Storyboards Tailored to You: Do-It-Yourself Magic Arrows

BY BILL BRANDON

For sale: Magic arrow. Facilitates work and maximizes free time by allowing the user to communicate any intent and execute any action by drawing simple figures. It’s based on the latest technology, and the magic arrow’s user-friendly interface ensures success even by unskilled or naive operators. Only $29.99. Money-back guarantee.” (Don’t you wish it were that easy?)

A magic arrow on a process flowchart gives the illusion of an integrated and automated transition, one that happens effortlessly. “Magic arrows” abound in instructional design. One of the important magic arrows in e-Learning is the storyboard, which transports a project from design to development — from the ethereal realm of problem-solving to the cold and cruel world of production.

A storyboard is to e-Learning design what a blueprint is to architecture. The storyboard provides the details from the designers that are needed by the developers in order to produce an e-Learning application on time and within budget. A common question among instructional designers seems to be, “Where can I get this magic arrow? I need a really good template for my storyboards.” In this article, I’ll present some answers to the “magic arrow” question, and I’ll give you some ideas that will help you build your own storyboards.

But first, some background

Much of the “process” in e-Learning development comes to us from the film and video world, as well as from software engineering and education. This common history with media design and production creates confusion at times. There are some common terms that are used in different ways, and not all of the lessons learned in producing other media apply to e-Learning. This is a serious enough issue to justify a bit of review.

Continued on next page
The Hollywood connection

In making movies, cartoons, and other visual media, a written script is the traditional way to specify the exact content. During preproduction, the storyboard is how writers and directors plan out the sequence of camera shots and connect them to the script. The storyboard usually consists of a series of sketches and notes on paper, covering the key shots in sequence.

The actual working practice varies. Alfred Hitchcock, a twentieth century director of psychological thrillers, used very exacting storyboards, so detailed (it is said) that scenes could be precisely shot even if he wasn’t present on the set. There is a famous scene, the shower murder in “Psycho,” that required dozens of individual shots, involving an actress and a stand-in, made over a period of several days. Hitchcock’s graphic designer on the film, Saul Bass, drew each of those shots on a storyboard in advance. That’s planning! Other directors seem to be products of the “back-of-an-envelope” or “cocktail napkin” school. The point is that all of them plan, and all of them rely on storyboards to communicate their ideas and vision to the rest of the production team. Very little is left to chance.

There are a number of common concerns that apply both to the film, video, and multimedia world and to e-Learning:

• Both involve production with a team.
• Both involve production of visual elements and audio.
• Mistakes in either one are expensive to fix.
• Creativity is important in both.

At the same time, there are important differences between other forms of media and e-Learning:

• Most multimedia and all video and film products are linear — one thing always follows another in a fixed sequence. But most e-Learning involves branching based on learner responses — so each learner may experience a different path through a course.
• Most multimedia and a lot of video and film is made for the purpose of creating awareness and interest via a clearly communicated message. e-Learning is created in order to obtain particular business goals as the result of people developing new skills or knowledge.
• Most multimedia and all video and film products are non-interactive (or only minimally interactive). e-Learning is defined by questions, interactivity, and practice.

In both cases, the storyboard is a focal point, a translation or transition from the language of problem definition to the language of problem solution, from creative vision to technical expertise. The storyboard provides a communication channel between the various disciplines contributing to the final product. This is significant in the case of e-Learning because at least three disciplines are involved: instructional design, graphic design, and technology.

The e-Learning storyboard

Because storyboards are more useful for educational content than scripts, e-Learning designers have adapted and refined the idea to suit their particular needs. Where a moviemaker’s work results in a fixed sequence of images, e-Learning usually involves branching and interactivity and so e-Learning storyboards must connect not only content and images but also programming instructions.

In their excellent training strategy document, the U.S. Department of Justice Office for Domestic Preparedness says, “Storyboards are the blueprints of an interactive courseware design and development process. They provide a combination of text and graphics or graphic descriptions that convey all the necessary information about the delivery of course content. Storyboards describe in detail all images, animations, movie segments, sound, text and navigational paths. The more complete, detailed, and accurate they are, the fewer the assumptions, questions, delays, confusion, and errors that occur later, during the costly Development phase. An accurate content outline, course design document, and style guide are essential to the success of the storyboard design.” (The complete training strategy document is available on the Web at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/blendedlearning/odp.htm.)

