100 Things Every Designer Needs to Know About People
by Susan Weinschenk
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The book, 100 Things Every Designer Needs to Know About People by Susan Weinschenk, is an interesting collection of facts and thoughts about how people perceive communications and the world around them. While applicable to graphic designers, much of the information in the book would be useful to anyone involved in communicating with people in any medium.

This book is easy to pick up and put down as each of the 100 things take up only two or three pages with easy to scan charts, illustrations and pull boxes.

Some of the facts are things many people already know, but some of them provide additional information to accompany common held rules. One example of this is thing number four which discusses how and why the brain recognizes faces. Using this information, graphic designers can make educated decisions on when and how to include human photography in design work in place of object or nature photography based on the reaction they hope to create.

User Interface designers should pay close attention to the following sections: How People See, How People Read and How People Focus Their Attention and How People Decide. The author looks at how people relate to information based on where it is placed on the page, the errors in relying on eye tracking studies, how font choices impact how people read, what draws people's attention, how long people really focus on different types of information, and what you can do to influence the decisions your viewers take.

Marketers of all types should pay close attention to things 33 and 34 which talk about how people process information when presented in a story format and how people learn from examples. These examples can be applied to a number of different formats such as crafting compelling stories to convince a customer they will benefit from your product or providing step by step relevant examples when designing training documents.

The section, What Motivates People, should be required reading for those designing materials with the goal of having people take action. This section compares how people make choices and why people search for information.

This is a great book to read while near your computer, as many sections refer to websites and YouTube videos containing additional information.

Overall this book didn't include any earth shattering information, but rather gives scientific facts and information to back up some of the commonly taught design principles and practices. This book could be helpful to anyone at any stage in their design or communications career. New students will benefit for having some of the data to back up some of what professors teach and experienced designers will re-learn some of the basics and keep them fresh in their mind while working on projects.

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