

# Q & A

## Per Dahlgren

### Explain the thinking behind Nelson, what was the overall design concept?

Our intention with Nelson was to create a compact, informal meeting chair for everyday use. Our process is more holistic, it's not so much about 'the big idea', but a combination of ideas; knowledge evolved from previous products, comments from Clients, experiments with new forms and so on.

We started with a set of simple parameters, things like price point, user requirements, durability and materials.

The product finds its identity as you progress - in the beginning it was only going to be a chair, but as the product developed we added a 2 Seater and a Bench Seat. Out of this also evolved a range of tables that complement Nelson called 'Parker'.

We are interested in design with a long term future, so considerations for the everyday reality of the product were never far from our minds. Well designed objects are one of life's little pleasures - I think we can be inspired by everything, even with designs we use everyday.

How furniture sits within a space is important to us as well, it has to establish a positive relationship with the interior architecture.

### What was involved in the development?

We began by talking and drawing ideas and gradually decided it would consist of two simple geometric shapes, held together by an interesting leg structure. We drew countless seat and base versions then moved pretty quickly to making prototypes - once you go full scale you get a different perspective of the angles and proportions, you can see it in real space.

We experimented with foam density and thickness, angles, edge radiuses, seat heights, depths and so forth. Prototyping takes a lot of time, there is no fast fix but it's a lot of fun when you get the right mix.

Once the design took shape, it became to-and-fro between ergonomics, design constraints and technical feasibility. It always takes a lot of time to get the details right.

### How did the form for the base come about?

We wanted the legs to complement the geometric shape of the upholstered sections. To keep the aesthetic light we experimented with a cantilevered structure but struggled to resolve this elegantly. So we introduced two different materials which allowed us to maintain the strength but produce a visual lightness with the front in black powder coated steel and the back in a more subtle stainless finish.

### It seems environmental concerns are becoming more integrated into product design – where does Nelson fit in?

They need to be. Eventually it will become the foundation for the way materials are processed and used. But for now, government legislation and high volume manufacturing industries should lead the way. As a small company we are constrained by a lack of Suppliers that believe in the long term benefits of using environmentally sound materials and methods. We see part of our role is to increase awareness of these issues so that demand for sustainable materials and methods increase. We believe in producing and buying local and the value of long lasting design - good design has to withstand daily use. We design our products so they perform and remain relevant over a long service life.

### Do you think there's a need for design companies to adapt to the times by working with cheaper materials or production methods?

We experiment with economical materials, but also expensive ones. As long as the quality and durability is not affected in the final design then it doesn't matter how you get there or what materials you use.

We do our best to be innovative but affordable and accessible to as many people as possible. Our products might not be low-cost but they provide value for money, are honestly priced and we hope this will carry us through the current situation.