Target Audience, Learner Profile, and Reflection

Glen Buchanan. LDTC 605 9040, Instructional Design Models to Inform Learning Design. May 26, 2026.

Target Audience and Learner Profile

Digital Foundations is the first module of my Getting Ready to Work with AI pathway. It teaches the device, account, and data basics that need to be in place before any AI training can work.

Target audience. My learners are working adults, roughly ages 25 to 55, who are getting ready to use AI tools at work but do not yet have a solid digital foundation. They include career changers, frontline and operations staff, office staff, small business owners, and people returning to work. Many are told to build AI skills for their jobs, and they stall because the basic skills are not there yet.

Demographics. Most are employed or job seeking. Their education ranges from a high school diploma to a bachelor's degree. They are spread across different places, and many use a phone as their main device. The age range is wide, so people arrive with very different comfort levels.

Background and prior knowledge. They can use a phone and a few familiar apps, but they are shaky on password management, backups, encryption, account recovery, and judging everyday risk. This is the gap the DigComp 2.2 framework describes, and it is a big reason AI training often does not stick (Vuorikari, Kluzer, & Punie, 2022). Most have had little or no formal tech training.

Skills. They can do basic tasks on a device. Their file management and security habits are uneven. They can follow steps when the steps are in plain language and done on their own device.

Dispositions. They are motivated by what helps them at work. They are short on time. Many feel anxious or low in confidence about technology and say things like "I am not a computer person." They want a real, useful result, not theory.

Two example learners.

- Maria, 47, is an office manager returning to work after a few years away. She uses a desktop, has low confidence, and needs to get comfortable with AI tools for a new role. She worries she is behind.
- Devon, 29, is a warehouse team lead. He is confident on his phone but never learned the basics in a formal way. He has little free time and wants a promotion that requires digital reporting.

Reflection

Technology proficiency and access. My learners range from true beginners to people who are capable but never learned the basics in a formal way, so I design for that range instead of an average. Each lesson starts on the learner's own device with a short confidence check. Beginners get a slower path with an extra worked example, and stronger learners skip ahead to a review task. I use plain words first and the technical term second. Every concept comes with a short captioned video and a written transcript, so learners can pick what works for them. I match the format to the goal instead of to learning styles, which research does not support (Grant, 2019). I also recommend one free tool with backup options so beginners are not overwhelmed by choices.

Cultural relevance and accessibility. My learners speak different languages, come from different generations, and have different budgets. I build the course to meet WCAG 2.2 AA. That means captions, transcripts, keyboard navigation, good color contrast, and cues that do not rely on color alone. I follow Universal Design for Learning by offering more than one way to take in content and show learning (CAST, 2024). My examples come from many kinds of jobs, not just office work, and I plan for real limits like data caps and shared devices. Plain language and defined terms help both new English speakers and nervous beginners.

Feedback and improvement. I treat the course like an ADDIE loop, where what I learn at the end feeds back into the next version (Boogaard, n.d.). I use short check-ins before and after each lesson, watch where learners drop off, and use the one page device map as proof that learning carried over. A short survey at the end tells me what to fix. These signals lead to small, regular updates, which matters because security tools change often.

I used an AI tool (Claude) as a thinking partner to organize this profile and check my reflection. The learners, choices, and analysis are my own, which follows the UMGC AI policy.

References

Boogaard, K. (n.d.). The ADDIE model: A beginner's guide. GoSkills. https://www.goskills.com/Resources/ADDIE-model

CAST. (2024). Universal Design for Learning guidelines (Version 3.0). https://udlguidelines.cast.org

Grant, A. (2019, November 7). The myth of learning styles. PCMA. https://www.pcma.org/adam-grant-myth-learning-styles/

Vuorikari, R., Kluzer, S., & Punie, Y. (2022). DigComp 2.2: The digital competence framework for citizens. Publications Office of the European Union.