



***Processes of the Planning and
Instructional Design of
Online Professional
Development Opportunities***

PD Module Template

YOU MUST STATE EVERYTHING about the topic that you can in the content. We can't assume the user knows anything, will do anything without our guidance, can make connections, etc. I know this is difficult to imagine, but we really have to put ourselves and our knowledge in there because it is not facilitated, we are not face to face. We have to have closure, clear connections, samples, examples, ties to the GED-i made clear to the reader of this content.

Introduction to the Module:

- Take a look at the sample. The developer has a decent introduction although I have included some feedback for her to make improvements.
- The intro should be a separate document entitled IntroPD?????.doc (put your title in place of the ????)

Module Content Set Up:

- Bring the user into the module with an anticipatory set that clearly connects to the goals and the scenario and the learning objectives for the module. You can see my comments on sample content submission.
- Follow it with a scenario.
- Transition from the scenario into the content and tell how the scenario relates to their world and how the content will address the situation presented in the scenario. Then dive into the content and make sure you connect back to the scenario.
- When moving from topic to topic within a lesson make the connections to the GED-i and to the scenario. Make the connections for the reader. Don't leave anything left undone or leave the reader to figure something out on their own without some guidance from you. Again, this is not facilitated so we must provide as much information and make as many ties as possible to the goals, scenario and GED-i.
- Give me closure to all sections. Transition me into each section. Revisit the scenario at the end and tell how everything that was presented helps with the situation presented in the scenario. Close by making the connections to GED-i.

NOTE: As far as module content set up, please model after the sample. I have worked with the content developer to get the sample set up the way I want it. She still has some work to do to get hers in tiptop shape but the actual structure of the

content, the way it is presented, is the way I expect it from all of you.

RETENTION AND BEST PRACTICES FOR *GED-i*

Graphic: please insert a picture that matches the following scenario.

Kathy: You need to bring the reader into the content. Possibly starting out with a sentence or two like the following:

Have you considered what it takes to retain an online learner? Have you given any thought as to why online learners leave? Think about your work in the traditional classroom, do you think you will encounter the same types of attrition and retention issues in your online world?

This may not be the best wording Kathy but it gives you something to work with. I guess we can call it an anticipatory set from our K-12 classroom instruction teaching.. We want to set the stage for their learning. We want to get them thinking about the content and what questions they might have on the topic. Then we can throw them into a scenario. NOTE: I am not sure I like the “Scenario to Start” title for the scenario but I can’t think of anything better at this point and I am open to suggestions.

Scenario to Start

Bernard has taught GED for close to 10 years. This semester, he began teaching a *GED-i* course and was excited to learn that he had 15 students eager to begin. However, 2 weeks into the semester, only 8 students were actively working online. Bernard wanted to develop strategies to retain students and he needed to do some investigation into strategies that will help attrition and increase retention in the *GED-i* classroom. He wants to learn the following:

- Define reasons for attrition in *GED-i*.
- Identify successful retention strategies.
- Apply instructional strategies to online retention for adult learners
- Identify features and tools in *GED-i* to help retain students.
- Formulate a retention plan when teaching *GED-i*.

Once Bernard has developed his retention plan, he hopes to re-engage the 7 students who have not continued online.

Throughout this module, information presented and learning activities will enable both new and experienced *GED-i* instructors to understand causes of attrition, develop retention initiatives through using effective teaching strategies, and to become familiar with instructional tools incorporated in *GED-i*.

Developer: please insert a button that when it is selected, the answer to the following question is emailed to the GED Illinois Online Trainer. In the subject heading, the email should read – Burning Question for Student Learning. Can the button look something like the following:



Before you begin the module, let's begin by investigating your **Burning Question**.

Please identify your personal objectives for participating in this module. What would you like to learn? Type your questions in the box provided and select submit. The comments will be shared with the [GED-i](#) trainer.

Now, let's begin with the lessons on Student Retention in [GED-i](#).

Lesson 1: Attrition in [GED-i](#).

Lesson 2: Effective Retention Strategies

Lesson 3: Features and Functions in GED-i that can be used for Retention.

