

Guidance on Objectives

Good applications should contain a few outcome objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-framed (S.M.A.R.T.).

- Specific:** An objective should specify one major result directly related to the program goal, state who is going to be doing what, to whom, by how much, and in what time-frame. It should specify what will be accomplished and how the accomplishment will be measured.
- Measurable:** An objective should be able to describe in realistic terms the expected results and specify how such results will be measured.
- Achievable:** The accomplishment specified in the objective should be achievable within the proposed time line and as a direct result of program activities.
- Realistic:** The objective should be reasonable in nature. The specified outcomes, expected results, should be described in realistic terms.
- Time-framed:** An outcome objective should specify a target date or time for its accomplishments. It should state who is going to be doing what, by when, etc.¹

Outcome Objectives

An outcome objective is a statement which defines a measurable result the project expects to accomplish.

In the health field, outcome objectives are important because they can facilitate monitoring of changes in behavior (e.g. increasing parenting skills) in a given population over time. Therefore, outcome objectives should be described in terms that measure what results in behavior your project will bring about.

As illustrated in the following examples, when drafting outcome objectives specify one major result per objective to be accomplished. State who is going to be doing what, when and how much it will be accomplished, and how you will measure it².

Examples of outcome objectives from previous AFL applications:

1. Within 2 years of giving birth to the target infant, 10% or less of the teen mothers in the program will have another birth as measured by intake, and monthly follow-up forms.
2. Ninety percent of all target infants in the program will be fully immunized by the age of 2 years as measured by infant's immunization records.
3. Eighty-five percent of all teen moms in the program will have returned to school, graduated from

¹How to Get Grants. San Francisco, CA: The Public Management Institute, 1981.

²Proposal Writing Skills, HIV/AIDS Technical Assistance Paper, 1992. Published by: The United States Conference of Mayors, with support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

high school, or earned GEDs by 2 years after the birth of the target child as measured by school attendance records.

4. Seventy-five percent of the fathers who participate in the project will report at least a 50% increase in parent caregiving activities as reported on the ABCD Parent Care-giving instrument after participating in the project for one year.

Process Objectives

A good application should also include process objectives directly related to the few outcome objectives listed. They may be described in list or narrative form in the time table, work plan, program narrative, or with the related outcome objective. Process objectives operationalize the outcome objectives by describing the actual activities and/or methods that must be implemented for your program to have the desired effect on clientele.

Remember: Outcome objectives relate to benefits, changes, results. Process objectives will state the types of materials, programs or services to be provided in order to achieve that outcome³.

Example of process objectives related to outcome objectives:

Outcome Objective: Seventy-five percent of the fathers who participate in the project will report at least a 50% increase in parent caregiving activities as reported on the ABCD Parent Care-giving instrument after participating in the project for one year.

Process Objectives: 1) Bi-monthly parenting group sessions, 2 hours each, will be implemented by the Male Facilitator at Joe's Youth Center for participating fathers. The topics of sessions will include: nutrition for the baby, bonding with the baby, discipline, postpartum depression, child development, future planning and goals, STIs, injury prevention, child health and immunization, and family planning.

 2) Each year of the program, 40 job readiness training sessions of 2 hours each will be implemented by the Male Facilitator at Joe's Youth Center. Sessions will include: how to fill out a job application, interview for a position and dress for the interview.

 3) Weekly peer sessions will be held for each program year for participating fathers. These sessions will be interactive and will reiterate information taught in the bi-monthly parenting group sessions.

³Proposal Writing Skills, HIV/AIDS Technical Assistance Paper, 1992. Published by: The United States Conference of Mayors, with support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.