What can you do with a storyboard? Storyboards are important to production of effective e-Learning for several reasons. First, the storyboard documents the e-Learning design completely. Also, the brainstorming that often accompanies work on a storyboard may assist the creative process and result in a better design. Storyboards provide an important basis for project management, control, and communication. A storyboard can facilitate training of e-Learning novices, provide support for standards, and make it possible to achieve consistent “look and feel” across an organization’s e-Learning products.
Where the storyboard fits in the production process

The design process leading up to creation of the storyboard has several steps, each one meant to reduce the possibility of mistakes or to preserve the integrity and value of the e-Learning design. (See Figure 1, below.) These steps have been addressed in two of my previous articles in The Journal. The first four steps (Priority Needs, Job Objectives, Task Analysis, and Methods and Tools), were covered in “How to Connect e-Learning to Business Objectives” (April 12, 2004). “How to Build Composite Learning Progressions Using Approximations” (December 16, 2002) showed a method for moving from the initial analysis to the creation of the Learning Objectives and the Learning Progression.

To review very briefly, after identification of priority business needs, the e-Learning designer will have named the job objectives (outcomes or accomplishments) required to resolve those needs. By task analyzing the outcomes — breaking down into steps what a performer must do in order to accomplish each outcome — and by listing the appropriate methods and the available tools, the designer identifies the approximations that will help the learners develop the needed skills in a learning setting. At this point, the formal learning objectives can be defined and organized into progressions. The designer can then create a flowchart to set up the sequence of learning activities. The next step is to create draft storyboards that can provide a basis for reviewing the course plan with subject matter experts. Once reviewed, the draft storyboards can be transformed into production storyboards that will guide the developers. These production storyboards also serve as a checklist for the final summative evaluation before release.

Storyboards are not always part of the design and development process. If your approach involves applying a rapid prototyping technique, you likely won’t be storyboarding because the emphasis is on getting prototypes developed as soon as possible and iterating the process. However, in almost any other situation, especially when using systematic instructional development processes such as ADDIE (Analyze — Design — Develop — Implement — Evaluate) (see http://ed.isu.edu/addie/Research//Research.html) or structured delivery models, such as ROPES (Relate — Overview — Present — Exercise — Summarize) (see http://business.baylor.edu/James_Moshinskies/ROPESTHTM), a storyboard should improve your process, facilitate production, and lower costs. It may not be a “magic arrow,” but storyboarding works.

Could you borrow or buy a storyboard?

Storyboard formats and details always relate to a particular design methodology, and to particular e-Learning approaches and authoring tools. In some cases (perhaps a third of the time), there will be a storyboard template that someone else has developed and which will exactly fit your circumstances. Some of these are free, and some can be purchased. Finally, you may already own a tool that includes storyboard development among its features, or you may have the budget to buy such a tool. Let’s look at some examples.

Freebies

Some templates are available on the Web at no charge. If you search the Web using a keyword such as “storyboard,” you will get many hits. That’s the good news. The bad news is that most of these search results will relate to film, video, or multimedia and will not be useful for e-Learning work. So a search for “e-learning” on the results of the first search will reduce the clutter and still yield a large number of potential hits. You may also find that many of the templates posted on the Web claiming to be for e-Learning are not useful for your particular situation. They may be incomplete, they may be based on a model of learning that you disagree with, or they may have no learning model behind them at all. They may turn out to be suitable only for developing non-interactive PowerPoint presentations. Others won’t work for networked teams where revision control is important. Many of the formats will only be suitable for frame-based e-Learning, which in turn is mainly suitable for declarative (factual) or canonical (right/wrong) knowledge.

There are some bright spots, though. Two of the best sources online provide solid templates at no charge.

Studio 1151

“Studio 1151” is an online guidebook maintained by Alan Levine at the Maricopa Center for Learning and Instruction. One section provides storyboard guidelines and examples. (http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/authoring/studio/guidebook/storyboard.html). The examples seem to have been designed for HyperCard stacks, but they still illustrate three useful formats. Another section of the site offers advice on flowcharting as well.

U.S. Department of Justice

Section 3.6.2.2.4 of the Office for...
Domestic Preparedness, U. S. Department of Justice, training strategy document that I cited earlier in this article (http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/blendedlearning/odp.htm) offers three other useful formats and a great deal of detail that would be appropriate indoctrination material for individuals new to e-Learning design.

Templates you can buy

Among the results when you search the Web for “storyboards” will be a number of storyboard tools and templates offered for sale. Again, most of these will be for movie or video production purposes. A few will be useful for sketching out ideas graphically in storyboard fashion. A handful are designed for e-Learning, and of these there are two that are, in my opinion, most generally useful.

