

Writing Effective Learning Objectives For Your OPTA Conference Presentation

Learning objectives may be written to address the cognitive, psychomotor, or affective domain. Use Bloom's Taxonomy to assist with writing them at an appropriate level. A copy of Bloom's Taxonomy can be seen at [this link](#).

1. It may not be appropriate to set your objectives at the lowest level on the **cognitive** domain (knowledge). You will likely want to achieve more with your instruction than simply "naming, defining or listing." It is probably more appropriate to set your objectives at one of the higher levels of the cognitive domain such as analysis, synthesis, or evaluation so that what the learner achieves is more at the "differentiating, integrating or comparing" level. The verbs under each category (at the link above) are very helpful in setting your objectives, so use them. Use the **cognitive** domain for objectives related to knowledge or understanding.
2. If your presentation involves something more clinically based (e.g., manual techniques), write an objective using the **psychomotor** domain. For these, the middle of the domain is probably most appropriate (imitate, manipulate, demonstrate). Use the **psychomotor** domain when the intent is physical action or motor skill.
3. Use the **affective** domain to set an objective if you are interested in improving the learner's appreciation of something they will be experiencing (e.g., individuals working with adaptive sports). Use the **affective** domain when the intent of the objective is feelings, attitudes, or values.

Objectives should describe precisely what the learner is expected to do, how well they are expected to perform, and when it should be accomplished. Remember the **A, B, C, D** rule:

- A.** Audience: the "who" (e.g., The learner will...)
- B.** Behavior: "what" the learner will do, perform, or demonstrate (e.g., Compare and contrast 2 exercises... *or* Palpate the greater trochanter...)
- C.** Condition: the "when" (e.g., At the end of the presentation/session...)
- D.** Degree: the "how well" (e.g., Accurately, 90% of the time...)

Other tips to follow:

1. Write objectives that are learner-centered (e.g., The learner will demonstrate... *rather than* the learner will be shown...).
2. Write objectives that are outcome oriented, not process oriented.
3. Describe **only 1 outcome** in an objective.
4. Write objectives that are specific, observable, and measurable.

Adapted from the writings of Tonya Apke, PT, DPT, OCS.