

Case Analysis: 2. Cassie Standage (Workplace Violence Training)

By Vinaya Kulkarni

1. Key Stakeholders, Primary Interests/ Concerns:

Stakeholder	Role	Primary Interests	Primary Concerns
Arizona ID Experts (AIDE)	Instructional Design Company / Contracted Vendor	Deliver a high-quality training program, maintain client satisfaction, strengthen organizational reputation	Meeting client expectations, delivering on schedule, maintaining quality within project constraints
Emergency Services Association of Arizona (ESA)	Client / Project Sponsor	Improve workplace violence prevention and firefighter well-being through effective training	Training effectiveness, learner engagement, statewide implementation
Cassie Standage	Instructional Designer (represents AIDE)	Design authentic, learner-centered training that meets client expectations	Limited time for learner analysis, ensuring relevance and learner engagement
Melissa Jennings	Project Manager / Lead Instructional Designer (represents AIDE)	Deliver a successful project within scope, timeline, and budget	Coordinating stakeholders, managing project constraints, ensuring quality
Chief Kyle Adams	Client Representative / SME	Ensure training reflects firefighters' operational realities and promotes early intervention	Accurate, practical content that meets ESA's goals
Chief Andy Bingham	SME – Retired Fire Chief	Provide authentic firefighter experiences and learner perspectives	Ensuring the training reflects real firefighter culture and experiences
Greg Jones	SME – Workplace Violence Prevention Expert	Provide evidence-based workplace violence prevention strategies	Accurate risk mitigation and behavioral guidance
Michael Kempton	Internal SME – Retired Fire Chief	Support instructional design with firefighter expertise	Ensuring realistic scenarios and operational relevance
Firefighters	Primary Audience (Course 1)	Learn workplace violence prevention strategies that improve personal safety and well-being	Relevant, practical training that reflects their work environment and culture
Fire Chiefs & Captains	Primary Audience (Course 2)	Learn to recognize concerns, support firefighters, and reinforce behavioral wellness	Practical leadership strategies that can be implemented within their departments

2a. Instructional Design Challenges (ADDIE)

What has the designer been tasked to do:

- Design and develop two blended workplace violence prevention training programs for Arizona firefighters and fire service leaders.
- Develop instruction that promotes awareness, early reporting, help-seeking behaviors, and behavioral wellness.
- Deliver authentic, evidence-based training within the client's timeline and project expectations.

Instructional Design Challenge 1:

Limited opportunity to conduct an in-depth learner and context analysis for a unique learner population.

ADDIE Phase: Analysis

- Firefighters represent a highly specialized learner population with a distinct culture, values, language, and strong identity as helpers.
- Limited learner insight increases the risk of designing instruction that is less relevant, authentic, empathetic, engaging, and trusted by firefighters.
- The accelerated timeline limits opportunities for in-depth learner analysis methods such as focus groups, interviews, and field observations, making it more difficult to understand firefighters' experiences, perspectives, and barriers to help-seeking.

Instructional Design Challenge 2:

Lack of project team consensus regarding acknowledgment of the Cave Creek incident within the training.

ADDIE Phase: Design

- The project team discussed whether the Cave Creek incident should be acknowledged in the training but did not reach a consensus.
- The unresolved decision influences the instructional framing, learner messaging, tone, and introductory design of the training.
- If the incident is incorporated, the design challenge is to acknowledge a recent tragedy while carefully navigating learner privacy, emotional triggers, and unintended feelings of blame, shame, or guilt. If the incident is omitted, the design challenge is to establish urgency, relevance, and learner buy-in through other authentic instructional strategies

2b. Case-Specific Constraints

Case Constraint : Limited organizational support resources

- Behavioral health resources and support systems vary across fire departments.
- Some departments have established programs (e.g., routine behavioral wellness check-ins), while others have limited resources.
- Limited post-training support may reduce reinforcement, transfer of learning, and long-term behavioral/cultural change.

2c. Prioritization of challenges and constraints:

Priority	Challenge / Constraint	Rationale
1	Instructional Design Challenge 1: Limited opportunity to conduct an in-depth learner and context analysis	Understanding firefighters' culture, experiences, and perspectives is essential before making instructional design decisions. This challenge influences the relevance, authenticity, trust, and effectiveness of the entire training.
2	Instructional Design Challenge 2: Lack of the project team consensus regarding acknowledgment of the Cave Creek incident	This decision should be resolved before Course 1 is finalized because it influences the instructional framing, learner messaging, tone, and overall learning experience.
3	Case Constraint 1: Limited organizational support resources	Organizational support influences reinforcement, transfer of learning, and long-term behavior change but can be addressed through leadership training and implementation planning after the initial course design is completed.

