

E-LEARNING



Developing a Professional e-Portfolio with WordPress Made Simple

How to Develop a Professional E-Portfolio in UTB

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IU 5: The Formative Evaluation

Specific Goal

Using a free blogging program, students in the Educational Technology master's program will be able to develop an electronic portfolio by requesting access, creating and customizing the blog that will be accessible to other students, instructors, prospective employers and the world.

Instructional Unit Overview

This instructional unit was created to provide individual training for non tech and tech students on how to develop a professional electronic portfolio using a free blogging program; for the Educational Technology master's program that is reviewed at the 18 hour mark. Many new students to the program have a different educational background other than educational technology and need to create an e-portfolio to record their work throughout the program. Students will use the web software WordPress to create their e-portfolios because it is easily manageable and more professional than a wiki.

Evaluations

After the rough draft materials were created, the formative evaluation phase for this design project began. There were three steps implemented to evaluate this training. First, a subject matter expert (SME) reviewed the materials and provided feedback. Then, the materials were provided to a member of the intended audience and reviewed over the phone. Based on the feedback, revisions were made. Finally, the revised product was given to two members of the intended audience and they were asked to complete the training independently. Only one member completed the small group evaluation but the input was valuable. Reflections from these three phases of the formative evaluation phase are below.

Subject Matter Expert Review

1. Introduction. The Subject Matter Expert who reviewed this instructional unit is the Master Technology Teacher and Technology Coordinator, at UTB/TSC. She has been with the university for more than ten years and is highly skilled in instructional design and understands the importance of completing the process correctly. This training guide was emailed to her and she reviewed it independently. Her reactions to the training were emailed back to me.

2. Subject Matter Expert Review Summary. The following table shows the SME's comments and my responses for each of the major steps in the training.

Steps	SME's Comments	My Response
Step 1: Identify instructional needs of students	The SME suggested that I provide one-page example copies of the documentation referred to in the module.	Explained to the SME, that learners are able to print a quick reference diagram and are able to print assignments.
Step 2: Register for a WordPress Account	The SME suggested making sure the learner had access to the WordPress account.	Explained to the SME, in step two, some guidance is offered to help learners log in to WordPress, and email is used to verify account.
Step 3: Customize the Blog Account	The SME suggested increasing screen shots so that learner could read more easily.	Explained to the SME, that screenshots would be replaced by clearer screen captures in the final product.
Step 4: Edit the About Page	The SME suggested I give more options for name, date, location, overview to allow for creative input.	Explained to SME that during this phase the students are inputting personal data, creation of other data would be outside scope of this training and require more time.
Step 5: Add New Pages	The SME suggested that I provide enhanced views of the areas on the screens that were being discussed in the module.	Explained to the SME, that these areas will be highlighted by using the zoom feature in the final product.
Step 6: Edit the Home Page	The SME stated that the learners would benefit from actually completing an adaptive assessment.	Explained to the SME, that in order for the learners to proceed to the next objective they would need to complete one objective at a time.
Step 7: Link the Projects to the E-Portfolio.	The SME stated that this step involved many sub steps for the learners.	Explained to the SME, that I would clarify the sub-steps.
Step 8: Visit site to test.	The SME stated that showing screenshot of each stage of the process was helpful.	

3. Synopsis. Overall, the SME thought that the training adequately represented the process. Her suggestions and feedback allowed for better instruction and highlighted areas of the program so that it was one of optimal learning. We also discussed the overall layout of this training and she thought it would be better suited for a Moodle Course and am greatly considering this in the future. Through this conversation, I have identified some short term and long term changes that I will make.

Immediate Revisions:

- ◆ Make the following contextual updates: provide link to quick reference diagram (step 1), screenshots will be replaced by clearer screen captures in the final product (step 3), will provide enhanced views of the areas on the screens that are being discussed (step 5) and clarify sub-steps (step 7).

Longterm Revisions and Considerations:

- ◆ Will include assessments for the some objectives.

One to One Evaluation

1. Introduction. As previously stated, the intent of this instructional unit is to familiarize non-tech and tech students in the Educational Technology master's program how to develop a professional e-portfolio using WordPress. This instructional unit was presented to the Instructional Technology Director at UTB/TSC for a one to one evaluation to be conducted. The Instructional Technology Director is the supervisor for the Campus Technologists and the Distance Learning Specialists. After the SME review, the immediate revisions listed above were completed and the training was emailed to the Instructional Technology Director for review. The one to one evaluation could not take place face to face as intended in the Dick & Carey model due to vacation schedule conflicts. The Instructional Technology Director reviewed the training independently and took notes on the written document as she progressed through the material. Following this, we had a phone conversation to discuss his observations and recommendations for improvement.

