



HOW TO WRITE OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT

Contents

Writing Objectives	1
How Many Objectives Do I Need?	1
Sample List of Action Verbs.....	2
Writing Content	3
Samples	3
Timeframes	4
Contact Hours for Live Events	5
Calculating Contact Hours for Enduring Materials	5
Important Note about the Term: CEU	5
Teaching Strategies.....	5

Writing Objectives

Educational objectives are derived from the overall activity purpose and describe learner – oriented outcomes as a result of participation in the educational activity. These statements describe knowledge, skills, and/or practice changes that should occur upon successful completion of the educational activity.

Learner-oriented outcomes must be expressed in measurable terms (using measurable, behavioral verbs), identify observable actions, and specify **one action or outcome per objective (avoid using the word “and”)**. Examples of commonly used measurable behavioral verbs include: classify, compare, contrast, demonstrate, describe, develop, differentiate, discuss, explain, identify, list, and name. See the “Sample Verb List” on the next page.

How Many Objectives Do I Need?

The number of objectives should be sufficient to accomplish the intended purpose/goal(s) of the activity. For a 60 minute/one (1) contact hour presentation, at least one (1) objective must be

identified. Please note that it is not necessary, nor is it recommended, to begin an objective by saying "The participant will be able to. . .". Just start with a measurable verb from the Sample List of Action Verbs on the next page.

Sample List of Action Verbs

KNOWLEDGE	APPLICATION	EVALUATION
Arrange	Apply	Appraise
Define	Choose	Argue
Describe	Classify	Assess
Distinguish	Demonstrate	Attach
Identify	Develop	Choose
Label	Employ	Compare
List	Generalize	Consider
Match	Illustrate	Contrast
Name	Interpret	Decide
Recall	Operate	Defend
Relate	Organize	Estimate
Repeat	Practice	Evaluate
State	Relate	Judge
	Restructure	Predict
SYNTHESIS	Schedule	Rate
Arrange	Solve	Score
Assemble	Transfer	Select
Classify	Use	Standardize
Collect		Support
Combine	ANALYSIS	Validate
Compose	Analyze	Value
Construct	Appraise	
Create	Calculate	COMPREHENSION
Derive	Categorize	Classify
Design	Classify	Demonstrate
Develop	Compare	Describe
Document	Contrast	Determine
Formulate	Criticize	Discuss
Manage	Deduce	Explain
Modify	Detect	Express
Organize	Diagram	Identify
Originate	Differentiate	Indicate
Plan	Discriminate	Interpret
Prepare	Distinguish	Locate
Produce	Examine	Rephrase
Propose	Experiment	Report
Set up	Identify	Restate
Specify	Inventory	Review
Synthesize	Question	Rewrite
Transmit	Test	Select
Write		Summarize
		Tell
		Translate

Adapted from: Bloom, B.S. (Ed.) (1956) Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals: Handbook I, cognitive domain. New York; Toronto: Longmans, Green.

Writing Content

- Each objective must have written content that is directly related to the objective.
- Subject matter which relates to each objective should be supplied in the form of a **topic outline** (e.g., bullet points).
- The content outline should not be a restatement of the objective. This outline should provide **a list of the material to be presented** to support the intended outcome and facilitate learner achievement of the objective. The amount of material to be covered should be adequate to support/justify the allotted timeframe.
- Identification of the content/topics is a collaborative process between the planners (Planning Committee) and presenters.

Samples

Following are examples of the INCORRECT and the CORRECT ways to state an objective and its content on the Activity Documentation Form (ADF).

INCORRECT

Title of Activity: *Total Hip Replacement*

Objective	Content	Timeframe	Presenter	Teaching Strategies
1. Describing the symptoms and risk for a candidate for a total hip replacement.	The major symptoms for a candidate for total hip replacement	10-15		Slides

1. Objective is compound (**avoid using the word “and”**).
Learner-oriented outcomes must be expressed in single measurable terms (using measurable, behavioral verbs), must identify observable actions, and must specify one action or outcome per objective

This Objective is actually asking for two outcomes:

- A description of the symptoms; and

- A description of the risks.

It would have to be split into two objectives:

- Describe the symptoms a person who requires total hip replacement may exhibit; and
 - Discuss the possible complications following total hip replacement.
2. Content is just a restatement of the objective. Content must be presented in an outline form and, in this case, a list of the items to be described/discussed.
 3. Teaching Strategies should address adult learning. Lecture, slides, handouts are some examples. No Q&A session is noted; therefore, “discussion” must be added for each.

CORRECT

Objective	Content	Timeframe	Presenter	Teaching Strategies
1. Describe the symptoms a person who requires a total hip replacement may exhibit.	a. Arthritis – restricted movement hip b. Pain not relieved by non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications c. Pain not relieved by physical therapy d. Impact on ADL	15 minutes	Wm Smith, MD	Lecture, slides, discussion
2. Discuss the possible complications following total hip replacement.	a. Nerve damage b. Infection c. Failure of prosthetic device	20 minutes	Wm. Smith, MD	Lecture, slides, discussion

Timeframes

The educational objectives and the level and amount of content to be provided dictate the amount of time which will be required. Each objective or content area should have a specific designated

timeframe. The time allotments for content for each objective should be sufficient to facilitate achievement of the objective by the learner.

Contact Hours for LIVE events

One (1) contact hour is equal to 60 minutes of presentation time (e.g. LIVE events). Introductions, breaks, and meals are not valid contact-hour time, and, as a result, do not count toward the total number of presentation minutes. However, time scheduled for completion of the Evaluation Form, a Questions & Answers session, and Discussion is calculated as valid contact-hour time. Add up the total number of minutes used for valid presentation time and divide by 60 to determine total number of contact hours you want to apply for. A minimum of one-half (.5) contact hours (30 minutes) must be awarded.

Calculating Contact Hours for Enduring Materials

For Enduring Materials/Web-based activities, the timeframe established is for the entire course since learners complete these materials at their own pace. The methods for calculating the number of contact hours include pilot study, peer review, historical data, Complexity of content and data, and/or the Mergener Formula (see <http://touchcalc.com/calculators/mergener>).

Important Note about the Term: CEU

The ANCC Commission on Accreditation does not recognize the Continuing Education Unit (CEU) term. CEU is not a generic abbreviation for continuing education but rather a specific measure: ten (10) contact hours equal one (1) CEU. **Please do not use the term “CEU” in any manner.**

Teaching Strategies

Instructional methods that support attainment of the educational objectives should be used. The action indicated as the expected outcome determines the teaching strategies to be used. Teaching strategies include, but are not limited to, lecture, PowerPoint/slides, discussion, demonstration, return demonstration, and enduring materials/web-based activities. Question and Answer may be considered a teaching strategy as well.