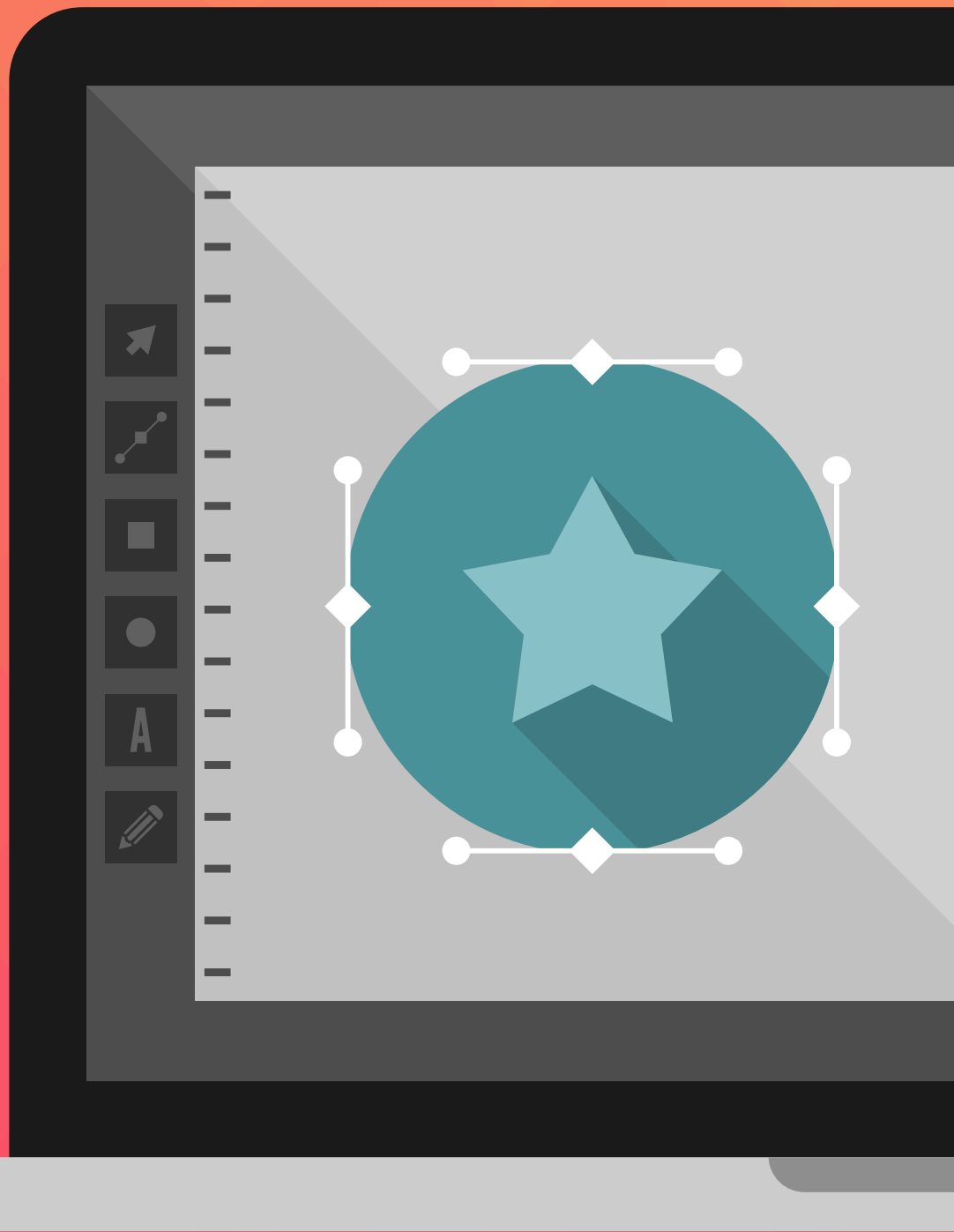# buildingalogo
FROM START TO FINISH

The Complete
Step-By-Step Course
to Designing Logos
From Start to Finish

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Graphic design is the process of using visuals to communicate a message, and when we're designing a logo, the message we're communicating is a brief summarization of the story behind a brand.

Logo design poses a unique challenge to designers because it calls on them to conceptualize the story of an entire brand and what they stand for, then communicate a simple summarization of that with a design that can do the job that a logo is required to do.

Because this is such a fragile and precarious objective, it should be approached with strategy and tact. There's crucial guidelines and implications that should be followed when designing a logo, and my mission in this course is to teach you all of the nuances of designing a logo, how to apply them to your work, and how to approach the entire project with a strategy that you can use to design a logo for any brand, from start to finish.

After completing this course, you will have all of the resources necessary to communicate your client's brand through a logo design that was professionally approached and executed. **You will be able to design a logo from start to finish**.

