

Benefitfocus Design Guiding Principles



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1

Design

Start with design. Pause at the beginning and get the whole of the thing in your mind. Consider the importance of design as you begin. Design is a process. Include others in the process.



2

Trust

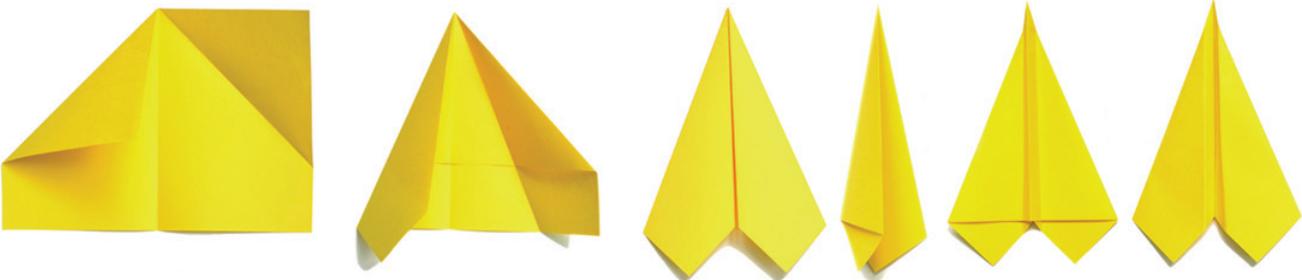
Make trust part of everything you create. A process needs to be structured so that those relying on it can trust in a consistent outcome. Visibility into background processes allows users to see what is taking place. This creates trust. Our conduct and actions must protect information and therefore be trustworthy.



3

Two Max, One Preferred

Selection of the proper way yields a lifetime of simplicity. Focusing our combined designs on fewer methods results in operating leverage, training standards and a realistic pursuit of excellence. Ignoring the way of others is not wise. Challenge the former way if necessary, but do not ignore it during design.



4

Scale Through Limits

Accomplish scale through focus. Focus through elimination. Be brave in your design by eliminating the unnecessary. Poor design often includes too many options, too much variety, a lack of commitment to a single way.



5

V1, V2, V3

Each version of software is valuable and important. Each version is unique. Version 1 is good because it represents the introduction of new capability. We must realize the importance of Version 1 and know that this version will not have all of the components for full operational stability. Version 2 is transitional. It is a bridge for engineering and operations. Version 3 is a stable and well-rounded application. Tension produced while moving from Version 1 to Version 3 is healthy and natural. An awareness of this cycle helps the team balance the needs of each group and work through each phase.



6

Benefitfocus Platform Common

Ask yourself and your group questions about commonality, reusability and architecture to fit within the Benefitfocus Platform Common library. Also ask if there is something that already exists that performs similar functionality and seek to use that and expand that if applicable. These decisions are very important and impact many more parties than you may initially believe. Take some time and speak with folks in various areas and disciplines to help with your decision.



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Humangous

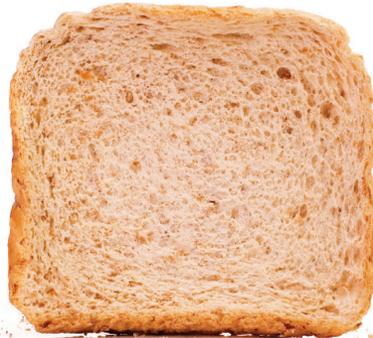
There are a lot of humans in the United States, over 306,000,000. There are a lot of humans in Europe, over 400,000,000. There are more than 1 billion humans in China, Africa and India. Our vision includes everyone. When designing your next process or technology, consider both near and far scale.



8

Friends

We are not alone. All that we do should be performed with consideration of others. Our design should allow for others to extend what we have built, expand our functionality and express themselves. We should thoughtfully permit logical places of extension. Leaving adapters along the way is a nice thing to do for our friends. Friends are everywhere. Our network of friends is constantly growing. We do not need to know in advance every way that they will apply their creativity to our Platform. We just need to keep them in mind, know there will be more, and provide tools for them to use along the way.





Scott's Turf Builder

Focus on our strengths and let them become so strong that they displace our weaknesses. We as a group are naturally stronger at certain things, and we must trust in those traits to carry us forward. Feed the good grass, water it and trust that it will expand and fill the yard with healthy and strong turf.



10

Verify

In all that we create we must build in verification. We need measurement and reporting to allow users to verify that what they expect to be happening is indeed happening. This builds Trust and allows for visibility into our system. Design in verification. Ask yourself, “How will the user know?”



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Routine Review

Sometimes you just need to stop everything and pull folks together to review the product, the technology, the process and the people. This is not a regularly scheduled management meeting, but rather an on-purpose deep dive review of a specific thing. It is helpful to identify a few similar things to review in a batch so that you can see patterns. The “review” is the important part. The “routine” is a reminder that this is not a once-and-done activity. Design is a lifelong pursuit. Reviewing and refining is part of a designer’s role.



12

Power of 3's

View three options before making your selection. There is something about a set of three that balances your mind's eye. Picking from two items does not provide a sufficiently wide field. Four or more choices can create paralysis. Mock up three options. Print them in color on large format sheets. Stand back and take some time to observe them. Let the power of three help you design.