Lesson 4: Pulling All the Pieces Together

Retention L1P1 Overview of Student Attrition



Graphic: please insert a graphic for reflection: something like the image to the left. (this came from clip art on Microsoft word) Label it reflections, and the following text should be included in a shadow box.)

What do you see as the most significant cause of attrition for online students? Think about the traditional GED classroom. What factors lead to students dropping out? Do you think the reasons that students do not continue with learning is similar or different for *GED-i* students?

Kathy: You might even move the above paragraph over to be a part of your anticipatory set.

In the introduction, Bernard began teaching *GED-i* and had seven students stop working online in the first two weeks. Before he began to develop instructional strategies to help retain his students, he needed to begin with defining and understanding reasons for attrition.

Kathy: I like this tie back to the opening scenario. I think it is VERY important that we do this all the way through. We need to relate back to our opening scenarios and help find the answers or solve the problem that was presented there.

Graphic: please insert the tip icon and include the following content in a shadow box.

It is important to note that attrition is much higher the beginning of the course

Although online students need to be independent, autonomous, and self-reliant, they still need to be supported and motivated. There are four basic reasons that students do not complete their learning goals after they register for GED programs. They include the following:

- Situational: Situations arise in a student's life.
- Personal: Personal problems such as motivation
- Content: Students are having difficulty with content
- Institutional: Difficulties with things like inadequate support.

Kathy: Do you think you can relate these to the GED-i? Can you provide an example or something from the field that might illustrate this as it relates to online? It is important that we make the ties between the content we present and the GED-i. We can't assume the participant will automatically do that. We can't assume anything, especially since these are NOT facilitated learning experiences.

L1P2

Attrition

Students may have one or more reasons for not completing their GED. Before effective retention strategies can be implemented, the reasons need to be identified.

Kathy: Maybe add the wording about online to the paragraph above, again making the ties to the online classroom so we are not assuming our audience is making the ties.

Animation: this is an instant feedback activity.

In the following activity, read each sentence and select the correct answer.

1. Sarah wanted to register for *GED-i*. Her reading scores were under the suggested 9th grade level, but she convinced her teacher that she could do the work. She logged on and attempted the Pre-Survey. She had a lot of difficulty completing it, and was assigned every lesson. Sarah logged on the first week and did three lessons. None of the lessons met her teacher's requirements for passing. Sarah stopped logging to *GED-i* and stopped responding to email from her teacher.
In this case, the reason for attrition is:
 - a. Situational
 - b. Personal
 - c. Content
 - d. Institutional

Feedback: You selected . The correct answer is C-Content. The reason Sarah did not continue to work on *GED-i* is due to the content not matching her academic ability. The content was too difficult. In order to retain Sarah, the content and method of delivery need to be re-assessed. Sarah could be invited into a traditional classroom and begin on *GED-i* again when her skill level matches the basic requirements to succeed.

2. Jase attended his GED classroom for two weeks. He also worked on *GED-i* when he was not in class. He began the program extremely excited. His boss told him that once he earned his GED, Jase would get a pay raise. However, during the 4th week, Jase stopped coming to class, and the next week he stopped logging on to *GED-i*. Jase responded to an email from his teacher asking why he was no longer working toward his GED. He said that he lost his job due to a lay-off and would try to come back to class later.

In this case, the reason for attrition is:

- a. Situational

- b. Personal
- c. Content
- d. Institutional

Feedback: You selected . The correct answer is B –Personal. When Jase lost his job, he lost his motivation for earning his GED. A strategy to retain Jase would be to send him both an email and letter exploring the career potential that is available once he completed the GED.

3. Evan was working online and doing extremely well for a while. Suddenly, he stopped turning in work. He was not active and not responding to repeated email contact from his instructor, Molly. She attempted to call, but learned that his phone number was no longer in service. Molly sent Evan a letter asking him to come to her office to discuss his progress. Evan did not respond. Finally, Molly sent Evan an exit survey and requested that he indicate why he chose to discontinue pursuing his GED. Evan returned the survey and indicated that he was now working full time and had work conflicts with traditional class time. Also, his phone and Internet were disconnected so he could not participate with *GED-i*.

