

A Guide for Writing Learning Outcomes

A learning outcome can be defined as a clear and concise measurable statement of the behaviors (e.g., skills, knowledge or attitudes) we expect our participants to demonstrate as a result of learning. It is what we want learners to exhibit or demonstrate at the end of a learning event or unit of instruction.

How to Write SMART Outcomes Using Bloom's Taxonomy

*The **SMART** criteria require your outcomes to be **Specific**, **Measurable**, **Achievable**, **Relevant**, and **Time-bound**. Bloom's Taxonomy provides the specific action verbs needed to make the outcome measurable.

Instead of using vague, unmeasurable terms like "understand," "learn," or "know", follow these steps:

1. **Use an Action Verb:** Choose a verb from one of the six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy based on the complexity of the skill:
 - **Remember:** List, define, state
 - **Understand:** Explain, summarize, describe
 - **Apply:** Demonstrate, calculate, apply
 - **Analyze:** Differentiate, compare, analyze
 - **Evaluate:** Assess, judge, recommend
 - **Create:** Design, formulate, build [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#)]
2. **Make it Measurable:** State the specific topic and the method of assessment (e.g., passing a quiz, writing a proposal). [[1](#), [2](#)]
3. **Make it Achievable & Relevant:** Ensure the objective matches the learners' current experience and solves a clear professional practice gap. [[1](#), [2](#)]
4. **Make it Time-bound:** Indicate when the outcome must be demonstrated (e.g., "By the end of this 4-hour course..."). [[1](#), [2](#)]

Use verbs like: identify, describe, examine, analyze, evaluate, demonstrate, apply.

DO NOT use verbs or phrases like: understand, learn, know, look, encourage, be familiar with, appreciate, think about, grasp or comprehend.

Examples of IACET-Compliant Learning Outcomes

- **Poor:** "Students will understand project management." (Unmeasurable).

- **Better:** "By the end of the module, students will apply agile project management techniques."
- **Best (SMART + Bloom's):** "By the end of this 60-minute session, participants will demonstrate (Apply level) two risk mitigation strategies by completing a project management simulation with 80% accuracy." [1]

IACET Blog on Bloom's Taxonomy (2020)

- <https://www.iacet.org/events/iacet-blog/blog-articles/a-glance-into-blooms-taxonomy/>
- <https://www.utica.edu/academic/Assessment/new/Blooms%20Taxonomy%20-%20Best.pdf>