

Adjusting Reading Order in Articulate Storyline

Hello, in this video, I would like to explore focus order, what it is and how it contributes to accessible elearning development.

[opens Focus Order command from Ribbon]

So the focus order window controls tab order of any interactive objects such as buttons, icons, markers, any form fields, as well as reading order of non interactive objects, such as text and images.

The slide that I'm currently working with is a download from the Content Library and upon review, it doesn't have any interactive objects. It does have multiple elements that are text elements.

So it's important here that all of the text objects flow in a manner that is consistent with what a sighted person would experience on the page.

So for example, when looking at the page, the first thing I see is Objectives Layout, that is the title of the slide, followed by the brief description then the objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and six. However, when you look at when we look at focus order, the first item that will be read out by assistive technologies, like a screen reader is Objective 1.

So there's already some misalignment here. Now, why is this important?

One of the WCAG criteria, WCAG stands for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, is focus order. And the intent of that criteria is to ensure that users can navigate sequentially through content, whether it's you know, when they're tabbing, using their keyboard, or whether it's listening to content with a screen reader.

This is why we need to, in developing accessible elearning, we need to fix up or customize our focus order. And here's how we can do that.

The first thing I typically do when I open the focus order window is just click through the objects on the page in the order to look at the order that they are currently presented in.

[clicks through objects listed in the Focus Order window – in the Shape column]

So again, I'm looking to find the Objectives Layout [title] and the supporting text. And to move it up to the first position because that is the first item that I would like users to hear read out when they come across this page.

Okay, so the main title, Objectives Layout is in this position, I'm going to go ahead and create a custom focus order.

[clicks to check Create a custom focus order radio button]

And using the up and down arrows, specifically the up arrow, I'll move it up to the first position.

[moves title up using the up arrow]

So now, when somebody accesses this page, the main title is in the first position. So now I need to find the body, the supporting body of the text. So I'm just going to again, click through the contents here and find it.

There it is. So again, using the arrows, I will move this up to the second position.

[moves supporting text up using the up arrow]

Yep, so now I have my title, information about, little supporting information about this slide.

And then I see that I have a grouped object, a rectangle, the title, Objective 1, and then the body of objective one. So I need to figure out a way of deactivating some of these from being seen by screen reading.

And to do that, I will most likely just mark them as decorative. So you can you can address this two ways, you can either work with the focus order here, or you can cancel out of here and work with a timeline object,

I'm just going to stay within the focus order window and see how I can address them here.

So for sure, I have this rectangle, which appears to be the background of this content, this rectangle item does not need to be read out by assistive technology. So I'm just going to remove it by using this little delete icon.

Now this delete icon is not going to remove it from the slide altogether, it's just going to delete it from the focus order of this slide.

So I'm just going to do that, I can see that there's multiples of these rectangles that need to be deactivated from screen reader view or marked as decorative. So I'll just go ahead and do that.

[removes rectangle objects from focus order by deleting them from focus order view]

Okay, the next thing I see is that there are a number of grouped objects that are typically read out as "Group" followed by the content within the group.

So I don't need the entire group object to have alt text applied to it. I would rather just the screen reader focus on the objective title, which to which I applied a heading two and just the body.

So I'm going to go ahead and again, remove these grouped objects from screen reader view by marking them decorative. I'll do this to all six items.

[removes grouped objects from focus order by deleting them from focus order view]

Okay, so let's review focus order as it currently stands.

So I have the title, I have the information text, then I have my Objective 1 with its text, Objective 2 with its text 3, 4, 5 and 6, perfect.

So now my focus order is as it should be, as, as it is displayed to sighted users. And I can save it important, don't cancel out of it, save it. And if you were to test this slide with a screen reader, you would have all of the items read out in the appropriate order.

[NVDA screen reader reads unedited slide]

Frame clickable main landmark slide objectives, clickable group, rounded rectangle 16, three objectives 01 and objective slide helps set the stage for learning group rounded rectangle 14 two objective zero two write course objectives in clear, concise language frame clickable main landmark slide objectives.

[NVDA screen reader reads edited slide]

Slide objectives. Clickable objectives layout. If you express your course objectives in a boring bulleted list, learners can be tempted to skip right past them, but a unique slide layout might just capture your learners' attention, Objective 01 an objectives slide helps set the stage for learning. Objective 02 right course objectives and clear concise language. Objective 03 describe the skills learners will gain in the course. Objective 04 avoid vague words like understand. Objective 05 instead, use clear and specific action verbs. Objective 06 example sort describe

identify and demonstrate. Slide navigation navigation landmark button next button previous top bar region navigation landmark.

In this video, I looked at how adjusting focus order can improve reading order navigation on an elearning slide.