

Career Pathway—Personal Reflection: Ginger Ciuperca

Introduction

For over 10 years, I have worked in training and development in various roles and industries. My first role was as a National Training Coordinator with a telecom company. Throughout the years, I have seen the evolution of the instructional design responsibilities and expectations. I have had experience with design from ID's that have no formal training to vendor experts in e-learning and web-based training. My career goal is to be successful in my current role as Strategic Program Manager at SAP.

Speaker Videos

Helping Teachers with Technology Integration: Dr. Anne Ottenbreit-Leftwich

This video is by Dr. Ottenbreit-Leftwich. She is a graduate of Purdue's Learning Design and Technology Program and is currently a professor at Indiana University. Her presentation focused on how she assists teachers in learning how to integrate technology into education by working closely with teachers in a coaching role. I found this video to be very useful to understanding what types of barriers teachers face and how one can work with teachers to help them overcome these barriers.

From the Field: International Career in LDT: Dr. Dana Ruggiero

Dr. Dana Ruggiero is a graduate of Purdue's LDT program who is now working in Bath, England. In the video, she discusses how she went from graduating from Purdue's PhD program to become a tenured professor (Learning Technologist) at Bath University. Dr. Ruggiero discussed projects she has worked on with international students as well as some of the cultural differences she has encountered. Dr. Ruggiero's video helped me to understand the differences between

instructional design in the U.S. and U.K. I particularly enjoyed this video because I had the pleasure of having her as an instructor for Foundations of Learning Design & Tech Ed 51300.

Maestro E-Learning: Jennifer Randall

Jennifer Randall is president of Maestro E-Learning, an instructional design company based in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Mrs. Randall indicated that most of her employees have backgrounds in academia. After the introduction, she showed storyboards for one of Maestro's clients, Dannon, and examples of e-learning courses developed for other clients.

From the Field: Faculty with a PhD in LDT: Pat Connolly

I watched Dr. Pat Connolly's video because I was interested in how his PhD changed his life. Dr. Connolly offered how he learned how to do research. His discussion made the connection that in order to be a competent instructional designer you must know how to perform the adequate research on the learning process, as well, as on certain subject matters. I enjoyed his story about how he had to create a course for 500 freshmen. He was very concerned with aligning the right content to the objectives so the learners can meet the objectives and feel like the course was relevant and meaningful to them. I related to this story since it closely parallels my current job.

Job Skills/Instructional Design Competencies

As I viewed the information in the competencies and job skills folder, I saw the connection between my current role and the topics that I will continue learning in this program. When I read the domains, it reiterated that instructional designers are being held accountable for the design, development, utilization, management, and evaluation of instructional materials. The standards are clearly written and there is no confusion about what is expected.

Since I am currently employed as a Strategic Program Manager, I am not currently looking for a position in instructional design. However, if I were looking for a new position, the main resources that I would use are monster.com, linkedin.com and indeed.com. I have noticed that my Purdue e-mail often sends out job postings. Recently, I discovered the ASTD (ATD) Job Bank and HigherEd Jobs advertise positions as well.

After looking at the job postings from indeed.com and monster.com, I appreciated the correlation between what I am learning and what the job market is looking for. Many jobs are looking for individuals who can design and develop courses using a variety of instructional models. Corporations are seeking employees who can create and implement an evaluation plans, as well as, people who can implement a variety of instructional strategies. I feel I can currently execute on instructional strategies in an adequate way but feel this program will help me become an ID expert.

Purdue University lists eight competencies that it requires students to demonstrate before graduating. I feel confident in my abilities to meet the first four competencies (synthesize knowledge, create knowledge, communicate knowledge, and think critically and reflectively). I have met competency 5 (engage in professional development) as I have a SAP conference scheduled and have joined ASTD (ATD) to meet competency 6 (participate actively in the profession). I feel some of my past assignments, particularly my evaluation class with Dr. Paredes, help me meet competency 7 (apply instructional design principles). Competency 8 (apply technology to solve instructional problems) is a competency that I currently use with my current job with a global software company.

Relevant Organizations

Here are the resources I have found that pertain to instructional design and technology careers in training and development.

- Association for Talent Development (Formerly the Association for Training and Development)—this organization is probably the most well-known in instructional design and offers a wide variety of excellent resources for those who develop instruction.
- ASTD (ATD) publishes *Training and Development*, one of the premier journals for instructional design.
- E-Learning Guild—this organization is advertised as the oldest organization in existence for distance learning professionals. The organization has almost 65,000 members and produces courses, conferences, and *Learning Solutions Magazine*.
- LinkedIn—this is a social network for professionals who wish to connect professionally and network. I have already joined LinkedIn. I am currently a member of several LinkedIn groups: Purdue Association of Learning Design and Technology, ASTD (ATD), ISPI, Adobe Captivate, E-Learning Guild, and Instructional Designers.

Conclusion

Due to my current work experience at SAP, I am certain of my career direction. My goal is to fully utilize the resources that I am learning. In addition, now that I am aware of Purdue's competencies, I will begin preparing for the portfolio review. I will continue to actively network by joining professional organizations on the national and local levels.