Learning objectives examples: 42 workplace objectives, weak and strong

These learning objectives examples are for trainers of adults at work: 42 original objectives in six groups, from communication to software and customer service. Each one is shown as a weak version, a strong rewrite with an action, a condition and a standard, and a way to see that it was met. A rewrite worksheet, a partner check sheet and a 30-minute practice help you fix the objectives in your own course.

30 minutes | 2–16 participants | Online and adaptable in person

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The outcome

By the end of 30 minutes each participant has rewritten three objectives from their own course so that each names an action someone could observe, a condition and a standard, has had them checked by a partner, and has written how they will see each one met.

Before the session

- For trainers, instructional designers, subject experts and team leads who write objectives for workplace courses, with 2–16 adults working in pairs. It is not written for school or university teaching.
- Ask each participant to bring three objectives from a course they run or are planning. Anyone without a course uses three weak versions from the example table.
- Print the four checks page, the example table (four landscape pages), a rewrite worksheet and a partner check sheet per person, and one copy of the filled examples per pair.
- Send the four checks and the example table a day early in plain text for screen readers. Everyone works in writing first, may pass on reading aloud, and keeps cameras optional online. No movement or colour is needed.

Included in this kit

A facilitator run of show, participant worksheets with real tables, reference tables, debrief questions, adaptation notes and a follow-up plan. Use the editable Word copy to tailor examples and prompts before delivery.

Original material by Superglue. Timings are suggestions; adjust them to your participants. This resource has not been independently evaluated.

What is inside

- The four checks for a learning objective
- Words that hide the action
- All 42 examples: weak version, strong objective and how to observe it
- Rewrite worksheet
- Partner check sheet
- Filled example: rewrite worksheet
- Filled example: partner check sheet
- Facilitator section: run of show, debrief and adaptations

The four checks for a learning objective

A strong objective passes all four checks. Then add one line on how you will observe it. The four parts follow a long-standing approach to objectives (performance, conditions and criterion) described by Robert F. Mager in Preparing Instructional Objectives (1962). The wording here is our own.

Check	Ask	Weak sign	Strong sign
1. The learner does it	Does the sentence describe what the learner will do, not what the trainer will cover?	“The session covers the expenses policy.”	“Check five expense claims …”
2. An action you can see or hear	Could someone watch it happen, or hold the result in their hand?	Understand, know, be aware of, appreciate	Write, sort, give, find, score, book, set up
3. A condition	With what, where or from what does the learner do it?	No situation named	From a fictional brief, in the training system, in a role-play
4. A standard	How well, how many or how fast counts as done?	“Well”, “clearly”, “properly”	At least eleven of twelve, in under five minutes, all four parts

Words that hide the action

These words describe a state of mind, not something you can see. When a draft uses one, ask the question next to it. The workbook flags these words in a draft.

Word	Ask instead
understand	What would the learner do that shows they understand?
know	What would they do with what they know, and where?
aware	What would someone who is aware do differently?
appreciate	Which action shows that they value it?
learn	What will they be able to do once they have learned it?
familiar	Which task can they now do without help?
confident	What would you see a confident person do?
improve	Improve from what, to what, measured how?
better	Better by how much, and how would you tell?
effectively	Which result shows that it was effective?
clearly	Clear to whom, and how would you check it?
excellent	Which three things would you see in excellent work?

All 42 examples: weak version, strong objective and how to observe it

Six groups of seven. Each row gives the weak version, the strong objective and how you would see it met. The scenarios are fictional and the standards are illustrations.