Horton e-Learning Templates

Most storyboard templates, as I mentioned, are really designed with the needs of frame- or screen-based e-Learning in mind. This is fine unless you are developing a simulation or an application where frames and screens are not involved. The only templates I have found that include options for applications that are not screen-based — i.e., for those based on timelines, such as Flash movies — are in the Horton set. Actually, the Horton e-Learning Templates are a package of several dozen models, all based on a complete design methodology. The full set includes templates in your choice of Visio, PDF, or HTML formats for everything from basic PowerPoint presentations to learning objects. Many of these are also discussed in William Horton’s book Designing Web-Based Training. Information and samples are at http://www.designingwbt.com/index.htm.

Designer’s Edge

Designer’s Edge is an e-Learning design application that has been around for several years. This is another product that delivers a complete design methodology, based on classic ISD. For this reason, experienced instructional designers sometimes feel that Designer’s Edge is redundant, but teams that consist of new designers, or those with only a few projects under their belts, seem to like it. Designer’s Edge includes a key part that creates actual storyboards.

Designer’s Edge was originally intended for use with the authoring system Quest, but it can be used as a stand-alone product. To “kick-start” development, Designer’s Edge storyboards can be exported to HTML or Java templates, through use of another application called Net Synergy, or they can go directly into Quest. At various times in the past, Allen Communication Learning Services (or Mentergy) has offered utility applications that would export Designer’s Edge data into Authorware and ToolBook, but these do not seem to be supported now. From time to time, individuals in user groups report that they are working on applications that will “translate” Designer’s Edge data into file formats that authoring systems can use, but to date none of them have said they have been successful.

However, an extension from Mentergy is available for Designer’s Edge Enterprise that allows Dreamweaver developers to access Designer’s Edge project design information from within Dreamweaver. Designer’s Edge also produces a number of reports that are useful to the project manager. One of those reports is an inventory of the assets identified in the storyboards (screens, movies, and other objects) that will have to be produced during development; this can be very helpful in refining your schedule and your budget. Designer’s Edge is relatively expensive, but if your organization isn’t too experienced, and is serious about...
applying a systematic approach to e-Learning design, there is nothing quite like it. Information is at http://www.mentergy.com/mainmenu/?menuid=tools&subid=designing

**Templates built into tools and LCMS**

Learning content management systems (LCMSs) usually include a storyboard tool. In addition, traditional stand-alone authoring tools may also provide storyboarding capability. Some of these storyboarding applications are very complete, offering both graphics and text to communicate the designer’s intent. Others only provide text-based “storyboards” that are little more than an outline. These are not as effective as the ones that offer graphics.

**What if these won’t work for you?**

A great deal of e-Learning authoring is done with tools such as PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, and Flash. It is possible that more e-Learning is created with these three, and with native Web applications (HTML, XHTML, DHTML, JavaScript, etc.), than is created with traditional authoring tools, LCMSs, and rapid development tools. In these instances, designers must provide their own storyboards.

**Designing your own storyboard**

An effective storyboard will provide a robust hybrid of instructional design, graphic visualization, and software engineering features. In my opinion, the only way to get this is to build your own, using Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, or even HTML or Flash.

**What goes into a storyboard**

To be most useful, a storyboard must

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**TABLE 1 Typical storyboard organization**

These items are representative of the types of detail frequently included on storyboards for frame-based e-Learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Header section:</strong> Identifying information and administration details</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Storyboard creation or latest revision date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storyboard number</td>
<td>Unique number assigned to this screen or frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Version</td>
<td>Version number; reflects number of SME review cycles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision number; reflects revisions between SME reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writer</td>
<td>The designer or author of this storyboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewer</td>
<td>The person assigned to review the storyboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review date</td>
<td>The date the current storyboard was reviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course title, number</td>
<td>Course title is the one that will appear on the course title screen. A unique number identifies the course to which this storyboard belongs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module title, number</td>
<td>Module title is the one that will appear on the module introduction screen. A unique number identifies the module within the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lession title, number</td>
<td>Lesson title is the one that will appear on the lesson introduction screen. A unique number identifies the lesson within the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screen title, number</td>
<td>Screen title is the one that will appear on the screen itself. A unique number identifies the screen and its position within the lesson.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Display section:</strong> Instructional content seen or heard by the learner</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monitor</td>
<td>Graphic showing what the learner sees on the monitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script/notes</td>
<td>Script for narration, notes for developer/programmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor image details</td>
<td>Where to find the graphic, if one exists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logo/branding</td>
<td>Notes concerning use of logos or branding on this screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Font, bullets, text position</td>
<td>Notes concerning typographic treatment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Navigation section:</strong> Options and instructions given to the learner</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Navigation controls</td>
<td>Indicate which controls are available and which screen each goes to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User instructions</td>
<td>Specific instructions to appear on screen for the learner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Interactivity section:</strong> How the learner and the application communicate; logic</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rollovers</td>
<td>Location and text for any rollovers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot spots</td>
<td>Location and result for any hot spots on screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items and logic</td>
<td>Response items, right/wrong/none, and result of selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of tries</td>
<td>How many tries does the learner get on the question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Feedback for learner when maximum tries are exceeded, number of next screen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
address all of the details included in the individual Web pages or screens. In turn, the authoring application and the nature of the e-Learning content itself will determine many of these details. An e-Learning storyboard integrates instructional methods and media elements in a graphical way. It documents the instructional sequence, text and narration, graphics, other audio and visual elements, learner interactions, and testing.

