

Rita M. Lee

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Designer and consultant with a solid track record of helping organizations to conceptualize, plan, launch, and manage initiatives. Experience includes strategic consulting and information design work for a wide variety of clients from major corporations to local non-profits. Also serves as an adjunct design instructor for Carnegie Mellon University (HCII and School of Design). Has a strong interest in using design and management skills to help organizations clarify new ideas, develop strategies, and communicate information.

Experience: **Corporate**, pages 1-2; **Non-Profits**, page 3; **Academic Experience and Education**, page 4.

EXPERIENCE

Corporate Sector—1988 to the present

Practicing as a design professional for twenty-six years. Started in 1988 at ThoughtForm Inc. (formerly Agnew Moyer Smith Inc.) in Pittsburgh, PA. Held several roles, from staff designer to project leader and manager. Became an independent designer and consultant in 2002, sole proprietor of Rita Lee Information Design and Planning.

2014

Deloitte Global Compliance Team

Information visualization and associated materials for the Tax Compliance Framework.

2013

Gensler Architects | Chicago Office

Information visualization of the role of the talent management team for the Chicago office.

2006–present
Branding,
Information
Design, Content
Development

McDonald's Corporation, U.S. Operations—Major Restaurant Business Initiatives

2009 to the present—McDonald's 1-2-5-year Initiatives

Developed a brand, designed, and edited a series of comprehensive reference guides (print, PDF, web page) for McDonald's field representatives to use during the deployment of six business-changing initiatives for McDonald's restaurants in the U.S.

2008—McDonald's McCafé Launch

Designed and wrote training materials (print, PDF) that explained to franchisees how to implement and market the McCafé beverage offering in their restaurants.

2007—McDonald's Drive-thru Optimization Program

Designed, illustrated, and wrote specification guides (print, PDF) that explained to franchisees and local contractors across the U.S. how to build drive-thrus according to McDonald's specifications, for maximum restaurant efficiency.

2006—McDonald's in Wal-Mart Best Practices

Content development and design of a guidebook for franchisees that describes best practices for how to operate a McDonald's restaurant within a Wal-Mart store, and how to work with the Wal-Mart management team.

2002–present
Strategic
Consulting,
Branding,
Information
Design, Content
Development

McDonald's Leadership Institute, Global Talent Management, and Human Resources Groups

2006—McDonald's Leadership Institute Launch and Curriculum Promotion

Worked with the executing training group to conceptualize, brand, plan, and promote the Leadership Institute, a corporate-wide effort to promote executive training.

Activities included:

- Led the brainstorming sessions to develop the concept for the Institute
- Facilitated conversations with internal stakeholders from various departments to create consensus about the role of the Institute and the curriculum it offers.
- Created visual explanations of how the Institute ties into McDonald's strategic business objectives, and into other human resource efforts within the company.
- Consulting for the Leadership Institute brand and associated materials, including a website.
- Branding and packaging for curriculum and course materials offered by the Institute.

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Corporate Sector Experience, continued

2002 to 2009—McDonald's Performance Development System

Engaged by McDonald's Human Resources to help them to conceptualize and disseminate a new employee performance evaluation system worldwide, and then to revise, re-brand, and re-launch the system five years later. Activities included:

- Mapping how the annual evaluation cycle works
- Developing communications for employees and managers
- Designing performance review forms
- Branding and web site consultation

2002 to present—McDonald's Human Resources Initiatives

Completion of several projects for different human resources efforts, including employee communications about talent management and succession planning, career development, executive bonus program information, and concept development for McDonald's bi-annual owner/operator convention.

2004
Information
Design, Content
Development

Robotics Institute and Radio Shack

Editing, design, and client relations for the *VEX Robotics System Guide*, a collaborative endeavor of the Carnegie Mellon University Robotics Institute and Radio Shack.

1999–2002
Project
Management,
Information
Design, Content
Development

McDonald's Operations and Training Publications (ThoughtForm Inc.)

Team leader, project manager and client liaison for the McDonald's corporation account at ThoughtForm Inc. Managed a team of 20 professionals for the development, design, and ongoing publication of the *McDonald's Operations and Training Manual* and associated training documents in several different languages for print and web. Effort included the development of a proprietary multi-channel database publishing application. Managed an annual budget of over two million dollars. Account doubled in size during tenure as manager.

1988–2002
Resource
and Project
Management,
Design and
Content
Development

ThoughtForm Inc.—Other roles and accomplishments

2000 to 2002—Resource Manager

Team leader and manager of employees during implementation of major organizational shift to a non-hierarchical, autonomous team structure. Role included leading the effort for teams to become self-managing, as well as participating in decision-making about how the business was run, with a focus on resource allocation.

1995 to 1999—Senior Designer and Project Manager for Steelcase Inc. Account

Lead designer and project manager for multiple projects for the Steelcase Inc. account. Wrote content, designed the publication, and led the team that developed the *Pathways Application Guide* for the Steelcase Pathways furniture system—the biggest product release in the commercial furniture industry in 30 years. The Pathways guide won multiple awards (AIGA, Print Magazine) for best information design in 1998 and 1999.

