



Leila Shirley

Instructional Designer & Learning Strategist


Translates Research into Scalable Learning Systems and Measurable Capability Outcomes

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EDUCATION

CORNERSTONE PERFORMANCE SOLUTIONS

Advanced Certificate in
Leadership (Cum Laude, Top
Performer)

2024

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

PGCE (Cum Laude)

2021

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

BCom Honours Economics
(Prof Sampie Terreblanche
Prize for Best Postgraduate
Research)

2018

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

BA Philosophy, Politics and
Economics

2016

PROFILE

Instructional designer and learning strategist specialising in transforming research, complex knowledge, and organisational goals into scalable learning systems that measurably improve capability. Experienced across corporate, academic, and community contexts, I design evidence-based programmes that strengthen decision-making, engagement, and performance. By combining analytical rigour with creative pedagogy, I build learning environments that convert insight into action and theory into applied competence.

CORE CAPABILITIES

- Learning strategy and instructional design – I build end-to-end learning ecosystems aligned to measurable outcomes
- Research translation – I convert complex analysis into practical frameworks, curriculum, and tools
- Strategic communication – I simplify technical concepts for diverse audiences and contexts
- Programme design and delivery – I develop and implement initiatives from concept to evaluation
- Facilitation and cognitive engagement – enables deep understanding through structured dialogue and adaptive teaching
- Systems thinking – integrates interdisciplinary insight to design effective learning interventions
- Data-informed improvement – uses evidence and analytics to refine programmes and strengthen results

CERTIFICATIONS

CORNERSTONE PERFORMANCE SOLUTIONS

Disruptive Process
Facilitation Accreditation
2025

GUEST RESOURCE SERVICES

Artificial Intelligence in
Teaching Methodologies
2023

THE TEFL ACADEMY

TEFL Level 5 Certificate
2018

SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

- Co-authored research on Personal Significance and Sales Resilience integrated into vocational banking qualifications (2025)
 - Awarded Top Performer, Advanced Certificate in Leadership (2025)
 - Founded SmallTaIX®, expanding public learning access across three towns (2023)
 - Presented research on determinants of adult education throughput at NADEOSA Virtual Annual Conference (2022)
 - Golden Key Honorary Award (2016)
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LANGAUGES

English (Advanced) | Afrikaans
(Conversational) | French (Working
proficiency) | isiXhosa (Beginner)

EXPERIENCE

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER

Cornerstone Performance Solutions | 2025–Present

- Designed national and international accredited programmes, enabling scalable capability development across banking and digital innovation sectors.
- Integrated applied research findings into curriculum architecture, strengthening real-world relevance and learner performance outcomes.
- Applied AI-enabled and adaptive learning methodologies, improving engagement and future-readiness of participants.
- Delivered learning solutions using Disruptive Process Facilitation techniques, increasing depth of learner insight and retention.
- Promoted from Learning Research Designer in recognition of programme quality, analytical contribution, and design impact.

FOUNDER & ORGANISER

SmallTaIX® Public Lecture Series | 2023–Present

- Established a multi-location public learning platform, expanding community access to science, technology, and conservation knowledge.
- Designed and facilitated lecture experiences that improved public understanding of complex topics.
- Built partnerships with venues, speakers, and institutions, strengthening programme reach and credibility.
- Structured event formats to promote critical thinking, dialogue, and knowledge exchange.

LEARNING RESEARCH DESIGNER

Cornerstone Performance Solutions | 2023–2024

- Conducted sector research and competitor analysis, informing programme strategy and positioning.
- Co-designed SME development curriculum, supporting enterprise capability growth.
- Collaborated with subject-matter experts to ensure academic rigour and industry relevance.
- Strengthened internal knowledge systems, improving organisational learning consistency and design quality.

CONTRIBUTING WRITER & GHOSTWRITER

Oct 2022 – Aug 2024

- Produced published articles translating scientific and educational research into accessible public insight.
- Developed client manuscripts from concept to final draft, ensuring clarity, coherence, and publishable quality.
- Supported knowledge-focused retail environments, strengthening customer engagement through informed guidance.

TUTOR & EDUCATOR

Teach Me 2 | Bridge House | Chungdahm Learning | 2015–2023

- Delivered 400+ teaching sessions across mathematics, economics, and sciences, improving learner outcomes and confidence.
- Designed personalised lesson plans and assessments, strengthening engagement and comprehension.
- Applied immersive teaching methods in South Korea, accelerating language acquisition for diverse age groups.
- Integrated adaptive teaching strategies to cultivate independent learning skills.

DATA SCIENCE INTERN

Leap.ly | 2018

- Conducted quantitative analysis and modelling to support platform development decisions.
- Applied analytical methods later leveraged in education research and programme design.