

Writing Good Learning Objectives for a Conference Proposal

Learning objectives (LOs) – when done well – help presenters focus their topic and help potential attendees decide whether the session is a good match for their needs. A good LO communicates what you want participants to learn or be able to do as a result of the conference presentation. Your LOs communicate your goals, not your process or activities.

Using Bloom's Taxonomy

(<https://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/effective-teaching-practices/revised-blooms-taxonomy/>) is a common way to specify LOs. This taxonomy breaks learning into domains that take increasing amounts of cognitive involvement. Do you want your attendees to Know/Remember, to Comprehend/Understand, to Apply, to Analyze, to Evaluate, or to Create something new by the end of the session?

Using one Bloom's Taxonomy action verb per LO, and being as concise as possible, each LO expresses one outcome/goal. Each LO needs to be both realistic (can you really do this in 50 minutes?) and of value (why does this outcome matter?).

A 50-minute session will typically have 3-4 LOs, as that is what is achievable in that time. As you write the LOs, keep asking yourself: Is this the priority for the session? Is this what attendees really will want to know or do? and Can that be achieved in the time I have?

It can be useful to start the LOs with the phrase, "By the end of the session attendees should be able to 1....., 2.....,(etc.)"

Once you have your LOs written, you can check with your presentation plan and materials to make sure your LOs are met – this is helpful for all involved!