

**VCU Office of Continuing Professional Development and Evaluation Studies
(CPDE)
Inter-Office Correspondence**

From: Paul E. Mazmanian, Ph.D., Associate Dean
Office of Continuing Professional Development and Evaluation Studies

Re: Objective Writing

There are two principles of objective writing:

1. WRITE THE OBJECTIVE IN TERMS OF WHAT YOU WANT THE LEARNER TO KNOW OR BE ABLE TO DO, HAVING ATTENDED THE PROGRAM. Goal statements such as "to provide the physician-learner with information on the latest techniques in angioplasty" are unacceptable. They are presented from the provider's prospective and they are not learning objectives.
2. BE SURE TO USE AN ACTIVE VERB. An objective which describes an observable form of behavior specifically describes what the physician-learner is to accomplish. Phrases such as, "the physician will be familiar with, will understand, or will know" are more ambiguous than observable behaviors such as, "the physician will describe, will outline, or will access".

These are examples of acceptable objectives:

At the conclusion of this program, the participants will be able to:

1. Define and discuss the pathophysiological changes, clinical signs and symptoms of congestive heart failure;
2. Outline the conventional therapy used in treatment of congestive heart failure;
3. Indicate the significance of digoxin serum levels and maintenance doses of digoxin;
4. Outline the treatment protocols using nitrates, other vasodilators, and inotropic agents in the treatment of congestive heart failure;
5. Identify the need for preload reduction and afterload reduction or both in the treatment of congestive heart failure;
6. Describe the mechanism of action, dosage, route of administration, adverse reactions, and monitoring parameters of drugs used in the treatment of congestive heart failure.