



Backward Design

Backward design intends to make sure that any learning experienced is based on desired outcomes (knowledge, skills, understanding, for example) instead of basing it on the methodologies used. By defining where you will end up, you can make sure appropriate methods and tools are used along the way to optimise the learning.

There are three steps to the process.

Step 1: Identify desired results

What would you like the participants to have learnt during the session? What competencies do you wish them to have? What understanding do you want to them to gain? Maybe the desired result is a big idea, strategy or experience. Whatever you are aiming for, outline it at the beginning of the design process.

Step 2: Determine acceptable evidence

How will you measure success? Are you including an assessment, project brief or task? How will you know the desired results have been met? What evidence will there be acceptable in doing so?

Step 3: Plan learning experience and instruction

What methods, teaching practises, mental models are appropriate? Depending on your teaching styles and pedagogy experience, this is where you design the experience. How does the agenda look like? What content do you need to include? Examples include lectures, group discussion, peer-to-peer learning and presentations.

Even if you do not have any teaching experience by working in this way, you will always be putting the user (student in this example) centre-stage from the onset.