

TRANSCRIPT

Your Design Proposal

Hey there, I'm Tabetha Hedrick, design director for SweetGeorgia yarns. And in this short course, we're gonna go over some of the best practices that'll help you in working with SweetGeorgia as a designer. Or really with any publisher that you might wanna work with going forward. We're gonna go over things, like what should be in a proposal, timelines and everything in between.

The very first thing that is probably the most important thing that every designer needs to work on, is their design proposal. It is literally your first introduction to any publisher that you're gonna work with and in our case it is the make or break for accepting your design, moving forward.

When it comes to a good proposal, the number one, the first key thing to remember is keep it to one page per design. And that means your sketch, your schematic, your swatch, your information are all going to be on one PDF. I have an example here from one of our designers that we worked with and you can see she has all of the components, just on this one sheet. Name of the design, submission, a sketch, Swatch, Schematics that show measurements, a brief synopsis of what we can expect. The yarns that she expects to use, the yardage she anticipates, the needle size and prime most important, crossed out down here is the contact information.

When a publisher receives over a hundred different submissions, that's why it's so important to keep your design to one page, so that in all of our printing, the pieces to your proposal don't get lost in the shuffle, because we print everything out. I like to arrange everything on a big table when I'm trying to put together the story of what we wanna say within the collection or within the publication. And so ensuring that you are on one page, means your contact information doesn't get separated from your design idea. So always keep that in mind.

The second big thing about your proposal is your swatch. It should be in the stitch pattern that you plan to use and if you have any unusual techniques or shaping instructions that you plan to use in the piece, use your swatch to be able to showcase that. It's important that it's a decent size swatch and that you take a photograph of it, well lit and so that it's very clear within the proposal. The third thing you need in your proposal, especially for garments, you don't really need it for accessories in most cases, but in garments it's really important to have a schematic and there's a variety of reasons why we have a schematic. The schematic is that flat little vector drawing that you see that show the construction of the sample.

The reason why we want schematics on your garment proposal is two fold. The first thing is we wanna see what the construction's going to be. Is the shape going to be doable, fitable for our models? Is it construction that our customers are going to be able to utilize. 'Cause we're gonna know who our biggest knitters are and so we know their skill levels a bit more than the average person out there. We wanna know, if the drape is what we anticipate. Will the shape of it fit within the confines of our collection and our story going forward.

But then there's another reason. Another reason why we wanna see the schematics, is that it showcases your skill level. Do you understand measurements? Do you understand grading? It's gonna show us that you get what the body is doing. For example, does your armhole correspond appropriately to the bust size and the cross back. Your

schematics are gonna show us that. So it's really important to put those in your garment, design submissions.

The other piece of a good proposal is the sketch. And a lot of people really groan at this idea. 'Cause I'm not the best artist out there myself, so I understand where you're coming from when you say, I can't draw, I can't do a sketch. The drawings are really important, because it helps us to visualize the drape and the shape of the piece. But there are some things out there that can help you even if you can't draw. I know of designers who will go on Pinterest, or on magazines or on a website somewhere and they'll find a piece or a sweater or a shawl that really mimics what they're feeling. What they envision, what they're envisioning and they'll print that out and they'll just include that with their proposal. They'll paste it right into the PDF.

Other people I know will print those out and they'll trace the shapes over them which is totally acceptable. Other people have found what's called a Croquis. So a fashion Croquis is basically just a blank figure. Sometimes they're in a model pose, and you can trace over that the shape and feel of your sketch. Those are really important. Like you saw in Cheryl's piece earlier. She's got almost like a schematic layout here and it just highlights the details, but it's enough that we can visualize the overall shape and feel and drape of the piece. And what kind of mood and setting that the whole thing brings together.

The next thing that we need in your proposal is just a short description, just highlighting all of the important details. Is it going to be a bottom up sweater, worked in the round, flat, seemed, any special neck shaping. Is the arm hole worked in one piece or is it going to be seemed and put together? Those are the kind of details that we need in the description. We've received a lot of submissions where people are sharing wonderful stories that deserve to be told, but they're really long stories about how they got into designing and what it means for them. And in the time constraints that we have, it's really important to just stick to the key details of the piece in your brief description.

