Creating Content for Adults in 3 Easy Steps
(or maybe 4...or 5...okay...6)

Content: Short and Sweet is Always Best
• Content should focus on key ideas and content.
• Support main ideas and content with text, visuals and narrative.

Guiding Questions
• What are my key ideas and what might I be able to leave out?
• How might I use visuals to support the learning and not detract from it?
• How have I made my content relevant to the learners in their current role?

Tips/Suggestions
• Before you start creating your class, reflect on how much time you think the learner will need to understand the content. This will help keep you focused during development.
• At the beginning of your course consider adding a list of objectives to be covered. This helps prepare the learner for what is expected.
• Consider adding additional resources for further learning and exploration at the end of the course. This values the learners who may need more support but also provides additional learning opportunities for those who wish to deepen their understanding.

Script: Can We Talk?
• Use we, you, and us, instead of I, to connect with learners on a more personal level. Using these pronouns helps the learner feel more connected to the learning.
• Learners want to feel like they are engaging with an actual person they can relate to, instead of being "talked to" by a computer.

Guiding Questions
• How does the language in my script help learners feel connected to the course and instruction?
• How does my script motivate learners to engage with my class?
• How might I encourage learners to view my class as a chance to grow professionally instead of just something forced upon them?

Tips/Suggestions
• Make sure your script reflects real life scenarios and situations that learners may experience in their daily work.
• As you are creating your content, think of how you might explain things face to face to a friend or colleague.
Language: Keep the Dictionary for Webster

• Know your audience; what vocabulary do they know, should they know, and need to understand in order to be successful.
• When developing content for your class, think of ways you can introduce the vocabulary and definitions together seamlessly.

Guiding Questions
• How might I support learners as they encounter new terms?
• What scaffolding might I include to help support my learners as they explore new vocabulary and terms?

Tips/Suggestions
• If needed, consider adding a slide at the beginning of the class to list vocabulary/terms that will be used.
• Consider including a link to a "cheat sheet" of terms that can be saved and downloaded for quick reference.

Tone: Don’t Take That Tone with Me

• Keep your overall tone professional, but not disinterested or too authoritarian. The goal is to invite learners into the learning process and engage them in it, not come across as the "sage on a stage."
• Keep the tone at a level of someone the learner could go to for help and/or collaborate with on a daily basis.
• The overall tone should make learners feel like you are speaking directly to them and that you created your course with them in mind.

Guiding Questions
• As a learner, would you want to take your class?
• What words would you want someone to use to describe the person behind the microphone?

Tips/Suggestions
• Remember that "You're in trouble" voice your parents had to use sometimes when you were growing up? Yeah? Don’t use it here.
• Remember, you can’t please everyone all the time. Keep the tone as upbeat, interesting, and inviting as you can.
Assessment: Must We Teach to the Test

- When creating content, keep in mind that learning is for the learner; you already are an expert.
- Find natural breaks in the content where some type of reflective or assessment element might be added.
- Provide immediate feedback to learners when they are responding to integrated tasks and assessments. Make sure the feedback is helpful and
  1) educational, explains the "why" of a correct or incorrect answer;
  2) motivational, encourages struggling learners to keep trying; or
  3) appreciative, helps the learners feel like their time and effort is valued by you, the designer.

Guiding Questions

- How do I use reflection and assessment in my class to enhance retention?
- How have I provided feedback to support the learning process?
- Are my assessments viewed as opportunities to "guess and go" or provide helpful feedback on what was learned?

Tips/Suggestions

- The goal of your course is learning, not regurgitation of content. It is okay to challenge learners and make them think.
- Remember learners learn when they F.A.I.L (first attempt in learning) and when they succeed.
- Using the process of backwards design is helpful when creating class content. List your objectives/goals and then decide how you will assess each. This helps ensure that you are assessing what you value.

Imagery: A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

- Use imagery that helps define and explain content, not a picture that "matches" the words on the screen.
- Make sure the images and media used adheres to copyright laws and you attain any necessary permission.

Guiding Questions

- How might the images I include help the learner create and trigger a memory for the content?
- Are the visuals I am using supporting the learning or detracting from it?

Tips/Suggestions

- Think of images as creating a metaphor for the content and a visual aid for recall.
- Less is always more. That goes for images, number of fonts, and colors used in your class (think Dan Flavin or Agnes Martin).