



How to Write Learning Outcomes

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Learning outcomes examine cognitive skills that students develop through educationally purposeful activities. They are statements indicating what a participant (usually students) will know, think, or be able to do as a result of an event, activity, program, etc.

ABCD Structure of a Learning Outcome

Audience

Who does the outcome pertain to?

Behavior

What do you expect the audience to know/be able to do? (This needs to include an action verb to describe the learning, chosen from the Bloom's Taxonomy word bank on page 2.)

Condition

Under what conditions or circumstances will the learning occur?

Degree

How much will be accomplished, how well will the behavior need to be performed, and to what level?

EXAMPLE

Students who attend advising sessions will choose courses that fulfill their chosen degree requirements.

Outcome Writing - The 3 Ms:

Check your outcome against these criteria:

1. **Meaningful:** How does the outcome support the mission or goal?
2. **Manageable:** What is needed to foster the achievement of the outcome? Is the outcome realistic?
3. **Measurable:** How will you know if the outcome is achieved? What is the assessment method?

Common Challenges When Writing Learning Outcomes:

- People don't use Bloom's taxonomy verbs and instead use vague terms like: appreciate, become aware of/familiar with, know, learn, value, use, understand
- Too vast/complex, too wordy
- Multiple outcomes in one learning outcome statement (the word "and" is usually a clue!)
- Not specific enough (e.g., effective communication skills)

EXAMPLE

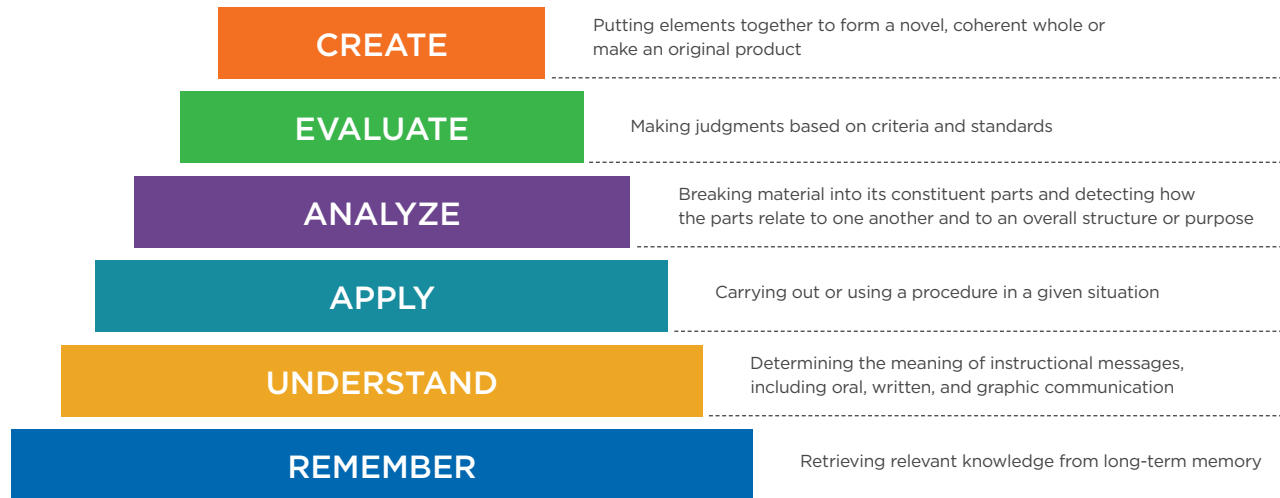
To improve this learning outcome statement:

"RAs will be more self-aware as leaders", you could change it to:

"As a result of attending RA training, RAs will be able to accurately assess the strengths and weaknesses of their leadership skills."

Bloom's Taxonomy: Cognitive Domain

The cognitive domain of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives offers a framework for classifying learning outcomes. The framework is hierarchical in nature, beginning with a foundational layer (*Remember*) and accelerating in a stepwise manner (from *Understand* to *Apply* to *Analyze* to *Evaluate* and on to *Create*). Select from this word bank when writing your learning outcome statements.



Adapted from A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Anderson, L.W. (Ed.), et al., 2001)

| REMEMBER | UNDERSTAND | APPLY | ANALYZE | EVALUATE | CREATE |
|-----------|--------------|-------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| Cite | Articulate | Compute | Calculate | Argue | Act |
| Define | Ask | Construct | Categorize | Assess | Arrange |
| Find | Characterize | Demonstrate | Compare | Check | Assemble |
| Identify | Clarify | Employ | Contrast | Convince | Build |
| Indicate | Classify | Exercise | Correlate | Critique | Compose |
| Label | Describe | Illustrate | Deconstruct | Debate | Construct |
| List | Discuss | Make | Detect | Decide | Create |
| Locate | Elaborate | Model | Diagram | Defend | Design |
| Match | Estimate | Operate | Differentiate | Determine | Develop |
| Memorize | Explain | Perform | Distinguish | Judge | Formulate |
| Name | Infer | Plot | Examine | Justify | Generate |
| Outline | Interpret | Practice | Experiment | Measure | Improve |
| Quote | Paraphrase | Present | Graph | Predict | Invent |
| Recall | Recognize | Produce | Integrate | Prioritize | Modify |
| Recite | Report | Provide | Order | Rank | Plan |
| Recognize | Restate | Show | Organize | Rate | Prepare |
| Repeat | Summarize | Sketch | Select | Recommend | Revise |
| Reproduce | Translate | Solve | Sequence | Reflect | Synthesize |
| State | Visualize | Use | Solve | Relate | Write |

Writing Outcomes

1. Identify the overarching/broader objective or goal your outcome is going to support:

2. Identify the audience:

3. What do you want them to be able to know, think, or be able to do? (Be specific!)

4. What circumstances or context will foster the learning?

5. To what degree will the learning occur? (Be specific!)

6. How will you measure the learning?

Fill in the blanks:

Audience:

Behavior:

<will learn what>

Condition:

<under these circumstances / conditions>

Degree:

<to this level of efficiency / effectiveness>

Check yourself:

| | YES | NO | NOT SURE |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Is the outcome measurable? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the outcome meaningful? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the outcome manageable? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Would you feel comfortable/proud sharing this outcome with students, campus constituents, and external audiences? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Rewrite the learning outcome statement to address any issues:
