Refinement

by Sophia

	WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you'll learn about refinement in the creative process and why it's important. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Refinement

Refinement is the process of simplifying the project to its necessary attributes.

This step breaks down what a designer has developed during the visualization step and further refines these developments to the expected goals of the project.

You would refine and design a project by making an **adjustment**, which is the process of fixing any mistakes.

	TERMS TO KNOW

Refinement
> The process of simplifying the project to its necessary attributes.

Adjustment
> The process of fixing any mistakes.

2. Refinement in Action

Below is an example of how Samsung advertised its S3 line of phones.

The ad reads "It doesn't take a genius." You can see the iPhone 5 and Galaxy S3 there; however, the ad is confusing, as there's no clear message. Who is this ad for? What is it advertising? Beyond the catch phrase, the way the phones are positioned suggests there is some sort of battle or face-off.

However, if you made an adjustment or two, while attempting to keep the same message, the ad becomes clearer.

The iPhone 5 is recognizable enough that you don't need much of it there to know what it is. The product in competition—the S3—is now more visible and apparent; it has the spotlight. The position of the S3 in relation to the iPhone 5 makes the message clearer.

Now despite the confusing phrase, your mind can fill in the gaps and see what the ad is saying: It doesn't take a genius to realize which phone is better, newer, or bigger.

Adjustment and refinement are thus crucial to how a viewer is going to perceive a design's message.

3. Collaboration

Whether a designer is working with a client or someone from his or her team,**collaboration** is an expected part of the refinement process.

Say you're a designer working with a company. Naturally, you're going to be collaborating with the client who will give you rough examples of what she wants or a very clear direction with specific ideas to be conveyed. It's your job to turn those ideas into reality.

If you begin work on an ad, such as the one comparing the S3 to the iPhone 5, you'll be providing a client with a **prototype**, which is a product that is ready for observation, but not ready for distribution.

Because you work for a design firm, you're not the only one working on the ad. Someone else is in charge of the text that's going to accompany your design layout, so you will have to collaborate with that person as well. You work on a prototype design, and then your teammate in charge of the text phrase sends you back the phrase that he thought of.
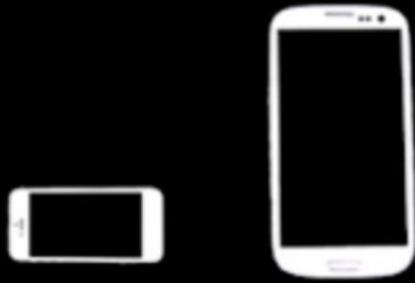

This phrase is just way too long, and it doesn't fit with your initial design. So you two collaborate on something that might work better, and then you create another prototype.
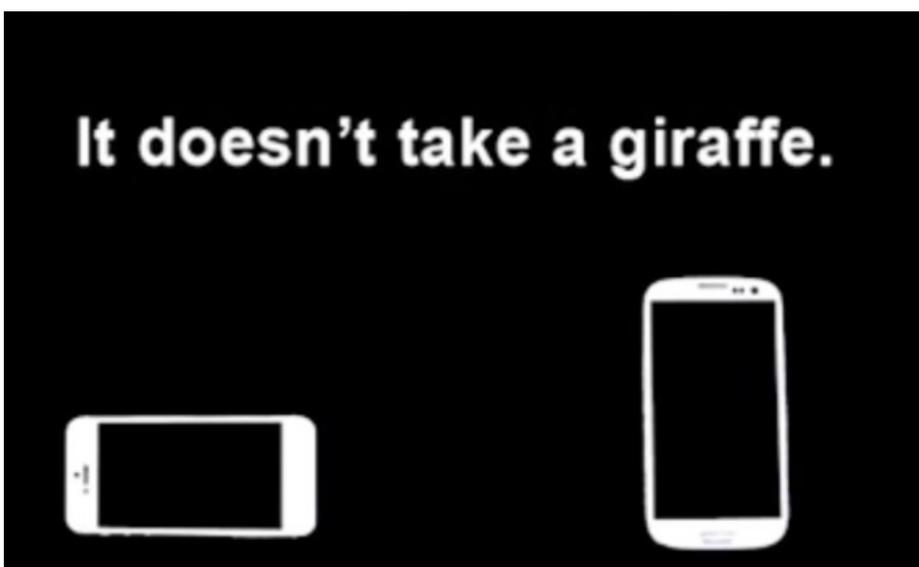
This prototype gets sent out to the client, and she just doesn't understand what giraffes have to do with cell phones. She also suggests that maybe you do something about the phones' proximity. So you and your teammate get back to work and do a quick clean-up of the design.

You then send it back to the client who you're still collaborating with. Although the client is not a designer, she still feels like something's missing and would like it to be more obvious that the S3 overshadows the competitor. So you go back to work again and produce another prototype.

You continue with this process—collaborating with your team members and the client—until the prototype evolves into something that the client is happy to showcase as a final design.

It doesn't take a genius.

☑ SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that **refinement** is the process of simplifying a project to its necessary attributes. You then looked at an example of **refinement in action**, and explored the importance of **collaboration** with other designers and the client.

Keep up the learning and have a great day!

Source: THIS WORK IS ADAPTED FROM SOPHIA AUTHOR MARIO E. HERNANDEZ

📄 TERMS TO KNOW

Adjustment

   The process of fixing any mistakes.

Collaboration

   The process of having many participants working together on a project.

Prototype

   A product that is ready for observation, but not ready for distribution.

Refinement

   The process of simplifying the project to its necessary attributes.