

# Badge Creation Guidelines

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## Section 1: Considerations for Designing Badges

### Getting Started:

This documentation was established to assist in the creation of content for badges. This document (Badge Creation Guidelines) provides you with important information or considerations for developing badge content. The Badge Design Pattern provides you with a clean workspace for developing your badge content. When both of these documents are used together, they will provide you with a comprehensive walk-through of how to establish highly detailed badges that hold a significant value for your earners.

### Making a Meaningful Badge:

The main focus for developing any type of badge, should be on clearly identifying the competencies the earners will obtain or build upon by earning the badge. Many people refer to this as WIIFM or What's In It For Me. Often we think of creating information that is focused on the main points that we want others to know. However, when working with badges, the focus should be on equipping the earners with the competencies that will be the most beneficial for them. These benefits should be clearly defined and easily discernable for potential earners. To assist you in creating badges with this type of focus, please take the following points into consideration:

- Badge steps are clearly defined and measurable - no random activities.
- Specific goals and objectives should be clearly stated for your earners.
- Badges should be focused on specific outcomes.
- Assigned Tasks or Steps should be divided into attainable sections of information.
- The time allocated to a badge should be reasonable and not intimidate potential earners.

## Badge Creation Pitfalls

To assist you in creating badges that are highly detailed, effective, and valuable for your earners, there are a number of approaches that should be avoided.

- Avoid linking out to external websites for the majority of your badge content.
- Avoid providing the earner with a wide variety of activities for a single step.
- Avoid having rigorous criteria that must be adhered to, while leaving the submission guidelines open-ended.
- Avoid creating badges that have unrealistic expectations for badge steps.

## Text First Approach:

This worksheet was designed to assist you in the badge creation process by allowing you to work through your badge content in a text first approach. There are number of benefits to this approach.

### 1. **Content Alignment and Accuracy:**

It allows you to holistically see your badging content, which ensures each section of information aligns with the overall concept of the badge.

### 2. **Sharable with Collaborators:**

Within the current badging system only one individual can view the content while in the editing mode. If your collaborators will be assisting you with reviewing the badge content, this allows them the opportunity to refine the aspects of the badge they will be responsible for.

### 3. **Badges with Greater Detail:**

The current badging system does not allow for the badges to be edited once they are published. By developing your content prior to entering it into the badging system, you have the ability to review and refine your content to ensure your badge provides the necessary detail for your earners to be successful.

**4. Mapping to Learning Methodologies:**

By developing your content prior to entering it into the system, you have the ability to identify the various learning methodologies your badges may align with. This assists you in communicating the academic value associated with your badge activities.

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## Section 2: Designing Badge Content

### Three Part Process:

During the badge design process, your content will be divided into three parts: Badge Basics, Steps and Criteria, and Graphics. This document will walk you through the steps required to design each of those sections.

### Section 1: Badging Basics

The first step is to prepare some basic information about the badge: Badge Category, Badge Title, and General Description. Use the information below to help you establish these items for your badge.

<b>Badge Category:</b>	<p>Each badge in the system is assigned to a <u>single</u> category, to help prospective earners find badges they want to complete. When you create your badge, please choose from one of the categories listed below. If you are using the accompanying Badge Design Pattern document - please enter the category into that document for your reference when developing your badge within the actual badging system.</p> <p>*Please note the category defines the color of the badge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Agriculture &amp; Natural Resources</li><li>● Arts &amp; Architecture</li><li>● Business &amp; Finance</li><li>● Citizenship &amp; Ethics</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communication</li> <li>● Clubs &amp; Events</li> <li>● Education</li> <li>● Engineering</li> <li>● Health &amp; Medicine</li> <li>● Humanities &amp; Language</li> <li>● Just for Fun</li> <li>● Law &amp; Criminology</li> <li>● Professional Skills</li> <li>● Science &amp; Mathematics</li> <li>● Social Sciences</li> <li>● Technology &amp; Information</li> </ul>
<p><b>Badge Title:</b></p>	<p>Create a title for your badge that is reflective of the overarching competencies that the earners will be working to develop. The title should be meaningful, interesting, and clearly understood by potential earners. The title should consist of approximately 2-3 words and will be editable until the badge is published.</p> <p><i>*Please do not use titles that correlate to a course offering.</i></p> <p><b>Examples:</b>  <i>Introduction to Photoshop</i>  <i>Global Awareness</i>  <i>Personal Leadership Perspective</i></p>
<p><b>General Description:</b></p> <p><i>480 Character Limit</i></p>	<p>This brief description is intended as a general overview of the badge content. There's no need to go into specific details about the actual steps included in the badge, but you should provide some information that will give prospective earners an idea of what skills they'll be required to master and demonstrate to earn the badge.</p> <p>The general description for your badge, should answer these three questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What is this badge about?</li> <li>● Why is this badge important?</li> </ul>

- What are the skills that are acquired by obtaining this badge?

