

Using Instructional Design to Shape Technology Training

Technology training for faculty and staff is more effective when it is based on instructional design principles. This presentation will show how **three principles** can be used to guide training efforts and achieve positive results. So, why is this important? First of all, there are always training needs at universities. Whether it is a move to a new course management system or the rollout of a new e-mail client, we have all asked this question: How are we going to train our faculty and staff?



The instructional design process starts with asking the right questions:

Who are the learners?

What do the learners need to be able to do?

one Learning Objectives

Learning objectives is a fancy way of saying “what the learners will be able to do at the end of the workshop.” Objectives are supposed to be specific rather than “fuzzy” and should contain concise, active verbs.

Why are they important? Software upgrades and system changes can be stressful. Using learning objectives can help you and your staff stay focused during a time of transition.

Bad → Understand the basics of podcasting.

Good → After completing this workshop, you will be able to:

- State the three tools needed to record a podcast.
- Record audio using a headset and Audacity.
- Edit audio with Audacity.
- Add ID3 tags.
- Upload a podcast to iTunes U.

two Formative Evaluation

Formative evaluation is the process of trying out drafts of instructional materials on learners before finalizing the instructional materials.

Why is this important? This key step allows you to try out materials with a small group and revise them and improve them before unveiling them to a larger audience.

You need to ask someone who is member of your target audience to review the materials for clarity and content. For example, ask a professor, “After reading this handout, can you make a backup of your course?”

Listen, and then use what they tell you to improve your training materials.

three Relevance

It is critical to explain how and why a concept is important. Don’t tell workshop attendees, “You need to click here because I said so.” Instead say, “It is important that you accept this Java security certificate or you won’t be able to upload files to Blackboard.” Show them and tell them why concepts are relevant.

If a tool or a concept isn’t relevant, eliminate it from the workshop. Most people have busy schedules. So, when people attend a two-hour workshop they want to leave the workshop feeling like what they learned was relevant to their job.

Focus on what the average person needs to know and strive to make the training relevant.

example

conclusion When faced with a technology change, users will need training. Designing training is going to take time. The instructional design process starts with asking the right questions: Who are the learners? What do the learners need to be able to do? Then use the answers to these questions to guide your efforts. Take the time to write specific learning objectives and do formative evaluation. Also, remember to focus on what is relevant: your trainers will be more focused and the instruction will be more effective.

Lisa McNeal, M.S., Instructional Developer
mcnealla@appstate.edu
http://lts.appstate.edu/about/bio_lisa.php

Appalachian
STATE UNIVERSITY
BOONE, NORTH CAROLINA

“Instructional Design is a systematic process that is employed to develop education and training programs in a consistent and reliable fashion . . . a complex process that is creative, active, and iterative.”

Reiser & Dempsey (2006)

“Instructional Design refers to the process of systematically applying instructional theory and empirical findings to the planning of instruction. . . . There is a clear focus on an instructional goal that represents what the learner will be able to do when the instruction is completed, the present skills of the learner, and how the learning will take place.”

Dick, Carey, & Carey (2005)

References

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