Table 1 on page 5 summarizes items that often appear in storyboards, particularly those that support frame-based e-Learning.

Storyboard content will tend to be different for each authoring tool used. PowerPoint storyboards can be very simple, while storyboards for Authorware may be complex. Some tools have more capability than others, e.g., regarding test types (drag-and-drop, fill-in-the-blank, hot objects and hot spots, multiple choice, true-false), and these features should be included on the storyboard template. Other differences will depend on the particular style of delivery chosen for a given e-Learning application: the storyboard for a “slide show” format will provide features distinct from those of storyboards meant for use in designing demonstrations (for example, Camtasia captures), interactive lessons, or collaborative exercises.

However, the details will almost always include the navigation features found on the pages, the information content (text and graphics), the interaction features, and scripts for narration, animation, and video. Normally a storyboard also includes unique identification and other administrative information in the heading. It helps to organize the storyboard around these groups. Also, the storyboard should reflect key points in your organization’s style guide for e-Learning applications, such as:

- Navigation: consistent throughout, button actions indicated, accessibility indicated, navigation and branching clearly indicated on each page.
- Text and layout style: type styles, bullet styles, text positioning
- Narration: audio script, including instructions and feedback, male/female narrator voices indicated.
- Interaction: Adequate description of interactions for developers to work with, prescriptive feedback for all quiz items and interactions,rollover text included, number of tries learner gets on each exercise or item, scoring and tracking instructions, clear instructions for the learners.
- Graphics: detailed descriptions and actual graphics, file names and locations, logo usage and colors, other branding specified.

If you have accessed the Studio 1151 and Department of Justice sites mentioned earlier, you have seen how two organizations tackled the layout problem in different, but effective, ways. Another example of a customized storyboard appears below in this article (“Using your storyboards”). You may also find it helpful to develop your own style guide for storyboards, modeled on the one on the Department of Justice site.

**Storyboard with the tools you know**

There is no doubt that storyboarding on paper is a more fluid process than...
storyboarding online, especially during the drafting stage. However, you should carefully consider whether your organization will use paper storyboard forms or electronic forms for the production storyboards. Paper forms are acceptable for small projects and for a local team that does not develop many courses each year, if you don't mind the housekeeping issues and a certain amount of inefficiency when it comes to revisions and to project management. In my opinion, electronic forms are really mandatory for large projects and where the team is geographically spread out.

I cannot recommend strongly enough that the information contained in your storyboard about the images in your e-Learning application be in graphic form. Whether it's screenshots for software training, PowerPoint slides thrown together with clip art, sketches done with MS Paint, or hand drawings captured with a scanner etc, an image will communicate the designer's intent and vision to the development and production team much more clearly.

If your e-Learning design involves branching, with prerequisite tests and lesson reviews instead of purely linear designs, PowerPoint won't be an ideal storyboarding application. You may find it necessary to execute your storyboard forms by using a relational database, HTML, or Flash.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Prerequisites</th>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>Teaching/Testing</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Briefly explain the concept behind macros: tools that speed up tasks. Give examples of use to show the benefits.</td>
<td>Customizing toolbars, using autotext. Offer option to review pro-reqs.</td>
<td>Macro: recorded keystrokes. Macros are normally recorded in a template. Compare to making a tape recording.</td>
<td>Using a macro.</td>
<td>Practice skills together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recording a macro.</td>
<td>Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assigning macros to toolbars.</td>
<td>Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adding a macro template.</td>
<td>Practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 2** This is a learning progression chart for an e-Learning course. The numbers designate the sequence numbering for the storyboards (see Figure 3).

