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Upon consideration of the various ID models that I have studied and utilized, I have developed what I believe to be a model that is the consensus of best practices, contained within a simplistic and easy-to-understand structure. I call this the ASAP model.

The first overarching step is to **A**nalyze. One cannot know the goals nor understand what to develop without first identifying something to study or work on. Whether it is conducted formally or informally, a needs analysis must be conducted. This analysis will help the designer to find the topic upon which to base all else. This needs analysis can be completed through a survey, an interview, or even general discussion amongst potential learners.

After the needs analysis, a content analysis should be done. Unless the designer is already a subject matter expert (SME) on the need, a deeper understanding should be gathered about the content that will serve as the focal point of the later instruction. Without accurate information being disseminated, the entire instructional session is without positive effect.

A learner analysis is the following step to begin the process of learning about your learners. It is beneficial to eliminate wasted time throughout the ID process, and that is part of what makes this model—a sound, structured, efficient one. The instructor should not emphasize material that the learners already know well—here, the learner analysis gives input as to where the focus of instruction need be, and allows one to connect information to prior knowledge.

Our next overarching step is to **S**ynthesize. This starts with defining strategies and resources for the instruction. However, in the ASAP model, an emphasis is on having the instructional designer complete the Synthesize step in conjunction with the stakeholders of
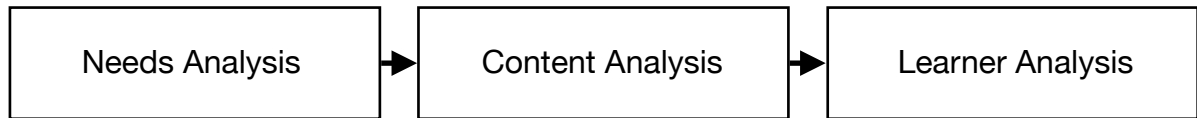
this instruction (a sample of learners, even perhaps their employer, or other designers) in

order to facilitate open-mindedness and reduce tunnel vision of only one individual choosing

the best strategies and resources to use. As the strategies and resources are chosen, the next

thing to do is craft the instruction itself in preparation for its use.

The final overarching step is to **A**pply & **P**rognosticate. This last overarching step

incorporates a feel of the Rapid Prototyping model, as evaluation is stressed even as

instruction is put into practice, not just during or after. This, in turn, allows for adjustments

to be made on-the-fly, where necessary. Instead of putting the bulk of evaluation during or

after instruction (which means most adjustments will not be made until the next training), the

idea is to assist the designer and instructor maintain relevant and effective learning as
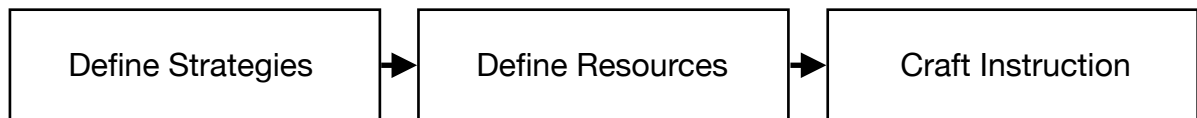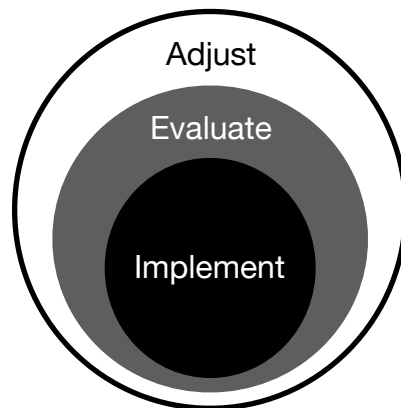
instruction happens.

The ASAP Model

Analyze

| Needs Analysis | → | Content Analysis | → | Learner Analysis |

Synthesize

| Define Strategies | → | Define Resources | → | Craft Instruction |

Apply & Prognosticate

Adjust

Evaluate

Implement

My prior experiences using ID models have been mixed. I appreciate the various models and the unique approach each tailors for the instructional designer. However, I have consistently found myself using what feels like a mix of a few of these. I will say that I do not believe there is a "one size fits all" approach, and, just as learners need personalization, so do instructional designers. Different designers have different preferences and, therefore, will prefer different models (and of course the needs will drive this too).

My solution to create a structured model that exhibits practices of the rapid prototyping model is in part my agreement with Tripp and Bichelmeyer's findings that "any design methodology which acknowledges the complexity of the situation may be more efficient because it anticipates and short-circuits the kinds of problems designers typically encounter" (p. 34). The latter portion of the ASAP model (Apply & Prognosticate) allows just this; the designer should adjust instructional strategies and methods (if possible) as evaluation occurs during instruction. What is the ultimate purpose? To emphasize flexibility in teaching, which is, in my opinion, a crucial skill.

Let me explain more using a specific scenario. For an instructional designer who chooses to use the ASAP model to, say, show middle or high school students how to evaluate the content of websites for its validity, the first step of planning would align with the overarching Analyze step. In this case, a needs analysis is not necessary, as we already know what the focus of the learning will be on. Therefore, we move on to analyzing the content of this instruction. If he or she did not already know, the designer would need to research or use an SME to determine exactly what information students need to learn from this session. Are there any specific steps or actions that can be taken to accomplish this task? What do they look for? How can they rate a

website? Once the content is analyzed, the designer could then perform a learner analysis. This would entail finding out more about the students; what do they already know? how fluent are they with technology? This information will drive the creation of instruction and determine where to connect their prior knowledge with new learning.

The design phase aligns here with the overarching Synthesize step of the ASAP model. Preferably, the instructional designer would (in conjunction with some teachers, students, admin, etc.) now select the best instructional strategies and tools to utilize in creating the actual instructional format. Let me re-state here that this can be done alone, but the more minds you put together, you typically will find it allows for better results overall. Of course, this process occurs after the analyses as you need information about the learners in order to determine the right strategies and methods of instruction. In addition, the defining of instructional goal(s) and objective(s) is meant to be conducted as a part of the development of instruction. Once the instructional creation is finished, the designer can move to the final phase of the model.

The last overarching step is to Apply & Prognosticate. Here, the designer/instructor takes care to immediately evaluate and adjust instruction as it is being implemented. From start to finish, all three concurrently take place; although all errors cannot be corrected during instruction, effort should be made to do so where possible. It is not enough to leave improvement to the next session. Instead, make the most of what you have now. At the least, informal evaluation and revision of instruction occurs alongside the implementation of the instruction. Think of it this way: if a designer sees a fixable problem part-way through instruction, is it even ethical to simply note it for future reference, or do what you can to make it right now?

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References

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