

The Mystery of Objectives

This is a general outline of objective writing. A good detailed discussion of objectives is found in chapter 3 of Romi's Designing Instructional Systems (Romizowski, 1981). Note that Romi does not follow the ABCD model. He uses Mager's approach to writing objectives. However, you can apply his discussion to the ABCD model for objectives.

Introduction	<p>The hard part of writing objectives isn't typically the actually writing of it, it's the thought that must be done prior to that. In other words, it is coming up with the outcomes appropriate to the overall goal of your instruction. For example, an overall goal could be that students will understand how to create motivating instruction. The hard part is coming up with the specific tasks related to the goal, and the classification of each task. Into either of the psychomotor, cognitive, affective domains.</p> <p>Generating specific learning tasks is part of the content/task analysis (which I am not going to go into here) and should go hand-in-hand with the construction of objectives. One can help to clarify the other.</p> <p>Once you feel you have determined your determined outcome, you then must consider (1) the relevance to the overall aims of the instruction, (2) the viability of the desired outcome viable, and (3) is the desired outcome measurable.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="407 877 1414 1073"> <tr> <td>relevance</td><td>Would the achievement of this objective really contribute to the overall goals of the instruction?</td></tr> <tr> <td>viability</td><td>Do you have necessary conditions to be able to achieve this objective?</td></tr> <tr> <td>measurable</td><td>Can you measure the desired outcome measurable? Some desired outcomes may be easier to measure than others.</td></tr> </table>	relevance	Would the achievement of this objective really contribute to the overall goals of the instruction?	viability	Do you have necessary conditions to be able to achieve this objective?	measurable	Can you measure the desired outcome measurable? Some desired outcomes may be easier to measure than others.
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Performance Objectives	<p>A performance objective is a precise statement of the capability a learner should be able to demonstrate as an observable performance. A well written objective communicates the purpose of the instruction and how success will be evaluated.</p> <p>Objectives are typically written during the process of conducting content or task analysis. When constructing objectives you, as the instructional designer, should be answering the questions (1) what will the learners be able to do after completing the instruction and (2) how will they demonstrate success mastery of the content or task.</p>						
Types of Objectives	<p>There are three domains of learning identified by Romizowski (1981): (1) psychomotor, (2) cognitive, and (3) affective. How you construct your objective is dependent upon the type of learning you intend your students to participate in.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="407 1545 1414 1883"> <tr> <td>Psychomotor Objectives</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Romizowski (1981) describes this as objectives that have to do with doing. Use action verbs that relate to doing, such as execute. </td></tr> <tr> <td>Cognitive Objectives</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Romizowski (1981) describes this as objectives that have to do with thinking. Bloom developed the taxonomy of cognitive domain. (View the taxonomy of cognitive domain.) Action verb used will depend on the particular cognitive learning you expect of the students. </td></tr> </table>	Psychomotor Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Romizowski (1981) describes this as objectives that have to do with doing. Use action verbs that relate to doing, such as execute. 	Cognitive Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Romizowski (1981) describes this as objectives that have to do with thinking. Bloom developed the taxonomy of cognitive domain. (View the taxonomy of cognitive domain.) Action verb used will depend on the particular cognitive learning you expect of the students. 		
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Components of performance objectives	<p>A precise performance objective contains four components. One commonly used acronym to remind us these components is ABCD. These four letters stand for:</p> <table> <tr> <td>A: Audience</td><td>This component describes the target audience of the objective.</td></tr> <tr> <td>B: Behavior</td><td>This component describes the behavior the learner must perform. This should describe the specific action the learner must take to demonstrate capability. An action verb, referred to by Gagne, Briggs, & Wagner (1992) as the learned capability verb, is used to describe the behavior. The particular verb used also indicates the classification of the objective.</td></tr> <tr> <td>C: Condition</td><td>This component states the situation under which the learner must perform.</td></tr> <tr> <td>D: Degree</td><td>This component includes the criterion for successful performance.</td></tr> </table> <p>Examples</p> <p>Cognitive objective: Given two different motivational models (C) students (A) will be able to compare (B) the components of the two models within 70% agreement with the instructor (D).</p> <p>Affective objective: Given class discussions on the course topic (C) student in the course (A) will share information they learned from (B) at one reading that was not provided by the instructor (D).</p> <p>You may notice that there is a qualitative difference between a cognitive objective and the affective objective. Affective objectives are about attitudes. Attitudes are measured on how a learner chooses to act. Motivational objectives are a type of affective objective.</p>	A: Audience	This component describes the target audience of the objective.	B: Behavior	This component describes the behavior the learner must perform. This should describe the specific action the learner must take to demonstrate capability. An action verb, referred to by Gagne, Briggs, & Wagner (1992) as the learned capability verb, is used to describe the behavior. The particular verb used also indicates the classification of the objective.	C: Condition	This component states the situation under which the learner must perform.	D: Degree	This component includes the criterion for successful performance.
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References

- Gagne, R.M., Briggs, L.J., & W.W. Wagner (1992) Principles of Instructional Design (4th ed) Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
- Romizowski, A.J. (1981) Designing Instructional Systems: Descision making in course planning and curriculum design. New York, NW: Kogan Page.