Writing Effective Learning Objectives

Objectives

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        LEARNING
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Experience   **Reflection**
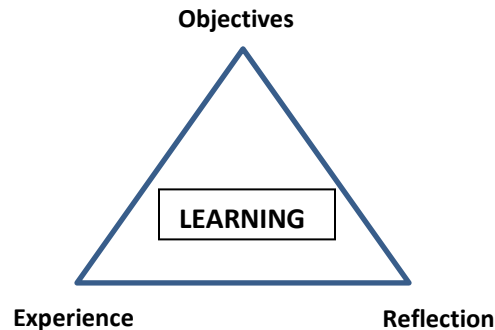
What is a learning objective?
- An outcome statement that captures specifically what knowledge, skills, attitudes you set out to develop and gain through the experience

Why have learning objectives?
Creating clear learning objectives during the planning process of an experience serves the following purposes:
- Serves to connect **content** and **reflection** around learning
- Guides direction of actions that will best achieve objectives
- Provides a clear picture of the working partnership between student and site supervisor
- Forms the basis for evaluating the experience

Ask yourself:
- Do you aim to gain, expand, apply, or test out a particular body of knowledge?
- Do you want to acquire or improve upon a skill? Think about technical (field-related) skills as well as transferable (soft) skills such as communication or leadership. Think about your professional development as well as personal growth.

What are the key components of a learning objective?
Learning objectives should be "SMART"
- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable/Observable
- **A**ttainable within scheduled time and specified conditions
- **R**elevant and results-oriented
- **T**argeted to the position/experience and your desired goals

How do I create a useful learning objective?
To create specific, measurable/observable, and results-oriented objectives:
- Finish the sentence, "After this experience, I want to able to..."
- Start with an observable **action word** - terms that describe directly observable behaviors
  - Think about how you would want to describe/frame this experience on a resume
To create attainable learning objectives:
- Consider the conditions under which performance will take place
- Consider the level of your understanding /skill before your experience and craft your objective to develop to the next level
To create objectives targeted to the position/experience and your desired goals:
- Ask yourself whether you want to be able to: know, apply, integrate your knowledge; or comprehend, apply, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate a new skill.