Constructing Learning Outcomes

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There are at least three distinct parts to a well-constructed Learning Outcome.

PERFORMANCE	CONTENT	CRITERIA	
Guiding Question:	Guiding Question:	Guiding Question:	
What should learners be	What is the focus of the	What measurable	
able <i>to do</i> after the	learning?	characteristic is the	
instructional activity?	Include:	learning grounded in?	
Include:	The knowledge, concept,	Include:	
One verb which describes	or skill that the learner	Information about time,	
an observable behaviour	will acquire	place, resources, context	

Seneca Examples

The following examples were delivered in a Learning Outcomes workshop by Valerie Lopes. The workshop was aimed at faculty taking the Foundations of Teaching and Learning (FTL) course, part of the Faculty Development Program at Seneca.

Performance	Content	Criteria
Write	learning outcomes statements	that are SMART
Discuss	the integral links between learning outcomes and assessments	when developing subjects and programs
Distinguish	between learning outcomes and learning objectives	when planning subjects
Apply	a Bloom's revised taxonomy of learning	to develop and revise learning outcomes
Discuss	the reasons why verbs such as "understand" and "appreciate"	are not used in a SMART learning outcome

Quality of Learning Outcomes

A well-structured learning outcome depends on the choice of verb it contains, and whether it is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-limited). This section highlights suitable verbs, and lists verbs which should be avoided. The section also describes SMART learning outcomes, and includes a rubric for evaluating your current course learning outcomes.

Visit the following links to learn more:

Verb Choice

Bloom's Taxonomy: A Caveat

SMART Learning Outcomes

Rubric for Writing Learning Outcomes

You may use the rubric below to help guide your writing of learning outcomes:

Rubric for Evaluating Learning Outcomes (PDF)

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