

# Working together

A guide for SMEs and small manufacturing businesses

- 1. Preparation**
- 2. Well begun is half done**
- 3. Communication**
- 4. Plan for the future**

## 1. Preparation

Ahead of engaging with any external agency it is important to have a clear plan for what problem you are looking to solve. Most typically this is:

- A shortfall in available in-house resource.
- Requirement for an 'unusual' skillset.

Commonly, in-house mechanical engineers run at capacity making small updates and responding to ECNs.

When new product development is planned they are also not necessarily experienced in original concept design and may not be the most effective resource.

Approaching a design agency with a draft specification which defines the scope of the work required helps to establish accurate costs and an understanding of key product requirements.

## 3. Communication

As the project progresses it is important to have regular updates on progress and report immediately if any issues arise.

Having easy two way communication is important to allow for the scope of the project to change if necessary. Agile adjustment has to be an option if the project requires it.

## Looking forward to hearing from you:

Please visit the FAQ section on our website for more information relating to intellectual property, working arrangements and software compatibility. With an NDA in place it would be great to discuss your requirements further and show you some relevant examples of previous work.

Please email: [contact@jamesbarrdesign.co.uk](mailto:contact@jamesbarrdesign.co.uk)

## 2. "Well begun is half done"

Getting off to a good start is essential for the smooth delivery of a product. With clear instructions of what work is required, a project plan and timeline can be put in place.

Whilst there are elements of R&D that inevitably might not go quite as planned first time, good planning and open lines of communication can help mitigate this risk.

No two projects are ever the same but following a logical process helps to deliver the project in controlled and predictable way.

The planned handover of a project may occur after reaching a predefined point (perhaps a point where your in-house resource has sufficient experience or capacity).

We ensure that any handover of work is well ordered, with a logical and clear file structure. If there are any questions or additional assistance requested we will of course be happy to help.

## 4. Plan for the future

We look to build long term relationships with our clients as it's rewarding to see projects develop and have the opportunity to work on additional products.

Being available as an ad-hoc resource is mutually beneficial as working together builds on past experience.