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Open Here: The Art Of Instructional Design



Synopsis

Open Here: The Art of Instructional Design displays an entertaining array of the most ingenious, stupid, beautiful, and horrible visual solutions that instruction designers and illustrators have invented to help us handle modern technology and everyday products. These works of art show us how to floss out teeth properly, where to insert the printer cartridge, which button to press to transfer a phone call, how to use chopsticks, how to open a milk carton, and how to exit the plane in case of an emergency landing. Open Here also includes a diverse sampling of images: the finest cut-away drawing of a truck's diesel engine, a revealing expanded view of a model airplane, and detailed full-color photographs of a sewing machine in a 19th-century manual. Open Here also includes an overview of the basic elements of visual instructions: the baffling yet remarkable drawings, cartoons and symbols that tell us where to cut, where to twist, how to repeat, and also how not to do all of the above.

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Customer Reviews

Paul Mijksenaar is designed the signing system for Schiphol airport in the Netherlands, New Ark airport in New Jersey and JFK in New York City. He is a professor of Visual Information design at the University of Technology in Delft, The Netherlands. Piet Westendorp is a researcher at the Delft and Eindhoven Universities of Technology in the Netherlands, where he specializes in technical communication.

Congratulations on your purchase of "Open here: The Art of Instructional Design." We're sure you will appreciate it. But before using this book, please make sure you have studied its contents carefully. "Open here" has been designed and manufactured to the highest standards. It will show you around your daily Kafkaesque life of incomprehensible technology, frustrating packaging, do-it-yourself disasters-and the Visual Instructive Esperanto that should help you out. "Open here" is for all those who appreciate everyday art with a lowercase "a." It is also meant as a source of inspiration for those who produce such art, to help them find smart-or shrewd-solutions to the communication problems they face when they have to tell us where to look, how to twist and what not to do. "Open here" presents designers and illustrators with the ideas and clever tricks of their professional predecessors and colleagues. This book reveals how much we depend upon visual instructions in daily life. We consult maps, schoolbooks, traffic signs, training manuals and scientific illustrations. In "Open here", we focus on the visual instructions that help us to solve the most basic problems of each day: how to open a child-proof bottle of aspirin, make a reduced-sized double-sided photocopy, listen to voice mail using a mobile phone, program the microwave oven to turn on automatically and have dinner ready when we arrive home. This book contends that products definitely do not speak for themselves and that it's only getting worse. It also surveys a wide range of solutions that designers and illustrations can employ in creating visual instructions: mediums they can use, concepts they can apply and various ways they can communicate to different target groups. The book then looks at inventive instructional elements in detail, more or less in the order they should be produced and used, from warnings and identification of parts to composition and connections through the movements and sequences that must be performed and finally, the successful results: a VCR that works!

No, you perverts, not that...this book tells you everything you always wanted to know about instructional design. You know, those little picture stories that tell you how to thread a bobbin, put on a life vest, open a can of sardines, or change the battery in your camera. The book itself is not well put together -- it could have included more information about where the informational comics came from -- but the cartoons are a hoot! Ingenious, some of them, totally incomprehensible some others. Look at this book - you will learn something, but look at it at the library. Have some fun looking at the directional comics from other countries. Just don't buy it...I don't think it is worth the money.

This is not one of those 'How to design instructional material for Dummies' books (if it was I

certainly wouldn't own a copy) but a beautifully designed and printed book with hundreds of illustrations and diagrams showing how designers have attempted to explain, mostly visually, how we should handle everyday technology. Not only technology but simple stuff too, page eighty-seven shows the instructions, usually printed on tissue paper as I recall, on how to complete one of these little wooden puzzles you can buy in arcade shops, this one is for a camel. Instructional design is serious stuff, a matter of life and death in some cases. The fold-out on page forty-seven shows forty-one examples of those emergency exit and life jacket cards you find in the seat pocket facing you on a plane. Although they all provide the same information, the type of illustration and layout is different in each example. Simple instructions can be the hardest to put across, just how do you depict, in a simple visual way, the action of washing out your mouth with a glass of water, page 126 shows how with a profile of a boy's head and four arrows describing a circular motion printed on his cheek, his hand holds a tilting glass with the water. Here is a lovely book for graphic designers to leave on their coffee table.

The introductory chapters promise a methodological approach on instructional design. Forget it. There are hardly any research findings in the book, and of those, none come from the author. The book keeps repeating itself by saying that we deal with all kinds of instructions on a daily basis, up to the point where you start skipping the text. In the end, all that's left is the catalogue of an exhibit of instructional design examples. There's even a hint that this is what the book was made out of...

a student of industrial design and looking for information on UI and instructions, this book is great in that it shows a variety of examples of instructions that are good/bad. very colorful and interesting pictures, not a lot of specific information though; a lot of good quotes and perspectives on instruction information.

I was looking for theory; so I was initially disappointed, but once I got past that I started enjoying it as a catalogue of both best and worst practices. It's funny. There's a particularly good example of how to use a toilet bib.

Don't buy it if you need to know how to do instructional design, instead enjoy the interesting illustrations and examples through the ages. Worthwhile addition to a well-rounded design collection.

Really nice book with beautiful images! If you don't know how to open a can or what to do in a plane crash - buy this book!

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