

The fashion designer plays an important role in the clothing industry. They are basically the starting process of any clothing design. They are the reason behind any success story.

This is how the designers work in order to make their work a success:

### **a) GENERATING IDEAS**

Fashion designer is the one who has to generate ideas for the upcoming clothing. These are the ideas of new clothing which the customers will want to buy. The designers achieve this by ensuring that they have an in-depth understanding of the requirements of the market and are able to satisfy those needs by offering a continual supply of new ideas which will appeal, excite and motivate purchases.

Generally, these ideas don't just happen. Sometimes the proverbial flash of inspiration will occur but the designers more often work to a routine which continually feeds and stimulates their imagination to ensure that there is a supply of ideas ready to be tapped as the need arises.

The following are some of the ways through which the fashion designers conceive their ideas:

**Keep A Journal** – This is probably the most useful exercise which the fashion designers undertake. A journal is used to record their ideas, things they have seen, small sketches, cuttings from magazines, scraps of fabric, ribbons and braids, photographs of paintings, costumes and architecture, paint swatches, favorite designs.

Over the years, they build their own personal resource book, a vast supply of ideas and a valuable monitor of their own evolving style.

**Arts And Crafts** – Because fashion reflects changes in society, so the fashion designers keep themselves alert in recognizing new trends. They keep themselves in touch with social influences such as music, architecture, art, films, books, theatre and the cult movements which develop in these fields and filter through the various levels of the society. For example, Jean Paul Gaultier's designs for Madonna's world tour in 1990 which set a strong "underwear as outerwear" trend worldwide.

Fashion designers also get inspiration from crafts and hobbies. In the 1960s and 1970s, tie-dyed t-shirts, embroidered jeans and crocheted dresses were popular, with some of these treatments emerging in the early 1990s.

**The Media** – Fashion designers also conceive ideas from the media. Local and overseas magazines as well as newspapers and trade publications exist to keep the fashion designers up-to-date with local and world events, influential identities and technological developments. They also present new ideas in commercial graphics, layout and color use. Therefore, the print media is especially invaluable in promoting design techniques.

**Museum, Galleries And Libraries** – Fashion designers also conceive their ideas through the use of museums, galleries and libraries. These institutions carry a vast range of objects and ideas, from costume and textile collection to paintings and sculptures, birds and insects, skeletons and industrial inventions. Sources of inspiration in such places are limitless.

**Nature** – Fashion designers also use the nature to conceive ideas. Nature is the ultimate source of inspiration to the fashion designers and provides endless variety in pattern, color and form.

**Folk And Historical Costumes** – Fashion designers also generate ideas from folk and historical costumes. Costumes are regularly rediscovered as themes for new collections. Each new interpretation is created from the contemporary view point, so is always different from the previous viewing. As contemporary viewpoints change, so too do the inspirations drawn from history.

**Street Fashion** – Fashion designers also generate ideas from the street fashion. Street fashions are particularly important indicators of new directions. Night clubs, progressive boutiques, local magazines and news papers are rich sources of ideas.

**Shopping** – Fashion designers also get ideas from shopping. From opportunity shops, second-hand book shops and flea markets to department stores and up-market boutiques, ideas are always there waiting to be discovered.

**Travel** – Fashion designers generate idea through travel also. Especially travelling overseas, travelling to trade fairs, collections and to see the locals in ‘fashion forward’ cities can be very rewarding. Interstate travel can also present a different viewpoint on clothing needs with regard to climate and life style.

**Doodling** – Fashion designs also generate ideas through doodling. Being able to express visually is a tremendous asset to the design. A myriad of latent ideas can come to the surface when the fashion designers draw and doodle. Doodling is a great way of experimenting before the fashion designers put scissors to the fabric.

**The Muse** – The fashion designers also draw inspiration from a specific level of beauty, a personal view of the needs of a particular woman or man, or by the changing needs of the women or men in general. Many fashion designs have a muse, an ideal person who serves as a tangible source of inspiration and keeps their vision constant.

The designer’s muse may be the designer herself, a friend or mentor, or someone famous who epitomizes the person, the fashion designer would like to see wearing her designs.

**The Concept** – Fashion designers also generate idea through the concept.

Donna Karan is a conceptual designer who successfully uses her own lifestyle and that of women like herself as a guide for the clothing she creates.

Ralph Lauren is also a conceptual designer who holds an image of the way people live and what their needs are. He presents a romantic vision of America, of comfort and simplicity.

which is secure and dependable and his success is a proof that it is the same vision to which many others aspire.

**CAD** – Fashion designer also uses the CAD (computer aided design) to generate ideas.

The use of CAD helps designers visualize their ideas on computer. They are able to use a variety of tools to create different qualities of line and texture, and have a choice of literally millions of colors to work with.

The designers can interchange garment parts, raise or lower hemlines, add pleats or fullness, vary colors and textures and try out various trims. Photographs of models can be scanned in to determine how the designs would like when worn, and the final designs can be stored in the computer's memory to recall for immediate reuse or later modification. Full color, finished drawings or photographs can be printed. Having such a range of options to manipulate can be an inspiration itself.

