

MEETINGS COACH »

ADHERE TO ADDIE

Guide event speakers with this instructional design process.

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Q: My association is planning its yearly conference, and we really want to make the sessions memorable. Where do we begin to overhaul our program?

A: Two words: Instructional design. Instructional design is a systems approach to analyzing, designing, developing, implementing and evaluating any instructional experience.

Meeting professionals often focus on logistics, like site and menu selection. And speakers, while commonly recognized as subject matter experts, are generally not familiar with adult learning and cognitive processing. Instructional designers, however, focus on content, creating experiences that make the acquisition of knowledge and skills more efficient, effective and appealing. They help to ensure speakers draw upon attendees' prior knowledge and that learning sessions provide clear objectives and meaningful activities. They also focus on feedback and application of the new content once attendees return to their workplace.

Your association might not be in a position to hire an instructional designer. Fortunately, you can draw on a classic model, known as ADDIE, to guide the instructional design process. Consider how coaching your speakers in each of the following five ADDIE phases could result in quality instruction and an improved attendee experience.

- **Analysis.** Conduct an assessment (e.g., survey, interview, focus group) to pinpoint your target audience's learning needs.
- **Design.** Carefully plan (e.g., segment, sequence) how content will be presented, practiced and assessed to ensure attendees achieve established learning objectives.
- **Development.** Create materials, such as participant workbooks and slide decks, and interactive exercises, like case studies and games, to support learning and retention.
- **Implementation.** Develop an implementation plan to meet the unique attributes of adult learners (i.e., pressed for time, goal-oriented, knowledgeable).
- **Evaluation.** Collect data that illustrates attendee reactions and learning outcomes, as well as the degree of job transfer and business impact.

As more organizations offer continuing education both to support their strategic missions and to deliver business results, only those meetings and events that meet or exceed attendees' increasingly sophisticated expectations will survive.

Meeting professionals who determine which of these phases can be managed internally, which can be delegated to volunteers and which should be outsourced will be most successful in adapting to this new norm of instructional design.



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HAVE A MEETINGS DILEMMA YOU NEED HELP SOLVING?

Email your questions to Coach Aaron at aaron@eventgarde.com; please write "Meetings Mag" in the subject line.