W.I.T.S.

How To Write Effective Learning Objectives

A clear learning objective states what the learner will be able to do upon completion of a continuing education activity, in terms of behavioral change.[1]

A clear objective identifies the terminal behavior or desired outcome of the educational offering. When writing objectives, follow these 3 steps:

Step 1 - Learning objectives begin with the phrase:

"At the conclusion of this course, participants will be able to…"

Step 2 - Connect step one with an action verb which communicates the performance by the learner.

Use verbs which describe an action that can be observed and that are measurable within the teaching time frame. The different levels of learning are defined by Bloom's Taxonomy. If you aren't familiar with Bloom's, here's a helpful link!

Sample verbs

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
define	classify	apply	analyze	arrange	assess
identify	compile	calculate	calculate	assemble	compare
label	conclude	demonstrate	categorize	compose	critique
list	discuss	develop	classify	construct	decide
match	describe	interpret	criticize	design	determine
name	explain	locate	compare	develop	establish
recall	express	operate	contrast	diagnose	evaluate
recognize	give examples	perform	determine	manage	judge
record	identify	practice	differentiate	organize	justify
relate	interpret	predict	distinguish	plan	measure
repeat	recognize	present	examine	propose	rate
select	summarize	report	outline	relate	recommend
state	translate	use	test	summarize	select

Words to Avoid

appreciate	believe	improve	learn
approach	grasp the significance of	increase	thinks critically
become	grow	know	understand

Step 3 - Conclude with the specifics of what the learner will be doing when demonstrating achievement or mastery of the objectives. Stress what the participant will walk away from the activity with:

"At the conclusion of this course, participants will be able to differentiate between static and dynamic warm-up exercises."

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[1] *Courtesy of Boston University -* https://www.bu.edu/cme/forms/RSS_forms/tips_for_writing_objectives.pdf