

Best Practices for Tutorial Creation

What type of tutorial do you want to create?

- Directional
 - How to search Academic Search Premier
 - How to do an interlibrary loan request
- Conceptual
 - Boolean searching
 - Navigating the "information maze"
- Informational
 - Intro to the Library and Its Services

Why create a tutorial?

- To supplement classroom instruction
- Outreach to courses without library instruction
- "Just-in-time" instruction
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Adaptability for different learning styles

Discussion

- What is your experience in creating tutorials?
- Are there tutorials you've seen that you've liked?
- What are your goals in creating a tutorial?

The Planning Stage

- KISS: Keep it short & simple!
- Provide precise and direct information
- Outline the important points you want to cover
- Length: as a general guideline, the tutorial should be no longer than 5 minutes. Make it EASY to listen to!
- Consider breaking up big chunks of related information into separate tutorials
- Use the outline to think about what computer actions you will execute (search examples, mouse clicks, etc...)
- Then start to script your presentation: plan screen actions, spoken words, call outs, etc...
- A script will help you keep on task, make transitions to new examples, and help prevent um's and ah's

Writing/Scripting Stage

- Be as brief as possible
- Set the stage: Prepare learners for what they are about to see
- State the skills you expect them to learn
- Devise your examples/illustrations based off of these skills
- Have multiple editors review your script for clarity and to reduce any unneeded text

Creating Online Tutorials using Wink: the CARLI Experience

- Make sure text matches screen shots, call outs, etc...
- Devise your script to include both spoken words AND actions (screen shots, call outs, etc...)
- If demonstrating sample searches, be sure it yields the results desired in a clear and straightforward way

Practice Makes Perfect (or thereabouts!)

- Practice, practice, practice
- Read your script out loud
- You'll be amazed at how awkward some written text can sound when read out loud!
- Eliminate redundant wording
- (If recording audio) Consider putting the microphone/headphones on just to get a feel for how it feels when speaking the script
- Practice any mouse movements and typing that you may be demonstrating on the computer screen. Move the mouse slowly and purposefully.

Recording Stage

- Shhhhhh! If possible, record in a QUIET place, in a room with a door that shuts.
- Avoid recording near any open air vents
- When recording: It's good to leave a few seconds before AND after the spoken word in case you need to edit
- Speaking style: Casual and friendly comes across to students best. Be sincere: fake "cool" often comes across as lame. Because you have a script, do make sure not to sound like a robot!

Where to make your tutorial available?

- Library web site
- Linked from YouTube
- Available in various formats
- Downloadable to mp3 player

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Audio doesn't match screen actions
- Working without an outline or script
- Text is not written in a natural speaking tone (in other words, "write like you talk!")
- Speaking too fast in order to shorten the time length. This never works!
- Attempting to cover too many objectives in one tutorial. Just stick to 2-3 important points.
- Bad sound and acoustics
- Length. Anything over 5 minutes is TOO LONG! Ideally, 3 minutes is the maximum.
- Currency. Keep your tutorials up to date. Time to record something new if a database/catalog interface changes!