

MIT 500: Instructional Systems Design: Research and Theory

Understanding GroupWise

Project Report I

- Needs Assessment
- Learner and Context Analysis

Project Report II

- Instructional Strategies
- Task Analysis

Project Report III

- Evaluation Plan & Surveys

Context and Conditions

Understanding GroupWise was the project completed for MIT 500: Instructional Systems Design: Research and Theory. Dr. Mahnaz Moallem was the instructor for this course taken in the fall of 2005.

New Hanover County Schools (NHCS) administrative personnel frequently used e-mail to communicate information to teachers throughout the institution, often in the form of attachments. However, teachers were indicating that they were not aware or never received information that had been sent via GroupWise e-mail. NHCS personnel interviewed the teachers in order to thoroughly analyze the problem and concluded the cause of this problem was a lack of training in using the GroupWise system.

The *Understanding GroupWise* project was completed in teamwork with fellow graduate student, Tina Nelson. We proposed the creation of a self-study print-based module to instruct teachers in the basic functionality of the GroupWise system. Tina and I shared the tasks required to design and develop the module.

Scope

MIT 500 required the student to design, develop and evaluate an instructional module. Project Report I included a needs analysis, instructional goals, learner analysis, context analysis and task analysis. Report II involved determining instructional strategies, performance objectives and their coordinating test items. Report II also documented the results of the formative evaluation process, both one-on-one, small group, and the subsequent revisions. The project was completed within the semester in which the course was taken.

Role

Tina and I served as equal team members on this project, using Dick and Carey's *Systematic Design of Instruction model* (2005) as the guide for the instructional design process. Together we served as instructional designer in completing the tasks of conducting a needs analysis, determining the instructional goals, analyzing the learners and the context, completing the task

analysis, designing instructional strategies, determining performance objectives, developing test items and completing the evaluation process.

As project developers, we completed the project using Microsoft WORD. The fifty-two page module included a pre-test, the instructional content, a follow-up checklist at the end of each section, a post test and a quick reference guide.

Tina and I also served as subject matter experts and writers for the project because both of our employers use GroupWise for e-mail within the institution. We were familiar with the subject content.

Reflection

This course was my first exposure to the formal instructional design process. Although I had created many instructional materials for patient education over the past years, they were created on a trial and error basis. This course not only revealed the proven process for creating effective instructional materials, but also revealed the purpose of each step, how the steps are interconnected and the theories and foundations upon which each step is built.

Looking back at this initial project as I am about to complete my graduate work, there are certainly things I would do differently. First, I would spend more time assessing the pre-requisite skills of the learners to more effectively target the instruction to the audience. Also, I would spend more time drafting and planning the module, using storyboards to layout the design in order to ensure the quality and clarity of the content and to reduce the need for revisions.

Through this course, I learned the instructional design process and the theories supporting that process which should be applied throughout the design and development of an instructional module. I will build on the skills and knowledge gained in this course as I continue to design and develop instructional materials.