In this case, the reason for attrition is:

- a. Situational
- b. Personal
- c. Content
- d. Institutional

Feedback: You selected . The correct answer is A-Situational. Evan's situation changed when he lost Internet and had a job conflict with traditional classes. A strategy to retain Evan might be to provide him a list of public library or computer lab times that might work in his schedule. Additionally, providing him a list of classroom times will help him identify a time frame when he can prepare for his GED.

4. Heather contacted her local adult education program after noticing online that they offered *GED-i*. Initially, the person who answered the phone knew nothing about *GED-i*, but asked Heather to come in for the registration and intake. Once Heather arrived, the intake person said, "I don't know much about *GED-i*, so your teacher, Jody, will contact you with information relating to taking the class online. I can get you registered and give you a password, but Jody will take care of everything else." Heather left the intake appointment with many questions about learning online unanswered. She went home and logged on to *GED-i*, and began working. She submitted 3 lessons on the first day. Within the week, she had done approximately 15 lessons, but had not heard from her instructor. The next week, she tried to do some more lessons, but felt confused about some of the content. She still had not heard from her online instructor. Heather felt like working online was too difficult, so she stopped logging onto the site.

In this case, the reason for attrition is:

- a. Situational
- b. Personal
- c. Content
- d. Institutional

Feedback: You selected . The correct answer is D – Institutional. Heather did not receive the instructional or support help that is required in order to assist her in learning how to be a successful online learner. A retention plan for Heather is to have the instructor call and talk through expectations and develop a learning plan. For future students, these plans and processes need to be in place prior to enrolling in the GED program.

Additional reasons why students quit working on *GED-i* include the following:

- Their learning expectations and course content do not match.
- They are not confident learning in distance learning environments
- They have learned what they wanted and they lost motivation to continue to learn.

Kathy: The activity above is great and see in the last section you do make the ties to the GED-i. Your feedback is well-written as well. I would like to see a wrap up to this section. Why is this important to the instructor to know? How does it help with teaching/learning/planning, etc. Do a wrap up of this before we move on to motivation.

L1P3

Motivation

Kathy: Transition from the reasons for attrition to motivation. How are these two things connected? Are they connected? Why does an instructor care? How does it related to the GED-i? Give me some kind of setting the stage info that transitions me from your last topic to this one.

Keeping students motivated can be a difficult task. Adult learners are goal-oriented and learning oriented. Understanding student motivation will help develop retention strategies.

First, provide learning environments where they can accomplish their goals. **When they do not or cannot accomplish their goals through the distance education, they very likely quit learning.** Second, provide a learning environment where the adults can acquire relevant knowledge and skills. **When they do not perceive that they are acquiring the knowledge and skills that they wanted, they very likely quit learning**

There are two forms of motivation: intrinsic or extrinsic.

Graphic: please include this chart.

Extrinsic Motivation	Intrinsic Motivation
Seeking qualifications for a better job	Acquiring skills for future desires
Desire to pass GED exam.	Pursuing their own intellectual growth
Prove their capability to others	Desire for self-improvement



Graphic: please insert a graphic for reflection: something like the image to the left. (this came from clip art on Microsoft word) Label it reflections, and the following text should be included in a shadow box.)

Think about both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Which type of student do you think is more likely to remain with their GED preparation? How can you help move a student from having extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation?

While both forms of motivation are powerful, when students enter the GED program with intrinsic motivation –they are more likely to complete their GED. It is important to understand the motivation behind the student’s enrollment when entering the GED program. Then, specific strategies can be incorporated into the instruction that will help move students from extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation.

Animation- Please copy this chart and when the student select the middle column, a strategy appears.

Select the column marked strategy to explore instructional tips that can be used with *GED-i* to help move students from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation.