#	Weak version	Strong objective: after the training, the learner can …	How to observe it
	Group	COMMUNICATION AND WRITING: EXAMPLES 1–7	
1	Understand how to write good emails.	Rewrite a fictional 300-word email as a message of no more than 120 words that puts the request and its deadline in the first two lines.	Count the words. A partner reads only the first two lines and names the request and the deadline.
2	Improve presentation skills.	Give a three-minute spoken update on a piece of their own work that states the status, one risk and one request, finishing within 15 seconds of the time limit.	An observer times the update and ticks status, risk and request.
3	Be a better listener.	Summarise a colleague's two-minute account of a work problem in three sentences that the speaker confirms as accurate, without adding advice.	The speaker says whether the summary is accurate. The observer notes any advice.
4	Learn to write in plain English.	Rewrite a fictional one-page notice to staff with headings, an average sentence length of 20 words or fewer and every abbreviation spelled out on first use.	A word-count tool gives the average sentence length. A partner circles any abbreviation that is not spelled out.
5	Communicate better across teams.	Write a request to another team for two fictional cases, each stating what is needed, by when, why, and whom to contact.	A partner ticks the four parts in each request.
6	Be confident speaking up in meetings.	State a disagreement in a practice meeting in two sentences: what they see differently, and what they propose instead.	The observer writes down the two sentences and ticks both parts.
7	Appreciate the value of good documentation.	Write a how-to note of no more than ten numbered steps for a task they do every week, which a colleague new to the task follows to the end without help.	The colleague does the task from the note in a test run. Mark any step where they stopped.
	Group	LEADING PEOPLE: EXAMPLES 8–14	
8	Understand delegation.	Brief a team member on a delegated task in under five minutes, covering the result wanted, the deadline, the limits of their authority and the first check-in date.	An observer times the briefing and ticks the four parts.
9	Give better feedback.	Give feedback on one observed behaviour from a fictional brief in four parts (what they saw, its effect, a question, an agreed next step) in a role-play of up to four minutes.	An observer ticks the four parts and notes any comment on character rather than behaviour.

#	Weak version	Strong objective: after the training, the learner can …	How to observe it
10	Know how to run one-to-ones.	Prepare a one-to-one agenda with three items, at least one of them chosen by the team member, and send it a day before the meeting.	The sent agenda, with the item the team member chose marked.
11	Develop the team's skills.	Agree one development goal with a team member in a practice conversation, naming the skill, one practice activity and a review date within eight weeks.	The goal on the planning sheet, with all three parts filled in.
12	Be able to manage conflict.	Restate both positions in a fictional dispute between two team members so that each role-player confirms their view was stated fairly, before proposing any next step.	Each role-player says yes or no. The observer notes when the first proposal came.
13	Get familiar with the interview process.	Score two fictional interview answers on the four-point scale in the interview guide, within one point of the reference score for every question.	Compare the scores with the reference scores.
14	Be aware of workload issues.	Read a fictional team workload sheet and name the two people most over capacity and one task that could move, giving a reason for each from the sheet.	Compare with the answer key. Each reason must point to a figure on the sheet.
	Group	PROCEDURES, SAFETY AND QUALITY: EXAMPLES 15–21	
15	Be aware of the visitor sign-in procedure.	Sign in a fictional visitor using the site procedure, completing all six steps in the right order without the checklist.	An observer follows the checklist and marks each step as done and in order.
16	Understand the incident reporting process.	Complete the incident form for a fictional near miss within ten minutes, recording what happened, where, when and the immediate action taken.	A reviewer checks the four fields against the facts of the scenario.
17	Follow document control rules.	Find the current version of three named documents in the document system and point to the version detail that shows each one is current.	The trainer checks the three version numbers and the detail each learner pointed to.
18	Appreciate the importance of quality checks.	Inspect ten sample items against the quality checklist and find all three planted defects, with no more than one good item rejected.	Compare the results with the answer sheet for the sample set.
19	Have an awareness of information security.	Sort twelve fictional emails into "report as suspicious" or "safe to open", with at least eleven correct, and name the warning sign in each suspicious one.	Compare with the answer key, including the warning sign for each suspicious email.
20	Understand the stock count procedure.	Count the items on one practice shelf with the count sheet and record every difference from the system figure, with no errors when a second person recounts.	A second person recounts the shelf and compares the sheet.
21	Comply with the expenses policy.	Check five fictional expense claims against the expenses policy and approve, return or reject each one correctly, citing the policy section for each return or rejection.	Compare with the answer key: the decision and the section for each claim.

