

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/an-iterative-process/>

Sharon Prince, CEO and founder of Grace Farms Foundation, describes how she spent many years iterating on ideas with the Grace Farms architects until they had a plan that embedded the vision and values they set out to express.



Transcript

- What is the process in terms of creating 00:00:05,910 that you can apply to many of the creations you're involved in and will be.. It starts with not knowing, and also it starts with creating many, many options.. So this is in their studio in Japan.. And what I love about this is that the answer was always, we study, we will study.. Not a linear answer.. And it was a really fun process to be going back and forth with them, iteratively, but also they had the same way of being in terms of being immersed.. So after we selected the River Building, it wasn't called the River Building, it was actually the solution to a set of requirements, the architecture directive.. And when we selected the River Building, I thought, okay, it's done.. And no, it was like literally many, many years, all the way up to the finish line, while you're still iterating back and forth.. That image of Teshima is in Japan where they said, "Okay, now go out and see some of our other projects." I've now probably seen 15 so that I can understand how they were interpreting that architecture..

Again, being immersed.. So this is the interior, you can see how it was situated on the hill, but the interior, this is a mind blowing project.. One art installation, and this was just opening when I took that picture.. And then some other elements, so you start to think about materiality, and this is really intentional, it's not very clear, it's more of a blurred, reflective space here, so that everyone has their own entryway, their own entree in.. And then this is a really important part of selecting them is that I could see on the left that this as if you're walking out in nature and you're also can be having this experience all together, that long bench I loved.. And then on the right, the use of glass, super fascinating.. But what I saw here is that the glass was green and did not quite love that, I still like the clarity.. And now the process.. So this is a moment where I had to let Sejima and Nishizawa know the order of operations, we'd already been two years now into development, about to go into construction documents.. And as we're examining, I did not see a rendering for two years..

So I really highly encourage something along those ways where you're not along the way, where you're not tethered to existing materials, like in here you can see what we're doing is I'm determining whether proximities are right, the atmospheric elements, not really concerned about whether that material, sure, it comes later, but first, is the order operations right? And at first I thought, what are we gonna see a rendering? And now I realized like that was elemental to producing the outcome.. And then you'll see here too that there are many iterations that I can look at, this as an art piece actually, at Grace Farms, that helps you see all the variations of all the decision making along the way.. But I did have to tell them that the order

was not achieving the goal, because the tonality was intended to be both peaceful and active.. But the way that the volumes ended up being positioned, it was peaceful, and I realized, oh, it's active, peaceful, active, achieved many other goals, but it did not achieve that.. So we had to switch those, and that was a huge deal to do that.. If you're in construction, you'll know it's not a good thing.. I had to re-engineer the whole roof, it took about six months to make that change of just changing the order of the volumes.. But again, you really need to know and be confident in your vision of what you're trying to create, and you have to articulate beforehand.. You have to articulate the values you want to also embed, the team members that you wanna be a part of your team.. And I think that it was a really I important way of being able to determine whether or not we were going to....

Okay, oh, okay, this other one too, I wanna show you, is that there's rarely a form of building like this where it again, becomes part of the landscape, but this elevation change afforded many of those aspirational ideas, just the elevation change, so that you have these sight lines all along the river.. You're also even curious now, if it's glass, like what's happening here? What's happening over there? Versus opacity.. And I asked for an ambient experience because when you're moving, you're creating, you're creating new perspectives...