Guide to Writing Learning Outcomes

Why measurable learning outcomes

- Communicate clearly with colleagues and students about expectations
    - Clear learning objectives state what the learner will be able to do upon completing the educational activity, in terms of behavioral change
- Ensure that what you intend students to learn is what they actually learn
- Improve alignment between assessments (measures) and instruction (teaching methods and materials) and desired goal state (learning outcome).

ABCD method for writing learning outcomes

Although there is no such thing as a perfectly written learning outcome, some learning outcomes are more effective than others. Including all components into the statement makes it easier to align assessments and learning outcomes.

Components

Audience – What population are you assessing? Who is learning?

Behavior – What action do you expect from the participant?

Conditions – Under what circumstances will the individual perform the behavior?

Degree – How well must the individual perform the behavior?

Example

Learning Outcome: Using the ABCD Method and Bloom's Taxonomy, the workshop participant will be able to write a measurable learning objective with at least 75% accuracy.

Assessment: Each workshop participant will write a learning outcome, and then will identify each component within the learning outcome. The student must correctly identify at least 3 of the components for successful completion.

Instruction: Demonstrate how to identify each component in the workshop learning outcome. Have participants identify components within several example learning outcomes while working in pairs. Then each person will write a learning outcome and have their neighbor identify the components.

Answer Key:

- Audience is "workshop participants"
- Behavior is "write a measurable learning objective"
- Condition is "Using the ABCD Method and Bloom's Taxonomy"
- Degree is "at least 75% accuracy"

Bloom's Taxonomy Verb Samples

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
remembering previously learned information	grasping the meaning of information	applying knowledge to actual situations	breaking down objects or ideas into simpler parts and seeing how the parts relate	rearranging component ideas into a new whole	making judgments based on internal evidence or external criteria
arrange	classify	apply	analyze	arrange	argue
define	convert	change	appraise	assemble	assess
describe	defend	choose	breakdown	categorize	attach
duplicate	discuss	compute	calculate	collect	choose
identify	distinguish	demonstrate	categorize	combine	compare
label	estimate	discover	classify	compose	conclude
list	explain	dramatize	compare	construct	contrast
match	express	employ	contrast	create	defend
memorize	extend	illustrate	criticize	design	describe
name	generalize	interpret	diagram	develop	discriminate
order	indicate	manipulate	differentiate	devise	estimate
outline	infer	modify	distinguish	explain	evaluate
recognize	locate	operate	examine	formulate	explain
relate	paraphrase	predict	identify	generate	judge
recall	predict	prepare	illustrate	plan	justify
repeat	rewrite	produce	infer	prepare	interpret
reproduce	report	relate	interpret	propose	relate
select	restate	schedule	model	rearrange	predict
state	review	show	outline	reconstruct	rate
	select	sketch	question	reorganize	select
	summarize	solve	relate	revise	summarize
		use	select	summarize	support
		write	separate	synthesize	value
			subdivide	write	

Words to avoid

- Appreciate
- Approach
- Become
- Believe
- Grasp the significance of
- Grow
- Improve
- Increase
- Know
- Learn
- Think critically
- Understand