



Association of Social Work Boards

ACE Resource

Developing Learning Outcomes

Developing Learning Outcomes:

- Learning outcomes identify a learning outcome.
- These statements reflect knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes the learner should be able to demonstrate following the learning experience.
- The outcome must state what the learner is to perform, not how the learner will learn.
- Learning outcomes are clear and concise written statements reflecting what the learner will gain from the course.
- Each outcome must be precise, giving different people the same understanding of the desired outcome.
- Learning outcomes are the foundation for planning, instruction and assessment of a learning experience.
- Outcomes must be behavioral, and stated as measurable and/or demonstrable learning outcomes.
- Learning outcomes must be listed and ranked for effectiveness in the evaluation form given to each participant at the end of the presentation.
- Properly written learning outcomes will
 - Help learners understand how the course is related to their educational goals
 - Focus the learner's attention on specific aspects of the course content
 - Help the participant evaluate his/her learning experience
 - Help the participant communicate clearly with the CE provider
 - Help the CE provider organize the course material
 - Help the CE provider develop the course assessment
 - Help the CE provider evaluate the course material
 - Help the CE provider evaluate the presentation

Some hints in forming learning outcomes:

- What should the learner be able to do that s/he couldn't do before taking your course?
- Use behaviorally specific language to describe learning outcomes.
- Avoid passive verbs: There is no way to measure the educational impact of verbs, such as appreciate, believe, understand, learn or know.
- Materials originally designed for audiences other than social workers must be carefully reviewed and modified as necessary to address social work course content and licensure requirements.

D. Program Development (excerpt from ACE Application for provider approval)

II. Content

2. List educational outcomes for this course. Course outcomes must:
 - Be specific, clear and concise
 - Be measurable and/or observable

- Illustrate what the participant will be able to demonstrate as an outcome of the learning experience

Action words (verbs) from “Bloom’s Taxonomy II”

The action words (verbs) listed below are from “Bloom’s Taxonomy II.” They will help you construct performance outcomes aimed at desired learning outcomes.

Level: Beginning

1. **Knowledge** - remembering of previously learned material (memorization)

Define	name	show
Label	match	describe
Memorize	recall	distinguish
Select	identify	list, tell
Recognize	discover	associate, spot

2. **Comprehension** - grasping the meaning of the knowledge being learned

Translate	demonstrate	change
Infer	rearrange	generalize
Express	illustrate	give
Interpret	transform	explain
Restate	summarize	comment
Contrast	predict	distinguish
Give examples	estimate	describe

Level: Intermediate

3. **Application** - using learned materials in new/concrete situations

Apply	use	organize
Classify	restructure	choose
Solve	transfer	generalize
Relate	determine	dramatize
Demonstrate	calculate	examine
Modify	discover	show

4. **Analysis** - breaking down material into its elements; understanding its underlying structure

Discriminate	describe	compare
Classify	diagram	analyze
Differentiate	categorize	put into lists
Subdivide	deduce	identify
Explain	arrange	discriminate

Level: Advanced

5. **Synthesis** - putting parts together to form a new whole; creating new patterns or structures

Write	produce	originate
Design	develop	formulate
Compose	plan	role-play
Create	construct	modify
Manipulate	integrate	arrange
Rearrange		

6. Evaluation - judging the value of material for a given purpose, using predetermined criteria

Judge	criticize	consider
Appraise	conclude	rate
Weigh	rank	decide
Convince	summarize	evaluate

For further description, consult Benjamin S. Bloom, et al, *Taxonomy II: Affective domain*, N.Y.: Mc Kay, 1964.