

Identifying Need for Instruction and Learner Analysis

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Introduction

The instructional topic I will be developing an online course for is a training program for employees working in a sign shop. This employee onboarding training is important, because many new employees struggle to understand the tools, procedures, and safety protocols specific to the sign making industry. The sign making process is different from traditional graphic design environments that may mainly focus on design skills on the computer. Sign design requires knowledge of different types of materials, different production techniques, and how to use potentially dangerous equipment. The purpose of this training is to educate sign shop employees about the process of making signs and giving the employees the knowledge and skills they need to do their job effectively and safely. By teaching employees how to operate the equipment and follow the production process our training can help improve workers' productivity and reduce errors. Training on safety protocols will minimize workplace accidents and injuries. Trained employees not only produce better work, but they also have greater job satisfaction because they feel confident and capable of their abilities. Without structured training employees are left to figure things out on their own, which can lead to mistakes that could have been avoided. This affects not only the financial cost and final product of the sign but can also affect the employee's confidence. When workers do not feel prepared, it can cause frustration, which can lead to burnout or quitting. Without proper training, employees often face performance gaps between what is expected of them and their actual performance. These gaps can lead to inefficiencies, errors, and possible safety concerns. The goal of my online course is to address these performance issues, minimize errors, help employees meet the demands of their roles, increase productivity, and increase safety awareness.

Problem Statement

There is a gap between what new employees in the sign shop are expected to do and what they can actually perform without proper training. The lack of knowledge of specialized equipment, materials, and safety procedures leads to errors and safety hazards. A structured training program that addresses the knowledge and skill gaps of many new employees is necessary for productivity and safety in the sign shop

Target Audience

The primary target audience for this online training program is entry level graphic designers who are new to the sign making industry. General characteristics of my primary target audience include that they are young, between the ages of 20-30, predominantly female, college graduates, and are beginning their first full-time job in the field. Specific entry characteristics include that the learners are comfortable using Adobe software and have a baseline knowledge of common tools like the pen tool, shape tool, type tool, etc. and baseline knowledge of common design terms like kerning, leading, and bleeds. Beyond familiarity with Adobe software, learners should have basic knowledge of file preparation for print, such as setting up bleeds, understanding color profiles, and exporting files in formats compatible with sign making machinery. The academic background of the employees includes having either an associate or bachelor's degree in graphic design, art, or communications. The primary target audience is motivated by their desire to succeed in their new jobs and develop practical skills that can make them more valuable in the workplace. Common mistakes in the print and production area often stem from a lack of familiarity with key processes, particularly with tasks like weeding, printing, substrate selection, and safety. Novice learners may struggle with weeding, especially when it comes to delicate designs, accidentally removing parts of the vinyl that should remain intact or

not using the proper weeding tools, which can damage the final product. In printing, common mistakes include incorrect color profiles, such as using RGB instead of CMYK, leading to color inaccuracies, or misloading materials, which causes alignment issues or jams. Additionally, learners often fail to select the correct substrates for specific projects, such as using the wrong type of vinyl for outdoor signs or choosing a material that is not compatible with the printer or intended use. Novices sometimes overlook the importance of wearing protective gear, handling sharp tools, or following proper procedures for operating large printers and cutting machines. Addressing these common mistakes in training can prevent costly errors, improve product quality, and ensure a safe working environment.

Instructional Needs and How to Measure if Learning Occurred

The instructional needs that my online course will resolve include felt needs and critical incident needs. Employees will show felt needs because they have a desire to improve their performance and do well at their job. Critical incident needs will be addressed in my online course, because of the safety concerns during the sign making process. The online course will focus on ensuring that learners can select the correct materials, operate machinery, and demonstrate safety procedures. To measure if learning has occurred throughout the training there will be quizzes and hands on experiences. Learners will be asked to show the correct production steps, label equipment and materials, and answer questions about safety.

Why Instructions Can Resolve the Training Problem

The training program will resolve the instructional problem by teaching employees how to perform the tasks of their job. By focusing on practical, hands-on learning, the training will give employees confidence in their ability to use the equipment and follow safety procedures. Employees who receive training have increased employee satisfaction, which leads to higher

retention rates and a better overall work environment. Employees view training as a way employers show them that they are valued or worthy of time away from the job to learn and grow. Training is often associated with costs, and employees may feel a sense of worth or pride knowing that the company is spending money on their growth (Schmidt, 2010).

Conclusion

Developing a training program for graphic designers in a sign shop addresses a clear need for structured instruction on the tools, processes, and safety protocols. Without proper training employees can make mistakes, have decreased productivity, and have safety risks. By developing this training to cater to the learner's characteristics I can create an effective and engaging training program for new employees. The online course will help employees feel better prepared to succeed in their position. The employee training will improve employees' technical and production skills and enhance their satisfaction and safety in the workplace.

References

- Schmidt, S. W. (2010b). The relationship between job training and job satisfaction. *International Journal of Adult Vocational Education and Technology*, 1(2), 19–28.
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