

Instructional Design Project Management

We all get the question; “Can you build a video for...?” followed, before you can even answer, by “Of course you can, let us know sometime next week when it is ready.” Ah, the life of a trainer or instructional designer. The goal of this document is to better equip you for handling these requests and projects, whether you are a veteran or a rookie in the ID world.

Key Questions to ask during the request/project kickoff

Questions for the Requester/Project Owner

- What are the objectives or outcomes we are trying to achieve? What do people need to be able to do?
 - Communication is key; always get the stated request and desired outcome in writing.
 - You are looking for learning and performance objectives, but don't use L&D speak.
- What is the business need or problem, which lead to this request?
 - Frequently, training or the requested form of training is not the right solution. This is a hard conversation to have, if your experience says that training will not fix the problem. Better to get the conversation started before work has begun.
- What type of training would you prefer that we provide?
 - I know the request was a “Video”. However, after our first two questions things could change.
 - Don't get boxed in before you have examined the need closer though!
- Who is the audience for the training?
 - Target audience should always be accounted for in any development project plan.
- Where are the trainees located?
 - Need to know locations and available equipment.

Question that need to be answered by the Developer with input from the Requester

- How will the trainee be evaluated, so that we know the desired outcome was achieved?
 - Never a question that should be the sole responsibility of the developer.
- What will be the final implementation plan?
 - Need set expectation for the business on when you can realistically complete the project.
- How will later changes, corrections, and fixes be achieved? Depends on the project.

Developer Questions

- What are the learning objectives of the course?
- What is absolute must know vs. nice to know?
- How do we get people doing the desired behavior?
- What platforms/creation tools are available?
- What assets are available (people, places, things)?
- How will the course be structured?
- What other learner resources are needed?
- How are the objectives going to be presented?
- What types of interactions are going to be used?
- What navigational controls will be provided?
- What will appear on the computer screen?
- How do individual screens relate to each other?
- What narration will accompany the display?
- Where will each control input take the trainee?
- What will the interactions look like?
- What are the contents of the remedial paths?
- What form of remediation will be provided?
- How many learning paths will be available?
- How can existing media be incorporated?
- What new elements need to be created?
- What narration files need to be created?
- What models and templates can be employed?
- What data needs to be recorded & reported?
- Is there a learning management system involved?
- What will the Quality Assurance strategy be?
- Who will pilot the solution?
- How will problems be resolved?
- How will errors be reported?

Methodology for e-Learning Development

Tools do not make the developer. Creating good eLearning is not just about opening [*insert any content authoring tool here*] and beginning to develop your courseware. Good courses start with analysis and a good project plan. Good eLearning design starts outside of the development application.

Where do you start? You start with a developing a plan for the following reasons:

- A plan can be shared with all those involved in the project, so that they know exactly what is expected of them, and what their own role is in the overall process.
- A well-planned project leaves little room for the misunderstanding of objectives and desired outcomes.
- If management approval needs to be petitioned, a good project plan will permit you to submit a clear and valid proposal.
- A plan allows everyone to agree on what is being developed and reduces the possibility of misunderstandings.

Of course, the complexity and extent of the project plan will depend very heavily on individual project needs and the time and resources allocated to it. However, all project plans should consist of the following stages, which make up the eLearning Development Process.

Phases	Roles	Tasks
Requirement Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Manager • Instructional Designers • Subject Matter Experts 	<p>At this stage, we compile the necessary input and fine-tune the overall project specifications based on the results of the analysis.</p> <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of training is to be provided? • Who is the target audience? • What platforms are available? • What assets are available?
Instructional Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Designers 	<p>The most important phase. The goal is to create the foundation and structure upon which the training will be built.</p> <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the TLO (Terminal Learning Objectives)? • How will the course be structured? • How are the objectives going to be presented? • What types of interactions will be used? • How will the trainee be evaluated? • What form of remediation will be provided? • How many learning paths? • How many feature/function (JIT) will be covered?
Content Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Designers • Technical Writer • Media Developer • Subject Matter Expert 	<p>This phase involves the compilation of the physical content of the training, usually in the form of scripts and storyboards.</p> <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will appear on the screen? • How do individual screens relate to each other? • What narration will accompany the display? • Where will each control input take the trainee? • What will the interactions look like? • What are the contents of the remedial paths?
Media Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Designers • Technical Writer • Media Developer 	<p>The creation of all graphics, animations, narration, and other media elements required to support the development of training</p> <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can existing content/media be repurposed? • What new content/media needs to be created? • Which elements are graphics, photos, animation, and video? • What narration files need to be created? • What additional software controls are necessary?
Software Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Designers 	<p>During this phase all necessary display, control, interaction, and recordkeeping routines are created based on the design requirements.</p> <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What software creation tools will be used? • What models and templates can be employed? • How will errors be handled? • What data needs to be recorded? How will it appear? • Is this being built for LMS deployment? • How will the program structure be controlled?
Quality Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Reviewer • Project Manager • Subject Matter Expert 	<p>Last phase before publishing, this phase involves testing and validation of the full product.</p> <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review structure - Peer Review, Beta Group, Cold Body Test • How will the errors be reported? • How will problems be resolved? • How will later requested changes be processed?