



Tips from the Wisconsin Professional Development Approval System

What are “Learner Outcomes / Objectives?”

- Learner outcomes or objectives are statements that specify what learners will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity.
- Outcomes are usually expressed as knowledge, skills or attitudes.
- Learning outcomes or objectives provide direction in the planning of a learning activity. In other words, objectives should come first and aid in planning and developing training.

What are the characteristics of good learning outcomes/objectives?

- 1) *They need to be observable* 2) *They need to be measurable*

What should learner outcomes or objectives do?

- *Focus on learner’s behavior that is to be changed.*
- *Serve as guidelines for content, instruction, and evaluation.*
- *Identify specifically what should be learned.*
- *Convey to learners exactly what is to be accomplished*

How do I write learner outcomes or objectives?

Many trainings list learning outcomes that are unclear or represent elements of curriculum rather than some action the participants will demonstrate. For example:

- *Participants will be able to understand the nine reasons for conducting a needs assessment.*
- *Participants will be able to develop an appreciation of cultural diversity in the workplace.*

If you ask a simple question (“Can it be measured?”), you see that these learner outcomes

are weak. They are not measurable. These same outcomes can be modified by changing the action verbs. For example:

- *Participants will be able to list nine reasons for conducting a needs assessment.*
- *Participants will be able to summarize in writing their feelings about cultural diversity in the workplace.*

By stating them like this, learners have a better idea of what is expected of them.

Because the learner's performance should be observable and measurable, the verb chosen for each outcome statement should be an action verb, which results in behavior that can be observed and measured. Some examples of action verbs are:

Compile, create, plan, revise, analyze, design, select, utilize, apply, demonstrate, prepare, use, compute, discuss, explain, compare, rate, critique

Verbs that call for behavior, which cannot be observed or measured, are: know, become aware of, appreciate, learn, understand, and become familiar with

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