Extrinsic Motivation	Strategy	Intrinsic Motivation
Seeking qualifications for a better job	Provide a thread on the <i>GED-i</i> Discussion Board where students explore career opportunities and generate dialogue about their long term goals. The Occupational Outlook Handbook is a great resource for this type of activity. http://www.bls.gov/oco/	Acquiring skills for future desires
Desire to pass GED	Have an email	Pursuing their own

exam.	assignment that is turned into the instructor each week entitled “what I learned this week”. Provide them monthly snapshots of how much knowledge and insight they have gained over time.	intellectual growth
Prove their capability to others	Use the class email tool to send out motivational tips on a monthly basis.	Desire for self-improvement

Kathy: Again, wrap this section up for me. Tell me why this is important to an online instructor. Relate it back to the scenario or to the goals for the section.

L1P4

Situational, Content, and Institutional

Adult learners may face multiple challenges to completing their GED. As an instructor, helping to identify these challenges with the students and help them to develop specific plans and strategies can build a foundation for success.

Kathy: What are these multiple challenges that are faced? Are they some of the things you have mentioned so far that could be include in parentheses to the right of the “multiple challenges” wording or they things from the scenario? Can you connect them and transition me into Situational Content and Institutional a little better keeping me on target with the goals, connecting me to the topics etc.

Review the following plan.

Graphic: please make this look like a document.

Barriers to Success	Strategies for Success
Situational <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work conflict with traditional classes 	Situational <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide alternatives such as <i>GED-i</i> if student is eligible.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of phone / Internet connection • Lack of transportation / childcare • Other _____ <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content too difficult • Content too easy • Other _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact instructor to develop different learning plan. • Provide alternatives such as <i>GED-i</i> if student is eligible. • Other _____ <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide supplemental resources. • Have students take lesson reviews to do a self check and move through the content in a more rapid pace. • Other _____
<p>Institutional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clear expectations from instructor • Lack of technical and instructional support for learning at a distance • Other _____ 	<p>Institutional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide comprehensive orientation with expectations for both teacher and students detailed. • Provide of clear expectations from instructor at orientation and provide directions for accessing technical support. • Other _____

Additionally, when teaching at a distance and using *GED-i*, attrition is lowered when students are satisfied with the technological aspects of the course and the promptness of information exchange with the instructor.

Kathy: Why is this plan here? How can it help me? What am I to gain from it? How does it relate to what I am supposed to walk away from this lesson having learned? Make the ties for me and wrap this section up in a logical way that refreshes me on the goals and how things interrelate.

L1P5
Review

In the Scenario to Start, Bernard, a GED instructor, had many questions about *GED-i* and student retention.

Graphic: this is the scenario from the introductory page. Can we have the same image that is on the intro scenario?

Scenario to Start

Bernard has taught GED for close to 10 years. This semester, he began teaching a *GED-i* course and was excited to learn that he had 15 students eager to begin. However, 2 weeks into the semester, only 8 students were actively working online. Bernard wanted to develop strategies to retain students and he needed to do some investigation into strategies that will help attrition and increase retention in the *GED-i* classroom. He wants to learn the following:

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So far, we have explored the reasons for attrition. They include **Situational, Personal, Content, and Institutional**. Additionally, we explored motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic as it relates to student attrition and retention. Finally, we explored developing a plan with students that addressed the reasons for attrition as a way to help them develop their own strategies for success.

Kathy: How does this relate to the GED-i? The goals? What the participant is supposed to walk away from this lesson knowing. Give me some closure.

SLP6
Reflective Planning Activity



Graphic: please insert a graphic for reflection: something like the image to the left. (this came from clip art on Microsoft word) Label it reflections, and the following text should be included in a shadow box.)

Think about a time when you started a project but were not able to complete. What stopped you from reaching your goal? What tools and resources would have helped you reach your goals?

Animation: I want this to be a printable form that has text boxes which can be filled in with their comments.

Type your own explanation / definition of the four basic reasons of student attrition in the text boxes provided and print this activity for your review and reflection.

STUDENT ATTRITION

Lesson 1 Reflection

There four basic reasons for attrition are **Situational, Personal, Content, and Institutional**. By understanding each reason, appropriate retention practices can be initiated.

Animation: The students will need to be able to type their responses to the question and then print out this page.

In your own words, explain the following reasons for attrition.

1. Situational
2. Personal
3. Content
4. Institutional