Writing Behavioral Learning Objectives and Assessments

- Learning objectives, or learning outcomes, are statements that clearly describe what the learner will know or be able to do as a result of having attended an educational program or activity.

- Learning objectives must be **observable and measurable**.

- Learning objectives should (1) focus on the learner, and (2) contain action verbs that describe measurable behaviors.

- Verbs to consider when writing learning objectives:
  - list, describe, recite, write
  - compute, discuss, explain, predict
  - apply, demonstrate, prepare, use
  - analyze, design, select, utilize
  - compile, create, plan, revise
  - assess, compare, rate, critique

- Verbs to avoid when writing learning objectives
  - know, understand
  - learn, appreciate
  - become aware of, become familiar with

- Example of well-written learning objectives:

  **This workshop is designed to help you:**
  1. Summarize basic hypnosis theory and technique;
  2. Observe demonstrations of hypnotic technique and phenomena;
  3. Recognize differences between acute and chronic pain;
  4. Utilize hypnosis in controlling acute pain;
  5. Apply post-hypnotic suggestions to chronic pain; and
  6. Practice hypnotic technique in dyads.

- Objective learning assessments should be written in a manner that determines whether participants learned what you planned to teach them. The evaluation (or learning assessment) should be based on the stated learning objectives of the program.

- Example of well-written learning assessment:

  **Based on the content of the workshop, I am able to:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Describe at least two theoretical approaches to hypnosis;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Employ at least two hypnotic induction techniques;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Explain how psychological approaches differ when applied to acute vs. chronic pain;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Demonstrate a technique for applying hypnosis to acute pain;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Provide a post-hypnotic suggestion for controlling chronic pain; and</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. State that I had the opportunity to practice the technique during the workshop.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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