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Learning Objectives:
Foundation of Quality Distance Learning Courses

Objectives of the Workshop

1. To explore the importance of learning objectives in the instructional design process.
2. To define the components of properly written learning objectives.
3. To define the categories (domains) of learning objectives.
4. To write measurable objectives.

Instructional Design Cycle
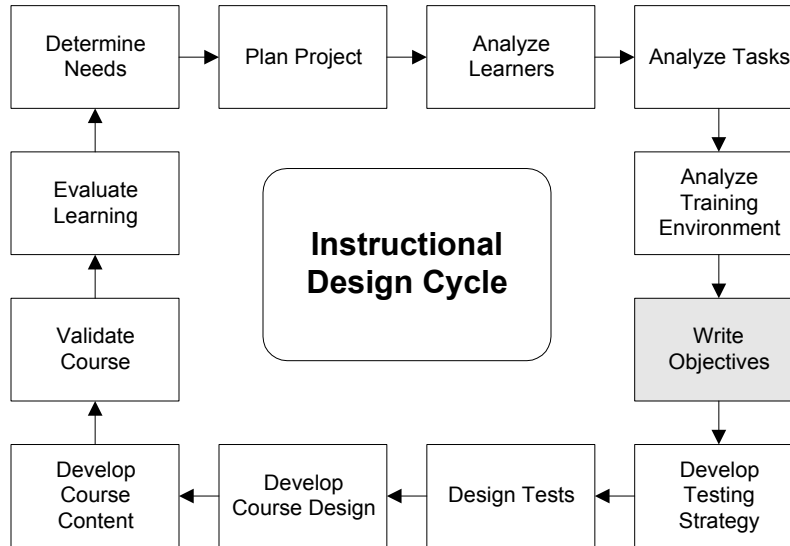
Notes

Terms and Definitions

A   Defines the purpose of the course.

B   Identifies what the course is intended to deliver and specifies what the learners' new behaviours will be after the learning experience.

C   Specifies what the learners' new behaviours will be after taking instruction for a lesson, unit, or module.
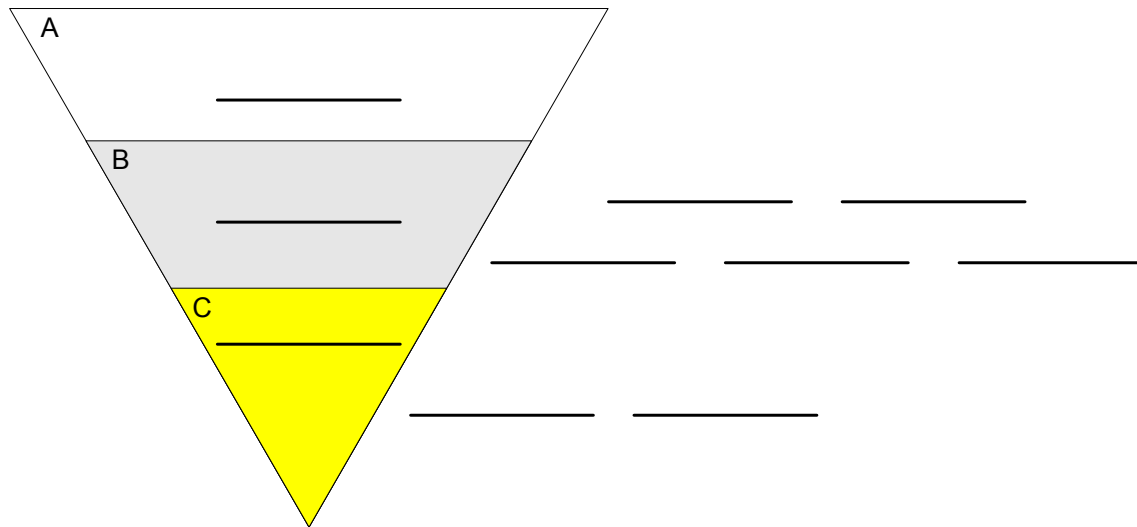
Fill in the blanks in the diagram above with the following terms:

1. behavioural objectives
2. competencies
3. content objectives
4. course goal
5. course objectives

6. learning outcomes
7. learning tasks
8. objectives
9. performance objectives
10. sub-outcomes

Notes

Importance of Objectives

Objectives are critical components to a well-designed course because they:

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- _____

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Components of Objectives

The objectives —also known as *performance objectives*, *behavioural objectives,* or *learning outcomes*—are statements of what learners should be able to do when they complete the course. These statements specifically identify what behaviour changes will result from taking the course as well as the measures of success that will be used to judge the course's adequacy. More broadly, objectives identify the scope of the course development project and focus the contents of the course.

