Nuts and Bolts

Your guide to creating learning materials with MEDIA

We're glad you're here!

You've pitched your idea or written your proposal, you've rounded up money, you've gotten key stakeholders on board, and now it's time to begin planning your project. Exciting times—but also perhaps a bit daunting. Because this may be your first foray into the world of online course development, we've come up with some pointers that will make the process flow a little more smoothly.

**Think about how you're going to use the materials.**

Find examples you like.

Prepare to spend some time with us.
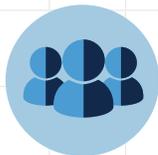
Work in concert with the development team.

Carefully define your learning objectives.

Remember that everything is connected.

It's all going to be okay.

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Think about how you're going to use the materials. Are they pre-work? If so, how will you adjust your lectures to accommodate the fact that learners are already familiar with some of the material you'd normally cover in class? How are you going to hold learners accountable for viewing the materials? What data do you want to collect about the learner experience (if any)? Carefully considering these questions will help you create a learning experience that's meaningful for participants.

Find examples you like. If you're creating a website, then find websites that you like. If you're requesting a video, then track down visual treatments that you find appealing. The same holds true with PDFs…if you're compiling a document, tear out magazine layouts that you like. Examples will help us come up with customized solutions for your project.

Carefully define your learning objectives. Learning objectives are the scaffolding upon which content is built. They determine what goes into a course—and just as importantly, what is omitted. What should learners think/feel/do differently as a result of interacting with your materials? The answers to these questions become your learning objectives.

Prepare to spend some time with us. The quality of the materials we create will reflect the amount of time that is spent planning and designing the instruction. The good news is that you only need to plan once; after the materials are made, then you can easily reuse them in the future.

Work in concert with the development team. We will listen carefully to you to figure out what's important, and then we'll brainstorm possible solutions with your team. All of our suggestions will be made with the learners—and the learning objectives—in mind. Creating engaging, instructionally sound educational materials is a collaborative effort!
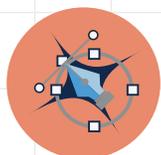
Remember that everything is connected. There are moments in the development process when a prompt response is required in order to keep a project on track. Delays can result in missed milestones and postponed final deliverables.

It's all going to be okay. Courseware development is cyclical, and every project has ups and downs. When you're in a "down" phase, don't despair. An "up" phase is probably just around the corner.