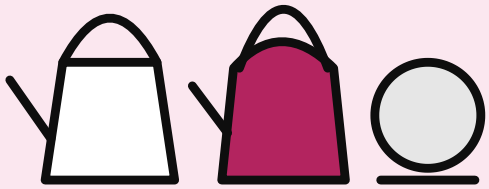
Concept

Most advanced yet acceptable

Principle stating that a product is liked more the more novel it is, as long as people still recognize what it is and what it is for.



In Spanish

Lo más avanzado pero aceptable

Origin

Loewy (1951); tested by Hekkert, Snelders and van Wieringen (2003)

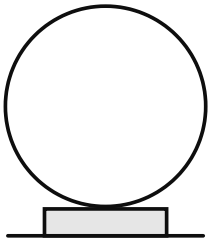
What problem it addresses

It helps decide how much to change the form of a product. Industrial design takes a working rule from it: move forward from the familiar, without going so far that the object stops making sense.

An example

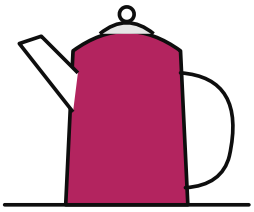
An illustrative example: a brand redesigns its electric kettle.

Too new



A smooth sphere, with no handle or spout in sight. **Nobody knows where to hold it or where to pour from.**

New, but recognizable



New shape and material, with the handle, spout and lid in place. **It looks modern and makes sense right away.**

Novelty is liked when it doesn't erase the cues that say what the object is.

Why it happens

1 

The typical is recognized quickly, but it bores if it adds nothing.

2 

The new catches the eye, but it confuses if we don't know what it is.

3 

We like best what balances both, new within the recognizable.

Applications in design

Use it like this

Before innovating, identify the features that make the product recognizable and keep them.

Avoid

Changing the form, the controls and the usage cues of an object people already know, all at once.

Don't fall for it

Show the design to someone who doesn't know it: if they can't tell what it is, you went too far.

3 studies

What the research says

With sanders, telephones, kettles and cars, people liked best the designs that were both typical and novel. Each factor only predicted liking once the other was taken into account (Hekkert, Snelders and van Wieringen, 2003).

● ○ ○ **Single study.** Loewy put it forward as a practitioner's intuition. Experimental support came half a century later, from a single research group and with consumer products.

Connections

Used in

- Transportation design

Related to

- Mere-exposure effect
- Jakob's law

Authors and works

1951	**Raymond Loewy**	Wrote that the public does not always accept the most logical solution if it strays too far from what it sees as normal. The acronym MAYA is attributed to him.
2003	**Paul Hekkert, Dirk Snelders and Piet van Wieringen**	Showed with experiments that novelty and typicality, together, predict which designs are liked best.

Sources

Original sources

- Loewy, R. (1951). Never leave well enough alone. Simon and Schuster.
- Hekkert, P., Snelders, D., & van Wieringen, P. C. W. (2003). “Most advanced, yet acceptable”: Typicality and novelty as joint predictors of aesthetic preference in industrial design. British Journal of Psychology, 94(1), 111–124. View source (https://doi.org/10.1348/000712603762842147)

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