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I decided to do my paper on the original 1988 “Just do it” Nike commercial. I chose this Nike commercial because I found it to be interesting for two reasons one being how Nike took the simple commercial and slogan and made it into its own massive brand. The second reason is I’m curious as to why they decided to use 80-year-old Walt stack to promote their first ever “Just Do It” commercial instead of a professional athlete, like there other commercials. The television ad shows a man named Walt Stack who is 80 years old running across the Golden Gate bridge. The man talks to himself and says that he got rid of his old sneakers and bought the new Nike running shoes to enhances his performance.

The origin of the “Just do it” slogan is interesting the name came from a convicted killer named Gary Gilmore. On the hustle branding website, it stated “Gary Gilmore uttered the words “Let’s do it” right before he was executed by a firing squad in 1977” (MJ, 2013). In 1988 the slogan was changed from “Let’s do it” to “Just do it”. I find it strange that Nike would use this slogan in there commercial because it was related to a convicted killer, and the audience could

have had a bad reaction to it. I would love to know how the creative team pitch this project to the executives and bosses, Because I want to know if they felt like this was a wild idea and were they skeptical about this approach because it was different than anything they've done before. When "Just Do It" pops up on the screen, it's a simple black background with slogan on it in a Futura condensed font, in white letters. The meaning behind "Just Do It" can be interpreted in many ways. This commercial and slogan led to Americans purchasing Nike products, with the idea of achieving greatness in whatever field they were in no matter their age, ethnicity, race, and gender. By showing Walter Stack running it emphasized how Nike wanted to show the experience they were creating was for everybody. Walter Stack was an 80-year man old man who ran marathons his whole life, by Nike showing him it was like they were almost trying to say that Nike products are a lifetime thing. I believe this gave them an edge on their competitor who was Reebok at the time. The message behind "Just Do It" is simple you are striving for greatness in whatever you want to do, Weathers that's being a professional athlete our being someone who works an office job and occasionally joggings for time to time, they want you to be your best self, and believe their products can help you do that. In 1988 when the commercial aired the audience connected with it deeply. For athletes they used it as mantra to keep them focused and performing at a high level. When it comes to their target audience, I believe they hit it right on the money with the athletes and people who were into fitness. Something surprising was how people who were barely athletes or didn't even pay attention to sports also loved the slogan introduced in the Nike commercial. It became something that people lived by no matter what they were doing in life, you didn't have to be an athlete to live by this slogan, which made it extremely popular. The meaning of the "Just Do It" slogan has change over the years. The slogan use to be something that mostly athletes and people who were into fitness used. Today

this slogan is used for anything ranging from motivational speeches to very popular memes. People also take the slogan and make their own meaning of it, to me “Just Do It” is used as something that helps me with overthinking in life. I tend to do this a lot, but when I tell myself to just do it and don’t overthink every little thing, I find myself being a lot more productive in whatever I’m doing, I’m sure other people use it in ways that aren’t always related to sports like me. When talking about the “Just Do It” slogan you must talk about international language, which is a language made to be understood by people with different linguistic backgrounds so they can use it as a form of communication. When this Nike commercial was first created, I don’t believe it was supposed to be a form of international language, but it has transformed into that over the years. In “Our Book” El Lissitzky stated “The hieroglyph is international: that is to say, if a Russian, a German, or an American impresses the symbols of the ideas on his memory, he can read Chinese or Egyptian, without acquiring a knowledge of the language” (Lissitzky 27). I believe this is where he starts to talk about international language, as you see this slogan you notice that Nike prioritized the essentials when it came to this commercial making it a minimal design, which follows the rules and ideas of the Bauhaus. It was as simple as it could be, and it seemed like they just wanted to get the “Just Do It” message out more than anything else. As for an international language, this slogan is something that is used as a symbol throughout the world to encourage and motivate people to achieve greatness, and this simple phrase is used to communicate a much bigger meaning amongst people with different linguistic backgrounds. As a graphic design major, I’m glad I wrote this essay, it showed me that as a designer I must take risk and explore different approaches when it comes to my work to become the best creative version of myself.

## Bibliography

MJ, 2013, [HustleBranding.com](http://HustleBranding.com): The “Just Do It” Effect: The Power of The World’s Most Inspiring Slogan

EL Lissitzky, 1926, *Our Book*: page 27