Instructional Design – The Ricky Bobby Model

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In a corporate environment, the goals and objectives of instructional development, as set by leadership, are usually "Get it done fast, efficiently, and with as little money as possible." In the immortal words of Ricky Bobby in the Will Ferrell movie *Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby*, "I wanna go fast" (McKay, 2006). This movie is about a guy, Ricky Bobby, who has forever wanted to become a NASCAR driver and "go fast." The Ricky Bobby ID Model is all about speed. How does the client and team get from Point A to Point B in the shortest amount of time? By speeding up the project. After all, less time equals less money, in most cases.

Theoretical Background

The Ricky Bobby Model is largely based on the ideas behind Successive Approximation Model (SAM), Rapid Instructional Design, Rapid Prototyping, Lot Like Agile Management Approach (LLAMA), and Agile instructional models. These development models approach instructional development with the idea that speed is of the essence. In theory, this approach works best when the learners are familiar with the content being presented. The goal is not to provide an in-depth, thorough, foundation setting degree of knowledge transfer, but rather to provide the learner with the information they need to perform a task and a little bit of why they are doing it as described. This falls in line with Vygotsky's zone of proximal development wherein the information being taught lies right in between what the learner can do and what the learner cannot do without the help of a more experienced other (Shabani, Khatib, & Ebadi, 2010).

Description of Model

The Ricky-Bobby model will contain all the various steps of the ADDIE model but not as a traditional waterfall method. A visual representation of the model can be seen in the Figures

section. Full disclosure: the author of this paper has never watched an entire NASCAR race, but the idea of speed is synonymous with NASCAR and it makes a great analogy that will be utilized throughout this paper.

Analysis

The Analysis phase of this model takes place all throughout the process. In the traditional ADDIE waterfall approach, the Analysis phase must end prior to any other phase beginning. In this model, the Analysis phase is the only phase that runs from beginning to end of the project. At the very beginning of the project, the Instructional Analyst (IA) works with the Instructional Designer (ID) and the Project Manager (PM) to gather the initial goals and objectives of the instruction. The IA will lead the Discovery Session to determine the needs, tasks, and the learners' assessment. The IA will work together with the ID to determine all the requirements of the instruction are covered for the ID to develop a sound design. Once the Discovery is complete, the IA moves into an assisting role with the ID taking point.

Throughout the remainder of the project, the IA will work to evaluate the results of each Sprint (period of time during which a useable product is created) and adjust the scope of the next Sprint with input from the client. For example, if the instruction produced from Sprint #1 elicits additional objectives or goals from the client, that information will be synthesized by the IA and the objectives and goals for the next Sprint may change accordingly. This, however, could result in an ever-moving target for the final product, and a good reason to make sure the client knows up front that the goal is never to be 100% perfect in the instruction. This concept is very similar to the SAM, wherein the process could go on forever if perfection were the goal. The IA and PM will be responsible for informing the client as to the timeline effects when deviations occur during the middle of the project. Changing course in the middle of the project or adding time to

the project is not always a bad thing. Best to find out the change in the middle than wait until the very end and try to ask the client for more time and money to do it all over.

By the end of the project, the IA is responsible for reviewing the final results of the implementation evaluation and making sure all of the goals and objectives were met through the course of the instructional design. In theory, the Analysis phase continues through the delivery of the instruction and the post-instruction evaluation.

Using the NASCAR analogy, the IA is like the Crew Chief on a NASCAR team. He/she is responsible for overseeing the entire race/project. He provides feedback to the driver about the race as it happens and offers insight and adjustments to help the driver (or ID) better perform.

Design

During the Design Phase, the ID takes the information gathered by the IA and creates a design breakdown for the instruction (Czeropski & Pembrook, 2017, p. 38). The ID will work with the Development team to determine the best approach given the client's specifications regarding the delivery method. This will include technical limitations and specifications for technology-based delivery methods.

The ID will be responsible for conducting each Sprint Planning meeting to determine the scope of each Sprint. The Sprint will be constructed with input from all involved: the IA will present the client's needs to determine the priority, the Development team will determine the effort involved in developing each task, and the ID will balance all of that to determine what can be completed within the timeframe allotted for the Sprint. The number of Sprints in a project will vary depending on the predetermined length of the project as defined in the contract, but it will be an iterative process (Tamez, 2016, p. 19); the Ricky Bobby Model does not assume just one Sprint. The number of weeks in a Sprint will be determined based on the complexity of the

development that needs to occur. If the development team is producing handouts and PowerPoint slides, the Sprint will usually consist of 2-week increments. If any technology is involved such as video generation, LMS integration, electronic evaluation assessments, etc., the Sprints will last, on average, 4 weeks.

Much like the Analysis phase, the Design phase will continue until the last Sprint Planning meeting. At this point, there will not be any additional design components, but the ID will work with the IA during the final implementation evaluation to interpret the results and provide feedback to the client.

Using the NASCAR analogy here, the ID is the driver of the race car. He/she wants to go fast. The driver runs the race each lap (or the Sprint) and directs the pit crew (Development team) on how the car (the instructional content) is operating.

Develop

During the Development Phase, the Development team works closely with the IA and ID to make sure the instruction produced adheres to the requirements set forth by the client. In theory, the Development team is the largest variable when it comes to team size. This team could consist of graphic designers, video editors, programmers, technical writers, etc, or this team could also consist of 1 person performing all those roles. This is all dependent on the size of the company and the resources they have available for instructional development.