The point of a logo is to be a visual representation of a brand. Your brand is not your logo; your brand is the relationship you have with your audience. Your logo is how your audience identifies that brand. So, it's important to understand the difference between the two before getting started.

If you've ever seen designers sharing examples of their logo work with other designers for them to critique, you'll see a lot of feedback somewhere along the lines of, "well, this logo is supposed to be for a company that creates computer hardware, but nothing about the design makes me want to buy computer hardware." They're missing the fundamental understanding of what a logo is.

A logo is not intended to sell, nor is it intended to be a marketing channel. That's why companies have sales staff and marketing departments. A logo is simply a communication tool. It's supposed to be a visual representation of a brand.

When you look at the Apple logo, does it immediately make you feel compelled to purchase expensive hardware? Take the logo out of context and look at it for what it is objectively - a basic drawing of an apple with a bite taken out of it. There is absolutely nothing about this logo that says "mobile devices" or "desktop computing." If anything, it makes you want to eat an apple.

If looking at the Apple logo does indeed entice you to buy Apple products, and the first thing that springs to mind is a desire for that new iPhone or Macbook you've been wanting, it's not because of the icon of an apple with a bite taken out of it; it's because **that's the relationship that brand has established with you**. You've known Apple as a producer of high-end hardware for so long that when you see their logo, your psyche automatically associates it with the relationship they have with you.

It's important to have a clear understanding of this before you start designing a logo for someone. When a potential client is discussing a project with you, and they state that they want their logo to give people the impression that they're trustworthy and do great work, understand that that is something you have very little (some, but very little) control over. If they want people to associate their logo with a trustworthy company that does great work, they're going to have to conduct themselves as trustworthy people and actually do great work. Their behavior is going to determine how their audience perceives their logo. There's only so much a logo design in and of itself can do to communicate that.

A logo is important, but the relationship and reputation a company establishes with their audience is infinitely more important. In short, a brand is going to define how their logo is perceived; not the other way around. As a logo designer, it's not your job to try to build a reputation for another company. Leave that to the PR professionals. Instead, focus on designing a graphic, appropriate for use as a logo, that summarizes what value the company offers and what problems they solve.

In this course, I'm going to teach you how to do exactly that, and to the best of your abilities.

In this section I'll be going over the guidelines to be followed when designing a logo, but the context in which a logo will be used is going to determine how it should be designed. I'd like to make a special point of noting that context trumps everything else, so if any particular design guideline that I go over isn't compatible with the unique logo you'll be designing for an individual brand, go ahead and break that guideline. Context trumps everything, and sometimes rules need to be broken because of that.

Proper Context

We go about determining context by assessing what the intent is. How do we do that? Well, let's take a look at an example.

For example, you wouldn't put a logo of a shoe on a shoe. That would be a bit redundant. People already know that it's a shoe when they look at it because... it's a shoe - it's fairly obvious. If you are designing a logo for a brand that makes footwear, and that logo is going to be placed *on the footwear*, something other than footwear needs to be communicated, because footwear is already implied when someone looks at it.

This is why Nike doesn't use a logo of a shoe on their shoes; they use an abstract check mark that suggests movement relative to athletics, because that's what they stand for, and that's the message they're trying to communicate to an audience that may see that logo. They want to be known as the athletic apparel brand. They want people

who are athletic and involved with sports to look at their logo and think "that's a brand I can identify with." Similarly, you have to find out **what your client's brand stands for and how they want their target audience to identify them**, and communicating that message through a logo design should be your mission.

On the other hand, if you're designing a logo for a retail store that simply sells shoes from other brands and doesn't actually make shoes of their own, and the logo will be used on the sign in front of the store, their website, their marketing materials and so on, then using a logo of a shoe makes sense. You want people who may see that logo on a big sign as they pass by the store to think "Oh, shoes. I can buy shoes in there." That's the message that needs to be communicated in that context. That store wants to be known as the place where shoppers can purchase shoes.

So, this is a perfect example of a scenario where context plays a major role in determining which direction to take the design process. If someone contacts you about designing a logo for them, and all they have to say is "I need someone to design a logo for my shoe company," you're obviously going to need a lot more information than that. Do they make shoes or do they sell shoes? As I've already explained, there's a very big difference, and that's only one variable.

You're also going to want to know: what kind of shoes? Is it a variety of shoes or a specific niche? Who are they targeting; budget consumers or consumers who may be looking for a high end product? And so on. We'll explore this in more detail later on in the course.

This is one of the many reasons why getting as much information as possible from the client is so important - it helps you define the context, and context is going to dictate everything you design for this client moving forward. For every logo you design, you need to ask yourself…

1 **Where and how will this logo be used?**

2 **Who will be the viewer of this logo?**

3 **What message needs to be communicated to that viewer?**

If you have the answers to those 3 questions, you're off to a good start.

For a copy of the complete guide, please visit:

http://blog.logosbynick.com/logo-design-course/