LOOKING AT YOUR DESIGN

- Proximity creates tension.
- Regularity creates rhythm.
- Sameness is frequently boring.
- Contrast exaggerates an effect.
- Avoid placement at dead center.
- Symmetry tends to promote stability.
- Diagonals are more active than horizontals.
- Use nothing that is unnecessary or distracting.
- Placement in corners creates awkward tension.
- Does it work from a distance as well as up close?
- Arches support weight, inverted arches imply weight.
- Make all parts of the work mutually interactive and interrelated.
- Can you control the viewer’s attention (both duration and direction)?
- Explore the most interesting and communicative presentation of an idea.
- Let elements be simplified, changed, added, eliminated, or generally edited.
- Be sure every part not only fits, but each one contributes to the overall content.
- Strive for perfect and inevitable rather than random relationships between elements.
- Seek an appropriate ratio of harmony and variety. Too much of one can be boring or chaotic.
- Arrange intuitively or logically, but with experience develop an instinctive feeling for organization.
- Study the composition from all angles. If it looks better another way, then there’s more work to do.
- Force yourself to restructure the work until it succeeds. Subtle changes can make a big difference.
- Slide the frame around to decide where to crop for best visual interest, balance, negative space, etc.
- Be critical of your own work - - it takes courage to recognize elements in your work that aren’t functioning.
- Change visual weight via size, location, accents, edge enhancement, emphasis, value and/or color adjustments.
- When you have the choice, open compositions (which extend past the frame) give the viewer more to imagine/enjoy.
- Don’t direct all your attention to the positive forms and neglect the negative space. Your composition may seem overcrowded, busy or confusing. ‘Negative’ thoughts aren’t always bad.
- Remember: UNITY is the ultimate goal of the Organizing Principles. Can you name seven?