It's really important to include what kind of yarn you anticipate. It's helpful. Whatever publisher you work with, whatever yarn company you work with, it's really important to get an idea of what their yarn lines are. You don't necessarily have to swatch in our yarns. We're happy to look at anything that you've swatched with, but it's really important that if you do choose a fingering weight yarn that you are well aware of the fingering weight yarns that we carry, what their fiber make up is and how that's gonna translate when you are finished with your final piece. So notate the types of yarn that you anticipate, being able to use in this design, what size needle you anticipate being able to use. If we're looking at a lace story, then we might not be looking for submissions, utilizing bulky yarns or big giant needles. So it's really important to include that information. You don't necessarily have to include notions or anything like that or gauge, but again, it's just those specific details.

One thing that we do request and this is just in the handling if we do accept your design is, let us know an anticipated yardage amount, so one, it shows us that you have done the math and kind of already anticipating what's going on with the design, but it helps us be able to get the yarn faster out the door to you once we've accepted your design.

So, all of those components come together quite easily within one page. But I'll end it with an emphasis on contact information, contact information, contact information. We've gotten some designs where it'll be a two page proposal and the contact information is on the first page with their long bio or a story about how they got in design and then their second page will be the design itself and we've printed out the design page and then we don't know who it went to, so it's very important to keep all your contact information on every single page that you send to us.

And that's the jest of the proposal. Just remember that the proposal is your first introduction most of the time to a publisher or any yarn company. And so you wanna make it as clean, as consistent as possible read over it a couple times, do a spell check, make sure your schematics are clear. Make sure your photos are clear and you should be good to go.

When it comes to SweetGeorgia, we are always looking for somebody, any designer, who knows how to be able to utilize colour, because we are a colour company, to use colour in a way that is elegant and shows the yarn to it's fullest potential. In sophisticated, totally wearable, fun to make ways. when it comes to standing out as a designer for SweetGeorgia or for any publisher.

The first thing you wanna do is look at the call for submissions and really read it and see what they're looking for. Whether it's Vogue, they will direct you to what's going on on the Runway right now. With SweetGeorgia, we have mood boards that'll tell you the colour stories that we're really aiming for and we always try to include some silhouettes and shapes in there that give you an idea of what we kind of are looking for. But we don't wanna really constrain you in that way. It's really a balancing act there. But go for what they're looking for. Really research it. Go on style.com and Vogue.com and look at what's on the runways. Try to think fashion forward, what might be coming down the pike.

And really, and then understand the brand. If you can understand the brand and what we are going for, which is colour in elegant wearable ways, and then what we're looking for in the mood board or the style guide and you put those together, that's your first thing. If we get something that just you pulled from a back pile and it doesn't fit anything that, that was represented on the mood boards that we had, it's not gonna stand out. So you take those two things, really do your research. That would be the first thing I would do.

The second thing, is send in multiple submissions. If you just send in one, then that's your one shot out of a hundred to getting selected. If you send me in three, four, five submissions, then that increases the odds that you'll be selected for maybe even not just for the collection that we are calling for, but I may be able to visualize it in a future collection or in the end of our individual monthly patterns that we release.

And then the third thing that will help you stand out, is any time that we have worked with you or you've worked with anyone. If you can think of yourself as the go-to kind of person, it's kinda how I grabbed hold myself within the industry, is being spot on with the deadlines and spot on with communication, and kind of the person that I think of when, hey this person, if I reach out to them and ask them to do X, Y, Z and they go oh yes, I will get you the X, Y, Z. That's the kind of go-to person that we go to over and over and over again.

So you cannot even have the strongest design in the pack but if you are a designer that it is just so professional and so spot on with things, I'm gonna pick you over some of the more spectacular designs in an issue, because I know that you are reliable and bring forth amazing work.