**A-B-C-D Approach to Objective Writing**

Writing objectives is much like writing outcomes in the nursing process. Objectives must be measurable, contain action verbs, be specific, include timelines, and indicate the degree to which you expect the leaner to achieve.

A helpful formula to write objectives is the A-B-C-D approach:

* Audience: Who is the audience for the class? Is it a student nurse? A staff nurse? A participant in a class?
* Behavior: What do I want the audience to accomplish by the end of the class? An example of a behavior is being able to identify the signs and symptoms of infection.
* Condition: How will students demonstrate mastery and be assessed in their learning? An example could be that students will demonstrate their knowledge of a lab or clinical area by taking a written test.
* Degree: How well will students perform their new knowledge? Should students be able to identify all signs and symptoms of infection, or would it be satisfactory if they identified only two symptoms?

A sample objective that illustrates these points is: “After reading this lecture (condition), the graduate student in the nurse educator track (audience) will be able to write an objective (behavior) using the A-B-C-D approach (degree).”

The above objective dictates that the student will be able to write an objective, as opposed to discussing or identifying it. Since the objective says “write,” the student must write an objective to meet this objective. If the objective instead said: “List the components of a complete learner objective,” the appropriate evaluation would require that the student list the A-B-C-D; whereas the objective “describe the components” would have students describe the meaning of each A-B-C-D step. Well-written objectives will dictate the evaluation process.