**FIGURE 3** This is the flowchart for the Prime sequence of the "Recording a Macro" lesson in the course shown in Figure 2. Each item in the flowchart represents a screen, and a storyboard frame will be developed to deliver the content specified.
Using your storyboards

The entire design process needs to be completed before creating the storyboard. The designer will have identified the learning objectives and organized the content, established the instructional sequence, and defined the modules. (See Figure 2 on page 7.) Finally, the designer flowcharts, or at least models, the sequence and titles the various parts. (See Figure 3 on page 7.) In an interactive application, storyboards and flowcharts must work together. The flowchart helps the design team visualize the paths through the course, and makes sure there aren’t any “dead ends.”

Storyboarding should be an enjoyable process, and it should not be rushed. The more complete and accurate the storyboards, the smoother the development work will go later. If you finish the storyboards and complete the review process before doing any actual production, you are far less likely to have to do any “re-work” of elements due to changes in sequence and content.

Storyboard development is frequently a two-step process. Start with simple rough sketches of the screens and grow these into a storyboard as the design solidifies. Initial storyboards should not be too “polished” — at the beginning of the process you’re still brainstorming. The objective is to have complete, useful guides for the developers, artists, and voice talent. (See Figure 4, below.)

Numbering the screens and storyboards is an important consideration. The usual practice is to have a sequential system that assigns a number based on the screen’s position in the course, module, and lesson. These systems will often increment individual screen numbers by 10, so that additional screens can be inserted if necessary without requiring renumbering of large sections of the course.

Other details of Figure 4 follow the descriptions shown in Table 1.

A final consideration is the translation of the storyboard forms into electronic formats. At a minimum, saving the production forms as Word or Adobe Acrobat (PDF) documents will make it possible to maintain the information online, where all members of the team can access it easily. In some cases, it is worthwhile to convert the information into HTML or into a database. Leo Lucas wrote an article on using HTML for this purpose in the March 17, 2003 issue of The Journal (“Create Web-based Courses Faster With HTML-based Storyboards”).

Conclusion

After the storyboard is completed, and before turnover to the development or production team, spell check and proofread everything! Verify that the style and usage guidelines have been followed, especially for capitalization, punctuation, headings, and layout. See the March 2002 Journal article and accompanying checklist by Chris Frederick Willis, “Storyboards: Ready? Set? NO!” for a thorough guide to a smooth handoff.

Everyone wants to find a fast, reliable, and cheap “magic arrow” for the critical transitions in the e-Learning design and development process. We’d all like to be a “Hitchcock” in the e-Learning annals. Nobody likes the extra work and scope creep created when “the plan” is only sketched out on the back of an envelope. Building your own storyboard is the best way I know to have it all!

AUTHOR CONTACT

Bill Brandon is the Editor of The eLearning Developers’ Journal. He has been active in the learning and development field since 1968, and created his first e-Learning applications in 1984. Bill lives near Dallas, Texas. You can reach him by email at bbrandon@elearningguild.com.

Additional information on the topics covered in this article is also listed in the Guild Resource Directory.
Interaction, Activities, and Learning

Engage learners meaningfully to develop mastery

Interactivity is a pretty hot topic in our field and for good reason. Its importance for learning has been clearly documented in instructional research. Some of the most critical outcomes of interaction include feedback, motivation, and the ability to adapt content to a learner’s needs.

If interactivity is considered an important measure of good online learning, the dilemma is that we often don’t know what we’re measuring, and that’s a pretty slippery slope. To answer that question we first have to ask: Interaction for what? That’s easy... Interaction that supports the desired learning. If the fundamental nature of learning is engagement in activity over time, as two significant teachers have convinced me, two of the words from that assertion hold important keys for what good interaction requires: activities and time.

Meaningful interactions

The design of meaningful interaction, for the purpose of learning, requires selecting activities that allow learners to practice doing what knowledgeable and experienced people DO with the content (in order to gain expertise and mastery — over time).

Too many online instructional materials contain limited or the wrong types of activities, though. Most of the time when we design instruction, we need learners to be able to use the content, not just recall it. If we truly want learners to be able to use the content, we need to design instructional activities that involve learners in the types of activities that allow them to practice using the content as it is used in real-life situations, deal with increasingly complex uses of the content as a whole (not just the parts), and get meaningful feedback and necessary support along the way. That’s a big charge, but that’s what it takes. Recall activities are useful to assure understanding of simpler concepts, but often do not go far enough.

