

Robert Wang—Philosophy Statement

I am passionate about designing simple, elegant, and easy-to-use user interfaces. Ever since I was a child, I have had an appreciation of the simple user interfaces found in video games. That appreciation led me to experiment with computers. When I was 16, I was diagnosed with a learning disability, which uncovered information processing delays and a weak working memory. The discovery of my learning disability was a difficult period in my life. I understood what it was like to be different and to have answers slightly out of reach. At the same time, computers gave me an outlet to express myself.

I was good at using computers, and I now understand my intuition for handling command lines and different software and hardware configurations as a metaphor for my instinct for elegant design. My goals include infusing humanistically engineered solutions with expanded affirmations of human dignity, with humanism as the foundation for technological design.

In terms of professional goals, I would like to acquire a balance of design and technical skills. I believe that creativity drives progress—what we can imagine, we can do—however, in the short and medium terms, I believe that user experience designers need to know what is technically feasible. Even novel interfaces need to be built from proximate technologies. This technical knowledge would be helpful when, say, a client wants a certain type of interface to be built. If that interface exists in a software library, for example, then I know that the interface could be built in a relatively short period of time.

My creativity and my preference for working on teams are among my best assets. Ideas come naturally to me, and I am a great strategist when it comes to architecting long-term solutions. I thrive in interdisciplinary team-based environments because I am an active listener and am able to find inspiration and build off of other people's ideas. I can go to my team about the things I am not sure about. In addition, working on teams helps me focus my efforts on making my work resonate with a larger audience. When I work on teams, I can also achieve more in a shorter period of time. As I have grown wiser, I realize that I need to have a great team to do anything great.

I measure success through the quality of my designs and the number of people who benefit from them. Although quality is highly subjective, it can be measured by user research, or even just the internal satisfaction I get when I know that I have hit on something big. Another way to measure my success is to know what my work has done to inspire others. The introduction of the iPhone, for example, was game-changing in my opinion because it elevated people's imaginations of what is possible on a smartphone. Apple essentially created a new platform developers to make contributions to their field.