

# Writing Learning Objectives for Your Customized Technical Assistance Request

OVC TTAC offers eligible requesters technical assistance that can be customized to meet your organization's needs. There is no trick to writing learning objectives. They are simply statements that describe what the participant is expected to achieve as a result of receiving the technical assistance in question. The following questions and instructions will help you create effective objectives.

## 1. What do you want your technical assistance participants to DO?

Think about who will be receiving the technical assistance and what the long-term benefits of the assistance should be. Are there:

- Concepts they need to understand?
- Problems they must be able to solve?
- Images they should be able to recognize?
- Analyses they need to perform?
- Objects they must be able to create?
- Documents they need to write?

Brainstorm a list of capabilities you want participants to know or be able to perform. Thinking about problems or questions or issues that have come up in your line of work will give you a good start. Suppose, for example, that you have been losing staff to burnout. You may want to seek training on identifying and addressing the signs of compassion fatigue.

## 2. HOW do you want them to do it?

Start with a "stem sentence," one that describes the conditions under which you want them to complete the objective. For OVC TTAC technical assistance delivery, this sentence is usually "After completing technical assistance, participants will be able to..."

To make objectives measurable, begin with a measurable verb that reflects what it will take for participants to achieve it. How simple or difficult is accomplishing the objective? What is the level of learning?

All objectives should contain measurable verbs so that the objectives are clear and specific enough for the instructor to determine if the participants did (or did not) acquire the new knowledge or skill by the end of the event.

The table below lists learning levels that progress from the simplest (knowledge) to the highest (evaluation). The verbs in the right-hand column are appropriate verbs to use when writing objectives for each of the six learning levels.

Difficulty	Learning Level	Verbs to Use for Objectives
Lower Levels	Knowledge	define, repeat, record, list, recall, name, relate, collect, label, specify, cite, tell, recount
	Comprehension	restate, summarize, discuss, describe, recognize, explain, express, identify, locate, report, review, translate
	Application	solve, interview, simulate, apply, employ, use, demonstrate, practice, illustrate, operate, calculate, show
Higher Levels	Analysis	interpret, classify, analyze, arrange, differentiate, group, compare, organize, contrast, examine, categorize, investigate, question, discover, distinguish, detect, diagram, inspect
	Synthesis	compose, plan, prepare, propose, hypothesize, incorporate, develop, generalize, design, originate, formulate, predict, arrange, assemble, construct, systematize, create
	Evaluation	judge, assess, decide, measure, appraise, estimate, evaluate, rate, deduce, compare, value, predict, revise, conclude, recommend

Going back to the example on compassion fatigue, how would you want your staff to learn about the signs of compassion fatigue? Participants could *list* the signs, but you may want to measure comprehension, not just knowledge. *Recognizing* or *identifying* signs of compassion fatigue would be good verbs. You can measure them by giving your participants a case study and instructing them to write down the signs of compassion fatigue. In doing that, one of your objectives would be “Recognize the signs of compassion fatigue,” while another would focus on addressing these signs, with the overarching goal being to equip your organization with the capacity to assist staff before burnout sets in.

**Remember:** Writing learning objectives is a simple, straightforward process. Just determine what knowledge or skills you want your participants to gain, decide how the learning will occur, choose the most descriptive verb, and finish with the new knowledge or skill they should have after completing the event.

OVC TTAC is pleased to help you define and achieve your technical assistance learning objectives and to support the enhancement of your organization’s and your community’s capacity to address the needs of all victims of crime.

Please contact our OVC TTAC training and technical assistance specialists at **1-866-682-8822** with any questions about this program.