## Exercise: Drafting Learning Objectives

**Overview**

In this exercise, participants will practice creating SMART (Specific, Measurable, Appropriate, Realistic, Timely)learning objectives that address their audiences’ knowledge needs. They will first learn about the SMARTcriteria and review an example learning objective that meets the SMARTcriteria, before developing their own.

**Objectives**

1. To identify the *SMART* principles in learning objectives
2. To develop a learning objective that meets the SMARTcriteria

**Time**

### Advance preparation: The Trainer will need to decide how to present the SMART criteria and sample learning objectives. For example, the Trainer may decide to present this information on a flipchart or through slides that s/he can present on a projector.

This activity will take approximately 45 minutes.

**Implementing the Activity**

1. The Trainer will need about 10 minutes to introduce the activity, explain the SMART criteria, and show an example of a learning objective that adheres to the SMART criteria.
2. The Trainer will then need about 5 more minutes for the group as a whole to evaluate together a learning objective to assess whether it adheres to the SMART criteria.
3. Participants can then pair up or form small groups to develop their own learning objective that adheres to the SMART criteria. They will have about 15 minutes to complete this activity.
4. Following the activity, the participants will regroup and can share the learning objectives they developed and summarize the key takeaways from the small-group discussions.

**Activity Steps**

1. Introduction: The trainer will explain the SMART criteria as it relates to developing an appropriate learning objective:

* Specific: Is the desired outcome and audience clearly specified?
* Measurable: Can the achievement of the objective be quantified and measured?
* Appropriate: Is the objective appropriate given the learning intervention?
* Realistic: Can the objective be realistically achieved with the available resources?
* Timely: Does the objective indicate the time period in which the objective will be achieved?

1. Present example of a learning objective that adheres to the SMART criteria: The trainer will present the following scenario and discuss as a group:

*Survey results revealed that most community health workers (CHWs) in district X were not familiar with the differences between short-acting, long-acting, and permanent methods of contraception. Based on these results, a team developed the following objective that addresses the CHWs’ knowledge needs:*

By the end of the in-service training program, CHWs in district X will increase their average knowledge scores on the differences between short-acting and long-acting family planning methods by 50%, as measured by pre- and post-intervention knowledge assessments.

The MOH evaluated whether the objectives met the SMART criteria. Ask the participants to “dissect” the above learning objective to see what they think the MOH decided:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Specific? | Yes! It specifies the audience (CHWs in district X) and the intended outcome (increased knowledge about the difference between short-acting and long-acting family planning methods). |
| * Measurable? | Yes! Increased levels of knowledge can be measured by comparing pre- and post-intervention knowledge assessments. |
| * Appropriate? | Unknown. The content of the training program would need to be evaluated to determine whether it addresses awareness of the difference types of family planning methods. |
| * Realistic? | Unknown. Whether the 50% increase is a realistic expression would need to be evaluated since it is context-specific. |
| * Timely? | Yes! The time frame is specified as the end of the in-service training program. |

1. Evaluate a learning objective together as a group: For more practice, participants will review the following hypothetical scenario and decide if and how it meets the SMARTcriteria.

*By the end of the in-service training program, 100% of CHWs in district X will be able to correctly counsel postpartum clients on the benefits of spacing births and the range of contraceptive methods available to them as reported in post-visit client facility surveys.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Specific? |  |
| * Measurable? |  |
| * Appropriate? |  |
| * Realistic? |  |
| * Timely? |  |

1. Develop a learning objective that adheres to the SMART criteria in small groups: Now that participants have had some practice, they should pair up with another participant or form small groups and develop a SMART learning objective on their own. The learning objective statement should explicitly state how success will be measured. Participants can use the worksheet at the end of this Exercise Guide to help them document their thoughts.

Adapted from Lee A, Mwaikambo L, Jayarajan N. *Making Content Meaningful: A Guide to Adapting Existing Global Health Content for Different Audiences*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs; 2016.

**EXERCISE WORKSHEET**

**SMART Learning Objectives**

* **S**pecific: Is the desired outcome and audience clearly specified?
* **M**easurable: Can the achievement of the objective be quantified and measured?
* **A**ppropriate: Is the objective appropriate given the learning intervention?
* **R**ealistic: Can the objective be realistically achieved with the available resources?
* **T**imely: Does the objective indicate the time period in which the objective will be achieved?

Develop your own SMART Learning Objective using the following template:

By ­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will be able to

*[When? Define the timeline] [Who? Define the audience]*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*[What? Define what they will be able to do, using a learning verb]*

by/from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

*[How? Explain how this will be done] [How? Define how to measure success]*