

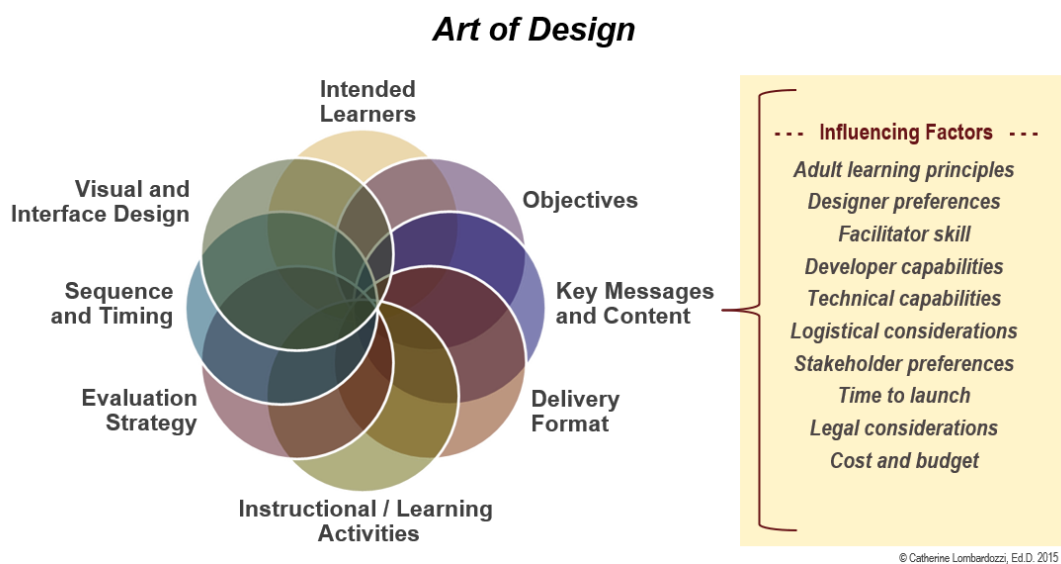
Design Decision Critique

The decisions outlined in The Art of Design can provide a framework for critiquing the instructional design of a course or program. In addition to looking at the different decisions, you can look at the aesthetics of design as an overall assessment.

This analysis works best on courses that are designed for adults, and may be most useful for ones that take substantial time (an hour or more).

The Decisions

The art of design is constituted through making many decisions over the course of conceptualizing and developing a course or learning experience. This graphic represents the principal decisions and the factors that are considered in making them.



For more, see curated resources at <https://l4lp.com/curated-resources/the-art-of-design/>

The Design Decision Critique

Here are some of the elements that can be evaluated in assessing the decisions designers make in crafting an instructional intervention. You do not have to answer all questions in each section to provide your critique. Pick the areas of the design that provide the most fodder for commentary (applause and change recommendations).

Decisions	To what degree...
Intended Learners	Has the audience been well-scoped (have clear relevant elements in common)? In what ways does the course specifically address these learners' needs?
Objectives	Are objectives clear? Do they seem appropriate for the audience and topic? Are the learners informed of the intended outcomes? Is the set of objectives appropriate to the time frame allocated? Do the activities address the objectives?
Key Messages and Content	Has the content been appropriately scoped for the audience, objectives, and time frame? Is the content accurate or well-supported by research or experience? Have the messages and models been crafted in a memorable way? Is all of the content necessary for the objectives? Is the content intellectually challenging for the audience?
Delivery Format	Does this delivery format seem well-suited to the content and objectives? Is the format well-utilized, following accepted practices for its type?
Instructional/Learning Activities	Has the designer crafted impactful activities? Do the activities keep the learners actively engaged and challenged? Are the activities memorable? Are they suited for and relevant to the audience? Do they have a clear purpose and outcome? Do activities align with learning principles? Do they align with recommended practices for the type of activity? Do some of the activities promote application of learning on the job? Are the activities creative?
Evaluation Strategy	Is progress being evaluated throughout the course/program? Are there opportunities to engage in remedial learning if needed?
Sequence and Timing	Does the course have a good flow from beginning to end? Are there adequate pauses and break times? Are activities given enough time to be adequately completed? Is most of the time devoted to the most difficult concepts or skills? Does the course have strong openings, closings, and transitions?
Visual and Interface Design	Does the course have a pleasing look and feel? Do graphics support learning? Are there visual themes or cues throughout?

The aesthetics of design

Taken as a whole, to what degree is the course/program meet the criteria for good aesthetics?

Element	Notes
Performance-based and relevant	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To what degree will learners know why their learning in this course is important?▪ How relevant and authentic are the examples and practice exercises?	
Theoretically grounded and well-supported	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To what degree are the activities in the course aligned with principles of adult learning?▪ To what degree is the content of the course well supported by research, evidence, or experience?	
Engaging and intellectually challenging	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To what degree are learners actively engaged in learning in the course (vs. absorbing information or watching demonstrations).▪ To what degree are learners challenged to apply their learning in authentic environments and provided constructive feedback?	
Memorable and meaningful	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To what degree is the course material designed to be memorable?▪ How well do graphics, metaphors, and mnemonics support the learning?	
Absorbing and enjoyable	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How attention-getting and intense is the course so as to keep learners focused?▪ To what degree will learners be enticed into a state of “flow”?▪ To what degree are there elements of fun or humor? To what degree are these appropriate for the audience?	
Well-organized and easy to follow	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How effective are introductions, transitions, and conclusions for keeping the learners on track?▪ To what degree are the elements of the course easily accessible and in working order?	