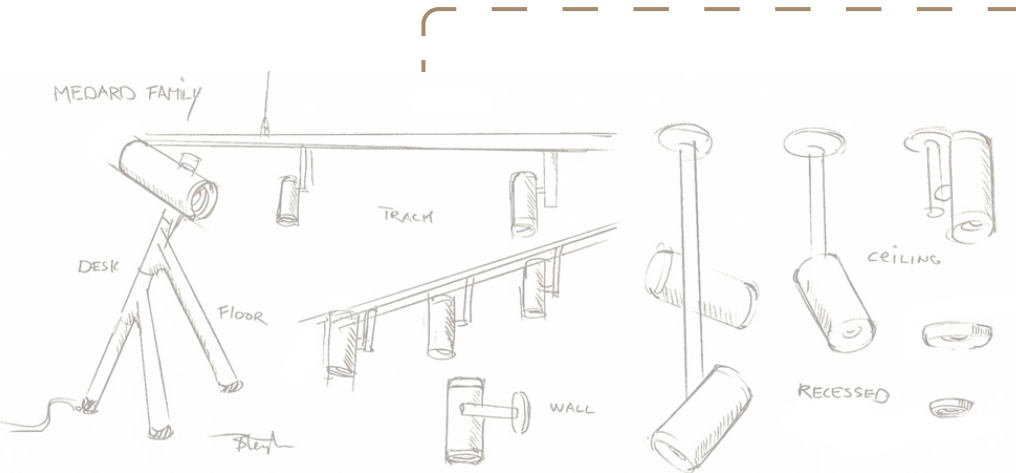
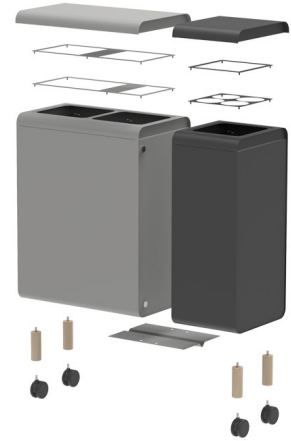


BASTEN LEIJH



# PRODUCT DESIGN

As a team process

This white paper is a production of:

## Basten Leijh Design Studio

Basten Leijh Design Studio is led by product and concept developer Basten Leijh. Over the years, Basten Leijh Design Studio has built up a valuable portfolio. His work ranges from innovative interior solutions to designing bicycles, from ingenious and magnificent waste systems to complete lighting concepts.

Basten Leijh uses a working method that arose in an evolutionary manner and has proven to work. In this working method, he acts as a member of the team that works on the creation and launch of a new product or concept. In this white paper, Basten Leijh shares his best practice experiences and describes the process step by step, from the initial idea to the production of a design. Key points in this process are: responsibility, sustainability, involvement, connection, identity, feasibility, aesthetics and successful sales.

### For whom?

This white paper is interesting for:

