

What is your goal?

After the training needs assessment and writing the needs statement, the next step is to write an instructional goal.

No matter what we do in instructional design, we start with defining what our goal is. What is it we are trying to achieve? Identifying and clearly articulating the goal will help you design something that meets the needs. **If you don't clearly articulate your goal, you will not know when you have achieved it.**

An Instructional Goal is a clear and concise statement of the learning need.

Writing Instructional Goals

Instructional goals should be clear, concise, and observable.

Instructional goals are written from the perspective of the performance environment. That is, they are written from the perspective of where the goal will be performed in the real-world, outside of the classroom context.

A typical confusion is between goals and objectives. Goals are written from the perspective of the performance environment, where objectives are written for the classroom environment.

What is meant by observable?

This requirement stems from behaviourist learning theory, where learning was considered something that you can see (or observe). If you can observe it and measure it, it is observable. Often, beginner instructional designers use terms like **understand** and **appreciate**; however, you can not observe understanding or appreciation.

Tip

If you find yourself using the words understand or appreciate, ask yourself "how will I know they understand?" or "what does it mean to appreciate?". These questions will help you identify observable behaviors that you can use in your instructional goal statement.

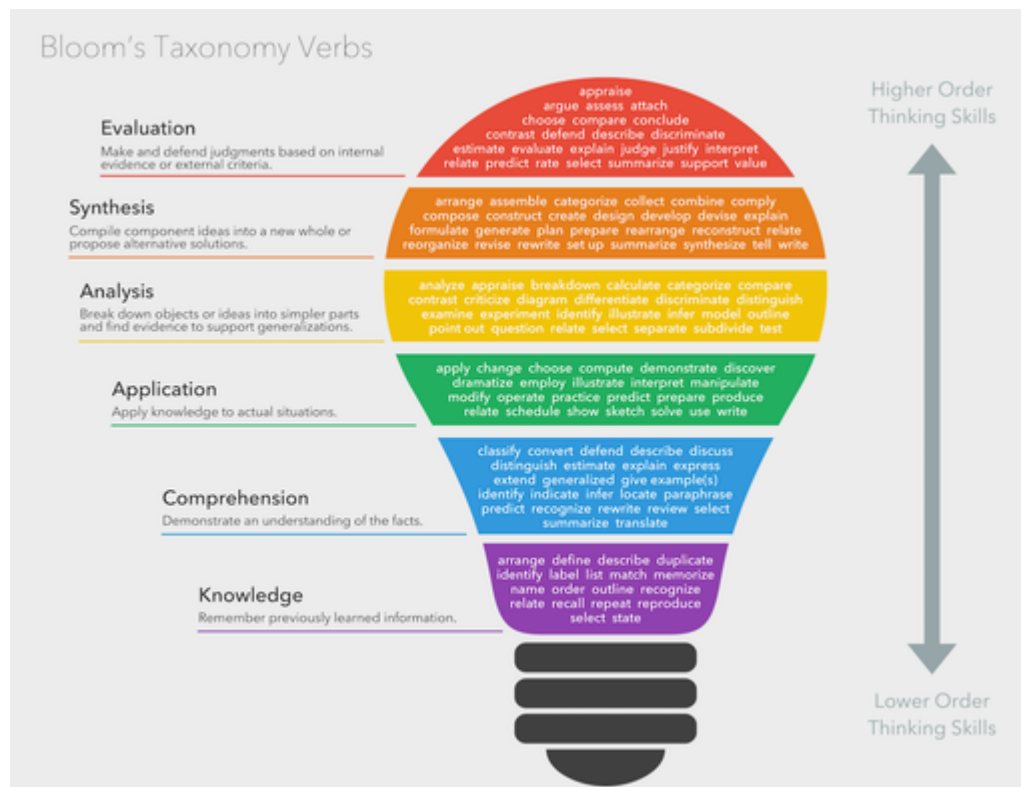
In addition, the terms understand and appreciate are not precise. They don't help the instructional designer figure out how to create a learning plan. It is ok to start with the word understand, but then you need to ask *what does it mean to understand/appreciate? How will know that the learner understands/appreciates?* The answers to these questions are often something you can use as an instructional goal.

Using Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy is a list of observable verbs that are organized in a hierarchical manner. There are many different Bloom's verbs lists, such that you can easily Google "Bloom's verbs" when you are looking for a verb to write an

I like newer versions of the Bloom's taxonomy with "create" at the top. You will find this taxonomy particularly useful later in the course when you are creating objectives. For now, the taxonomy is useful in finding verbs to describe what you want learners to do in the performance context.

[illegible]



A recipe for writing instructional goals

"A complete goal statement should describe the following:

- *The learners*
- *What learners will be able to do in the performance context*
- *The performance context in which the skills will be applied*
- *The tools that will be available to the learners in the performance context" (Dick, Carey, & Carey, 2014, p.27)*

Writing Instructional Goals

STEP 1: Who the learners are

STEP 2: What you want learners to learn

STEP 3: Where skill is performed

STEP 4: What tools are available



[Watch on YouTube](#)

Tip

Use the phrase "need to be able to" in your goal statement.

You will often see instructional goals simplified to remove the parts that are obvious or not necessary to the need. I recommend that you begin with the formula and then simplify the parts that do not add value.

Example

The full statement is:

Instructional designers

Need to be able to *write observable instructional goals*

At their home office

With pencil and paper

The simplified version is:

Instructional designers need to be able to write observable instructional goals

Example

The full statement is:

Instructional designers

Need to be able to *effectively evaluate new technologies in a minimal amount of time*

In their work environment (home or work office)

Using a rubric or evaluation framework

The simplified version is:

Instructional designers need to be able to effectively evaluate new technologies in a minimal amount of time using a rubric or evaluation framework

Validating Your Instructional Goal

“Any selection of instructional goals must be done in terms of the following three concerns:

- 1. Will the development of this instruction solve the problem that led to the need for it?*
- 2. Are these goals acceptable to those who must approve this instructional development effort?*
- 3. Are there sufficient resources to complete the development of instruction for this goal?” (Dick, Carey, & Carey, 2014, p.27)*

The three questions above help to validate that your instructional goals make sense. You can follow the recipe and write a perfectly formatted instructional goal, but if it doesn't solve the problem, won't get approval, or is too expensive to implement, the goal is not useful. These are questions that only make sense if you understand the performance environment. They are questions you should consider when doing a training needs assessment.



This content is provided to you freely by EdTech Books.

Access it online or download it at <https://edtechbooks.org/demystifyingID/what-is-your-goal>.

