Briefing your Architect: 10 Step Guide

This guide:
has been created to assist you in bringing together the right criteria to brief your architect whether you are planning a renovation or new build.

This will give both you and your architect a starting point for the direction of your project, and allow your ideas, needs and wants to be clearly communicated.

See the attached blank form - page 3.

1 What type of project?

Are you planning a knock down and re-build on a new site, or to renovate and extend?

Or it could be that you are mostly looking to make internal changes, or preparing for a complete interior makeover?

2 Are you fixing a problem or creating anew?

If you have been living in your home for a while, you may have a list of issues that you want to fix. Alternatively you may be looking to add more space, as an addition.

For example:
** Current house is too small and run-down*
** Problems with privacy*
** Open up to rear yard*
** Capture views with new upper level*

3 What's the outcome you hope to achieve?

These are your broad goals. If you have more than one, prioritise them.

For example:
i. Family home for 3 children
ii. Live in home for 4-7 years
iii. Sell with capital gain & relocate closer to beach

4 Your general concept or idea is?

Think about how you could best describe what you want?

For example;
** Balinese beach house*
** Sustainable home, free flowing on the site*
** Light filled contemporary cube*
** Rustic beach house*
** Four Seasons Hotel / luxury*

5 Your list of priorities:

This is a list of critical items that you really must have. You may also like to list approximate sizes for these areas;

<u>Critical items, example:</u>
** 4 bedrooms, 2 living areas, laundry, eat in kitchen with walk in pantry*
** Master ensuite bathroom and robe*
** Large covered outdoor deck*
** Double garage with storage*

<u>Wanted items, example:</u>
** Rumpus room and/or study that can sleep guests*
** Double height entry*
** Courtyard with fern garden*
** 15m lap pool*
** Bath in master ensuite*
** No air conditioning (passive heating / cooling)*

<u>Wish list items, example:</u>
** Day bed*
** Bar*
** Library*
** Space for trailer and workshop*

Your architect will focus on the critical and wanted items, but wish list items are still important.

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Briefing your Architect

10 STEP GUIDE

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6 *Your scrap book of images:*

If you have been doing some research, start making a scrap book or disc of images for your architect.

When you do this, make sure to clearly note what you really like about each image and what you don't like, to avoid confusion.

Avoid being too fixed in your requirements - don't design it for them else you won't benefit from your architect's skill and experience.

For example: white kitchen - like contrasting bench and simple panel doors, but not green splash-back.

Think about what type of finishes & colours you like.

Floors, walls, roof, ceilings, example;
* *Big timber beams, timber floors*
* *Lots of glass and white walls*
* *Underfloor heating & polished concrete*
* *Shadowline cornices and ceiling fans*

7 *Any other requirements or special interests?*

For example:
* *Interested in sustainable design, low energy, passive solar, recycled materials*
* *Art space for painting*
* *Laundry to include a drying cupboard*
* *Big entry with pigeon holes for school bags*

8 *Any site issues that need to be addressed?*

For example:
* *Bushfire or landslip affected*
* *Flood zone or general dampness issues, termites*
* *Hazardous materials, ie asbestos, lead paint*
* *Foundation or structural issues*

9 *What is your construction budget?*

Be clear about how much you can afford and whether professional and or application costs are included.

For example:
* *$900k - plus PC items & costs*
* *$650k - total and fixed, including all fees*

It is also okay for the architect to work to the brief and not worry about the final cost of the project. Working to a brief is easier than working to a tight budget.

10 *Provide any additional supporting information:*

For example:
* *Boundary survey, levels survey of site*
* *Existing drawings, previous approval drawings*
* *Real estate sketches*
* *Building reports*

That's it.

Then you can just review and discuss this brief with your architect - aim to refine and clarify it.

A starting brief is just a starting point. Look to work closely with your architect so they have a clear understanding of your needs and how best to proceed.

This is especially true if you are working to a tight budget.

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Briefing your Architect: Blank Form

1 *What type of project?*

2 *Are you fixing a problem or creating anew?*

3 *What's the outcome you hope to achieve?*

4 *Your general concept or idea?*

5 *Your list of priorities:*

6 *Your scrap book of images: notes ...*

7 *Any other requirements or special interests?*

8 *Any site issues that need to be addressed?*

9 *What is your construction budget?*

10 *Provide any additional supporting information: notes ...*

Remember to discuss the brief with your architect.

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