Chapter III

Application of an Instructional Design Model for Industry Training: From Theory to Practice

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines reflections, considerations, and the problems encountered when attempting to apply an instructional design model in the design and development of two online courses for industry training. Recommendations are included for instructional designers to avoid and handle many of the issues that arise in the real world. Specific issues addressed include: tight budgets, limited cooperation from SMEs, high expectations of clients, major changes to 'finalized designs,' and the importance of dealing with such matters promptly and effectively. The significance of both formative and summative evaluation and the role of project management are also discussed.

INTRODUCTION

I took my first course in instructional design as a grad student. This introductory course presented structured step-by-step instructional design models, which, initially, I strictly followed and adhered to. I found these models, especially the Kemp, Morrison, and Ross (1998) one, very useful when I completed my first instructional design plan for a class project. While I found the application of an instructional design model very straightforward when applying it to an imaginary project, it did not seem as simple when I tried to use this same model for the design of online courses for business training a couple of years later. This chapter will discuss my reflections, considerations, and the problems that I experienced when attempting to apply an instructional design model in the design and development of two courses for industry training.

DEFINITIONS

While there are several definitions in the literature for Web-based training and instructional design models, the following two will be used for the purposes of this chapter.

Instructional design "is the process of designing the environment, methods, and resources for effective learning of specified goals and objectives" (Boettcher & Conrad, 1999, p. 49).

According to Hall (1997), Web-based training is instruction that is delivered over the Internet or over a company's intranet. This instruction is accessed using a Web browser, and is characterized by the readily available, interactive, multimedia nature of the Web and its associated plug-ins.

BACKGROUND

Among the many possibilities for growth that have stemmed from the World Wide Web, the most promising is its use for distance education (Swan, Shea, Fredridcksen, Pickett, & Pelz, 2000). Unfortunately, in our rush to create these online courses, the emphasis has often been on technological issues (Swan et al., 2000), instead of the instructional design process (Downs, Carlson, Repman, & Clark, 1999). Ritchie and Hoffman (1997) advocate that the Web's potential for instruction, combined with our knowledge of instructional design principles, can create a distributed instructional medium that is unlike previous methods of distance learning.

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