2. One-to-One Evaluation Summary. It took the Instructional Technology Director approximately forty five minutes to complete the training independently. The follow table includes the IT Directors Observations and my response to each major step in the training.

Steps	IT Director's Observations	My Response
Step 1: Identify instructional needs of students	This task was a refresher for the IT Director. He stated that he already had in mind several students who needed additional instructional assistance.	No changes
Step 2: Register for a WordPress Account	This task was easily accomplished for the IT Director since he stated he was comfortable with being able to log onto WordPress, as he had done this before.	Visual aides were left intact, no changes necessary.
Step 3: Customize the Blog Account	This task was fairly easy for the IT Director to accomplish since the learner was used to entering data in other programs.	Visual aides were left intact, no changes necessary.
Step 4: Edit the About Page	The IT Director was a little hesitant to attempt to edit the about page, and include personal information.	Added more screenshots and instructions about what information to include.
Step 5: Add New Pages	The IT Director mentioned he was clear on the concept of saving and adding new pages as he did in a previous task.	Visual aides were left intact, no changes necessary.
Step 6: Edit the Home Page	This task was fairly easy for the learner to accomplish since it is self-explanatory.	Visual aides were left intact, no changes necessary.
Step 7: Link the Projects to the E-Portfolio.	The IT Director stated the questions were very helpful in finishing the module.	No changes
Step 8: Visit site to test.	The IT Director was not able to access the assessment questions.	Explained to the IT Director how to access the assessment questions and will clarify instructions.

3. Synopsis. There was a 4 month period where the Instructional Technology Director was solely responsible for managing the instructional unit. The IT Director commented that he liked referring to the quick reference diagram, which he could print out and keep handy if he wanted to. He did mention it could be overwhelming. We also discussed the delivery mode and how the learner will also receive automatic feedback on the practice questions. From the observations and our discussion, the following revisions will be made:

Immediate Revisions:

- ◆ Will reformat the assessment questions and include them in the tutorial instead of a different web page so the learners will have better access to them.

Small Group Evaluation

1. Introduction. The Dick & Carey model recommends at least 3 members of the intended audience to participate in the small group evaluation. Due to the given time frame for the formative evaluation only one member of the intended audience completed the training since the Campus Technologists were on summer vacation. The selected learner is a member that is not confident in her ability to develop a professional electronic portfolio using WordPress. I purposely selected an apprehensive learner for this evaluation so that I could get her “on board” before it is presented to the rest of the team. Upon completing the class, the material was “turned in” electronically and I received notification that the assignment was pending my evaluation. The reflection of the completed activity was conducted on the telephone.

2. Small Group Evaluation Summary. The entire training was completed in an hour by the Campus Technologist. During a phone conversation, the learner responded to a few questions about each of the steps in the training. The learner’s observations and my responses are indicated in the following table.

Steps	Learner’s Observations	My Response
Step 1: Register for a WordPress Account	No problems	No changes
Step 2: Customize the Blog Account	This is new to me. No problems.	No changes
Step 3: Edit the About Page	I still don’t get it, but the chart helps. I need a cheat sheet to tape on the wall.	I am going to emphasize that everyone print a “cheat sheet”.
Step 4: Add New Pages	This is where I get confused. How do I keep adding pages?	This step will become easier with practice. I will provide a clearer screen shot.
Step 5: Edit the Home Page	This is new to me. No problems.	No changes
Step 6: Link the Projects to the E-Portfolio.	Wow, this is a lot and the sub steps do help.	This is not the reaction I was hoping for. If the sub-steps are identified to be a widespread problem that will need to be addressed.
Step 7: Visit site to test.	Got it.	No changes

3. Synopsis. The response from the small group evaluation was positive and brief. It did not provide too much detail. She was able to complete all practice questions successfully which she said helped her apply the skills in context. The learner was able to complete the end goal which was to develop an

electronic portfolio using WordPress. However, the instructional unit will be delayed until mid-August, for our fall semester begins giving me time to start making revisions. Through this stage of the formative evaluation, I will make the following revisions:

Immediate Revisions:

- ◆ Include directions with reference on how to print a cheat sheet (quick reference diagram) for the instructional unit.
- ◆ Provide more in detail screen shots for step 6.

Conclusion

The formative evaluation was successful in helping me, the designer, to create a more efficient and effective instructional unit. It is obvious that I was experiencing the “forest and trees problem” in my rough draft (p.282) which Dick & Carey (2005) refer to. Based on feedback from the subject matter expert, the Instructional Technology Director, one member of the intended audience, and myself, the instructional unit has been revised three times throughout this phase of the design process. There are several revisions which will be resolved before fully implementing this instructional unit in mid August.