D&AD New Blood Awards

In 2023, we reviewed all of the New Blood Awards Judges' feedback on why what won, won, and what was missing from work that didn't quite make the cut.

We'd recommend taking a look through all this feedback to make sure you avoid common pitfalls with creating an entry, and make your work the best it can be.

Where did unsuccessful work fall down?

1. Not reading the brief properly

2. Poor Execution
Some people had great ideas but lacked the execution to tell the story.

3. A lack of brand/client voice
Channel the brand identity – we saw lots of ideas that had potential but they could work for any company, rather than being specifc to the brand they were creating work for.

4. Lack of originaiity
Go back to the brief, dig deeper and really nail those ideas an execution. And most importantly don't waste time reiterating the brief back to the judges!

5. Going too big
Big ideas are great, but don't try to squeeze in so many ideas that it overrides the main concept.

6. Lacking research
RESEARCH IS KEY. Don't skip this step as the judges will notice. Read all the information available to you.

7. Misuse of AI & VR
AI and VR might be themes of the moment, but if you choose to use it, make sure it elevates your work as a unique selling point rather than a solve-all crutch.

8. Relying on shock tactics

How to create winning work

1. Feedback
For a lot of winning entries, it was clear they had iterated, scrapped ideas and gotten feedback throughout the process. Don't skip this step!

2. Be social-first
Social media was a huge theme in last year's work, but only the very best entries considered how to be social-first in their ideas. This means not just bolting on an instagram ad to your idea, but really thinking about how social media could drive the idea itself.

3. Look into cultural trends
Don't just look at what's come before. Reach into current conversations and niche audiences to create true stand out work.

4. What does the future look like?
In a constantly evolving industry, it can be easy to tap into the now. But spend time thinking about what the future of the industry might look like, and how your idea could be the first of it's kind.