#	Weak version	Strong objective: after the training, the learner can …	How to observe it
	Group	SOFTWARE AND TOOLS: EXAMPLES 22–28	
22	Get to know the new CRM.	Create a customer record in the training system from a fictional customer brief within five minutes, with every mandatory field complete and no duplicate record.	The trainer opens the record in the training system and notes the time taken.
23	Be comfortable with spreadsheets.	Build a spreadsheet that totals a fictional monthly budget by category with SUM formulas, so that changing any amount updates the totals.	The trainer changes one amount and watches the totals update.
24	Learn the features of the video meeting tool.	Set up three breakout rooms in a practice call, assign participants from a list and bring everyone back to the main room.	In the practice call, the rooms hold the right people and everyone returns.
25	Use the ticketing system effectively.	Log, categorise and assign three fictional support requests in the ticketing tool, giving each the category and priority that the triage guide sets.	Compare the category and priority of each ticket with the answer key.
26	Understand file sharing.	Share a document with one named colleague as view only, switch off link sharing for anyone outside the team, and show both settings in the sharing panel.	The trainer opens the sharing panel and checks both settings.
27	Be able to use the reporting dashboard.	Filter the reporting dashboard to one region and one quarter and read off the three figures asked for on a written question sheet, all three correct.	Compare the three figures with the answer key.
28	Work more efficiently in the team chat tool.	Find a past message, a shared file and a named channel in the team chat tool with the search filters, within three minutes for all three.	The trainer times the search and sees each item on screen.
	Group	CUSTOMER SERVICE: EXAMPLES 29–35	
29	Deliver excellent customer service.	Open a practice call within 30 seconds by greeting the customer, giving their own name and confirming the customer’s reason for calling in the customer’s words.	An observer times the opening and ticks the three parts.
30	Be empathetic with customers.	Name the customer’s problem and its effect on them in one sentence before offering any solution, in each of three practice calls.	The observer writes down the first sentence after the complaint in each call.
31	Know our product range.	Recommend one of three fictional service plans for each of four customer descriptions, giving the reason that matches the customer’s stated need.	Compare with the answer key. Each reason must refer to a need in the description.
32	Write better replies to customers.	Write a reply to a fictional customer email in no more than 150 words that answers every question asked, in the order asked.	A reviewer ticks each question as answered and counts the words.
33	Manage call times better.	Close a practice call in under 60 seconds by summarising what was agreed, giving a reference number and checking that the customer has nothing else to raise.	An observer times the close and ticks the three parts.

#	Weak version	Strong objective: after the training, the learner can …	How to observe it
34	Be aware of customers' access needs.	Offer at least two other ways to get in touch to a fictional customer who says they cannot use the phone, and record the chosen way in the customer notes.	The observer ticks the options offered. The trainer reads the note.
35	Improve customer satisfaction with price changes.	Explain a fictional price change in under one minute, stating the new price, the start date and one way to reduce the cost, then answer the customer's first question from the fact sheet.	An observer times the explanation, ticks the three facts and checks the answer against the fact sheet.
	Group	FACILITATION AND TRAINING OTHERS: EXAMPLES 36–42	
36	Understand how adults learn.	Plan a 20-minute training segment in which participants spend at least half the time practising, shown in the minutes column of the session plan.	The plan: practice minutes divided by total minutes is one half or more.
37	Facilitate engaging sessions.	Give instructions for a group activity in under one minute, covering the task, the time, the group size and the output, so that every group can start straight away.	An observer times the instructions and counts the questions asked before the groups start.
38	Be able to handle difficult participants.	Respond in a practice session to a participant who talks over others by thanking them, naming the time limit and inviting another person to speak, within one minute.	An observer ticks the three parts and times the response.
39	Know how to evaluate training.	Write one in-session check for each of three objectives from their own course, each showing whether every learner can do the task.	A partner reads each check against its objective and confirms that it tests the action named.
40	Use questions well in a debrief.	Lead a five-minute debrief after a practice activity with three questions in order: what happened, what it means for their work, and what they will do next.	An observer ticks the three questions in order and times the debrief.
41	Be confident delivering virtual training.	Run a 15-minute practice session online that uses the chat, a poll and one breakout round, losing no more than one minute in total to technical set-up.	An observer logs each tool used and the minutes lost to set-up.
42	Understand learning objectives.	Rewrite three weak objectives from their own course so that each passes the four checks, confirmed by a partner on the check sheet.	The partner check sheet: four ticks for each objective.

Rewrite worksheet

One sheet per person. Work down each column. Write three objectives from your own course in the first row exactly as they are now, then fill in the four checks and the strong version. Ten minutes in all.

