

SME Collaboration and Development Workflow

How I partner with experts and run a build from request to launch

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Good courses come from good collaboration and a disciplined process. This is how I work with subject-matter experts and stakeholders, and how I move a project from a request to a launched, measurable course.

My development workflow

Phase	What happens	Deliverable
Kickoff	Clarify the request, the audience, the business goal, and constraints with the requester	Project brief and timeline
Analyze	Confirm the performance gap and whether training is the right fix; write objectives	Needs analysis and objectives
Design	Storyboard the course and agree on the approach with the SME before any building	Storyboard, signed off
Develop	Build in Storyline or Rise, then run a full QA and accessibility pass	Draft course for review
Implement	Publish for the LMS with SCORM or xAPI and confirm tracking	Launched course
Evaluate	Put the measurement plan in place and report results	Evaluation plan and report

How I work with subject-matter experts

Experts are busy, so I make their time count. I come prepared with focused questions, ask for their knowledge rather than their design opinions, and structure reviews so they give feedback once, efficiently, against a clear draft.

My SME intake questions

- What should learners be able to do after this that they cannot reliably do now?
- What does excellent performance look like, and what does a common mistake look like?
- What are the few things they must get right, versus the nice-to-knows?
- Can you share two or three real situations or examples we can turn into scenarios?
- How will we know, on the job, that this worked?

How I protect the timeline

- **Sign off the storyboard before building.** Agreeing on the content and flow on paper prevents expensive rework after development.
- **Consolidate reviews.** One round of collected feedback against a clear draft, rather than scattered changes, keeps the build moving.
- **Name the roles.** The designer drives the build, the SME owns accuracy, the reviewer approves, and the stakeholder owns the goal. Everyone knows their part.
- **Flag risks early.** A hard conversation three days before a deadline is far better than a surprise on launch day.