**Example:**

*Sites.psu.edu is an installation of the WordPress platform that has been approved by The Pennsylvania State University. WordPress is highly flexible web application that allows for a variety of use cases, such as blogs, websites, online courses, and e-portfolios. Each of these examples, require different configurations within the system, which is why knowledge of the WordPress platform is important. This badge will equip you with the skills needed to establish a basic site.*

## Steps and Criteria

This section of the worksheet will help you work through the process of outlining the individual steps and criteria for your badge.

The steps in the badges should be specific and meaningful to the overarching competency that is being acquired or developed by the earner. Each badge can have a total of 12 steps. Each step has 8 components:

<b>Step #:</b>	
<b>Step Title:</b>	The step title should be concise and accurately reflect the competency being developed. If developing multiple badge steps that have similar titles, consider adding a specific differentiator (i.e. - Step 1, Step 2) as a prefix to the step title.
<b>Introduction (Objective):</b>	The introduction is a single statement that describes the importance or relevance of this step, in essence, this is an objective statement.
<i>250 Character limit</i>	If you are not familiar with how to write objectives, you can utilize the SMART method. ( <i>Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-based</i> ) A simple web search will provide you with a wide variety of resources on SMART objectives and how to write them.

<b>Embed Content Type:</b>	Each step has the capability to display some form of embedded content that the learner can view. The embedded content will be displayed directly on the page above the Description (Assignment). The options for embedded content are Video, Reading, Image, or Other.
<b>Link URL:</b>	The link for the embedded content is placed in this field.
<b>Description (Assignment):</b>	<p>The description is the actual assignment the earners will be required to complete in order to successfully complete this step and progress with earning the badge.</p> <p>The step description should specify the assignment to be completed. The information should be clear, concise, logically sequenced, and utilize numbered lists or ordered lists when appropriate. Most importantly, the assignment should describe the entire process that must be completed in order to successfully complete the step.</p> <p>It is an excellent practice to have someone review this information for clarity and completeness prior to uploading the content to the system.</p>
<b>Evaluation Criteria:</b>	<p>The Evaluation Criteria should clearly articulate the reviewer's expectations for measuring an earner's ability to demonstrate the competency that is being acquired.</p> <p>It should identify ways to measure the thoroughness or completeness of the assigned task, while providing ample opportunity for feedback and remediation of the earner's work.</p>
<b>Time to Complete:</b>	An approximation of the time required to complete this step. This should be in increments that appear reasonable to the earners. 15min, 30min, 45min, 1hour, etc.
<b>Evidence Type:</b>	<p>The type of evidence that the learner will need to submit to earn the badge.</p> <p><b>Text:</b> The earner will input text directly into the badging system. This is sufficient for text-only responses and there is currently no limit to the characters or number of words that can be submitted.</p> <p><b>File Upload:</b> The earner will complete the evidence outside of the badging system, and upload the file once it is complete. This type of evidence is better suited for more complicated submissions that may contain tables or images.</p>

## Graphics:

Now that you have developed your content, it's time to think about the visual look of your badge. There are three options available to you for the graphic design of your badges.

### Option 1:

Use a graphic provided by the system. The badging platform provides you with a variety of graphics to choose from when building your badge in the system. There are a number of graphics that have been made readily available for badge creators. With a few clicks you can have a polished and professional graphic established to represent your badge.

### Option 2:

If the graphics that are currently available in the system are not quite what you are looking for, you may go to the Noun Project at <http://thenounproject.com> to gain access to a wider array of icons. TLT Studio has a license with the Noun Project and therefore has permission to display the icons as part of this initiative. The badge icon graphic will be displayed overtop of the colored hexagon.

### Option 3:

For individuals who have access to graphic design resources and are able to design and create custom badges, there is an upload functionality that will allow you to use your own designs. However, please be aware that the system will only accept .png files. In order for badges to be transferred to Mozilla Backpack the graphics must be .png files, which is a standard established by Mozilla.

## Graphics Guidelines

If you are interested in following a similar look and feel that is offered by the badges platform, but with new icons, these are the standards you should follow:

- Graphics should fit into a 200X200 pixel square
- Graphics may consists of an image or text
- Icon should be white
- Background should be transparent
- All graphic files must be .png

## **Adding Evaluators:**

If you plan on having additional evaluators, you will be able to add them to the overall badge or specific steps within a badge. There are two ways of adding reviewers to your badges. (Define evaluator- determine whether the submission aligns with the criteria.)

### **Option 1:**

During the badge creation process, you will be able to add reviewers to the badge. The additional reviewers must have accounts with the Penn State Digital Badge initiative, in order for them to be assigned as badge reviewers.

### **Option 2:**

If it is not possible for all additional reviewers to sign up for an account prior to publishing the badges, you may add them after the badge has been published. This can be completed by navigating to the Manage Evaluators section of the dropdown menu of the upper right hand corner of the application.

## **Create your Badge!**

Once your content has been developed, you may create your badge within the platform itself. To gain badge creator access, please contact the Badge Development team. Please note that the badge content will be editable until you publish the badge. If you need to make revisions or modifications to an active badge, you will need to archive the current version and create a duplicate version. Modifications to active badge offerings are not possible due to version control considerations.