

Ace Your Instructional Design Interview

Elarning Course Case Study

PROJECT DATA

Project Title	Ace your Instruction Design Interview
Tools used in Development	Articulate Storyline, Canva, Microsoft PowerPoint, Word
Time in Development	Approximately 4–6 weeks
Client	Idol Acedemy (Academic/Portfolio Project)
Collaborators	Dr. Robin Sargent, and Amanda McCroskey
Executive Summary	<p>This project focused on designing a learning experience to help aspiring and early-career Instructional Designers prepare for job interviews with confidence and clarity. The course addresses gaps in interview preparation, particularly in articulating skills, aligning experience with job requirements, and responding effectively to behavioral questions. Using scenario-based learning and Merrill’s First Principles of Instruction, learners engage in realistic tasks such as analyzing job postings, developing STAR responses, and applying strategies in simulated interview situations. The course emphasizes practice, reflection, and real-world application. By the end, learners are equipped with the tools and confidence to perform effectively in instructional design interviews.</p>
Challenge	<p>Many Instructional Designers were entering interviews without sufficient preparation or confidence in communicating their skills and experience. Key challenges included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Difficulty aligning past experience with job requirements● Lack of familiarity with structured response methods like STAR● Limited practice with behavioral and scenario-based interview questions● Uncertainty about how to present instructional design work

and decision-making

These gaps often resulted in vague responses, missed opportunities to demonstrate expertise, and lower success rates in interviews. Additionally, there was no structured training available to guide learners through the full interview preparation process.

Solution

To address these challenges, I designed a scenario-based eLearning course grounded in Merrill's Pebble-in-the-Pond approach. The course walks learners through a realistic journey of preparing for and completing an instructional design interview.

Key elements of the solution include:

- Progressive Scenarios: Learners move from analyzing job postings to developing responses and applying strategies in interviews
- STAR Method Integration: Structured guidance for crafting clear, concise, and results-driven responses
- Interactive Practice: Opportunities to write responses, analyze scenarios, and receive feedback
- Real-World Application: A final activity requiring learners to apply all skills to a realistic job posting
- Learning Enhancements: Interleaving, retrieval practice, and dual coding to reinforce learning

The course was designed to be practical, engaging, and directly transferable to real interview situations.

Results

While this project was developed as part of a course design, success was measured through intended outcomes and learner performance indicators:

- Learners demonstrate improved ability to analyze job postings and identify key skills
- Learners create structured, relevant STAR responses aligned with job requirements
- Learners show increased confidence in articulating their experience
- Learners can apply interview strategies in realistic scenarios

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM CONTEXT

Executive Summary

This project was created to address a common gap among aspiring Instructional Designers: the ability to confidently and effectively interview for roles. Despite having strong design skills, many candidates struggled to communicate their value, align their experience with job requirements, and respond clearly to interview questions. This course provides a structured, scenario-based approach to interview preparation, guiding learners through realistic tasks and decisions they will face. By combining practical application with proven instructional strategies, the course bridges the gap between knowledge and performance. The result is a more confident, prepared, and capable instructional design candidate.

What were the challenges you were trying to solve with this project?

The primary challenge was designing a learning solution that addressed both skill gaps and confidence gaps. Learners needed not only to understand interview strategies but also to practice and apply them in meaningful ways.

Constraints included:

- Designing for learners with varying levels of experience
- Ensuring content was practical, not overly theoretical
- Creating realistic scenarios without access to live interview environments
- Balancing guidance with independent practice

SOLUTION JOURNEY

What were your criteria? What were the constraints that you needed to work around? Were there any solutions you considered but rejected?

The solution needed to be:

- Practical and immediately applicable
- Scenario-driven to reflect real interview situations
- Structured to reduce cognitive overload
- Engaging and interactive

Alternative approaches considered:

- Lecture-based content (rejected due to low engagement)
- Static guides or job aids only (rejected due to lack of practice)

What solution did you choose in the end? What drew you to that specific choice?

A scenario-based eLearning course was selected because it allows learners to actively practice skills in context. This approach aligns with real-world performance and supports deeper learning.

Briefly describe the design and development process you used.

The course was designed using Merrill's First Principles of Instruction:

1. Problem-Centered: Focus on real interview scenarios
2. Activation: Learners connect to prior experiences
3. Demonstration: Examples of strong interview performance
4. Application: Practice through scenarios and activities
5. Integration: Real-world application tasks

What challenges did you encounter when implementing/building the solution? How did you get over these hurdles?

Challenge: Ensuring scenarios felt realistic

- *Solution:* Based scenarios on common instructional design interview situations

Challenge: Balancing guidance and independence

- *Solution:* Gradual release model (guided → самостоятель practice)

Challenge: Keeping learners engaged

- *Solution:* Incorporated interactivity, storytelling, and real-world tasks

RESULTS

What did you learn from the development process?

- The importance of aligning instruction directly to real-world performance
- How scenario-based learning enhances engagement and retention
- The value of structured frameworks like STAR in skill development
- Iteration and feedback are critical in instructional design

Have you seen any benefits from your solution? How would you or do you measure its success? List key takeaways through a summary.

If implemented, success would be measured through:

- Learner confidence surveys (pre/post)
- Quality of STAR responses created by learners
- Ability to correctly analyze job postings
- Performance in simulated interview scenarios

Summary of Key Takeaways

Real-world relevance, structured practice, and targeted feedback work together to build learner confidence and drive skill mastery. By using a clear framework and scenario-based design, learners are better able to apply what they've learned in real performance situations.

