



Developing a Focused Learning Plan Writing Learning Objectives

What are learning objectives?

Learning objectives are specific and measurable statements that describe what the learner is expected to achieve as a result of engaging in a specific learning activity. Learning objectives are different from goals. Goals are broader and describe a more global learning outcome. A single goal may have specific learning outcomes associated with it

Instructions: For each issue that you identified for the Resident, write one learning objective that describes what the Resident will achieve by the end of the FLP process in the **next column** of the FLP template.

Why do you need to write learning objectives?

- Learning objectives serve as a "road map". By knowing where you want the Resident to end up, you increase the chances of the Resident getting there as your teaching can become more focused and organized. By having learning objectives, the Resident will also be able to focus and set priorities in their learning efforts.
- Writing learning objectives for your Resident will help you identify which learning strategies to use.

How do you write learning objectives?

- A learning objective has three parts:
 1. *Behaviour*: What will the Resident be able to do after the learning activity?
 2. *Criterion*: At what level must the Resident be able to perform?
 3. *Condition*: Under what conditions/in what environment will the Resident be expected to perform?
- Focus on the Resident's performance and what you want the Resident to achieve. There should only be one learning outcome in each objective.
- Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives distinguishes between three main categories of objectives (see Resources):
 1. cognitive (knowing)
 2. psychomotor (doing)
 3. affective (feeling)
- Begin each learning objective with a verb that specifies the desired outcome.
 - Choosing a verb for the learning objective is critical; it must be specific and measurable in nature (see examples of good learning objective verbs in the link above on this page).
 - Kathy Waller's "[Writing Instructional Objectives](#)" is a valuable resource for choosing appropriate verbs as they are listed based on the domain in which the objective is being written.
 - It is important to appreciate that some verbs cannot be measured or are redundant. You can see a list of some of the more common verbs to be avoided when writing objectives [here](#).

- When writing learning objectives, remember the mnemonic RUMBA. Learning objectives should be:

Realistic	• Is this something I would expect for a resident?
Understandable	• Would a resident know what is expected of them?
Measurable	• Is there a way to clearly identify whether the objective has been successfully met?
Behavioural	• Is the objective written in a manner that allows the expected performance to be clearly observed?
Achievable	• Is the objective achievable given the time and resources available with the demands of the resident's current work?

Learning Objective verbs (Table from Bloom's Taxonomy)

Level of Bloom's Taxonomy	Verbs
Knowledge	Count, Define, Describe, Draw, Find, Identify, Label, List, Match, Name, Quote, Recall, Record, Recite, Select, Sequence, State, Tell, Write
Comprehension	Arrange, Associate, Clarify, Classify, Conclude, Convert, Demonstrate, Describe, Discuss, Estimate, Explain, Express, Generalize, Identify, Illustrate, Interpret, Locate, Paraphrase, Predict, Report, Restate, Review, Sort, Summarize, Tell, Translate
Application	Apply, Assess, Catalogue, Change, Chart, Choose, Compute, Consolidate, Demonstrate, Develop, Dramatize, Employ, Establish, Extrapolate, Illustrate, Implement, Instruct, Interpret, Interview, Predict, Prepare, Produce, Role-play, Select, Show, Transfer, Use
Analysis	Analyze, Appraise, Calculate, Characterize, Classify, Compare, Contrast, Correlate, Debate, Deduce, Diagram, Differentiate, Discriminate, Distinguish, Examine, Investigate, Outline, Recognize, Relate, Research, Separate
Synthesis	Adapt, Arrange, Assemble, Build, Compile, Compose, Construct, Create, Design, Develop, Devise, Formulate, Generate, Incorporate, Integrate, Invent, Make, Manage, Modify, Organize, Perform, Plan, Produce, Propose, Rearrange, Reconstruct, Rewrite, Structure, Synthesize
Evaluation	Appraise, Argue, Assess, Choose, Conclude, Confirm, Critic, Decide, Defend, Diagnose, Evaluate, Judge, Justify, Predict, Prioritize, Prove, Rank, Rate, Recommend, Research, Resolve, Revise, Select, Validate

Resources

- Writing learning objectives:
 - [Kathy V. Waller, PhD, CLS\(NCA\), NAACLS Board of Directors](#)
 - [University of Tennessee](#)
 - [Ohio University](#)
 - [Planning for instruction](#)
- Bloom's taxonomy:
 - [Bloom's taxonomy](#)