

Specifying Output Attributes in XSL

Motivating Example

Take this XML document:

```
<?xml version="1.0"?>
<people>
  <person>
    <name>fred</name>
    <url>http://fred.com</url>
  </person>
  <person>
    <name>tom</name>
    <url>http://tom.com</url>
  </person>
</people>
```

We want to generate a HTML table where the urls are used as the href attributes in `<a>` elements.

Mistaken Approach

We might use an `<xsl:value-of>` statement in the href attribute, but this won't work – text in the quotes required for the href attribute will be treated as plain text and won't be evaluated. The browser will complain about ill-formed XHTML.

```
[...]  
<a href="<xsl:value-of select="./url"/>">  
[...]
```

First Approach

Use the stylesheet as follows:

```
<a>  
  <xsl:attribute name="href">  
    <xsl:value-of select="./url"/>  
  </xsl:attribute>  
  <xsl:value-of select="./name"/>  
</a>
```

You use an `<xsl:attribute>` element for each attribute that you want to specify.

Any `<xsl:attribute>` elements used must come before any other content in the parent element.

Alternative Approach

Use escape braces.

```
<a href="{href}">  
  <xsl:value-of select="name"/>  
</a>
```