, strategic planning and copywriting. I am a qualified pharmacist with an MBA from UCT. I am also an accomplished keynote speaker and presenter.

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