

“Design is a plan for arranging elements in such a way as best to accomplish a particular purpose.”

- Charles Eames
American Designer



CREATING ENGAGING ONLINE COURSES

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AGENDA

Today, we'll look at steps for designing engaging online courses:

STEP 1: IDENTIFY LEARNERS

STEP 2: DEFINE OBJECTIVES

STEP 3: CURATE CONTENT

STEP 4: ASSESS & EVALUATE

Ready to learn how each step
informs course design?

IDENTIFY LEARNERS

To close performance gaps, it's essential to understand your learners.

- Who are your learners? What do they already know? What do they need to know?
- What are their motivations for taking your training?
- When and where will they complete training? How much time do they have? What distractions might they encounter in the process?
- How do they like to learn?

Defining your audience is key to meeting their expectations and needs.

ADULT LEARNING BEST PRACTICES

Communicating objectives to learners lets them know what they will be expected to know, do, or value after completing the course.

Why Use Objectives?

- Focus learner attention
- Inform course design
- Measurable through assessment

Best Practices

- ≤ 3 learning objectives per module
- Use as the basis for assessments
- Define **actionable** outcomes

Objectives help you structure content for learners.

DEFINE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learners will be able to _____ in order to _____.

Knowledge	Comprehension
Recall learned information	Demonstrate understanding
Define, List, Label, Explain Identify, Give Examples, Summarize	

Not Measurable	Measurable	Engaging
Understand the importance of learning objectives	Write actionable, measurable learning objectives in order to clearly define outcomes	Are your learners picking up what you're putting down? Today, you'll learn how to clarify course outcomes by writing...
Know how to write effective quiz and evaluation questions	Write assessment questions in order to measure learner outcomes and retention	Are your quiz questions effectively measuring outcomes? In this course, you'll learn how to write...

What do you want learners to **do**?
What do they need to **know** in order to do it?

QUICK PAIR SHARE

Think of a course you want to create. What is one actionable, measurable learning objective for your training?

Share your answer with the person next to you.

CURATING CONTENT

Content should be relevant to the objectives of your training.

Product Training

- Key Features & Benefits
- Product Images
- Videos
- Sell Sheets

Process Training

- Step-by-Step Instructions
- Infographics & Diagrams
- Videos
- Scenarios

Draw inspiration from existing assets to support your content.

PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Interactions reinforce key ideas and focus your learner on targeted objectives.

- **Activities** give the learner control over information processing.
- **Knowledge Checks** offer a change to pause and reflect.

What activities compliment your existing assets?
What key ideas should be reiterated in Knowledge Checks?

SMALL GROUP BREAKOUT

In groups of 2-3, review the marketing materials provided.
What kinds of interactions do they inspire?

Share your ideas with the group.

CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

“If you ask me anything I don’t know, I’m not going to answer.”

—Yogi Berra

- Map to objectives and limit to what’s covered in the course.
- Make sure questions are clear and easy to understand.
 - Keep question stems short, and use positive language
 - Make distractors plausible, but not arguably correct
 - Keep answer choices the same length and grammatically parallel
 - Arrange answer choices in a logical sequence
 - Eliminate ambiguity by testing only one idea at a time
- Vary question types to keep maintain focus and attention.
- Provide instructional prompts so they know how to answer.

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Use assessments and surveys to collect information about the effectiveness of your training and inform future design decisions.

- **Assessments** let you know if learners are retaining critical information presented in the course.
- **Surveys** provide an opportunity to gather feedback on the learning experience (e.g., content, design, pacing & sequencing)

The answers have clear impact on future course design.

SURVEY BEST PRACTICES

Informative survey responses are the result of carefully worded questions.

- Likert Scale questions/statements help learners answer quickly without a lot of thought
 - Use a balanced and consistent rating scale
- Open-ended/free form questions provide learners a chance to share their thoughts, without any pre-conditions
- Maintain a singular focus for each question

POP QUIZ!

Complete the quiz, if you can. Do you feel that it was fair?

Share your thoughts with the group.

BEST PRACTICES IN ACTION

Let's take another stab at those quiz question stems...

Original

- When is it NOT a good idea to avoid negative questions?
- This workshop has been both helpful and boring.
- Do you have any feedback for the workshop coordinators?

Revised

- True or False? It's best to avoid negative question stems.
- This workshop has been helpful. This workshop was boring.
- What feedback can you share with us that will help us improve in the future?

BEST PRACTICES IN ACTION

Let's take another stab at those answer choices...

Original

- We can confuse learners when we:
 - fail to actually complete the sentence we started in the question.
 - inconsistent grammar in the options.
 - sometimes we veer off into another idea entirely.
 - all of the above.

Revised

- We can confuse learners when we:
 - ask questions on concepts that were not introduced in the course.
 - ask questions that are linked to the targeted learning objectives.
 - use negative question stems.
 - give learners multiple attempts to achieve a minimum passing score.

BEST PRACTICES IN ACTION

Let's take another stab at those question types...

Original

- What is the name of the animal?
 - ☐ Cougar
 - ☐ Puma
 - ☐ Panther
 - ☐ Mountain Lion

Revised

- What is the name of the animal?
 - ☐ Cougar
 - ☐ Puma
 - ☐ Panther
 - ☒ All of the Above

Revised

- What is the name of the animal? (Choose all that apply.)
 - ☒ Cougar
 - ☐ Cheetah
 - ☒ Panther
 - ☒ Mountain Lion

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Effective course design is the result of careful forethought and planning.

- Know your audience and design courses to meet their expectations.
- Identify targeted learning objectives help to focus learners and inform course design. Use them as your litmus test when deciding what goes in your course!
- Use activities and knowledge checks to add emphasis to key concepts. Find inspiration for interactive elements in your existing assets.
- Use LMS quizzes and evaluation surveys to collect feedback on the efficacy of your training and the overall learning experience.



THANK YOU!