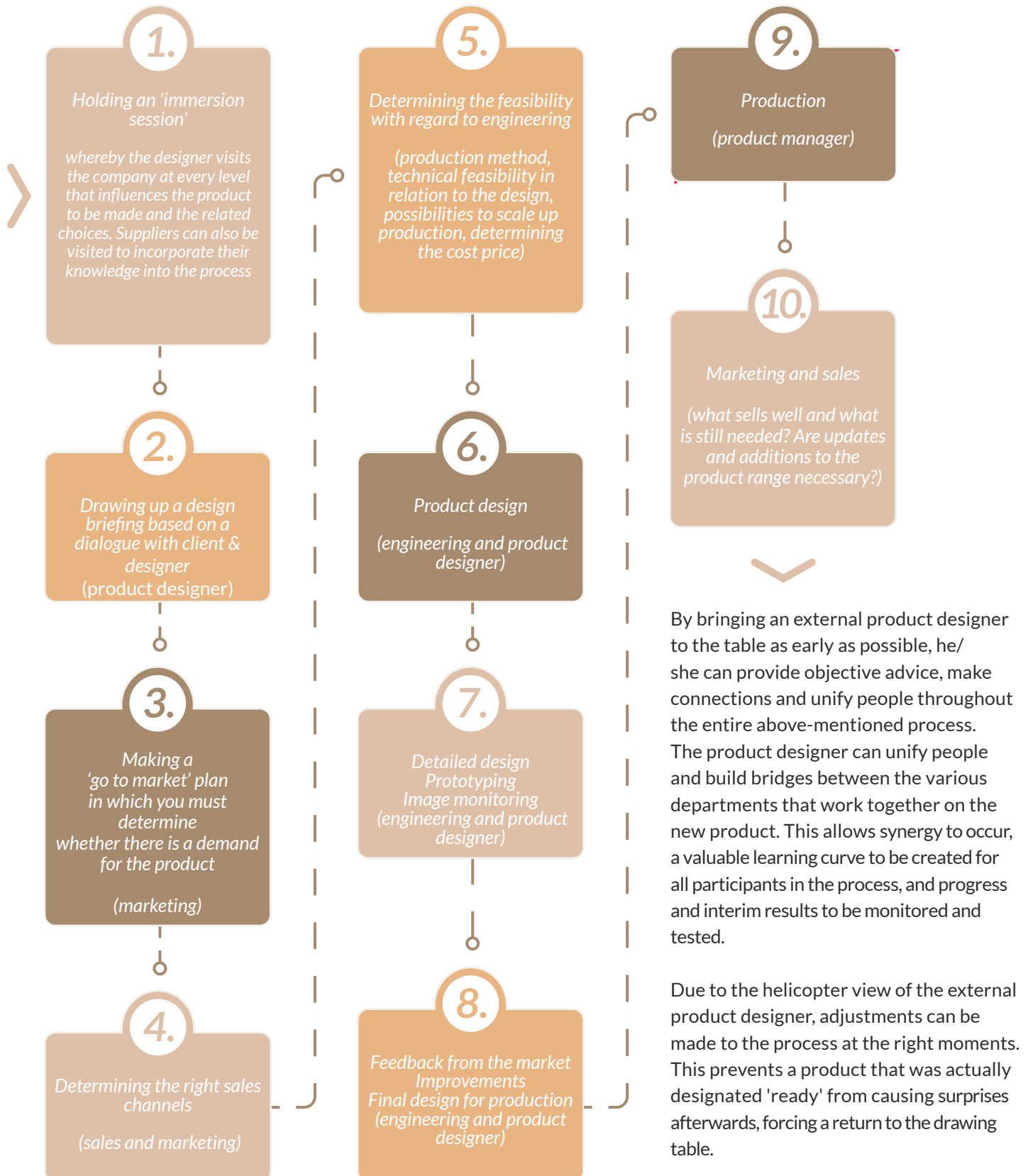
- Business owners
- Management teams
- Boards
- Designers
- Product engineers
- Marketing managers
- Sales managers



# The process is just as important as the final product

Each product starts with an idea. This idea arose from the desire to satisfy a new demand or fill a gap in a product portfolio.