Three components compose objectives:

- _____

- _____

- _____

Properly written objectives include all three components. As well, the audience (or "who") must be identified. In other words, objectives define who does what, under what conditions, and to what level.

Performance: Observable behaviour that will be used as an indicator that learning has taken place. Uses a verb to identify what the learner will be able to do.

Condition: Circumstances under which performance will occur.

Standard: Level of performance that will be acceptable and expected.

PRACTICE For each of the following objective examples, underline and identify the three components—performance, condition, and standard.

1. The player will describe two breakout plays that can be completed during a power-play situation.

2. During practice, the player will skate and handle the puck around 10 cones within 20 seconds.

3. The Edmonton Oilers will score at least as many goals as the Montreal Canadiens during the Heritage Classic game in Edmonton!

PRACTICE Write an objective (as directed to in the workshop) and identify the three components.

Notes

Domains and Levels of Learning

Learning objectives fall into three different categories, or *domains*. Each domain has different levels of learning. Consider both the domain and level of learning when writing objectives. The action verbs used to describe the objective's performance must match the level of learning required. Notice that the action verbs listed in the table represent measurable (observable, verifiable) behaviours.

COGNITIVE domain deals with thinking and intellectual skills.

Level	Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Definition	Remembers facts.	Grasps relationships and meanings.	Appropriately applies solutions to unfamiliar situations.	Separates a situation into its parts.	Combines elements to form a whole.	Judges the value for a given purpose.
Sample Verbs	• define • identify • label • list • name • recall • state	• describe • discuss • explain • locate • paraphrase • give example • translate	• apply • carry out • demonstrate • illustrate • prepare • solve • use	• analyze • categorize • compare • contrast • differentiate • discriminate • outline	• combine • construct • design • develop • generate • plan • propose	• assess • conclude • evaluate • interpret • justify • select • support

PSYCHOMOTOR domain deals motor skills.

Level	Perception	Set	Guided Response	Mechanism	Complete Overt Response	Adaption	Organization
Definition	Senses cues that guide motor	Mentally, emotionally, and physically ready to act.	Imitates and practices skills.	Performs acts with increasing efficiency, confidence, & proficiency.	Performs automatically.	Adapts skill sets to meet a problem situation.	Creates new patterns for specific situations.
Sample Verbs	• detect • hear • listen • observe • perceive • see • sense • smell • taste • watch	• achieve a posture • assume a body stance • position the body • site • stand • station	• copy • duplicate • imitate • operate under supervision • practice • repeat • try	• complete with confidence • conduct • demonstrate • execute • make	• control • direct • excel • guide • manage • master • organize • perfect • proceed	• adapt • reorganize • alter • revise • change	• design • originate • combine • compose • construct

AFFECTIVE domain deals with feelings, attitudes and values.

Level	Receive	Respond	Value	Organize	Internalize
Definition	Selectively attends to stimuli.	Responds to stimuli.	Attaches value or worth to something.	Conceptualizes the value and resolves conflict between it and other values.	Integrates the value into a value system that controls behaviour.
Sample Verbs	• accept • acknowledge • be aware • listen • notice • tolerate	• agree to • comply • conform • obey • respond • volunteer	• adopt • choose • commit • express • prefer • seek	• adapt • arrange • classify • group • rank • theorize	• advocate • defend • influence • maintain • serve • support

http://www.id.bcit.ca/pdf/outcomes.pdf

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Commonly Used Non-Measurable Verbs

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

PRACTICE Which of the following objectives are measurable?

1. By the end of this workshop, the learner will be able to list the three domains.

2. By the end of the Heritage Classic game, the fans will enjoy the game.

3. By the end of December, you will be able to calculate the cost of all purchased gifts.

4. During this course, the participant will learn about writing objectives.

5. By the end of the course, the learner will be aware of how to plan a holiday party.

6. By the end of the unit, you will understand the three-step process.

7. During the day, you will show up for at least one presentation.

Notes

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Self-Assessment Questions

1. What importance have I placed on learning objectives?

_____

_____

2. Have I written learning objectives that include all three components?

_____

_____

3. Have I written learning objectives that are measurable?

_____

_____

References

Dick, Walter, and Carey, Lou, *The Systematic Design of Instruction*, 4th ed., HarperCollins College Publishers, New York, NY, 1996.

Goldstein, Irwin L., *Training in Organizations*, 3d ed., Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, Pacific Grove, CA, 1993.

Hassell-Corbiell, Rives, *Developing Training Courses: A Technical Writer's Guide to Instructional Design and Development*, Learning Edge Publishing, Tacoma, WA, 2001.