

WRITE APPLICATION-FOCUSED LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The reason ASTD puts so much emphasis on how you write your learning objectives is to strongly encourage you to think deeply about the session you are proposing. We want these sessions to be top-of-the-line in terms of content, delivery, and applicability for the learner. **Session participants evaluate sessions positively or negatively according to how much they can use the information on the job.** If you follow the tips below for writing your learning objectives and develop your session accordingly, you will have a premier offering! Your learning objectives will be a key factor in evaluating your proposal.

1. Limit learning objectives to three (one or two are also acceptable) which answer one or both of these questions:

How will the learner be able to take action on the information from your session back on their job?

What results will they be able to produce because they came to your session?

Ensure that your objectives are reasonable and achievable within the timeframe and session structure.

2. To make learning objectives application-focused begin your objective with action words like **apply, analyze, develop, examine, assess, and evaluate.**

Avoid using these words: **identify, explore, discuss, or describe.** Go for a deeper skill level.

For example:

Correct: **Apply** the five-step communication model in your organization.

Incorrect: **Discuss** a five-step communication model.

3. Avoid passive words like **learn, understand, and know** and extra words like **learn creative techniques to design** or **determine how to analyze.** Go right to the action word: **Design, Analyze,** etc. for the lead in.

For example:

Correct: **Design** creative learning experiences.

Incorrect: **Learn** creative techniques to design learning experiences.

4. Use plain text—eliminate bullets, numbers, dashes, and other symbols—they don't translate into the database.