

Tips for Writing Learning Objectives

A learning objective is a statement that describes the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes that participants will gain from the educational activity. When developing objectives, ask these questions:

- What should the result of the educational activity be for participants?
- What should the participant be able to do?
- What should the participant know?

How to write a learning objective

For the purpose of NCCHC conference presentations, learning objectives should:

- List each objective in learner-oriented, not faculty-oriented, terms
- List each objective in measurable terms (Use the list of effective verbs for formulating learning objectives provided below.)
- Consist of only one action or outcome
- Identify abbreviations, acronyms or initials, at least once, to facilitate the peer review
- Complete this statement:
“Upon completion of this learning activity, participants should be able to....”

Why develop learning objectives?

The National Commission on Correctional Health Care is an approved provider of continuing education by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, the American Nurses Association and the American Psychological Association. In order to offer valuable CE to conference attendees, each presentation must be accompanied by learning objectives developed to guide the educational activity. Learning objectives:

- Help prospective participants determine whether this educational activity meets their needs or interests.
- Guide learning as participants engage in the educational activity, i.e., attend your presentation.
- Help us gauge the success of the educational activity by asking participants to evaluate how well the learning objectives were met.

Effective verbs for formulating learning objectives

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

1. Those that communicate knowledge:

Information

cite	identify	recite	state
define	indicate	recognize	trace
describe	list	record	write
draw	name	relate	

Comprehension

associate	contrast	distinguish	predict
classify	describe	explain	report
compare	differentiate	express	restate
compute	discuss	interpret	review

Application

apply	employ	order	restate
calculate	examine	practice	review
complete	illustrate	predict	solve
demonstrate	interpret	relate	translate

Analysis

analyze	criticize	differentiate	inspect
appraise	debate	distinguish	summarize
contract	detect	experiment	

Synthesis

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

Evaluation

appraise	construct	prepare	select
assess	estimate	rank	test
choose	evaluate	recommend	
compose	measure	revise	

2. Those that convey attitudes:

acquire	exemplify	realize	reflect
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Verbs to Avoid

These verbs are used often but are not measurable:

appreciate	conceptualize	know
believe	experience	learn
comprehend	feel	understand

Please follow the [NCCHC Position Statement on the Use of Humanizing Language in Correctional Health Care](#).

In summary:

- Reframe historically stigmatizing language by using person-first language such as person/people/individuals experiencing incarceration, incarcerated person/people/individuals, the incarcerated, person living with HIV, person with substance use disorder.
- Avoid correctional labels such as inmate, offender, prisoner, felon, convict, criminal.
- For the youth population, avoid terms such as juvenile, juvenile offender, and minor. Preferred terms are youth, adolescent, child, and young adult, as appropriate.
- Avoid health-defining labels such as addict, drug user, HIV patient, psychotic, diabetic.