



Guidelines for Writing Needs Assessment & Learning Objectives

Needs Assessment:

- The Needs Assessment is reviewed by the Program Committee to help evaluate the quality of your presentation proposal and gauge the potential audience interest.
- A needs assessment should clearly and concisely demonstrate that a relevant problem or need exists and include supporting data, which may consist of demographics, economic health, results from surveys, or published data.¹
- A needs assessment is a systematic process of gathering information that is appropriate and sufficient to develop an effective educational program that will address the groups' needs and wants (gap). A gap analysis can be defined as the determination of the difference between current knowledge/practices (what we are doing) and current evidence-based practices (what we should be doing). This may include new technologies, diagnosis or treatments, current research, legislative or regulatory changes, current research or literature, and clinical guidelines.²

Learning Objectives:

- The Learning Objectives are reviewed by the Program Committee to help evaluate the quality of your presentation proposal and gauge the potential audience interest.
- Accepted presentations will have the learning objectives evaluated by audience participants to rate the effectiveness of the presentation.
- Learning objectives state what the participant should know or be able to do at the end of an educational activity. They should be realistic, measurable, obtainable, and define desired outcomes.³ Avoid the use of vague verbs that are hard to measure like: understand, know, appreciate, become familiar, be aware of, and perceive. These verbs are about mental processes and one cannot realistically provide evidence that can be measured.⁴

The following words are some examples of what can be used to develop measurable educational learning objectives:³

Cognitive Domain	Psychomotor Domain	Interpersonal Domain	Affective Domain
Cite	Calculate	Advocate	Attend to
Classify	Conduct	Criticize	Determine
Construct	Connect	Defend	Develop
Compare	Construct	Express	Display
Defend	Demonstrate	Generalize	Exemplify
Define	Diagnose	Inform	Listen
Differentiate	Form	Object	Maintain
Discuss	Maintain	Offer	Participate
Evaluate	Operate	Produce	Recognize
Explain	Perform	Propose	
Express	Produce	Reflect	
Identify	Speak	Request	
Illustrate		Suggest	
List		Summarize	
Measure			
Quote			
State (or Restate)			
Tabulate			

References:

1. Department of Medical Education, Needs Assessment Guidelines, Centocor Ortho Biotech Services LLC (2017)
2. Pitman, NJ, A representation: Incorporating a needs assessment and gap analysis into the educational design, Anthony J. Jannetti, Inc. (2012)
3. NAPNAP, Developing Learning Outcomes/ Educational Objectives, NAPNAP CE Guidelines (2019)
4. Language & Learning Advisers, Writing Learning Objectives for Nursing, Learning & Teaching Unit, University of South Australia, (2012)