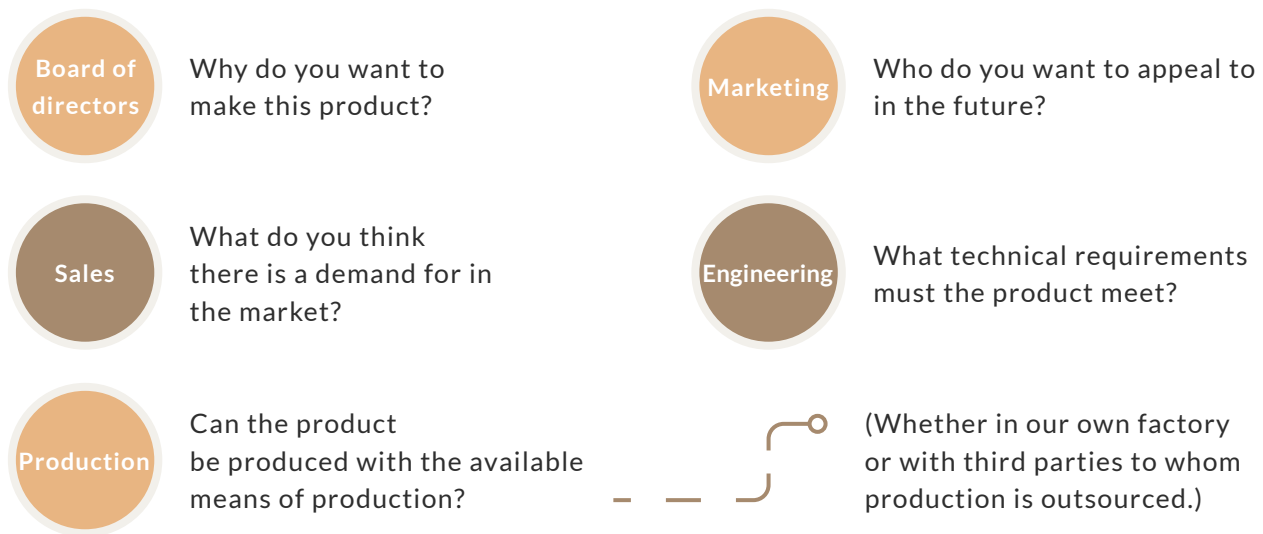
The subsequent process consists of:



# By asking the right questions you lay the foundation for the design process

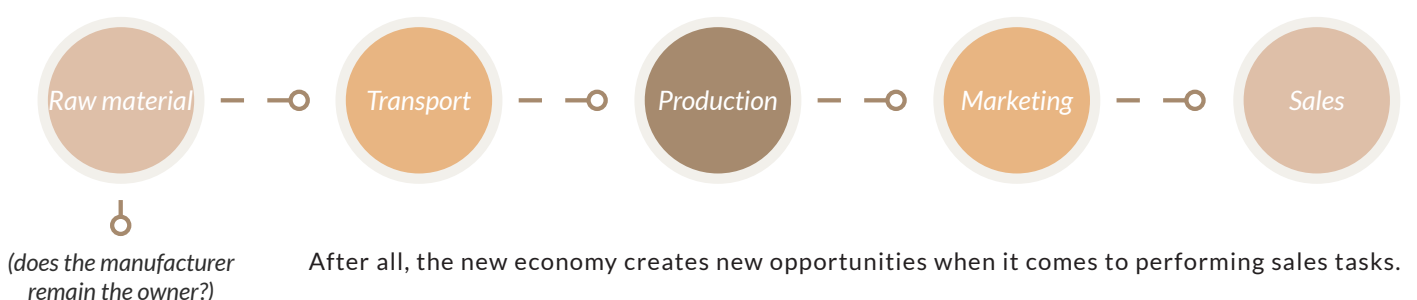
By asking the right questions, the external product designer can clarify what expectations the various stakeholders within the company have and what influence this will have on the product design.

Examples of questions to these stakeholders:



It is important to find out why a company wants to launch a new product. Is this done in order to satisfy a new demand or fill a gap in a product portfolio? The goal is to generate extra turnover. It can also be about sustainability or about tapping into another market. Another motive can be the optimization of production within the company. In today's society, it is also a good idea to question whether the product is necessary. Is the product more sustainable than the existing products or does the product offer a new sustainable opportunity?

