

Practical Application: Classroom Administration Course

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IDD&E Portfolio

June 1, 2022

Scenario

Organization

I am employed at the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy (SGM-A) as an instructor, course facilitator, and curriculum developer for the Sergeants Major Course (SMC). The SGM-A and SMC are considered the flagship for all Non-commissioned officer training and education and is the culminating institution that a select few attend when achieving the rank of Sergeant Major. The instructors teaching the SMC are fellows attending either the Pennsylvania State University (PSU) or Syracuse University (SU) and possess a master's degree in either Adult Education & Lifelong Learning from PSU, or Instructional Design, Development, and Evaluation for SU. Every graduating Fellow and SMC instructor is a master trainer and instructor – something they have done their entire military career and a pre-requisite for their selection to Sergeant Major.

Current Project

Although every Fellow & SMC instructor has a wealth of knowledge and experience as an instructor, many lack skills and expertise in classroom administration. While completing this degree program with Syracuse, I have spent a great deal of time analyzing the performance problem to determine the root cause(s) to create effective solutions. As such, the ultimate goal of an actual project I have been assigned is to design instruction on classroom administration to use for onboarding new SMC instructors.

Performance Issues

Having spent a great deal of time and energy understanding and describing this performance problem during my studies at SU, I quickly learned that the performance gap is a knowledge gap corrected with adequately designed instruction. Currently, 100% of all graduating Fellows and future instructors at the SMC lack the knowledge and skills required to manage their classrooms effectively. As a result, the SMC has had to reprimand, relieve, or replace an average of 20% of new instructors during their first year.

Proposed Solutions

For the sake of brevity, I will forgo the results of the Front-end Analysis that I completed regarding this performance problem during my studies at SU. However, the FEA conducting regarding this performance problem is the basis of my proposed solution. As such, designed instruction must be created to educate and train newly graduated Fellows on classroom administration policies and procedures. Then, all participants must practice, perform, and get evaluated on effective classroom administration techniques before performing instructor duties at the SMC.

Application of IDD&E Principles

As I recently described, a complete understanding of the root cause of this performance problem required a comprehensive FEA conducted during my studies in the SU IDD&E program. The FEA I ran allows me to understand the actual situation as opposed to attempting to correct symptoms of the problem. The FEA serves to understand the performance problem, but it does not offer solutions to correct the problem. Solving this problem by creating designed

instruction requires a systematic and deliberate approach – Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement & Evaluate – ADDIE. The most critical competencies I have developed for this performance problem will be defined using ADDIE.

Analyze (**A**DDIE)

Gained Competencies:

- IDD&E Standards of Practice Competency 2.2: *Validate performance gaps through multiple analysis techniques.*
- IDD&E Standards of Practice Competency 2.3: *Identify and describe target learners using multiple analysis techniques.*

I firmly believe that numbers do not lie, but people who use numbers do. I am not saying people are liars; somewhat, anyone can skew data to reflect their agenda or belief. Therefore, for data to be considered reliable, it requires an evaluation from several sources. Performance gaps are no different, and to truly understand a performance gap requires multiple analysis techniques and validation. And, if completed correctly, any solution applied to the performance problem will be effective and target the appropriate population – learners.

Design & Development (**ADD**IE)

Gained Competencies:

- IDD&E Standards of Practice Competency 3.7: *Develop new instructional, evaluation, and implementation materials based on plan, using appropriate techniques and technologies.*

This competency is perhaps the area in which I grew and developed the most. Before attending this program at SU, I probably would have resorted to creating some PowerPoint slides, a Program of Instruction (POI), and a few other accompanying materials to correct this performance problem. However, this program has taught me that approach would probably fail or not be effective. I have learned how to “scaffold” knowledge, recall existing schema, and cognitively & reflect on creating effective instruction. Additionally, I learned how to evaluate education for effectiveness and, probably most importantly, how to leverage current, existing, and emerging technologies into my designed instruction.

Implementation & Evaluation (**ADD**IE)

Gained Competencies:

- IDD&E Standards of Practice Competency 4.3: *Collect, analyze, summarize and report implementation and evaluation data*

Having served in the military my entire adult life, I consider myself a good planner. However, I quickly learned that not accurate regarding the implementation of instruction.

Equally crucial for when and how we will implement new instruction is how to report and evaluate the education and its data. Therefore, to truly measure the effectiveness of my designed instruction for new Fellows includes a noticeable behavior change that illustrates learning occurred and a reduction in incidents that occur with new instructors and their classroom administration skills and abilities.

Knowledge Gained

Recently I took a moment to reflect on what I have learned in the last year and then how I have grown. Admittedly, I must say that my perception going into this program and the reality coming out of it are far contrasting. My perceptions about the program, what an instructional designer is and does, and the profession, could not have been farther from the truth. For example...

Gained Competencies:

- IDD&E Standards of Practice Competency 1.3: *Develop multiple **theory** perspectives (e.g., learning, instructional design, media, and visual design theories)*

At the start of this program, we were required to complete a self-assessment. When rating myself for the above competency regarding theory, I rated myself a “low” in that I did not realize the level of theory that is included in instructional design and to some extent that so much theory existed.

- IDD&E Standards of Practice Competency 5.3: ***Lead, maintain quality, and manage ID projects and deliverables***

I have managed my entire adult life. What is this program going to teach me about managing? Instructional design, how complicated can it be where it requires managing? I was wrong, wrong, bad! Effective instructional design requires the expertise of an array of different people. As such, managing all the moving pieces and parts is essential and possibly the difference in whether the project is completed on time and/or effectively.

Reflection

As I graduate from this program and the scenarios I am already experiencing and involved with, I realize that my skills, attributes, and interest in instructional design have increased tremendously. My competencies have developed and will continue to improve as I gain more experience in the field. For the next two years, my primary focus will be on instructing and being an effective instructor. However, my secondary focus will be self-development as a lifelong learner and establishing my consulting firm.

References

Syracuse University School of Education IDD&E, 2020. Instructional Design, Development, and Evaluation Standards of Practice. Syracuse University. Syracuse, New York.