

Bela's Story | The eLearning Designer's Academy

Transcript from YouTube Video

Hi, I'm Bela Gaytan. I'm a Learning Specialist and I'm based out of Albuquerque, New Mexico.

So, I have a very diverse background. I am 45 years old, a single mom to two adult children. I have a Bachelor's degree in Human Resources and a Master of Education in Learning and Technology. And I really became interested in the whole learning and development and training and educational content that I was producing for the people on my team.

And somehow, I don't remember, but I fell into finding out about instructional design. And I just really fell in love with it. It really spoke to me. It felt like it could incorporate my diverse background. And I wanted to be able to create something that was effective, engaging, and enjoyable for learners and at the same time, being diverse and accessible.

So, when I realized that I wanted to get more practical experience, I started looking at different bootcamps and, you know, educational programs for instructional design. I came across Tim's program, I believe on LinkedIn, and just seeing his personality and, you know, knowing that there's a community that's involved in the program and also the flexibility of the program... I knew that it was

something right away that would really cater to me as being a single mom, working full time, and also being disabled.

In researching some of the other programs, cost was a big factor and also there seemed to be a lack of flexibility. It seemed like the programs were very rigid and Tim's was a lot more of a holistic approach to learning about, you know, eLearning design and instructional design. And having the flexibility to be able to attend the classes whenever I wanted to, and to go at my own pace was something that really motivated me to want to be part of the academy.

The thing that I love the most about the program was the community, hands down. I mean, the instructional design, eLearning design, learning and development community is already just fantastic, but it was so much closer in Tim's academy. I've made several friendships out of the different people that are in my cohort and even previous cohorts, as well.

It's not just having Tim's book. It's not just listening to Tim talk about do this and do that and that's how you'll become an instructional designer. It has real-world examples and as you're learning Articulate Storyline, you are actually going through a project with Tim, step-by-step. You get to learn the process first and then you go back in and you're able to put it into practice yourself.

I think the thing that surprised me most about the program was actually Tim and his availability. He was always there for us any time that we had questions and he was always very transparent

and authentic. He didn't gatekeep any of the secrets that others like to keep, you know, within the instructional design community.

I am constantly recommending The eLearning Designer's Academy to others when they have seen my success and my passion really grow after going through the program, as well as, you know, being able to tell them about the community aspect of the program. Explaining to them how accessible Tim is, how helpful he is, how hands-on he is in the program... that is so much different than other programs that are out there.

So after going through the academy, professionally I began to notice that I was blossoming. I no longer carried the "impostor syndrome" about being an instructional designer. I had the confidence to be able to present my projects to others and be able to accept feedback.

And, you know, in that I was learning as an instructional designer. I was learning to better myself in certain ways and learning how to really be able to be an asset to my learners and to other people in the community.