**SELF PACED – LEARNING – WRITING LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR ONLINE LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

**Writing Learning Objectives for Online Learning Activities**

Learning objectives are essential in the creation of any learning activity. They provide a foundation on which all the other elements (learning activity content, assignments, and assessments) are built. Below you will find a few tips on how to write learning objectives for online learning activities.

**Start with a Clear Overarching Goal**

All learning activities begin with an overarching goal (learning objective). If your overarching learning activity goal is clear, it is easier to build specific learning objectives to meet that overarching goal.

*Ex.: Prepare several different common types of pie.*

**Create your Specific Learning Objectives**

* Learning objectives are more specific statements of learning related to the overarching goal.
* Once you have defined your overarching learning activity goal, you can create your specific learning activity objectives.
* A clearly defined learning objective should specify what is expected of the learner.
* Learning objectives are all about what the learners can demonstrate while taking the course and not what the facilitators can provide.
* Learning objectives describe what learners are able to demonstrate in terms of knowledge, skills, and values upon completion of a course or a program.
* You can also further breakdown your learning objectives and create sub-objectives.

Your learning objectives need to answer the following questions:

(Try to be as specific as possible when you answer these questions.)

1. **What Needs to Be Learned?**
2. State the **action** the learner must perform at the end of the learning activity.
   1. Say what you want learners to be able to do with what they learn from your learning activity.
   2. Focus on the learner’s behavior and use simple, specific action verbs to describe what learners are expected to demonstrate (see job aid titled: **Bloom’s Taxonomy** for examples of action verbs that can be used when developing learning objectives).
   3. Avoid using verbs like “know” and “understand.” If learners understand something, how would you know it? One would have to measure the learner’s knowledge or understanding before and after the learning activity.

Ex.: At the end of the learning activity, learners will be able:

*Performance:*  To (action verb describing a measurable performance. Use only one action verb and no qualifiers).

*Ex.: Prepare an apple rhubarb pie*

1. Describe the **conditions** under which the learner must demonstrate his competence.
   1. Identify and set parameters for the performance.
   2. Set how the performance is evaluated

Ex.: At the end of the learning activity, learners will be able:

*Ex.: Prepare an apple rhubarb pie*

Condition: Given: (material and information supplied)

(Other conditions under which the action is performed, e.g., with or without coaching, individually or in groups, in writing or orally in a presentation…. (as close to what is required in the job as possible)).

*Ex.: Using all the reference material supplied during the learning activity and the help of the facilitator,*

1. Define the **standard(s)** of performance the learner must attain.
   1. Set the expectations for mastery.
   2. Say how it will be measured.

Ex.: At the end of the learning activity, learners will be able:

*Ex.: Prepare one apple rhubarb pie,*

*Ex.: Using all the reference material supplied during the learning activity and the help of the facilitator,*

Standards (Results or levels of proficiency expected from the performance. Includes qualitative (mostly) and quantitative factors and, sometimes, the time limit within which the action must be performed).

*Ex.: In two hours and to the satisfaction of the facilitator and other learners taste buds. ☺*

1. **Who Needs to Learn It?**
2. Identify the learners for your course, also known as the target audience.
3. Who are your learners specifically: New employees? Managers? Directors?
4. **How will you know the objectives have been achieved?**
5. Learning objectives need to be measurable.
6. Clear articulation of learning objectives serves as the foundation to evaluating the effectiveness of the learning objective and learning process.

**Conclusion**

The information you uncover will help you identify the content and learning activities you’ll need for your course to reach its overarching goal.