



Ag Education as a Profession



Writing Instructional Objectives

Think about a teacher who had a great impact on your learning. What did they do that made them so effective? What characteristics did they possess that makes them stand out? Although there are many characteristics that can be combined to “make” an effective teacher, the ones that most effectively impact learning have a single common thread...They know what they want the students to learn and they plan and teach to reach that goal!

Why should we strive to develop good instructional objectives? Clearly defined instructional objectives lead to more learning, better instruction, higher learner retention of learning, and even help students develop their own organizational, critical and creative thinking skills.

Four characteristics are evident in good instructional objectives:

1. Student oriented
2. Descriptive of the learning outcome
3. Clear and understandable
4. Observable

Student oriented objectives put the emphasis on what the student is expected to do NOT on what the teacher is doing... Words like, “The student will be able to” are found in a student-oriented objective.

Objectives that are descriptive of the learning outcome emphasize what the student takes away from the educational activity. Remember that the activity itself is worth little if the student does not learn from it. Listing learning activities in an objective does little to address student-learning outcomes

Learning outcome

Identify the compartments in
A ruminant digestive system

Learning activity

Read pp. 171-211

Clear and understandable objectives contain language that describes a specific action or behavior and often refers to the object of that action. Examples include:

- Assemble a four-stroke engine
- Conduct a titration experiment
- Conduct a business meeting

The objective is clean and unambiguous but not minutely detailed.

The key to having an observable objective is that it contains an observable verb (normally describing an observable action) that fits the object.

Observable verbs

Identify
List
Describe
Explain
Analyze
Locate

Unobservable verbs

Know
Understand
Think
Appreciate
Like
Comprehend