

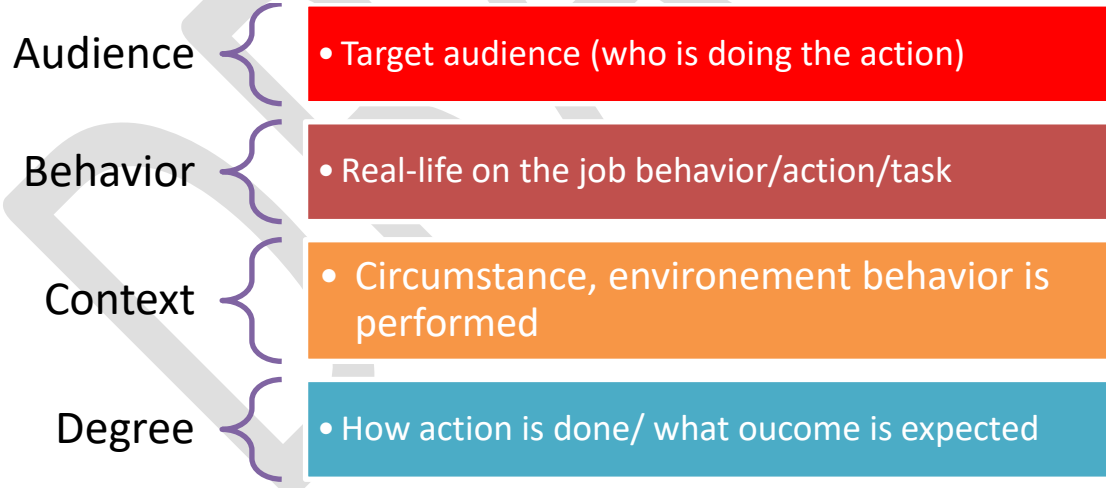
Tips for Writing Learning Objectives.

Accreditation Requirements

All continuing education accrediting bodies require clearly articulated learning objectives for educational activities. Articulated learning objectives are observable and measurable statements that clearly describe what learners will be able to do in their practice of clinical care, research, teaching, or administration **because of having participated in an accredited continuing educational activity**. These objectives should be learner-centric and appropriate for their level of training and role. Additionally, there should be continuity between the learning objectives, assessments, and evaluations. While all continuing education accrediting bodies may not require an assessment for all learning activities, each body does require all learning activities be evaluated. Well-written learning objectives improve the quality of assessments and evaluations, and, therefore, more useful educational outcome data can be produced. More importantly, learners will have a better understanding as to whether the learning activity is appropriate for them and their practice.

Learning objectives should reflect the desired knowledge, skills, and abilities that learners should develop because of participating in your CE session.

ABCD's of Learning Objectives:



The ABCD's do not always have to appear in this specific order, however it is helpful when all components are present

- Using a patient-centered approach, physicians will incorporate the patient perspective into diabetes and obesity care in the ambulatory setting.
- Physicians will involve patients in the decision-making process during clinic visits when establishing or reviewing care goals.
- Nurses will counsel patients in behavioral interventions during follow up calls and document discussion in EMR.
- Care team will deliver culturally competent care during all patient encounters to establish or build rapport.

Common Action Verbs (not an exhaustive list):

Acquire	Design	Modify
Administer	Develop	Negotiate
Advise	Direct	Notify
Analyze	Distribute	Order
Approve	Document	Organize
Arrange	Draft	Plan
Assemble	Edit	Predict
Assess	Establish	Prepare
Assist	Estimate	Present
Authorize	Evaluate	Prevent
Build	Facilitate	Process
Calculate	Finalize	Produce
Certify	Find	Provide
Check	Flag	Purchase
Code	Guide	Record
Collaborate	Help	Recruit
Collect	Hire	Resolve
Communicate	Implement	Respond
Complete	Inform	Review
Conduct	Inspect	Revise
Confirm	Install	Schedule
Contribute	Interpret	Solve
Counsel	Investigate	Submit
Create	Issue	Supply
Compare	Listen	Update
Coordinate	Maintain	Verify
Describe	Manage	Write
Deliver	Measure	Use

Template for Writing Objectives:

"Participants who engage in this educational intervention will be able to [action verb] [specific outcome] in [context]."

Examples of GOOD Learning Objectives:

Participants who engage in this educational intervention will be able to:

- Assess the efficacy of new antihypertensive treatments in clinical settings.
- Apply the latest guidelines for diabetes management to patient care.
- Describe clinical signs of malignant hyperthermia and outline management steps in clinical settings.
- Identify the signs and symptoms of acute stroke in adult patients in clinical settings.

NOTE- When reviewing learning objectives, please suggest edits when words and phrases like, "Understand, know, learn able, stay "up to date" are used. These words/phrases do not meet most accreditation standards and therefore should not be used.

Real-life and Job-Task Action Verbs

Think about what participants are doing in practice.

For example, in clinical practice, doctors typically don't "**recognize** medical and surgical treatment options for obesity and metabolic diseases."

Instead, they "**decide/evaluate/analyze** which medical and surgical treatment options for obesity and metabolic diseases is most appropriate for a given patient."

Verbs to avoid

Some continuing education accrediting bodies specifically identify verbs they consider unacceptable in learning objectives due to how challenging it can be to observe or measure these actions. Also, as a best practice, the following verbs/phrases **should not be used** in learning objectives for accredited continuing education activities.

- Understand
- Know
- Be aware
- Think about
- Keep abreast
- Stay up to date
- Appreciate

Verbs to reconsider

Some action verbs may be appropriate to use if the action is what the learner is doing in their day-to-day practice. However, if it is not what they are doing, the following verbs should be reconsidered.

- List

- Identify
- Define
- Describe
- Explain
- Summarize

For example, let's look at the learning objective, "*List* the impacts of pregnancy and lactation on bone health." Reconsider the verb "*list*" for "*implement*". When we stop and think about what we really want a clinician to do, a more accurate learning objective may be to "*implement* preventive cancer screening guidelines in a manner that involves the patient in shared decision making."