



It is essential that learning objectives be written *from the learner's perspective*. Objectives should clearly state what a participant will know or be able to do as a result of attending an event or session, as opposed to what the teacher (speaker) will teach or share.

Step 1

Please provide, in one sentence, the link between your presentation and the objective(s) of the event.

Step 2

Learning objectives typically complete a statement.

At the end of this session, participants will be able to...

or

Upon completion of the conference, participants should be able to....

Step 3

Connect the statement created in the previous step to an action verb. This word represents what the participant will be able to do or the action they will be able to undertake. Avoid using vague or abstract words such as believe, value, appreciate, be aware of, be familiar with etc. Example:

Analyze	Diagnose	Identify	Plan
Assess	Differentiate	Integrate	Recommend
Compare	Establish	Manage	Select
Demonstrate	Explain	Organize	

For a more complete listing, please refer to [List of Verbs for Formulating Learning Objectives](#) (p. 3)

Step 4

End the sentence with the details of what the participant will be doing when they are demonstrating the action. The detail should be specific and refer to the outcome of the learning objective.

Some Examples of Completed Learning Objectives

Personal Knowledge Management

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- ◆ identify skills related to the creation and use of knowledge that is relevant and important to them
- ◆ describe the knowledge transfer/translation process when dealing with information and
- ◆ apply methods that will allow for the creation, gathering, distribution and use of knowledge and information.

Gap Analysis

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- ◆ reiterate the difference between subjective and objective needs assessment and the importance of both
- ◆ utilize methods to identify the gap between current and desired skill/competency and
- ◆ access resources to assist in filling in areas where a gap in knowledge or skill has been identified.

Writing Learning Objectives

Every decision you make about your lecture/workshop should depend on the learning objectives for your intended audience. Learning objectives should be clearly stated for each learning activity, to inform your audience about what they should expect. Thus, the success of your lecture/workshop will be measured by how well you achieve these objectives.

A learning objective should be specific, short-range, and relatively concrete. It is not a mere description of the content of your presentation, but instead outlines what a learner will be able to do differently (what learner behaviour will change) if they attend your presentation.

One good way to state learning objectives is to begin with the phrase “At the end of this lecture/workshop, the learner will be able to...” This phrase is followed by an “action” verb that describes what the learner will be able to do differently.

Learning objectives can focus on **knowledge, skills, attitudes, and practice** (long-term future behaviour). For objectives relating to knowledge, “action” verbs could include: list, describe, explain, identify, categorize, document, etc. If the objectives are loftier, aiming for an ability to critically analyze knowledge, the verbs could include: debate, critique, distinguish, compare, evaluate, etc. For objectives relating to skills, the verbs could include: solve, demonstrate, operate, supervise, diagnose, etc. For objectives relating to attitudes, the verbs could include: accept, value, support, resist, consider, manifest care or concern about, etc.. For objectives relating to practice, the verbs are similar to those for skills, but the focus is on long-term behaviour.

It is also useful to specify the expected performance levels and conditions for each objective. For example, a brief workshop on psychotherapy would unlikely lead to a complete mastery of skills. However, it might lead to an awareness or appreciation of the skills, or competence in a specific component or skill.

Here are some examples of effective learning objectives written for a recent conference on “Maintaining Professional Boundaries”:

1. ...participants will be able to identify at least four types of sexual misconduct.
2. ...participants will be able to describe transference, countertransference, and list three bases for the power differential in the psychotherapy relationship.
3. ...participants will be able to describe administrative safeguards which can limit the risk of unprofessional conduct.

By Ivan Silver and John Teshima

Adapted from a document entitled “Guidelines for Conducting Workshops and Seminars”

©February 2002, Richard Tiberius and Ivan Silver, Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto

List of Verbs for Formulating Educational Objectives

The following verbs have been found to be effective in formulating educational objectives:

1. Those that communicate knowledge:

Information:

cite	identify	point	recognize	select	tell
count	indicate	quote	record	state	trace
define	list	read	relate	summarize	update
describe	name	recite	repeat	tabulate	write
draw					

Comprehension:

assess	compute	differentiate	explain	interpret	restate
associate	contrast	discuss	express	predict	review
classify	demonstrate	distinguish	extrapolate	report	translate
compare	describe	estimate	interpolate		

Application:

apply	develop	interpret	practice	restate	solve
calculate	employ	locate	predict	review	translate
choose	examine	match	prescribe	schedule	treat
complete	illustrate	operate	relate	select	use
demonstrate	interpolate	order	report	sketch	utilize

Analysis:

analyze	contrast	deduce	differentiate	infer	measure
appraise	criticize	detect	distinguish	inspect	question
contract	debate	diagram	experiment	inventory	separate

Synthesis:

arrange	compose	detect	integrate	prepare	specify
assemble	construct	document	manage	prescribe	validate
collect	create	formulate	organize	produce	
combine	design	generalize	plan	propose	

Evaluation:

appraise	critique	estimate	judge	rate	score
assess	decide	evaluate	measure	recommend	select
choose	determine	grade	rank	revise	test
compare					

2. Those that impart skills:

demonstrate	empathize	internalize	measure	pass	visualize
diagnose	hold	listen	operate	project	write
diagram	integrate	massage	palpate	record	

3. Those that convey attitudes:

acquire	exemplify	plan	reflect	transfer	
consider	modify	realize	revise		

These words are better avoided (often used but are open to many interpretations):

appreciate	believe	have faith in	know	learn	understand
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