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Point Course Development Checklist

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As leaders we are called to properly develop the people under our influence. One of the best ways to develop people is through a professionally and properly designed course process. I have had the honor of writing, developing and teaching several courses. Below is my checklist.



Did you develop the course backwards?

In other words, did you start with the end in mind? Did you reverse engineer the process? Be very clear about what you want the learner to be able to do when he or she is finished with the course. ONLY after that should you begin developing the course.

As you grow in this skill you'll be able to work backwards from the highest level skill, or information, you're teaching, to the lowest level. This insures proper order.



Did you teach with simplicity?

Simple is good. The purpose of a course is not to show how much the course developer knows. The purpose of a course is to allow people to acquire what you know as easily and painlessly as possible. The best way I know to keep things simple is to teach

in packets of three. You've heard the sayings, "It's as easy as 1,2,3" and "It's as simple as A,B,C." Teaching in a series of three steps, or even in multiples of three, is powerful.



Did you develop with cultural relevancy?

Know your target market or student base for your course. The way you teach a Type A person who works on Wall Street is different from the way you would teach a creative artist living on a lake in Colorado. Make sure that your course resonates

culturally with the type of people most likely to take it. If this isn't done, you won't effectively reach or teach the people who purchase your course.



Did you leave enough white space?

For some reason a lot of course developers like to cram as much information as possible on one page. L e a v e s p a c e. It leaves room for mental breathing room. It lets people feel like it's easier to learn your material. Too much information packed into too

little space is difficult to process. Paper, and certainly computer bytes on a webpage, are cheap. Learning, however, is priceless.



Did you utilize fonts consistently?

Make sure that you don't use too many different types of fonts. Fonts come in families for a reason. If you're going to use Myriad Pro, then use Myriad Pro regular, bold, italics, etc. Don't use multiple font types in a course design. It's confusing on the eyes.

Check this out. **I** *am going* to **write** *this* in **MULTIPLE** *types* *of* **fonts**. How does that feel to your eyes? Not so good. Keep fonts consistent.



Did you utilize three or less colors?

The law of three applies to colors as well. Unless you are using a full color image to illustrate something keep all your colors to a maximum of three. So, if you have a header that is, let's say, dark blue, keep your other text colors to say black and red. Keep

colors to three maximum or learners will feel like they are looking through a kaleidoscope and their heads will spin. Oh, by the way, keep a color wheel on hand to mix and match well.



Did you divide properly?

People need to feel like they are making progress and the way to do this is to create lessons and levels. After you get to say, 12 lessons (12 is a multiple of 3 by the way), make a level out of it, and then your next level will also need to have 12 lessons. Also,

to create an added sense of accomplishment, create lessons that contain a clear series of steps. This will keep people moving forward and help them feel a consistent sense of accomplishment.



Did you use consistent steps for each lesson?

You must create one process for each lesson that stays consistent throughout the course. This makes all new information feel easier because the person is familiar with the learning process. In my SpanishPower™ course I use a Six-Step

process in each lesson. That process then stays the same in each lesson of the course. It is a highly interactive process that keeps people from getting bored within the context of one lesson.



Did you utilize kinesthetic learning techniques?

The more engaging you can make your material the better. TPR, (Total Physical Response), techniques should be integrated into your course processes for optimal learning. For example, use memory techniques that require people to use multiple senses like

touch, sight and auditory, rather than memorize words by reading words on a page. Flow cards are an example of this where the person sees, hears and says while manipulating cards.



Did you use consistent iconography?

As you develop your course, and set up your steps, you should use iconography that looks like it is part of the same family.

These icons, or bugs, as some call them, visually tell the learner that they are now going to participate in X activity within a

lesson. An icon of an audio file, writing exercise, memory cards, etc. are all examples of this. Just make sure they are consistent and look like they are from the same family.



Did you record professionally?

There is nothing worse than going through all the work and expense of developing a course properly and then recording on your computer microphone in your office. Get professional sound recording and editing equipment and learn how to use

it. If you're not inclined to do this, then employ someone who knows how to do it. If you don't sound like a pro, professionals who need your teaching won't listen to you.

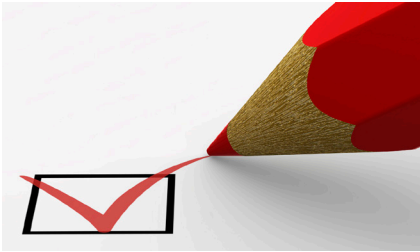


Did you create your artwork professionally?

This is along the same lines as having a professional sound recording but, by all means, invest in a professional artist to create your cover artwork and design. If you don't do this, you'll end up with a mediocre course cover, jacket or notebook and it

will look like it was created and put together at Office Depot. Oh, and find a professional fulfillment company to produce your course if you're selling hard-copy materials.

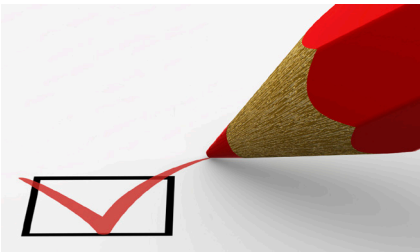
Additional Resources



Lynda.com is a fantastic and inexpensive resource for people who want to learn how to use the latest design, audio, and video editing software. It's a mega technology training site.



Adobe Creative Suite is also offered now inexpensively for a monthly fee of \$49.00 and includes all text, audio, and video editing software imaginable. If you plan on designing multiples courses and don't want to be shelling out \$100 plus an hour for designers and editors, this may be something to consider.



Media Tech Plus in Orlando, FL is my fulfillment company of choice. They do outstanding work, offer great customer service, and charge a reasonable fee.

mediatechplus.com

A Few Final Thoughts

There are many other things to consider about a course such as length of lessons, length of levels, total time investment to complete the course, whether or not to create quizzes, certification exams, whether to provide support, or even full blown facilitation and tutoring in conjunction with the course.

My intent here is simply to give you a macro checklist to consider as you develop a training course. Of course, we haven't even touched on the subject of monetization of your courses but that's another topic for another day.

Best,

Ricardo