Guidelines for Writing Measurable Educational Objectives

DO NOT put either your abstract text or URLs in Learning Objectives.
DO NOT place any HTML tags (ol, ul, li, etc.) into the "Learning Objectives" box.

The following guidelines are provided to assist in the development of **measurable** educational objectives for a proposed educational experience.

Objectives: Objectives are stated in operational/behavioral terms that define expected learner outcomes and indicate what the participant should be able to do at the conclusion of the activity. An average of three objectives per half-day APHA-LI course is realistic. There must be an abstract, (**400 words for ½ day course and 800 words for full-day or day and ½ course**) describing the course. In addition, there must be at least a two-sentence abstract - of not less than 2-3 sentences - and one measurable educational objective for **each** faculty presentation. **Writing the objectives within the abstract is not acceptable. Referring back to the full course abstract content for the objectives is also not acceptable.**

Content: The content must be congruent with the educational purpose and the objectives. Each objective has corresponding content detailing key points that will be addressed. Content must be more than a restatement of the objective. It is recommended that the content be sequentially numbered to show how the objectives correspond directly with the related objective.

Teaching Methods, Strategies, Materials and Resources: List the methods, strategies, materials and resources to be used by presenter/content specialist to cover each objective. These are to be congruent with the objectives and content covered. The teaching methods and strategies must be based on adult learning theory.

Instructions for Writing Educational Objectives:
Step 1: Write your objectives according to what is expected of the learner, not what you will do.

- Incorrect: I will have each participant list the four elements in the adult learning model.
- **Correct: Upon completion of this course, the participant will be able to list the four elements in the adult learning model.**
- Incorrect: I will present a definition of clinical algorithms to the learner.
- **Correct: Upon completion of this course, the participant will be able to define the concept of clinical algorithms.**

Step 2: Make the behavior or verb of your objective clear and measurable. Behaviors can be written on different levels (see Table below).

SOME POSSIBLE VERBS FOR USE IN STATING COGNITIVE OUTCOMES [1]

1.00 Knowledge	2.00 Comprehension	3.00 Application	4.00 Analysis	5.00 Synthesis	6.00 Evaluation
define	translate	interpret	distinguish	compose	judge
repeat	restate	apply	analyze	plan	appraise
record	discuss	employ	differentiate	propose	evaluate
list	describe	use	appraise	design	rate
recall	recognize	demonstrate	calculate	formulate	compare
name	explain	dramatize	experiment	arrange	value
relate	express	practice	test	assemble	revise
	identify	illustrate	compare	collect	score
		operate	contrast	construct	select
		schedule	criticize	create	choose
			diagram	set up	assess
			inspect	organize	estimate
				manage	measure

[1] Compliments of Marybelle Savage: Johnson & Johnson. *Assuring Learning w/Self-Instructional Packages*, Self-Instructional Packages, Inc., 1973.

Changing levels, as described in the table, requires some modification in the teaching techniques and time required. As a general rule, knowledge level behaviors can be taught in a short period of time while objectives at the evaluation level will take much longer periods of time. Your course will probably be concerned only with the knowledge and comprehension levels.

- Incorrect: Each learner will <u>know</u> the four elements in the adult learning model.
- **Correct: Upon completion of this course, the participant will be able to *list* the four elements in the adult learning model.**
- Incorrect: Each learner will <u>understand</u> the concept of clinical algorithms.
- **Correct: Upon completion of this course, the participant will be able to <u>write</u> a definition of the concept of clinical algorithms.**

In this example above, <u>write</u> is more specific than <u>understand</u> and is open to fewer interpretations.
Step 3: Make the <u>content</u> of your objective as specific as possible.

- OK: Each learner will <u>list elements in an adult learning model.</u>

- **Better: Upon completion of this course, the participant will be able to list the four elements in Knowles adult learning model.**

The "Better" example specifies the exact number of elements and the specific model that the participant is expected to learn. The "OK" example does not specify the number of elements nor does it specify the exact adult learning model.

- OK: Each learner will be able to write definition for <u>current terms used in continuing education.</u>
- **Better: Upon completion of this course, the participant will be able to write a definition for the following terms: self-directed learning, certification and CEs.**

The "Better" example specified exact terms while the "OK" example was vague. "Current terms" has different meanings to different people.

<u>IMPORTANT!! For the correct display of Educational Objectives on the on-line technical program</u>
<u>you MUST follow the format shown in Example of Educational Objectives below.</u>

1. List five indicators that link a healthy community to healthy economy.
2. Articulate the procedure for assessing the health status of a patient with Alzheimer's Disease.
3. Develop a care plan for a family of six supported by an annual income of $32,000, and caring for a child who has cystic fibrosis.