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## Brief Template

### What is a Brief?

A brief is the single document that aligns all teams to the main objective and goals for a given project or plan and the anticipated outcomes.

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### What to Consider in Creating a Strong Brand Story

- **Define The ONE thing.**
    - This one thing is what the work must deliver for the brand or business. It articulates what success looks like.
    - It must be tangible and measurable.
    - All stakeholders need to align to The ONE thing.
  - **Only include info that supports The ONE thing.**
    - The more information you have, the more open it is to interpretation.
    - Be concise and specific. Avoid being ambiguous or overly prescriptive.
    - A brief is meant to be discussed. So, additional context can be provided there or in supporting documentation.
  - **Define the additional supporting items for the brief. (And limit it to only these things.)**
    - Objective (The ONE thing)
    - Supporting background and info
    - Customer/consumer details
    - Mandatories
    - Success metrics/KPIs
    - Timing, deliverables, and budget
    - Signatures (don't skip this!)
  - **Keep coming back to the brief.**
    - Should be guiding every single meeting.
    - Serves as an objective reference for when the team gets off track or emotions run high.
    - Used as a filter to evaluate the work and deliverables.
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## Define The ONE thing

Put it down on paper! And make sure to keep it concise. No more than one line or two. And keep it to a single sentence to ensure that you are being choiceful about what you decide is your one thing.

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## Build the rest of the brief

Once you have your one thing, it is time to get started on the other items included in the brief.

**Objective (The ONE thing).** Repeat it here to start your brief. Bonus points if you can do it without looking at the previous one! Seriously, though, it is a good sign if the entire team can recite The ONE thing without reference. It means they have internalized it, and that you struck the balance of not making it too long, complicated, or nebulous.

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**Supporting background and info.** Hold yourself to 2-3 key points. The filter you should think through is what info supports The ONE thing, and then add only that. This is not a place for all the information ever given on this brand, business, or project. If you need supporting background documents, that is the place for extra information. A brief is an exercise in discipline and synthesis of information down to only the most salient points.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Customer/consumer details.** Again, 2-3 points only here as well. And same filter - what is necessary for those working on the project to know about the customer or consumer that supports The ONE thing of this brief. It can be easy to want to tell the consumer's entire life story. But think about it this way - if it is going to take hours for the team to get to know the consumer, it is too much. Give them enough to be able to filter their work through 2-3 key things. And stop there. Remember, discipline and succinct messaging.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Mandatories.** These are the things that cannot be ignored. So, it might be visual brand elements, key RTB's that have to be included, or copy that is required by legal. You know what we are going to say here - 2-3 key items only! Otherwise, you create a dangerous slippery slope of the mandates taking over and the big picture of The ONE thing being lost. We have seen it happen. And it isn't pretty.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Success metrics/KPIs.** What do you want to measure? How will you all align on what success looks like and quantify it? No more than 2-3 holds true here, and as Anne always likes to say, make sure you define success as clear and measurable. "Increase our customer base" is not measurable. "Increase our customer base by 10% in the first 90 days post-launch" is.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Timing, deliverables, and budget.** Three more line items that must be clear and concise to ensure you are all on the same page. Should they at any point need to change, you must get everyone to sign off on changes. But if not, these three things are what ensures you are all working toward the same goals.

**Timing**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Deliverables**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Budget**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signatures.** Remember, once you align on The ONE thing, collect signatures from everyone that weighed in and approved. This way, you are all held accountable to coming back to the brief and ensuring alignment at every key milestone and project review.

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## Come back regularly and review.

The brief is in the room for EVERY SINGLE MEETING, both internal and external. It helps when you seem to be getting off track or straying from the objective, or The ONE thing. It should be used as evaluation criteria for all work and deliverables, because it keeps things objective, clear and aligned. And when emotions get high - which will inevitably happen on most projects - come back to the brief.

Keep yourself and the team in check by listing out all key meetings, and checking off that the brief was in the room throughout the entire process.

**Meeting date and time**

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**Brief present?**

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Finding yourself still with questions? No problem. We are here for you. Reach out anytime at [Forthright-People.com](https://Forthright-People.com) and we will get back to you as soon as we can! Happy briefing!