1988 to 1995—Designer and Writer

Served as a team designer and writer for a broad range of projects. Clients included Steelcase Inc., Procter and Gamble, Eckerd Corporation, and the Pittsburgh Zoo.

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Non-Profits—2004 to the present

In 2004, began to seek opportunities to work with non-profits to strengthen understanding of the non-profit sector, and to learn how to best serve in this area. This effort included returning to Carnegie Mellon University Heinz College to pursue a master's degree in public management, volunteer work, and professional engagements.

2013—present
Design, Content
Development, and
Strategic
Consulting

The Source for Learning | Reston, Virginia

Work on multiple educational web site and mobile efforts, including Gettysburg by the Numbers (teachersfirst.com/gettysburg/), MySciLife (myscilife.org), Together for Learning (under development), as well as strategic consulting for the organization regarding their social media presence, marketing, resource planning, and branding.

2009—2010
Strategic
Planning

Carnegie Mellon University School of Design

Facilitation, research, planning, and content development for the strategic plan of the School of Design. Collaborated with the head, assistant head, and business manager of the school on this effort.

2008—2009
Organizational
Planning,
Branding

Mount Lebanon Village

Created a launch plan, branding and marketing materials that helped this new organization (mission is to develop an “aging in place” community) move from the concept stage to a pilot run—with the goal of establishing a track record of success to appeal to potential funders.

2008
Promotions

Global Links

Worked with development managers to create promotional materials for events and fundraising.

2006—present

Technical Editor: Annals of Carnegie Museum of Natural History

Desktop publishing, print production, and creative support for this science journal.

2003—2008
Marketing,
Grant Proposals,
Project Planning,
Information
Design

Section of Invertebrate Zoology, Carnegie Museum of Natural History

The many projects and collaborations with the Section over this five-year period focused on raising visibility, seeking funding, and project management. Efforts included:

- Spearheaded the design and development of a capabilities brochure that describes the activities of the section. Used for fundraising events.
- Brainstorming, visual explanations, and marketing for the Biodiversity Services Facility, an entrepreneurial venture to offer scientific services for hire. This initiative allows the section to be more self-sustaining in challenged funding environment.
- Participated in writing and project planning for several NSF grant proposals. Wrote the project plan for a facility grant proposal that received full funding (half million dollars). The plan was cited as one of the reasons that funding was granted.
- Wrote a strategic plan and a fundraising plan for the section (class projects while attending CMU for master's degree). The section continues to use the strategic plan today.

2003

Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

Designed and managed the production of a volunteer staff cookbook (*Carnegie Cooks!*) used for fundraising and sold in the gift shops of each of the four Carnegie museums. Provided a rare opportunity for cross-marketing all of the museums at once.

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ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Courses taught at Carnegie Mellon University

- Spring 2014** **Interaction Design Overview (HCII)—undergrad/grad combined**
Overview of visual design fundamentals (typography, grids/layout, color, image use), research methods, personas, narrative storyboarding, data visualization, design of digital dashboards, and mobile applications. Targeted to non-majors, mostly computer science students with an interest in design.
- Fall 2013, 2014** **Interaction Design Fundamentals (HCII)—graduate level**
Design fundamentals for both screen and print. Assignments cover web sites, mobile applications, and design of documents.
- Spring 2011** **Visual Design Fundamentals (School of Design)—undergraduate level**
Communication design fundamentals for industrial design majors. Course focused on design of documents and portfolio web sites.
- Fall 2011** **Professional Practice (School of Design)—undergraduate level**
Mandatory course for all seniors. Professional practice topics included making presentations, writing cover letters, client correspondence, client relationships and potential ethical challenges that arise in the field, billing time and budgeting projects, project management, and financial considerations for freelancers.
- Fall 2010**
Fall 2009
Fall 2008 **Communication Design Fundamentals (HCII)—graduate level**
Thorough introduction to use of communication design elements, including typographic hierarchy, type as voice, grids, use of color and color coding, use of images, the role of illustration, information design, book and e-pub design, and the role of writing and editing in design. Targeted to graduate level students in the Human Computer Interaction program.
- Fall 2006**
Fall 2005 **Senior Project (School of Design)—undergraduate level**
Facilitated semester-long team-based degree projects (communication and industrial design students combined) for real clients. Full-fledged projects from proposal phase through design of actual products and final presentation.

Administration, 2009 to 2012

- 2010-2012** **Director of Strategic Initiatives, Carnegie Mellon University School of Design**
Managed tactics that were a part of the strategic plan for the school, including development of executive level curriculum, expansion of the masters degree offering, oversight and content development for marketing and communications efforts, including the re-design of the school web site/brand/and social media presence, and cultivation of funding opportunities.
- 2009-2010** **Strategic Planning, Carnegie Mellon University School of Design**
Facilitation, research, planning, and content development for the strategic plan of the School of Design. Collaborated with the head, assistant head, and business manager of the school on this effort.

EDUCATION

- 2007** **Master of Public Management**
Heinz College, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA
- 1988** **Bachelor of Fine Arts, Graphic Design**
School of Design, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA
- 1983-84** **Commercial Art**
University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio