

ID Skills Self-Assessment

Updated August 2, 2026

This is the worksheet for my article on the top 15 instructional design skills. Print it, score yourself, and leave with a 30-day plan for your three biggest gaps. The demand percentages come from my [ID Hiring Manager Report](#), where hiring managers picked the top three skills, tools, and concepts they look for.

Step 1: How to score yourself

Use this scale. Go with your first instinct and be honest. An inflated score only hides the gap you need to close.

Score	What it means
1	I have not worked with this skill
2	I understand it but have little hands-on practice
3	I have used it on real projects
4	I could show it in a portfolio piece today

Step 2: Rate all 15 skills

#	Skill	Demand from my report	My score (1-4)
1	Articulate Storyline	75.2% named it a top 3 tool	
2	eLearning development	64.4% named it a top 3 skill	
3	Communication skills	69.3% named it a top 3 skill	
4	Applying ID theory and science	71.3% named it a top 3 skill	
5	Learning management systems	54.5% named it a top 3 tool	
6	Microsoft PowerPoint	38.6% named it a top 3 tool	
7	Adult learning theories	Counted under ID theory (71.3%)	
8	Writing strong learning objectives	54.5% named it a top 3 concept	
9	Managing cognitive load	No standalone survey line	
10	Visual design	31.7% named it a top 3 skill	
11	Project management	40.6% named it a top 3 skill	

12	Storytelling	No standalone survey line
13	Complex problem-solving	Top-ranked factor in portfolio reviews
14	Critical thinking	No standalone survey line
15	Creativity	No standalone survey line

Tip

for skills with no standalone survey line, open three job postings you actually want and count how often the skill appears. Two or more mentions means treat it as high demand in Step 4.

Step 3: Evidence check

A score of 4 needs proof. For each skill, check the box only if the answer to "Could I show this in a portfolio piece today?" is yes.

- ☐ **Articulate Storyline:** I can link to a published Storyline project with at least one interaction I built myself.
- ☐ **eLearning development:** I can walk someone through a finished course, from storyboard to published file.
- ☐ **Communication skills:** I have a storyboard, script, or stakeholder email I would show a hiring manager.
- ☐ **Applying ID theory and science:** I can point to one design decision in my work and name the evidence behind it.
- ☐ **Learning management systems:** I have uploaded, configured, and tested a course in at least one LMS.
- ☐ **Microsoft PowerPoint:** I have a deck I designed that carries a live session, not just decorates it.
- ☐ **Adult learning theories:** I can show where a project connects practice to the learner's real job.
- ☐ **Writing strong learning objectives:** I have objectives that name observable behavior, not "understand" or "know".
- ☐ **Managing cognitive load:** I can show a screen I simplified and explain what I cut and why.
- ☐ **Visual design:** I have a polished screen with deliberate layout, contrast, and alignment choices.
- ☐ **Project management:** I can show a plan, timeline, or tracker I used to run a real project.
- ☐ **Storytelling:** I have a project where a character, plot, or scenario carries the content.
- ☐ **Complex problem-solving:** I have a piece framed around a real performance problem and how my design addressed it.
- ☐ **Critical thinking:** I can describe a request I pushed back on and what I proposed instead.
- ☐ **Creativity:** I have one project element that was my own idea, not the template default.

Now audit your table. Every skill you scored a 4 must have its box checked here. If the box is empty, change that 4 to a 3.

Step 4: Find your build-first skills

Priority rule

build first where high employer demand meets a low self-score. Any skill at 50 percent demand or higher with a score of 1 or 2 goes to the top of your list.

Demand from the table	Score 1 or 2	Score 3 or 4
50% or higher	Build first	Keep sharp, show proof
Under 50%	Build later	Nice to have

Write your three build-first skills here. If more than three qualify, pick the three with the highest demand.

Gap	Skill	My score (1-4)	Why it beats the others
1			
2			
3			

Step 5: Your 30-day skill-building plan

Gap 1 gets two weeks because it is your biggest lever. Gaps 2 and 3 get one week each. Before you start, name the proof each gap will produce.

Gap	Skill	Proof I will produce by day 30
1		
2		
3		

Week 1: Gap 1, learn and start

- ☐ Work through one free resource for this skill (see the callout below).
- ☐ Start the proof piece so a draft, wireframe, or project file exists by day 7.
- ☐ Block three practice sessions on my calendar.

Week 2: Gap 1, finish and get feedback

- ☐ Finish the proof piece.
- ☐ Get feedback from at least one other person and revise once.
- ☐ Check the evidence box for this skill in Step 3.

Week 3: Gap 2

- ☐ Work through one free resource for this skill.
- ☐ Produce the proof piece I named above.
- ☐ Get one round of feedback and revise.

Week 4: Gap 3 and wrap-up

- ☐ Produce the proof piece for gap 3.
- ☐ Re-score all three gap skills in the Step 2 table.
- ☐ Pick my next gap and print this worksheet again for the next 30 days.

Free resources for each gap

every link below is free on devlinpeck.com.

- Articulate Storyline and eLearning development: [How to Learn Articulate Storyline](#) and [How to Design eLearning](#).
- ID theory, adult learning theories, cognitive load, and learning objectives: [How to Become an Instructional Designer](#) and [the ADDIE model](#).
- Visual design: [Easy Custom Illustrations for Instructional Designers](#).
- Communication, storytelling, problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity: prove these inside a portfolio piece. Start with [How to Create an Instructional Design Portfolio](#).
- LMS, PowerPoint, and project management: browse the [free content library](#) for current walkthroughs.

Have any questions? Email me at devlin@devlinpeck.com