

**What is a concept?** A concept is an idea held in the mind. It is an idea or notion – however small, or however incompletely detailed – this is a first thought, or series of first overall thoughts about a project. It is an idea that often comes spontaneously and is accessible perhaps only briefly. It is a generalization that is seen in the mind’s eye as a whole, without particular parts. A concept is a visual image, feeling or emotion of what the final space will be without providing any detailed (end-result) solutions. The initial concept you develop will drive the direction of your design throughout the entire design process.

**You should keep a concept brief and to the point.**

Answer these questions:

Did you identify the client and provide minimal background of the project.

(Name, location, problem and solution)

Did you use specific nouns: not car, but porche

Did you use specific action verbs: not run but sprint (look for synonyms)

Did you use specific color names: not yellow but honey, not green but celery green.

Did you provide a sense of touch/texture? (don’t use the word feel)

Did you use metaphors or similes?

Did you create good rhythm by varying length of sentences, short: 5 words, medium: 6 – 15 words and long: 16 + words.

Did you start each sentence with a different word?

**Simile:** A simile is a comparison of two unlike things, typically marked by use of "like", "as". Example: *"the snow was as thick as a blanket"*. *"Like sands thru the hour glass, so are the days of our lives."*

**Metaphor:** A figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another, thus making an implicit comparison. A metaphor does not use the word “like” or “as”. *“a sea of troubles”* or *“All the world's a stage”* (Shakespeare).

**Examples from magazines:**

A great vacation promises refreshing change, a new perspective, and Ocean Point of View, a historic three-bedroom cottage minutes from Boothbay Harbor Maine delivers just that with its rustic details and relaxing atmosphere. (this is not a complete statement, but a good start)

On the shores of Quonochontary Pond, along the New England Coast, Hollis and Anne Peters home acts as a magnet for their family and evokes memories of long lost summers of their youth. (this is not a complete statement, but a good start)

In a sea of gray, cedar-clad houses, Laurie Fishers’ Cape Elizabeth, Maine home stands out like a fashionable sore thumb. The exteriors green color, while unusual and risky for the neighborhood, transforms this dated cottage into a fun and functional home – a house of a different color.

**Example from student project:** Like breaking through the clouds into warm sunlight, the Stratus Gallery Apartment will have a warm, spacious and calm atmosphere. The colors will be relaxing and reassuring, like those of a sunset, while finishes will shimmer, reflecting light. The lines will be clean and the overall design will have a simple, elegant feel.