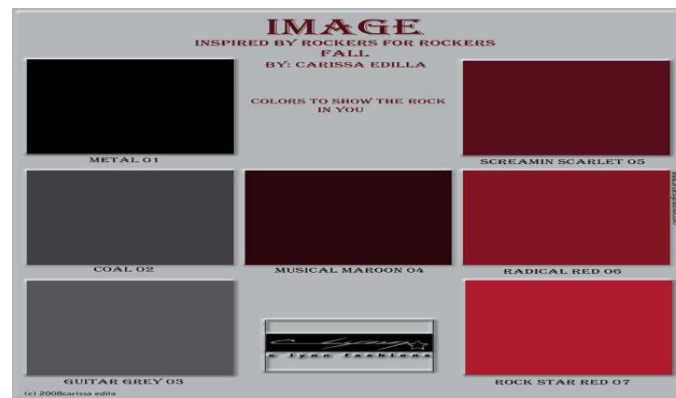
### **b) MOOD BOARD/THEME/CONCEPT BOARD**

Once the fashion designer has generated the ideas, they then make up the mood board/theme/concept board to organize these ideas in one location. This board tells the design story. It's an inspiration board for the designer. All ideas being put in one place helps the designer in further planning of the fashion range. It helps in identifying the best fabrics and accessories for their designs and also helps in finalizing the most suitable colors for their fashion clothing range.



### **c) COLOR BOARD**

Some designers create a separate color board if not a part of the mood board directly. The colors are chosen according to the season. The right colors are normally chosen from Pantone shade cards.



#### d) SOURCING FABRIC SWATCHES

Selection of fabrics is a very important stage. The fashion designer selects fabrics on basis of the season, and the look of the garment. Fashion designer has a variety of fabrics to select from. Fabrics can be woven or knitted. The fabrics can be of different weights, different weaves, printed or solid dyed etc. Fashion designer normally prepares a Swatch Board which is basically a collection of selected fabrics which the designer consults while designing.

#### e) CLIENT PROFILE

Fashion designer creates a customer image and biography which enables the designer to think more tangibly in terms of design. The client profile contains all detailed information about the client like their lifestyles, annual income, society the client belongs to as well as their likings and disliking.

#### f) DESIGN DEVELOPMENT SHEETS

Fashion designers prepare the design development sheet. The design development sheet is like a fashion sketchbook. It's a documentation of a designer's thinking process showing quick drawing skills and use of color, fabric, accessories ideas, makeup and even hair styles. Fabric exploration and surface ornamentation (embroidery, print etc.) is also finalized in this process.



### g) RANGE

Fashion designer selects the best designs from the design development sheet to make the final range of garments. The range can have six to twenty or even more garments. The range consists of garments of different types but will belong to one family in sense of use of color, fabric or style.

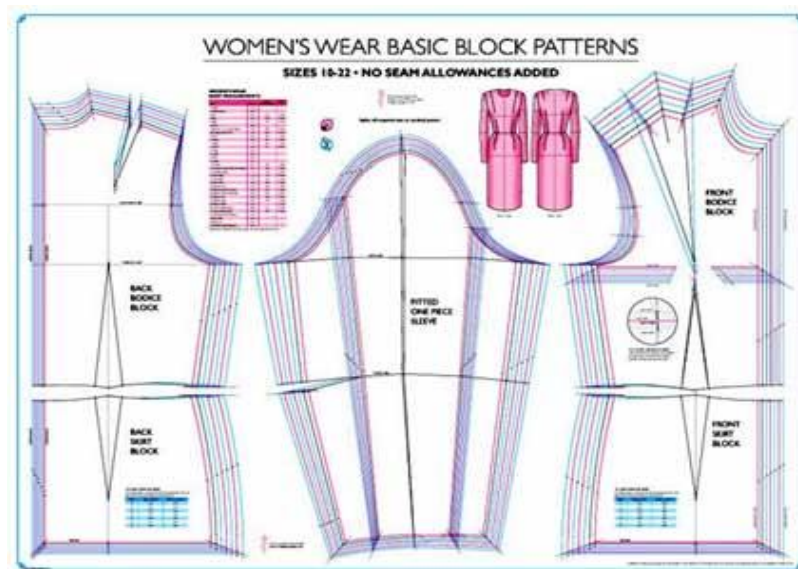


### h) DRAPING OR PATTERN MAKING

Fashion designers either choose draping or pattern making to construct the garment before stitching. The fabric is draped on the dress form (size similar to client's body size). Mostly gowns and cowls are made using the draping technique. Pattern making is a process where basic pattern of the client's size is made first. Later the garments are made from the basic pattern.



## DRAPING



## PATTERNS

### i) MULSIN FIT OR TOILE FIT

After draping or pattern making, the fashion designer gets the garment stitched on muslin or grey fabric to test the fit. Designers usually work on highly expensive fabrics, so before making the final garment, a muslin or toil fit is a must.









## j) FLATS AND SPECIFICATION SHEETS

The fashion designer prepares flats and specification sheets. The flats contain technical details of how the garment should be stitched. The flats include all details of types of stitches and use of trimmings etc.

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## k) FINAL GARMENT

The final garment is now ready to be delivered to the client or ready to be showcased in a fashion show. The final garment is a finished garment which is prepared from expensive fabric, have proper seams and surface ornamentations depending on the design.



#### **I) FASHION SHOW/EXHIBITION/DELIVERED TO CLIENT**

A fashion designer usually showcases their upcoming line or collection in an exhibition or fashion show where the models walk, dressed in their original clothing creation. If the garment is designed for a specific client, the garment is delivered to the client.



# THE FASHION SHOW

*Competition is the new black.*



HOSTED BY ISAAC MIZRAHI & KELLY ROWLAND



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