

# Suggested Guidelines for How to Write Learning Objectives

A learning objective describes the intended skills, knowledge, and attitudes produced as a result of instruction.<sup>1</sup>

A strong learning objective contains the following components:

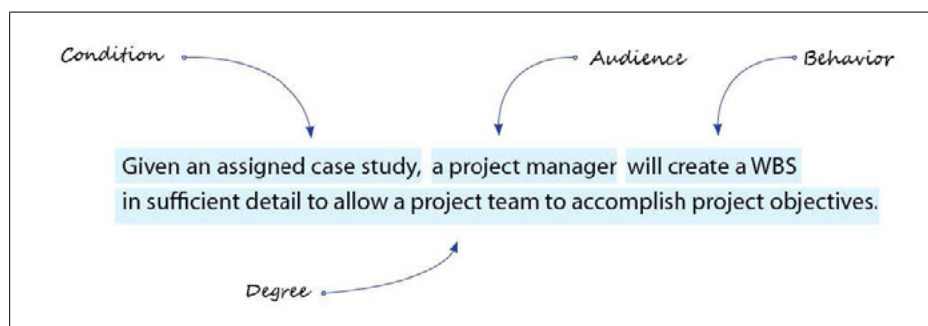
<b>Audience</b>	Who must perform this objective?
<b>Behavior</b>	What is the learner expected to do?
<b>Condition</b>	Under what conditions must the learner perform?
<b>Degree</b>	What constitutes an acceptable performance? <sup>2</sup>

The behavior portion is a critical part of an objective. Select a verb that will allow you to measure the results (outcomes) of the lesson.

Words such as “know”, “understand”, and “do”, are difficult to measure.

Words such as “define”, “identify”, “design”, “evaluate” are more specific and more accurately allow you to measure how well an objective was met<sup>3</sup>.

Here is an example of a strong learning objective. Notice all four components listed above are present.



To strengthen your training, display learning objectives at the beginning of each module of a course, so that students have a clear expectation of what they will learn.

# Suggested Guidelines for How to Assess Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are the achieved and measured results of what was learned.

The most common types of assessment used to measure these results are listed here:

**Performance-Based Activities**

These activities assess the learner's proficiency in meeting the learning objectives based on real-world assignments. For example, a learner can be assessed on his/her ability to create a WBS based on an assigned case study.

**Practice Quizzes**

Quizzes delivered at regular intervals (i.e. at the conclusion of each module) provide feedback to be used by the instructor and learner to indicate the level of proficiency in meeting the learning objectives.

**Final Exam**

Exams measure the level of proficiency obtained at the end of a learning event, by comparing it against a standard or benchmark. An example for a PMP® certification prep course could include a sample PMP® certification exam.

Strengthen your training by tying assessments and outcomes directly to your learning objectives.

Make sure the method used to measure proficiency is appropriate to the learners and to the instruction.

- 1 Dick, W., & Carey, L. (1996). The systematic design of instruction. 4th ed. New York, NY: Harper Collin
- 2 Mager, Robert. (1975). Preparing instructional objectives. Palo Alto, CA: Fearon Publishers.
- 3 Bloom, B. S.; Engelhart, M. D.; Furst, E. J.; Hill, W. H.; Krathwohl, D. R. (1956). Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals. Handbook I: Cognitive domain. New York: David McKay Company.