	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
The weak version, as it is written now			
1. Who does it: the learner …			
2. The action you could see or hear			
3. The condition: with what, where			
4. The standard: how well, how many, how fast			
How you will observe it			
The strong version in one sentence			

Partner check sheet

Fill this in for your partner's three strong versions. Write yes or no for each check. Suggest one change per objective. The writer decides what to change.

Writer: _____ Checked by: _____

Check	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
The draft objective			
The learner does it			
An action you can see or hear			
A condition			
A standard			
A vague word left in?			
How to observe it is written			
Checks passed, out of 4			
One change I suggest			

Filled example: rewrite worksheet

A fictional example. A trainer at a housing association prepares a half-day course on Tuesday 17 November 2026 for new customer advisers who take repair requests from tenants. These are the final versions, after the partner check on the next page.

	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
The weak version, as it is written now	Understand the repairs priority categories.	Be confident booking repair appointments.	Communicate clearly with tenants about delays.
1. Who does it: the learner …	Sorts repair requests	Books the appointment	Tells the tenant
2. The action you could see or hear	Sort repair requests into the four priority categories	Book a repair appointment	Tell a tenant about a delayed repair
3. The condition: with what, where	Twelve fictional requests and the priority guide	In the training system, during a role-play call with a tenant	In a practice phone call with a role-play tenant
4. The standard: how well, how many, how fast	At least 11 of 12 match the guide, and every emergency is correct	The correct priority, a date within that priority's target, and the access details recorded	In under two minutes, giving the new date, the reason and what to do if the problem gets worse
How you will observe it	Compare with the answer key	The trainer opens the booking after the call	An observer times the call and ticks the three parts
The strong version in one sentence	Sort twelve fictional repair requests into the four priority categories with the priority guide, with at least eleven matching the guide and every emergency correct.	Book a repair appointment in the training system during a role-play call, with the correct priority, a date within that priority's target and the tenant's access details recorded.	Tell a role-play tenant about a delayed repair in under two minutes, giving the new date, the reason and what to do if the problem gets worse.

Filled example: partner check sheet

The same fictional trainer's first drafts, checked by a colleague. 9 of 12 checks passed, and 1 of the 3 drafts was ready to use. The changes produced the final versions on the previous page.

Check	O1	O2	O3
The draft objective	Sort twelve fictional repair requests into the four priority categories with the priority guide, with at least eleven matching the guide.	Book repair appointments in the training system during a role-play call.	Explain repair delays clearly to tenants.
The learner does it	Yes	Yes	Yes
An action you can see or hear	Yes	Yes	Yes
A condition	Yes	Yes	No
A standard	Yes	No	No
A vague word left in?	No	No	Yes: "clearly"
How to observe it is written	Compare with the answer key	The trainer opens the booking after the call	No
Checks passed, out of 4	4	3	2
One change I suggest	Add "every emergency correct" to the standard: one wrong emergency matters more than one wrong routine request.	Add a standard: what makes a booking correct? The priority, the date and the access details.	"Clearly" is not a standard. Name the three facts, a time limit and the practice call, then say how you will observe it.

Facilitator run of show

1 Open: what an objective is for | 4 minutes

One minute. Say: "An objective says what a learner will be able to do after the training, and how we would see it. Today you fix three of your own." Two minutes: show the four checks and read the question for each check aloud. One minute: each person reads one pair of weak and strong versions in the example table, silently, and marks the part that changed most.

2 Demonstrate one rewrite | 5 minutes

Write "Understand the incident reporting process." where everyone can see it. Take one minute per check (four minutes) and ask the group each question. Who does it? What would we see? With what? How well? Build the strong version in front of them: "Complete the incident form for a fictional near miss within ten minutes, recording what happened, where, when and the immediate action taken." In the last minute ask: "How would you see that it was met?" and write the answer: the reviewer checks the four fields against the scenario.

3 The 10-minute rewrite exercise | 10 minutes

Each person works alone on the rewrite worksheet. Two minutes: write three objectives from your own course in the first row exactly as they are now, or copy three weak versions from the example table. Six minutes, two per objective: fill in the four checks and write the strong version in one sentence. Two minutes: write how you will observe each one. Call each change of phase. Say: “If an objective will not pass, it may be two objectives, or no objective at all. Write that down.”