3a. How Assigned Readings Contributed to this Case Analysis:

Assigned Reading 1: Brown (Training Needs Assessment)

Brown emphasized that effective instructional design begins with a thorough training needs assessment, including an analysis of the performance problem, learners, and organizational context. This helped me recognize that Cassie's limited time for interviews, focus groups, and observations increases the risk of developing instruction without fully understanding firefighters' needs, culture, and perspectives.

Assigned Reading 2: Meech & Koehler (Empathic Analysis)

Meech and Koehler emphasized understanding learners beyond demographics by considering their lived experiences, perspectives, and identities. This reinforced the importance of designing training that firefighters perceive as authentic, relevant, and trustworthy.

3a. How Assigned Previous Experience Contributed to this Case Analysis:

As a speech-language pathologist, I have learned that adults who use AAC devices differ in their educational backgrounds, family support, motivation, and life experiences, all of which influence learning and successful device use. This experience reinforced that effective instruction begins with understanding the learner beyond demographics—a principle that is equally important when designing training for firefighters.

4. Proposed Solutions:

Solution	Description / Coordinated Actions	Challenges & Constraint Addressed
Solution 1: Rapid prototype using the Successive Approximation Model (SAM)	• Develop an initial prototype using available SME interviews, firefighter stories, and existing resources. • Create two introductory prototype options—one briefly acknowledging the Cave Creek incident and one without referencing it—to evaluate how each approach influences learner trust, relevance, and engagement. • Use the first hour of the March statewide fire service leadership meeting to pilot key learning activities and prototype designs. • Use the second hour to conduct further learner and context analysis by gathering firefighter perspectives, cultural insights, organizational practices, and implementation barriers from representatives across Arizona fire departments. • Revise and refine the training before final development and implementation based on pilot results and learner analysis.	Challenge 1: Expands learner and context analysis. Challenge 2: Uses prototype testing to inform the instructional framing of the Cave Creek incident. Constraint: Gathers broader organizational perspectives across Arizona departments to inform a more system-level implementation approach despite differences in available behavioral health resources.
Solution 2: Delayed prototype development for additional learner analysis. (Traditional ADDIE approach)	• Postpone prototype development until after the March statewide meeting. • Use the meeting primarily to conduct additional learner and context analysis through interviews, discussions, and feedback from firefighters and fire service leaders. • Reach greater project team consensus regarding the Cave Creek incident before designing the	Challenge 1: Conducts more comprehensive learner and context analysis before design begins. Challenge 2: Resolves the instructional framing of the Cave Creek incident before development. Constraint: Better accounts for differences in

	instructional experience. Analyze organizational practices and behavioral health supports across departments before developing a single, informed prototype.	organizational resources and implementation contexts before training is designed.
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5. Pros and Cons:

Solution	Pros	Cons
Solution 1: Rapid prototype using the SAM model	- Aligns with the client's compressed timeline. - Uses the March meeting for both pilot testing and continued learner/context analysis. - Supports iterative refinement based on authentic firefighter feedback. - Allows the team to evaluate two introductory approaches before finalizing the training.	- Initial prototype may require substantial revisions. - Feedback from the March meeting may not represent all Arizona fire departments. - Requires flexibility in the development timeline to incorporate revisions.
Solution 2: Delayed prototype development for additional learner analysis.	- Provides more comprehensive learner and context analysis before development. - Increases confidence in instructional framing and messaging. - May reduce major design revisions later. - Better informs design decisions using broader learner and organizational input.	- Delays prototype development and may jeopardize the client's timeline. - Reduces opportunities for iterative testing before implementation. - Delays stakeholder feedback on the instructional design until later in the project.

6. Final Recommendation:

Solution 1 – Rapid Prototype Development Using the SAM Model

Justification

- Best balances the client's accelerated timeline with the need for meaningful learner and context analysis.
- Uses iterative prototyping and pilot testing to strengthen instructional design before statewide implementation.
- The March statewide leadership meeting provides an opportunity to pilot the prototype, conduct further learner and context analysis, gather organizational perspectives from departments across Arizona, and evaluate alternative approaches for introducing the Cave Creek incident.
- Maintains project momentum while allowing evidence-based revisions before launch.

Addressing The Limitations:

Con	Mitigation
Initial prototype may require substantial revisions.	Use rapid iterative cycles and prioritize revisions based on pilot feedback before statewide implementation. Leverage AIDE's 10-year partnership with ESA by reviewing previous firefighter training projects, learner analyses, and organizational knowledge. Supplement this information with SME expertise, peer-reviewed literature, firefighter documentaries, and first-hand accounts to inform the initial prototype while recognizing that this project addresses a unique, recent, and highly sensitive issue.
March meeting participants may not represent all Arizona fire departments.	Supplement pilot feedback with continued SME consultation and organizational data collected from departments unable to attend.
Development timeline must accommodate revisions.	Build revision time into the project schedule from the outset so pilot findings can be incorporated without delaying launch.