Innovative Approaches:

Developing Effective Stories to Complement Instruction

B. Dianne Calhoun

Quote

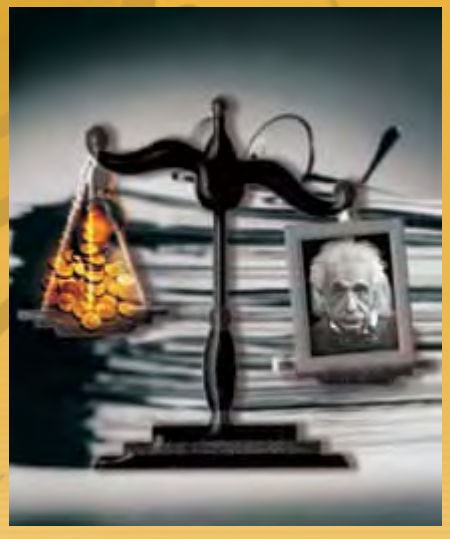
"We value stories because they are like reports of research projects, only easier to understand, remember, and use."

--Gary Klein

Problem

- The innovative approaches we use greatly enhance the instruction we develop by giving the learner a more interesting and realistic learning experience. There are templates available for us to use for the factoids and games, but not for the stories.

Purpose



- The purpose of this inquiry is to research how we can develop effective stories to complement instruction that:
  - Increase learning value
  - Use best practices for story telling
  - Decrease development time

Research Questions

1. What is a story?
   - What constitutes a good story?
   - Why should we use stories?
   - What are some typical types of stories?
   - What methods of story development are being used or explored in the industry?
   - What are some best practices for developing stories?
   - How will stories affect learner engagement?
   - How will stories affect the effectiveness of the instruction?

Research Questions (cont.)

2. What are the present challenges for us, instructional design analysts (IDAs), when we develop stories to complement instruction?
   - What methods do we use now when developing stories?
   - What are the preferred methods for developing stories?
   - What can be learned from the story development methods already in use?

Research Questions (cont.)

3. How can tools or job aids help support the development of effective stories that complement instruction?
   - How will tools or job aids enhance our ability to develop effective stories?
   - What format should be used to develop tools?
   - Do any templates exist today?
   - Are there any existing templates to use?
   - Who should be involved in developing tools and job aids?

Research Questions (cont.)

4. If project time permits, what would the tool or job aid look like?
   - What do the IDAs think of the tool or job aid?
   - How well does the tool or job aid work for them?
   - Are there any suggestions for improvements?

Methods

survey RESEARCH methods section

- Surveys
- Interview
- Literature Review

Findings

1. What is a story?

Denning states that a story in its broadest sense is anything told or recounted; more narrowly, something told or recounted in the form of a causally-linked set of events; account; tale,: the telling of a happening or connected series of happenings, whether true or fictitious (October 2000).

Findings (cont.)

1. What is a story? (cont.)
   - Good story—engaging
   - Stories allow learner to connect to instruction
   - Types of stories
   - Methods for story development
   - Best practices
   - Learner engagement
   - Effectiveness of instruction

Findings (cont.)

2. What are the present challenges for us, instructional design analysts (IDAs), when we develop stories to complement instruction?
   - Unsure where to start
   - Pressure to develop quickly

Findings (cont.)

3. How can tools or job aids help support the development of effective stories that complement instruction?
   - Give basis for where to start
   - Collaborative effort for job aid

Findings (cont.)

4. If project time permits, what would the tool or job aid look like?
   - Basis to start the story development process
   - Questions to ask
   - Story types
   - Story checklist—good reference

Conclusion

- Research showed how we develop effective stories to complement instruction that increases learning value, uses best practices for story telling, and decreases development time.
- Many developers have problems developing stories
- A job aid or process is needed to help ensure the story development is effective for the instruction.

Recommendations

- Offer IDAs training on story development. Many developers felt challenged when developing stories.
- Offer brown bag lunches where speakers or our own developers with experience in story development could give advice to less experienced developers.
- Offer seminars or sessions where developers share stories or tip and tricks of story development gone bad or good.

Questions?

- Any Questions?
- dpeach2959@aol.com