Activity types

The table below shows activities that are commonly used in online learning and support. The categorization reflects ways that these activities are commonly used in practice.

Research shows that transfer of learning is greatly enhanced when learning environments allow learners to experience real world complexity, with support. People don’t learn as well by being fed information. They learn best by engaging in meaningful activity. The best activities are those that mirror the way the content is used in the real world.

Example

Consider an online module on tools used for project management. Limited interactions that allow the user to see example project plans and Gantt charts improve learners’ awareness of tools of the trade and how they are used. This is fine as a conceptual starting point. Even better is adding the ability to manipulate the tools by changing data and determining how that impacts deliverables. Then use the tools in cases to experience how different tools support different processes... now we’re getting into real, real-life uses. Allow learners to use the tools and gain feedback, advice, and support on their own projects over time, and the learning environment begins to support real mastery.

The essential design question, when it comes to selecting activities (interactions) is the complexity of the learning task and the degree of skill that is desired... awareness, newbie, middle level, or expert? If you have a complex learning task (almost a given) and require more than awareness or newbie level of skill, the use of meaningful DO activities is needed.

Next time...

In this series of articles, I’ll describe methods and tools for accomplishing a DO activity each time. We’ll start on June 7 with how to accomplish hands-on practice. Think you need to spend a fortune building highly realistic simulations? If you’re training folks to fly 757s or clean up hazardous waste spills, that makes sense. Otherwise, it’s often overkill... better strategies can cost loads less. I believe I have some Ah Ha’s in store for you.
About the Guild

The eLearning Guild™ is a global Community of Practice

Through this member-driven community of designers, developers, and managers of e-Learning, the Guild provides high-quality learning opportunities, networking services, resources, and publications.

Guild members represent a diverse group of instructional designers, content developers, web developers, project managers, contractors, consultants, managers and directors of training and learning services – all of whom share a common interest in e-Learning design, development, and management. Members work for organizations in the corporate, government, academic, and K-12 sectors. They also are employees of e-Learning product and service providers, consultants, students, and self-employed professionals.

The more than 11,300 members of this growing, worldwide community look to the Guild for timely, relevant, and objective information about e-Learning to increase their knowledge, improve their professional skills, and expand their personal networks.

Resource Directory
The Guild hosts the e-Learning industry’s most comprehensive resource management database that includes more than 4,500 (and growing) e-Learning related resources in a searchable database. Guild Members can post resources and can update them at any time.

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The eLearning Developers’ Journal
The Journal provides in-depth articles about how e-Learning professionals can make e-Learning more successful in their organizations. It’s a weekly online publication in PDF format and Guild Members have unlimited access to the searchable archive of every issue published.

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Member Discounts
Guild Members receive a 20% discount on all optional services offered by The eLearning Guild that are not included in your membership. These services include all face-to-face and online events produced by the Guild, special publications, and other services as they are developed.

The Online Forum Series
e-Learning for e-Learning professionals! The Guild Online Forum Series enables you or your team, to explore the most pressing issues facing e-Learning professionals today with some of our industries smartest people – right from your desktop or conference room.

Engaging Symposia
The Guild’s unique and focused symposia drill into the most critical issues for e-Learning designers, developers, and managers. These are intensive learning events with limited enrollment. Participate in person or online, as an individual or as part of a team.

Annual Conference
The eLearning Producer Conference, held in the fall each year, offers comprehensive and in-depth content for all e-Learning professionals in a collegial environment conducive to learning and sharing.

Event Proceedings
If you attend a Guild event, you have immediate access to all event proceedings. If you do not attend, as a Guild Member you still have access to the proceedings 90 days after an event ends.

Guild e-Clips
A Guild Members-only publication sent by email every week. It’s short, easy to read, and includes “clips” designed to keep members connected to the latest information about Guild publications, surveys & studies, and learning events.

Professional Development Through Active Engagement
In order to maintain a vital community and provide relevant information, The eLearning Guild seeks the active involvement of all Guild Members and Guild Associates. Consider these ways to engage:

Speak at Guild Events: Members and Associates are encouraged to submit presentation proposals for any and all Guild events.

Write for the Journal: The eLearning Developers’ Journal articles are written by industry leaders and practitioners just like you who are working in this field every day.

Join the Program Advisory Committee: This committee works to craft the program content of all events produced by the Guild.

Join the Research Advisory Committee: This committee works to identify the topics for Guild surveys and studies, and also develops the survey instruments.

The eLearning Guild organizes a variety of industry events focused on participant learning: