

FOCUS ON OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVES:

1. By the end of this session, participants will write educational objectives which include the following components: "Who"/"What"/"When"/and "How will we know?"
2. *During the small group session participants will:*
Formulate educational objectives that are:
 - a) Based on a "task analysis" (the breaking down of a task into its component parts).
 - b) Based on "needs assessment" (What does this particular student need in order to be successful?).
 - c) In the areas of knowledge, skills, and attitude.
 - d) Encouraging students to think about their learning.

Goals vs. Objectives

| Goals | Objectives |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General • Broad • Lofty | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific • Concrete • Tangible • Measurable • May need multiple objectives to accomplish one goal. |

- **Educational Objectives** are at the center of the GN♥ME. They follow from the "Needs" and are the precursor to the "Methods". They are at the heart of the educational process.

Overview

- What is an objective?
- Why write them?
- How do we write them?
- Examples and practice.

Definition

- An "objective" is a statement of concepts or skills that students are expected to know at the end of some period of instruction. In other words, what do you want your student to know or do at the end of the lesson, series of lessons, or rotation.
- An "objective" can also be a statement of an attitude or feeling that the learner will have at the end of the instructional period.

How are "Objectives" written?

- They describe **Who** will do the task you are asking. This is usually the learner.
- They describe exactly **What** the student is supposed to learn.
- They describe **When** the task will be completed.
- They describe **How** success will be measured (in other words, "How will you know the learner understands what it is they were supposed to learn?")
- In other words, an educational objective describes **what** the **student** will know; **when** they will know it; and **how** you will know that they succeeded.

- Example 1: On Monday, after taking a focused history from a patient presenting with cough, the student will list the 3 - 6 most likely diagnoses.

[Numbers can be helpful since it gives the learner a better sense as to what is expected. However, it may be too rigid. Sometimes there may be more relevant diagnoses and sometimes fewer].

- Example 2: By the end of this session, the student will demonstrate the components of informed consent including: telling the patient the risks of the procedure, alternatives to the procedure, and assessing the patient's understanding of the information. The student will be observed giving informed consent to a standardized patient.

More Practice:

Goal: The first year medical students will know how to explore a patient's symptoms using the "7 Cardinal manifestations".

Objective 1: By the end of session 2, the students will list the 7 Cardinal manifestations of a symptom. [I will give them a quiz].

Objective 2: During session 3, the students will be observed asking a standardized patient about her symptoms, using patient centered language. For example, instead of, "Where does your pain radiate?" the student will ask, "Does your pain go anywhere else?"

In other words, with Objective 1 they learn what the Cardinal 7 are (Knowledge), and in Objective 2 they operationalize it (Skill); they learn how to put it into practice.

Purpose of objectives

Advantages

- Offers a sound basis for the selection of instructional "methods." When you know exactly what you want to teach it is easier to decide how you want to teach it.
- If you collaborate with the learner on setting the objectives, you are more likely to:
 - Teach what they really need
 - Get the learner to "buy in" to the objective and to be a more active participant in the educational process.
- Makes the purpose of our teaching encounter explicit. Both the student and the teacher know exactly what is expected. By making the objectives explicit we encourage self evaluation and self study. Since the learner knows exactly what is expected, it is easier to self- monitor and to study on one's own.
- Orients student as to what is being taught. Studies show that more learning takes place when the learner knows exactly what they are expected to learn. The objective gives the student the "skeleton" of your teaching session enabling the student to put the content into the framework. Conceptualization and retention are enhanced.

Formulating objectives require 3 things:

A Task Analysis, a Needs Assessment, and Prioritization.

Task Analysis

- Break down the task into its component parts. What is required to perform this task successfully? Examples:
 - In order to drive a car you need to:
 - ❖ Understand traffic regulations
 - ❖ Know what all the controls do
 - ❖ Have good hand eye coordination
 - ❖ Observe and react to a variety of traffic patterns
 - Before you teach a student who presented a patient with respiratory distress, you must first think of the tasks the student faces:
 - ❖ Can s/he perform the appropriate exam?
 - ❖ Does s/he know the differential diagnosis?
 - ❖ Does s/he know how to manage this problem?

Needs assessment

Now that I know what the particular **task** requires, I need to figure out which **step(s)** *this particular* learner needs to know.

Prioritization

- Defining your objectives can help prioritize the needs. You can't do everything; so don't try!
 - How do you decide on your priorities?
 - ❖ What does student think s/he needs?
 - ❖ What do you think student needs?
 - ❖ What is critical in terms of caring for the patient right now?
 - ❖ What can I cover in the time available?

REMEMBER:

Objectives can reflect knowledge, skills, and attitudes!

For example, a resident who needs to counsel a 17 year old patient who just told him/her that she is using cocaine:

Knowledge Objective: After this session, the resident will be able to tell me the:

1. Health effects of cocaine
2. Spectrum of casual use to addiction
3. Core components of motivational counseling.

Skill Objective: Upon observation, the resident will use the motivational counseling techniques as defined in the handout.

Attitude Objective: Upon observation the resident will counsel the patient non-judgmentally, as evidenced by her tone of voice, choice of words (words without negative connotations) and her body language.

You're all busy! When, in the "real world" do you really need to formulate objectives?

- When the material is difficult.
- When the learner is difficult.
- When you've tried to teach something but the learner didn't get it.
- When you're planning curriculum.

Summary

Objectives:

- Derived from the needs assessment and the task analysis.
- Done in collaboration with the learner.
- **Who** will do **what**? **When** will it be done? **How** will it be measured?
- Shared with the learner.
- Used to determine methods.