Each Sprint Planning meeting includes the Development team with the Dev Lead acting as spokesperson for the team. The Development Lead will assign a "point" value to each of the tasks in the Sprint. The idea is that the Development team can only accomplish a certain number of "points" within a Sprint. And the goal of each Sprint is to have a viable, working product with each successive Sprint improving on that product (Allen, 2016, p. 302). The first Sprint is

the most important Sprint in the series as the idea is to develop a working prototype for evaluation. Each subsequent Sprint will then build off the prototype to further refine the instruction (Jones, Li, & Merrill, 1992, p. 96).

As stated earlier, the Development team is like the pit crew in a NASCAR race. Constantly adjusting and changing out parts of the car (instructional content) at the advice of the driver (ID) and crew chief (IA) to make it run more efficiently and effectively.

Implementation

Implementation occurs all through the project at the end of each Sprint. This is where the instruction will be tested and evaluated by an internal team as well as a client team as part of User Acceptance Testing. The IA and ID will work with the testers of each area to further refine and build on the instruction, incorporating feed back into the next Sprint.

Upon the implementation of the final Sprint, the instruction will pass through the final evaluation by the team and client. The final sign-off cannot occur without the last evaluation being approved by both parties.

After the pit crew (Development team) has made the adjustments to the car (instructional content) at the advice of the driver (ID) and the crew chief (IA), each lap around the track until the next pit stop is the implementation and evaluation of those changes. This allows the driver and crew chief, as well as the team owner (the client), to see what works and what does not.

Evaluation

Evaluation occurs all throughout the project. After the initial analysis, throughout Design and Development, after each Sprint implementation, and all through delivery of the instruction to the client. A post-instruction evaluation will also occur with a random sampling of students that completed the course. This evaluation will consist of questions about the instruction content and

the learner's ability to consistently perform the task without the help of a more experienced other moving forward. These evaluations will be used in developing additional courses.

It is at this point in the race that the car (instructional content) is approaching the finish line. At this point, the car should be running in its best configuration according to the feedback from all invested parties. After the race, the goal is to be in the winner's circle evaluating what went well and what could have gone better during the race.

Evaluation of the Model

At the end of the development of this model, one must ask the question, "How will I know if this model is effective?" To answer this question, one needs to return to why this model was used: fast, efficient, and cost saving. The post-instruction evaluation will help to determine if the instruction was effective. And the timeline of the project coupled with the final budget will determine if the model used resulted in a fast and cost-saving product.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Ricky Bobby model works best when time is of the essence and the learners are familiar with the concepts presented. This allows the IA and ID to work quickly with all parties involved to develop the best training content possible. Perfection is not the goal: completion is. This approach also allows for less time to be spent developing a working solution, which results in less money spent for the instruction. This model also deviates from the standard ADDIE model in that it is an iterative process and not dependent on the previous phase being completed prior to the beginning of the next. This allows for quick and agile adjustments contributing to a faster development approach.

Is calling this the "Ricky Bobby model" a little silly? Not at all. It's good branding. One will be hard pressed to not remember what it is all about: speed, effectiveness and money.

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Figures

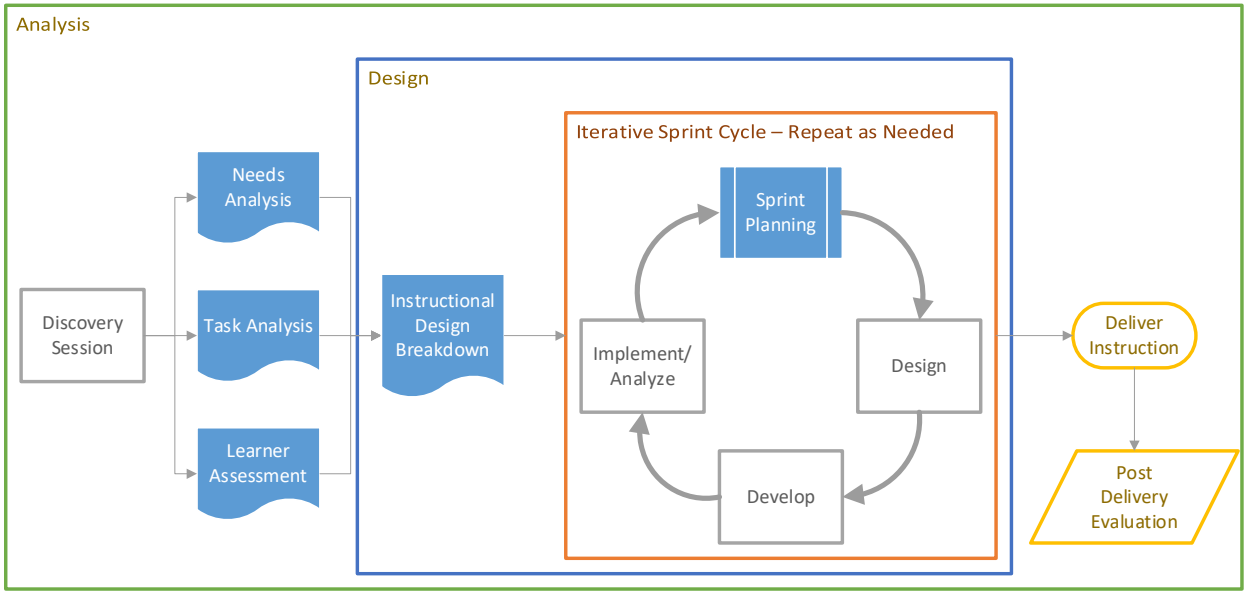

Figure 1. The Ricky Bobby Instructional Design Model