1. **What does the term instructional systems design/development mean to you? Can you share an example?**

Instructional Systems Design or ISD is a systematic and iterative process that involves analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation of instructional and non-instructional interventions.

More specifically, instructional design is the intentional manipulation of strategies for the purpose of increasing the probability that learning will occur.

An example is Gagne’s nine events of instruction. The process of embedding events in learning materials to activate internal learning processes. To do this effectively requires the instructional designer or ID to have knowledge of learning theories and instructional theories.

1. **You have extensive experience in corporate learning and development methods and higher education course development - how would you describe similarities in learning concepts between the two? What about differences between them?**

I believe corporate learning and development and higher education course development share general, overarching similarities, but that there are unique differences.

A similarity is the process of working with subject matter experts (SME). IDs, whether in corporate or higher education need to partner with SMEs to effectively design and develop training materials or academic curricula.

A similarity is the process. The process includes each phase of ADDIE-- analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation, but the focus within each of the phases needs to be tailored to the situation.

For example, in higher education, we develop courses that meet the state’s required course learning outcomes. In corporate, the focus begins with front-end analysis-- identifying root causes of performance problems and making informed decisions based on data collected from the analysis phase. The informed recommendations may lead to instructional or non-instructional interventions.

The significant difference in the corporate world is the IDs need to be not only knowledgeable in developing instruction, but also non-instructional interventions. An ID needs to be versed in performance technology, have a strong understanding of front-end analysis to understand the nature of performance problems and to make informed recommendations based on data. Training is not the panacea for all performance problems. In many situations performance problems are not caused by a lack of knowledge or skills, or new processes or equipment, but rather problems that exist within the internal environment, such as, systems, structures, strategies, or culture.

In today’s corporate world, training and development needs to be tied to the company’s mission and strategic goals. In corporate, it’s about bottom-line results.

In higher education, it’s about student engagement, retention, and success.

1. **How has learner behavior impacted ISD processes?**

The focus of Bloom’s 1968 Model of Mastery Learning was the learner. It was based on the educational philosophy that the “normal curve” should **not** be the desired outcome of education. The “normal curve” in fact is what is expected without any instructional interventions.

Bloom believed the purpose of instruction was to meet learners where they are currently--in aptitude and to support them to be successful, to master the subject matter. Today, Bloom’s Model is akin to personalized learning, adaptive learning, Universal Design for Learning—that is, developing learning materials and activities that give all students equal opportunities to be successful.

Knowing who the learners are, whether adults, generation X-ers, or millennials, influences ISD decisions.

Technology has significantly impacted learner behavior and the ISD process, specifically in the design phase of media selection and delivery strategies like social learning and mobile learning. Given the extent of learner differences, it's critical for IDs to ensure accessibility for all students.

1. **What is the most challenging ISD project you have ever worked?**

Most challenging was a manufacturing ISD project, affecting 800 employees. It was an organization-wide initiative of preparing the internal environment to adopt ISO 9001 Quality Systems.

It was multi-faceted, requiring industry knowledge, as well as instructional theory, systems theory, change management, and diffusion of innovations.

I had the responsibility to spear head the design, development, and implementation of a systematic training and certification process for 9 manufacturing job classifications. At the time there was no formal training or certification in place.

The system had to be standardized and codified for the purpose of demonstrating to ISO officials that the companies’ processes were under control.

The project required me to collaborate with SMEs—members of the American Flint Glass Workers Union, to create a system that included a job analysis, task analysis, and safety analysis, behavioral-based objectives, structured on-the-job training, simulations, work instructions, and competency-based performance assessments with evaluation rubrics.

It was a process that spanned 1 year's time. It involved on the job observation, focus groups, and Think Aloud strategies to elicit SMEs' tacit knowledge in order to create the training and certification system. The greatest challenge, other than sheer scope, was gaining buy-in from the SMEs and gaining their trust to share their knowledge.

1. **Which ISD model do you find most practical for corporate training? What about academia?**

I go back to 1977. The Briggs Model is one I use for corporate settings. It involves analysis, design, development, field trial, installation and diffusion. Diffusion is the gem of this model. Change is a constant in the corporate world. Diffusion is the foundation of the change process. We can develop the most brilliant initiatives, but if people are not involved in the process then adoption and implementation are compromised. Diffusion is a process that IDs need to know how to orchestrate.

I use the Dick and Carey model for both corporate training and academia. It is practitioner-based and systems-oriented.

The model reflects the fundamental ID process used across fields… in education, business, government, and military.

In particular I like the emphasis of the context analysis—the need to analyze the learning environment and evaluate how closely it approximates the actual performance, work environment.

1. **What is the best advice anyone has ever given you when it comes to developing learning?**

Very simply, to ask questions.

To ask why.

To ask, what is the purpose?

To gather data before making recommendations.

1. **Have ISD models become customized to fit specific industries?**

To a degree yes. ISD is practiced in a variety of settings—higher education, business, military, and various models have been created to reflect the nuances of those settings. ID's need to understand the underlying assumptions of a model in order to select the most appropriate one for the setting.

Some models have a classroom and curriculum orientation (Gerlach and Ely Model); some are product oriented (Leshin, Pollock and Reigeluth Model), and others are systems oriented (Dick and Carey Model).

Today, the AGILE eLearning Development Model combined with SAM (Successive Approximation Model) is commonly used in industry.

1. **Based on your experience in developing higher education courses, is curriculum designed with the characteristics you described in your description of corporate training ISD practices?**

There are similarities and differences. The ISD process includes each phase of ADDIE, but the focus within each of these phases needs to be tailored to the situation. Data derived from a front-end analysis in the corporate world is going to be very different than a goal analysis in higher education.

1. **For future instructional designers-what are the top two skills they need to set themselves apart from other industry IDs?**

1. Instructional Technology: the knowledge, skills, and abilities to transform a design into a custom, multimedia, ADA compliant product.

2. Solid foundation of ISD— not just instructional technology, but a solid knowledge base of ISD, the origin of the field—the theories.

1. **Aside from the name, is there a difference between an instructional designer and an instructional developer?**

In the abstract, yes.

An instructional designer focuses on analysis—what is the need, what are the goals, who are the learners, what are the tasks or content to meet the goals, and how does the learning context differ from the real world environment. And with that data, the designer determines the learning objectives, the assessments methods, and the strategies (Instructional, media and delivery) to achieve the goal. The designer is the architect.

The instructional developer transforms the blueprint into a sound instructional, multimedia product. The developer is the production specialist.

In the real world, the instructional designer/developer performs all aspects of the ISD process.