



**Toolkit:**  
Creating **Great**  
eLearning.

# Toolkit: Creating Great eLearning

Great eLearning doesn't start with content, it starts with intent. In a world where time and attention are limited, creating learning that lands requires more than just information. It requires clarity, purpose, and thoughtful design.

Whether you're creating something from scratch or refining what already exists, this guide will support you in designing learning that people don't just complete but can actually put into practice.

## 1. Always start with the "Why"

Before you open any authoring tool, pause.  
Why does this training exist?

- New internal policy or process
- Update or reinforcement of something existing
- External industry standard/compliance requirement
- Lifting performance against a specific KPI
- Supporting personal or leadership growth
- Just in time learning for something staff need

If the "why" is vague, the learning will be too.

## 2. Check: Do We Even Need eLearning?

Not everything needs a module.

Before you build, ask:

- Does this need formal training?
- Could this be a quick guide, checklist, or short video instead?
- Is this something people will use repeatedly, or just once?

If eLearning becomes the default for everything, people will stop engaging with it.

## 3. Define the Outcome, Not Just the Content

Do not start with: What do we need to include?  
Start with:

- What should people do differently after this?
- What decisions should be easier?
- What behaviour should shift?

If nothing changes after completion, it is not learning.  
It is just content.

## 4. Keep It Short, Structured, and Bite-Sized

People are busy. Attention drops quickly.

- Keep modules to 30 minutes or less
- Break longer content into parts
- Where possible, use microlearning (5 to 15 min)

**Example:** 2 hour module → 4 x 30 minute parts or smaller focused segments

This reduces fatigue and improves retention.

## 5. Design for Flow, Not Information Dumping

**Avoid:** Content → content → content → one big quiz  
**Instead:**

- Introduce a concept
- Check understanding immediately
- Then move on

**Think:** Learn → Check → Continue

**Stronger approaches include:**

- Scenario based questions
- Decision making moments
- Asking learners to think before giving answers

**And when you assess: Give meaningful feedback.**

- If wrong → explain why
- If right → reinforce the takeaway

**Avoid generic responses like:** "Correct", "Incorrect"

**Instead, be specific and useful:**

- "That's correct. Mandy would need to file a ticket with IT to resolve this."
- "Not quite. In this scenario, the issue sits with IT, so the next step would be to log a ticket."

The feedback should teach, not just mark.



## 6. Make It Engaging. Don't Overcomplicate

Good eLearning is varied and active. Use a mix of:

- Short video
- Simple visuals or infographics
- Interactions and quizzes
- Concise text

**Also: Write in active voice “You will learn...”**  
**Not “The learner will...”**

Variety helps keep attention and supports retention.

## 7. Bring Content Into the Module

If something matters, it belongs in the module.

- Avoid excessive links to intranet pages or websites
- Do not make learners hunt for key information

**Instead: Write in active voice**

- Include important content directly
- Provide links at the end as optional further reading

## 8. Make It Look Good (Without Being Boring)

Keep things on brand, but do not default to copy-pasting PowerPoint templates into eLearning.

That is how everything ends up looking generic.

**Instead:**

- Use your brand colours as a foundation
- If your palette is limited, introduce a complementary colour to add depth
- Keep layouts clean and consistent

The aim is to be clearly on brand but not identical or stock standard across every module.

**Also:**

- Stick to a simple colour palette (3 to 4 colours)
- Limit fonts (ideally one for headings, one for body)
- Use white space to avoid clutter

A good eLearning should feel like your organisation... just not like every other piece of content you have ever produced.

## 9. Use the Right Tool for the Job

Articulate Rise is great:

- Fast, clean, responsive
- Ideal for straightforward, content driven learning

But for more complex or interactive experiences, consider: **Articulate Storyline**

- Greater flexibility
- More immersive interactions

This is not about replacing one with the other.

It is about matching the tool to the experience you are trying to create.

## 10. Avoid Cliché Imagery

**Avoid:**

- Gavel and courtrooms for legal
- Hooded hackers, green code, padlocks for cyber
- “Boss talking, employee listening” visuals

These add nothing and feel generic.

**Instead:**

- Use imagery that feels human and relevant
- Be less literal
- Add personality where appropriate

## 11. Make It Practical and Relevant

People engage when they can see themselves in it.

- Use realistic scenarios
- Keep language simple and direct
- Focus on real decisions and actions

**Also be disciplined:**

- Cut “nice to know” content
- Focus on what people actually need to do their job



## 12. Write Like a Human

If something matters, it belongs in the module.

- Write like you speak
- Keep it clear and direct
- Avoid overly formal or policy driven language

If it sounds like a manual, people will treat it like one.

## 13. Keep It Accessible and Easy to Use

Design for real people, not ideal conditions.

- Ensure strong colour contrast
- Keep layouts simple and readable
- Include captions or transcripts where needed
- Add alt text to key visuals

**Also consider:** Mobile friendly layouts, buttons and interactions that are easy to use.

## 14. Do Not Overbuild

More is not better.

- Do not add interactions just for the sake of it
- Avoid unnecessary animation or complexity

## 15. Reinforce What Actually Matters

- Highlight key messages
- Repeat critical ideas in different ways
- Focus on what must be remembered

If everything is important, nothing is.

## 16. What Happens After the Module?

Completion is not the goal, application is. Ask:

- What happens once this is finished?
- Will managers reinforce this?
- Is there an expectation to apply it immediately?

If nothing changes after the module, the learning has not landed.

## 17. Test Before You Launch (If You Can)

- Pilot with a small group
- Watch where people get stuck or disengage
- Refine before rollout

## 18. Close With Clarity

Make sure learners leave with:

- A clear summary
- Confidence in what they have learned
- Direction on what to do next

Optional:

- Provide further resources

## Quick Sense Check - Before you hit publish:

- Is the purpose clear?
- Do we actually need eLearning?
- Does it drive a real outcome?
- Is it short and well structured?
- Are you checking learning throughout?
- Is key information included, not hidden?
- Does it look clean and on brand (not generic)?
- Does it sound human?
- Will it actually change behaviour?



# Want Expert Advice?



At Zest, we design learning experiences that work for your people and your business. We can help with:

- eLearning, in-persona and hybrid training programs
- Capability & Training Framework development
- Leadership & Management training courses
- New HRIS training sessions
- Talent Development Programme materials
- Learning Management System implementation and optimisation

**Practical, purposeful, and grounded in real outcomes, our solutions are always shaped around your goals.**

Get in touch