4 Swap and check in pairs | 7 minutes

Pairs swap worksheets. Three minutes: each person fills in a partner check sheet for the other’s three strong versions, in writing: yes or no for each check, any vague word left in, and one change to suggest. Four minutes, two each: talk through the sheet and agree one change. The writer decides. In a group of three, each person checks the next person’s sheet and the talk takes six minutes, two each, so the round runs one minute longer; take that minute from the close.

5 Fix and choose where each objective goes | 4 minutes

Two minutes: each person makes the agreed change on their worksheet. Two minutes: ask each person to say or type in the chat which of their three objectives they will put into their course outline or training plan first, and when. Anyone may pass. Collect the worksheets only if people offer them, and give them back.

Debrief and next steps

Questions for reflection

- Which of your three objectives changed most, and which check caused the change?
- Did any objective turn out to be two objectives, or not an objective at all?
- For which objective is the way to observe it hardest to arrange in your course, and what would make it possible?
- Which objective will you put into your course outline or training plan first?

Adapt the session

- For one person working alone, do the rewrite exercise and then fill in the partner check sheet yourself the next day, with fresh eyes. Or send the worksheet to a subject expert and ask only: “Could you see this happen?”
- For a 15-minute version, skip the demonstration, open in 2 minutes, run the 10-minute exercise with two objectives instead of three, and use 3 minutes for a written partner check: 2 + 10 + 3 = 15.
- Online, paste the four checks and the example table in the chat as plain text, use breakout rooms of two, and share the worksheet as a document each person can edit. Cameras are optional.
- For quiet participants and people working in a second language, keep every step in writing first. Anyone may pass on reading aloud, and the partner check works as a written exchange with no talk at all.
- For subject experts who are new to training, start from the example group for their field. Ask them to choose one weak version that sounds like their own course, rewrite it, and then turn to their own objectives.

After the session

Within a week, put the rewritten objectives into your course outline or training plan, with the way you will observe each one next to it. Then check that every objective has a practice activity in the course where learners do the action. Before the course runs, ask a subject expert to read the standards and say whether they match the job. After the course, note which objectives most learners met in the session and which they

did not. The kit has not been field-tested, and a well-written objective does not by itself show that the training works.

Questions people ask

What is a good example of a learning objective?

A good objective says what the learner will do, with what, and how well. For example: “Sort twelve fictional emails into ‘report as suspicious’ or ‘safe to open’, with at least eleven correct, and name the warning sign in each suspicious one.” You can watch it happen and compare the result with a key. The weak version, “Have an awareness of information security”, gives you nothing to see.

How do you write a learning objective for workplace training?

Start with what the learner will do, using a verb someone could see or hear. Add the condition: with what, where or from what. Add the standard: how well, how many or how fast. Then write how you will observe it. These parts follow Robert F. Mager’s Preparing Instructional Objectives (1962). The four checks in this kit put them in plain questions.

Do I need Bloom’s taxonomy to write objectives?

No. Many designers use Bloom’s taxonomy (Bloom et al., 1956; revised by Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001) to choose verbs and levels, and you can use it next to this kit. This kit does not reproduce it. The test here is simpler: could someone see the action, under a named condition, to a named standard?

Are these examples for school or university teaching?

No. All 42 examples are for adults at work: communication, leading people, procedures, software, customer service and facilitation. The scenarios are fictional and the standards are illustrations. Set the standard for your own course with the people who do the job, and use your organisation’s own procedures.

How is this different from the course outline template and the training plan template?

The course outline template links each objective to a practice activity and a module, and the training plan template maps objectives to sessions and evidence. Both assume you already have good objectives. This page helps you write them: a bank of weak and strong examples by topic, the four checks, and a 10-minute rewrite exercise. Write the objectives here, then put them into the outline or plan.

What is included in the free and editable files?

The open PDF has the four checks, the words that hide the action, all 42 examples in one table, the rewrite worksheet, the partner check sheet, a filled example of each and the 30-minute facilitator plan. Subscribers also receive the editable Word file, an Excel workbook with an objective checker and the example bank, and a CSV of the 42 examples.

Use and sharing

Free to use and adapt in your own training sessions, including paid client work. Do not resell or redistribute the unmodified download as a standalone product. Share the resource page instead.