

Instructional Design Checklist

Evaluating a Learning Experience

A checklist for storyboarding smarter

A well-constructed storyboard gives you—and stakeholders—an at-a-glance view of your soon-to-be course. Use this Instructional Design Checklist to facilitate the ultimate evaluation of your learning experience: discover content and clarity gaps, inconsistencies, and potential learning lags—before those design hours go to work!

As you scan your drafted storyboard, ask the following questions of the content.

- Does the overall structure and balance of content reflect and lead to the learning objectives for the course?
 - Does the order reflect a logical progression of learning?
Teach relevant vocabulary and facts prior to complex procedures. And verify that there's a clear purpose or teaching point for every slide or component.
 - Is the progression of learning clear for learners?
Consider previewing high-level steps or categories before diving deep into the detail of complex procedures.
 - Does the flow of components or activities make for a good experience, not having too many interactions back-to-back or too little interaction within a section?
Aim for interactivity every four to five slides or three to four components. Avoid repeating component or activity types unintentionally or too close together.
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- Does each component item or slide have the desired balance and/or consistency of copy? Of media? Of bullets? Of special treatment (such as bolded words)?
 - Are all sections of voiceover (VO) and scripting an ideal length?
A useful goal is 15–75 words of VO or scripted text per slide, though this will depend on your project and learners. Consider how you might make any lengthy chunks more concise and/or bolster one-sentence scripts with additional content.
 - Does the VO sync nicely with any on-screen text (OST), not competing with what's on-screen?
Keep key words that appear both in the VO and on-screen in the same order in both formats and try to find the sweet spot of coordinating VO and on-screen copy without making them entirely redundant: lean on VO for explanations, reserving OST for anchoring concepts, vocabulary, and complex instructions.
 - Are all sections of OST an ideal length, and does OST enhance and pair with the VO (not distract from it) to help keep learners engaged?
Lengthy OST not only means a longer seat time but can also decrease readability across formats. Keep in mind what else will be happening while the learner reads OST and break up chunks of copy with an interaction or a different layout.

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Evaluating a Learning Experience, *cont.*

- **Do examples and context mimic the learner's real life as much as possible?**
Any decisions the learner needs to make in scenario assessments and activities should be logically complete and reflect decisions they make in their real-life context. Activities should get as close to the desired application as the format allows.
- **Will assessments, knowledge checks, polls, discussions, and/or activities evaluate learners' progress toward learning objectives, and are they positioned and spaced thoughtfully?**
Ensure that evaluative elements reflect priority content and that learners can successfully complete them using what they've learned from the experience—not just by guessing well or relying on memorization.
- **Can learners successfully complete assessments and activities based only on the learning experience and any prerequisite knowledge?**
Avoid overly complex or tricky activities and questions and ensure that all wrong answers are clearly wrong.

- **Are transitions and other signposts included where needed?**
Make sure the text flows from topic to topic and component to component.
- **Do all interactive components have navigational text?**
Be consistent in your navigational text and tell the learner what they need to do, how many items to expect, and what they'll find within those items. Keep accessibility in mind and avoid ableist language. For example, for learners who can't see your course, directional language isn't helpful—instead of saying *Select the three icons below*, try *Select the following three icons*.

- **For instructor-led training (ILT), are breaks included, positioned, and spaced thoughtfully?**
- **Are there estimated times included with each slide or an estimated seat time?**
- **Is everything consistent?**
Make sure the text flows from topic to topic and component to component.
- **Does all content have suggested components noted?**
Make sure it's clear how content will appear in the designed-out course.