These questions can lead to more questions. For example, an adjustment to an existing product may be required in order to manufacture it more sustainably or to work circularly. A good designer not only looks at the (circular) materials to be used, but at all the energy consumption and CO2 emissions involved. Of course, the 'question behind the question' is especially important. Raw materials and logistics are included in this. It is a matter of 'connecting the dots', with the dots being:



# The new economy offers new opportunities

By looking at the sustainable intention, production and use of a new product with an innovative eye, we can meet the social demands that our new economy places on manufacturers. A product

designer can look at a product from the perspective of every stakeholder within the company, make connections and represent everyone's interests, with sustainability as the driving force. It is precisely because of his/her independent position and lack of prior knowledge that the designer can provide sound and future-proof advice. This creates an opportunity for those involved in the process to take responsibility, embrace new ways of working and work together to achieve a sustainable world.

## The benefits of working within the client's team

The board is usually the decider in the design process. The first discussions will therefore be held at the board level. Later in the process, most consultation will be with product management. The dialogue between design and engineering is super important. We determine the final appearance in consultation, but engineering is always helpful in realising the intended product concept. Of course, this is done within the sustainable and economic frameworks that have been set for technical feasibility. Therein lies the positive challenge of entering into dialogue. The focus in design is on engineering, simply because the product has to be right. Engineering therefore largely determines the appearance of the product, because form follows function. As a product designer/industrial designer, you have to put engineering above marketing and sales, but those two disciplines come in a shared second place in the process.

An important question that can be asked is whether there is support for the new product within the organization itself. If there is not enough support, the external product designer can create this support as a member of the design team. A good method for creating more support is to formulate the question more precisely. This creates more clarity for people within the organization who have difficulty making choices due to possible ambiguities. The external product designer must be able to properly justify each choice. Those who want to be at the forefront of new innovations must take risks and also dare to follow the gut feeling of the designer.

When there is sufficient support within the organization, a unique and proper design can be created. If the new product is widely supported, everyone can be proud of the end result and will celebrate their success together. This creates a bond, not only between the team members and the product, but also between the team members as people. The final product acquires its own character and puts the company on the map, increasing sales. A product must contribute to the identity of the company.

### Interest & deciders

*The board decides  
Decider in the design process*

*Consultation with product  
management  
Involved in the process later*

*Dialogue between design &  
engineering  
Dialogue between the two is  
important*

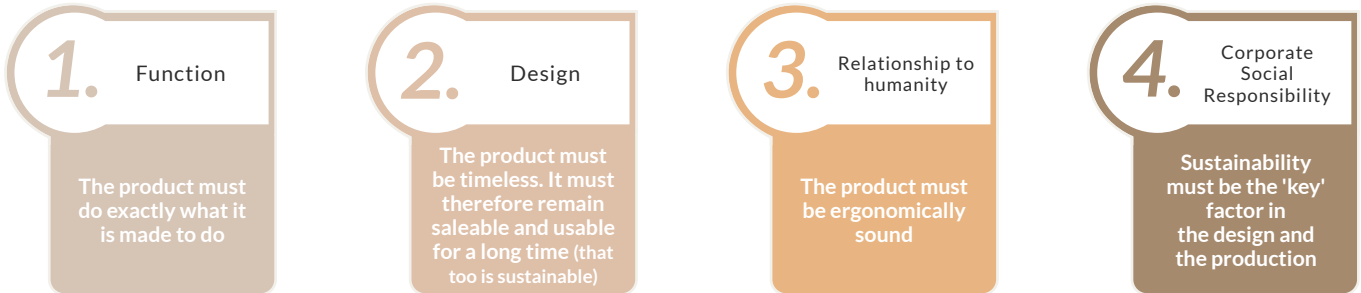
*Collaboration between design &  
engineering  
They determine the final  
appearance*

*Sustainable and economic  
frameworks  
The design must fit within the  
framework*

*Form follows function  
Engineering determines the  
appearance*

# | The four pillars of a good design

A good product design rests on four pillars:



The external product designer plays a central role in monitoring these four pillars and, as a team member, guides the organization in adhering to these important conditions. The most important thing at the end of the design process is sales. With sales as the end goal, everyone is happy. This also applies to the external product designer/industrial designer. There is no better compliment than to see the success of the sustainable design reflected in the number of products sold.

- Basten Leijh

