



Gain Attention

Today we are going to look at Gagne's First Event of Instruction: **Gain Attention**

...But, first, let's learn more about Gagne.

If you are already an instructional designer, chances are you've heard of Robert Gagne. Gagne was an American educational psychologist best known for his Conditions of Learning.

Gagne stipulates that there are several levels (or types) of learning, and each level requires a different type of content, including:

- Informational
- Intellectual
- Cognitive
- Motor, and
- Attitude-based

Gagne proposed a systematic instructional design process, comprising of nine events, that can be used to produce effective instructional content for each type of learning situation.

This model highlights that the skills to be taught, and the specific sequence of instructions to support such teaching, depends on the unique learning hierarchies that you are faced with. However, training designers have so much on the go that sometimes it's hard to keep the 9-step process in perspective.

The Nine-steps are:

1. Gain attention
2. Inform learners of objectives
3. Stimulate recall of prior learning
4. Present the content
5. Provide "learning guidance"
6. Elicit performance (practice)
7. Provide feedback
8. Assess performance
9. Enhance retention and transfer to the job

This model provides a checklist that ensures that you present comprehensive and successful learning experience. His approach also motivates learners and helps them associate the topics covered in your course with their previous knowledge. Another benefit of Gagne's approach is



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that it allows for trial and error- learners are allowed to make mistakes and build on their past experiences.

If you follow Gagne's process, you'll be able to create amazing eLearning courses even if you are new to instructional design.

But, remember...

instructional design is both a science and an art.

It's a science because it's based on learning theories, and art because of the creative process involved in course design. Besides, all courses are different and there is no one size fits all, so to truly succeed as an instructional designer you need to understand the science behind the art.

When instructional designers hear of Gagne, they immediately think that his approach to course design does not apply to eLearning.

Well, even though his original method was not created with eLearning in mind, it can easily be adapted to distance education.

Event 1- Gain Attention

Instructional designers are so desperate to get into teaching the content of their course that they sometimes forget why their learners are taking the course and that (in all honesty!) not all learners want to attend another eLearning session. That's why even before introducing the topic of your course and presenting your learning objectives, you need to gain learners' attention.

Some ways to do that are:

- Using catch-words, attention grabbing by lines, and quotes
- Using thought-provoking phrases and sentences
- Creating compelling stories around the course topic
- Showing a short video clip; and
- Leveraging social learning such as Facebook for Live discussion and introductions