

## Objectives

Objectives are tactical applications of the strategic goals. They are written in clear, unambiguous, specific and precise terms. They specify what the learners will be able to do at the end of each stage of the learning process. This is essential in evaluating the training by considering whether what has been achieved is what was intended.

A training objective has three elements:

**1. Outcomes** This is the observable behavior required at the end of the training and is prefaced by the statement, 'By the end of the session/program, the participants will be able to...'

**2. Conditions** These are the circumstances in which the outcomes should take place and must be clearly defined. Such conditions might include 'in a cohesive team situation', 'without the use of instructional materials', 'under realistic working conditions', and so on.

**3. Standards** The expected level of attainment in terms of quality, accuracy, quantity or whatever is relevant to the job. These can include 'to 100% accuracy (or some other level)', 'at the rate of 50 per hour', etc.

Objectives should be written so that mental manipulation can be avoided. Wherever possible, the learners should be made aware of the program or session objectives prior to or at the start of the event, either verbally or in written form.

Broad Area	Possible Wording
<b>Knowledge</b>	define – write – state – list – recall – recognize – underline - select
<b>Comprehension</b>	identify – justify – select – indicate – represent – illustrate – name – formulate – explain – judge – label - classify
<b>Application</b>	predict – list – find – show – demonstrate – choose – reproduce – compute – use - perform - construct - select – assess explain - calculate
<b>Analysis</b>	analyze – identify – conclude – differentiate – select – separate – compare – contrast – Justify – resolve - break down - criticize
<b>Synthesis</b>	combine – restate – summarize – argue – discuss – organize – derive – conclude - select – relate – generalize
<b>Evaluation</b>	judge – evaluate – recognize – support – validate – determine – criticize – identify – defend – attack – choose
<b>Attitude</b>	prefer – choose - identify with – accept - relate to - commit to

### What are instructional objectives?

Instructional objectives may also be called performance objectives, behavioral objectives or objectives. All of these terms are used interchangeably. Objectives are specific, outcome based, measurable and describe the student's behavior. So what does that mean?

Objectives are *very specific*. This means that they should describe precisely what the learner is expected to do.

Objectives are *outcome based*. This means that the objective is going to state what the learner should be able to do after the instruction is complete. The process of how the instruction happens is not considered in an objective.

Objectives are *measurable*. This means that objectives should describe learning outcomes that can be measured; objectives should be seen or heard.

Objectives *describe student behaviors*. This means that objectives should relate what the student should be able to do after the instruction.

### How do we write an instructional objective?

Heinich and his colleagues (2002) suggest that well written objectives have four parts. They call these parts the ABCD's of instructional objectives. The A stands for Audience, the B represents Behavior, the C stands for

Condition and the Degree for Degree of Accuracy. Each instructional objective is written in sentence format and should contain the A, B, C and D.

**Audience** The audience is the group of learners that the objective is written for. This is usually written "the learner" or "the student" however it could be written as specific as "The third grade science student". I suggest that "less is more". Make it simple so that the objective does not get too wordy.

**Behavior** The behavior is the verb that describes what the learner (audience) will be able to do after the instruction. This is the heart of the objective and **MUST** be measureable **AND** observable. In addition, these verbs **MUST** be specific. Verbs such as know, understand, comprehend, appreciate are difficult to measure and are therefore not good choices for objectives.

**Condition** Conditions are the circumstances under which the objective must be completed. What will the instructor allow the student to use in order to complete the instruction? What equipment or tools can the student have access to such as a calculator, map, the book, class notes, etc. Obviously it would be much more difficult to make calculations without a calculator than with one.

**Degree** The degree identifies the standard that the learner must meet to reach acceptable performance. In other words, what degree of accuracy does the learner have to meet in order that his/her performance be judged proficient? The degree of accuracy should be related to real-world expectations.

### What are the difference between Aims and Objectives?

Aims are general statements concerning the overall goals, ends or intentions of teaching. Objectives are the individual stages that learners must achieve on the way in order to reach these goals. For example a teacher might have an aim that a student should be able to take blood pressure using a sphygmomanometer. However to achieve this aim a series of objectives must be met. E.g. to explain procedure to patient, to position cuff correctly, to inflate to correct pressure, etc.

- Aims are general, objectives are specific.
- Aims are like strategy, objective are like tactics.

### Purpose and Function of Behavioral Objectives

- Guide for the teacher relative to the design of instruction
- Guide for the teacher for evaluation/test design (e.g. written tests, etc)
- Guide for the learner relative to learning focus
- Guide for the learner relative to self-assessment
- Statements of objectives tell others what we value.
- Causes careful thinking about what is to be accomplished through instruction.
- Helps relationship between teacher and learner because with explicit objectives the instructor is viewed less in an adversarial role because students are not forced to guess what is to be learned.
- Enhances possibility to create focused independent learning materials.
- Makes teaching more directed and organized.
- Communicates to colleagues what you are teaching thus enhancing collaboration and teamwork with colleagues.
- Helps facilitate those situations in which we want students to demonstrate competency (The objectives can be specified in such a way as to specify competency.)
- Aids in program evaluation
- Forces teacher to think carefully about what is important
- Helps avoid unnecessary repetitions in teaching
- Helps bridge the gap between vague, but relevant, and important, institutional goals and actual instruction
- Provides visibility and accountability of decisions made by teachers and learners.
- Provides models for the creation of objectives by students
- Helps students make decisions regarding prioritizing
- Provides feedback to learners as objectives are accomplished.

*Combined & Adapted, Abdelouahab Senhaji*