



Mendocino College Cooperative Work Experience Education

CREATING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

A *learning objective* is a specific and measurable goal. A “SMART” learning objective is one that is **Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-based**. It is a statement of *what you will know or what you will be able to do* when you’ve completed your CWEE course. By completing a learning objective you will **learn** a new skill, **develop** a new work habit or **gain** new information.

Learning objectives are established by the student in collaboration with the direct work supervisor and the CWEE instructor. They must be approved by both your work supervisor and CWEE instructor.

AN OBJECTIVE MUST BE:

A NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCE: This means acquiring new information or developing a new skill, or significantly improving your current knowledge or skills. Your objective cannot be a repetition of some task or skill that you have already mastered. For example, “enter all new customer data in a customer data base” is not an acceptable objective if you already know how to do this. However, if you have never done this, it could represent a new learning experience for you, in which case it would be an acceptable objective. You cannot repeat objectives from prior CWEE courses *unless* you are revising or expanding the objective in some significant way.

UNDERSTANDABLE: The statement of what you intend to accomplish should be written in basic terms and generally be no more than one sentence. Technical terminology is appropriate if it is understandable to both the student and the work supervisor.

MEASURABLE: There should be some observable outcome(s) that result from your having accomplished this objective. There will be an end-product or a behavioral change that the employer can observe and evaluate. If your objective is to “demonstrate the ability to effectively and efficiently enter data in a customer data base”, then one outcome would be “an accurate and up-to-date database approved by my supervisor”. Using words like “demonstrate”; “complete”; “develop”; “implement”; or “revise” in your statement of what you intend to accomplish will result in an outcome that can be measured. Words like “learn”; “know” or “understand” relate to internal changes that are more difficult for an employer to measure.

COLLEGE-LEVEL: The objective must be challenging, just as you would expect in a college course. “College-level” learning means:

- **Taking ideas or concepts you’re learning in the classroom** and applying them to the work place. This may mean taking principles of good customer service, for example, and applying them at work by changing specific behaviors towards customers. This demonstrates your ability to understand and apply principles which enable you to adapt to new work situations
- **Demonstrating skills you’re learning in the classroom**, like creating a spreadsheet or leading a group counseling session, and doing it in a professional manner with appropriate conduct and vocabulary. This demonstrates your ability to use skills and vocabulary consistent with higher levels of education.
- **Examining the work you are doing by thinking critically** about how you accomplish certain tasks, how you might do them differently, and whether you achieve the outcomes you desire. This demonstrates your use of critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- **Working independently in completing complex assignments** that require planning, organizing and implementing new tasks, skills or behaviors. This demonstrates initiative and requires the use of critical thinking, problem solving, communication and teamwork skills.

ACHIEVABLE: you must be able to complete the objective by the end of the semester.

WRITING YOUR OBJECTIVE

For each objective, you must answer the following questions:

1. **What are you attempting to accomplish?**
2. **How will the attainment of the objective be measure?**
3. **What is the specific learning process you will take to accomplish this objective?**
4. **When will the objective be completed?**

WHAT ARE YOU ATTEMPTING TO ACCOMPLISH? What do you wish to learn, or in what way do you want to improve? At the end of the semester, this is what you will have attained. Start with words like “The ability to...” or “The completion of...” Use [action words](#) (see list below)

Example: My objective is gain the ability to accurately and efficiently review and approve invoices

HOW WILL ATTAINMENT OF THE OBJECTIVE BE MEASURED? What are some observable outcomes that will result from your having accomplished this objective? What end-product or behavioral change will the employer be able to observe and evaluate? What will be the “proof” you accomplished what you set out to do? If the objective is a behavioral one, e.g., “improve customer service skills”, then evidence of attainment can be based on your supervisor’s and coworkers’ observations of your demonstration of specific new behaviors. Use words from the [measurement words list](#) (below).

Example: My supervisor will observe that all invoices are accurately sorted, coded and priced, on time and according to her standards

WHAT WILL BE YOUR LEARNING PROCESS TO ACCOMPLISH THIS OBJECTIVE? What are the specific learning steps involved in attaining the objective? There must be a clearly defined and outlined “college level” learning process. You should indicate the ways in which you will conduct research, ask questions, receive instructions, be provided with demonstrations, observe others, etc. The following four steps define a typical learning process:

1. **Obtain information** (read an operator’s manual, read an online tutorial, watch a video, attend a training session or workshop);
2. **Observe** an experienced co-worker or supervisor demonstrate the skill, or review examples of properly completed work;
3. **Be observed** by an experienced co-worker or supervisor and receive direction, correction and feedback. Or, have your supervisor review your work and provide you with instructional feedback.
4. **Practice**, with observation, review and feedback as needed.

Use [words describing a learning process](#) from list, below

Example:

- *Observe supervisor reviewing invoices; take notes on the procedure and critical things to look for*
- *Review invoices under observation of supervisor; receiving feedback and making adjustments as needed.*
- *Research individual invoices, match invoice amount to previously agree pricing, properly code to expense and adjust invoices if necessary*
- *Continue to seek supervisor’s review and feedback*

WHEN WILL THE OBJECTIVE BE COMPLETED? All objectives must be completed by or before the end of the semester

ACTION WORD LIST

Activate	Create	Instruct	Remove
Adjust	Decrease	Insert	Repair
Aid	Define	Introduce	Replace
Analyze	Deliver	Investigate	Report
Apply	Demonstrate	Learn	Reproduce
Arrange	Describe	Lengthen	Research
Articulate	Design	Limit	Restructure
Assemble	Detect	List	Review
Assist	Develop	Locate	Revise
Build	Direct	Maintain	Rewrite
Calculate	Display	Match	Select
Categorize	Devise	Modify	Separate
Change	Edit	Monitor	Set up
Check	Establish	Motivate	Simplify
Collect	Estimate	Obtain	Summarize
Combine	Evaluate	Perform	Supervise
Communicate	Expand	Permit	Train
Compare	Explain	Place	Translate
Compile	Gain	Plan	Transfer
Complete	Identify	Process	Update
Compose	Illustrate	Produce	Verbalize
Compute	Implement	Provide	Verify
Conduct	Improve	Prepare	Write
Construct	Increase	Rearrange	
Contrast	Indicate	Record	
Convert	Inspect	Recruit	
Coordinate	Institute	Reduce	

MEASUREMENT OF ATTAINMENT WORDS

Accuracy	Cross-checking	Inventory checks	Reductions
Client/customer feedback	Drills	Invoices	Review
Company evaluations	Meeting standards	Observation	Sale receipts
Comparisons	Improved performance	Participants' review	Surveying
Co-worker feedback	Increased accuracy	Program review	Testing Verification
Control process	Increased efficiency	Progress report	
Critique	Increased safety	Quizzing	

WORDS DESCRIBING A LEARNING PROCESS

Adapting classroom knowledge	Investigating	Seeking information
Analyzing	Observing	Seeking input
Applying new/current skills	One-to-group sessions	Studying
Asking	One-to-one session	Surveying
Assisting	On-the job training	Using a journal or report
Attending meeting/workshops	Operating	Training
Consulting	Organizing information	Trial and error
Customer response	Participation planning	Updating
Demonstration	Practicing	Visitations
Experiencing	Reading	Using necessary materials
Following policies & procedures	Receiving	Working with co-workers
Gathering information	Recording	
Increased communication	Researching	
Increased product knowledge	Reviewing	
Interpreting	Obtaining feedback	