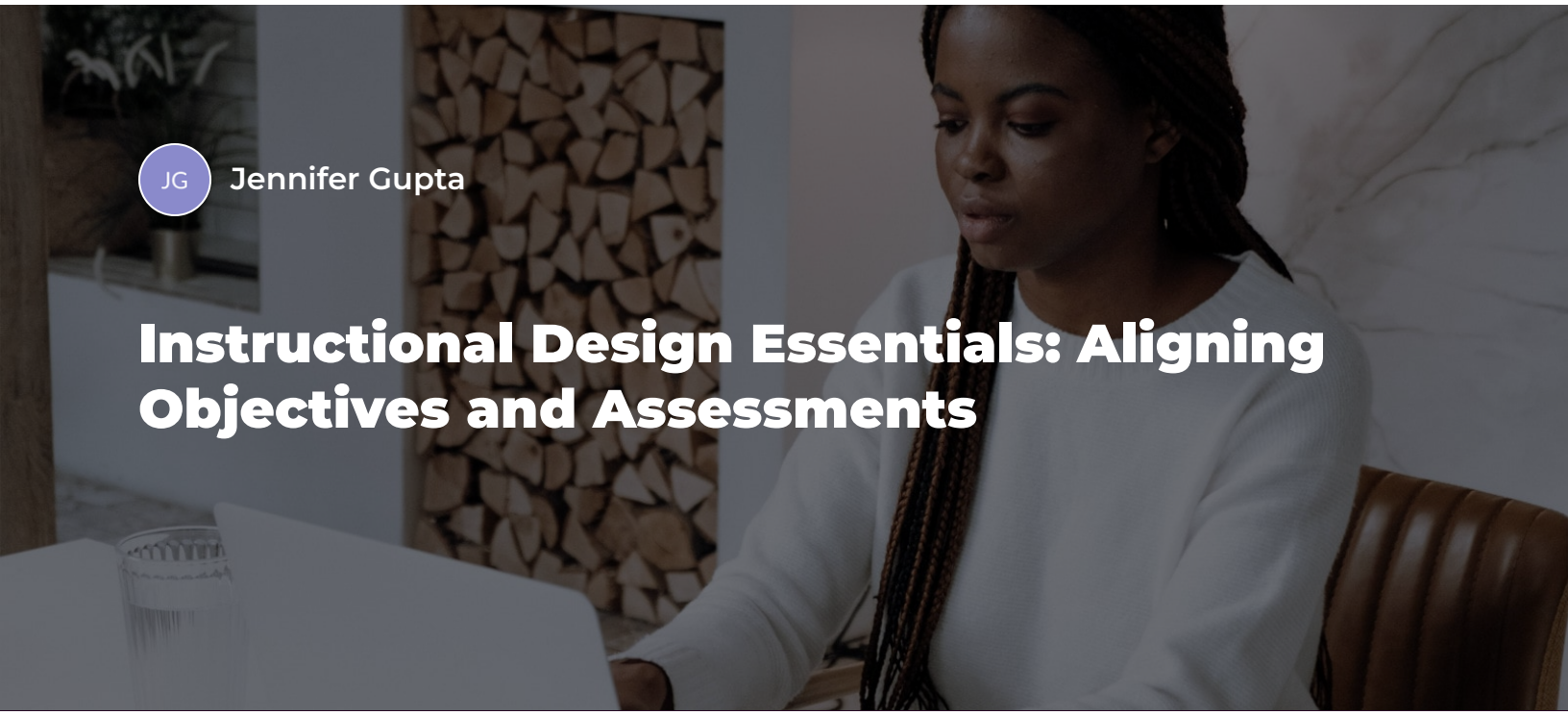

JG Jennifer Gupta

Instructional Design Essentials: Aligning Objectives and Assessments

Are you looking to improve your skills creating measurable learning objectives aligned to effective assessments? Then, this course is for you.

By the end of this blended learning program that includes this e-course and a live session, you will be able to ....

- apply the SMART or ABCD criteria to objectives (in class activity)
- discuss the importance of aligning these objectives with assessment questions (in class discussion)
- identify the basic principles of the Backwards Design Model

Learning Objectives

Cognitive Domains

Aligning Assessments

Assessment

Discussion Questions

Practice

Lesson 1 of 6

Learning Objectives

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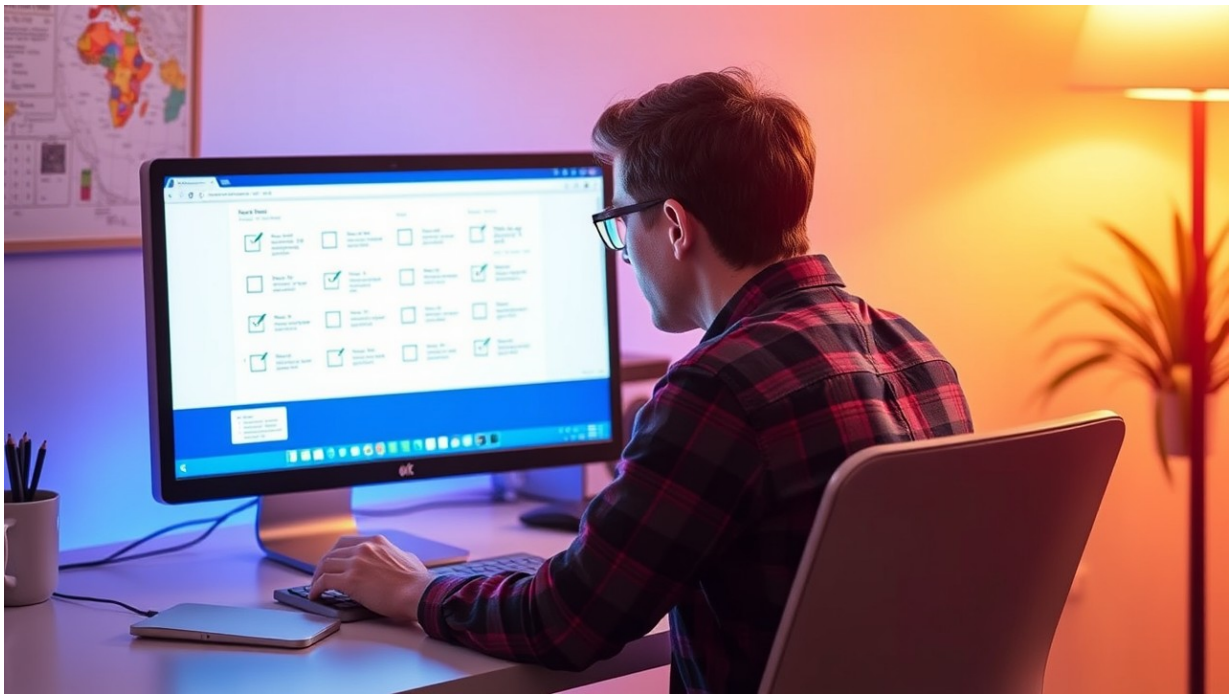

One way to create objectives is to make them SMART

1

Specific Goals. Clearly define the "who" and "what" of the activity. Use only 1 action verb. Avoid verbs that have vague

meanings that are not clearly measurable. (No "understand" or "know" verbs!).

2 **Measurable Outcomes.** Focus here on how much change is expected. Quantify it. How will we know the objective has been met?

3 **Achievable Targets.** Set realistic and attainable objectives to maintain motivation and commitment.

4 **Relevant Objectives.** Ensure your goals align with broader organizational or personal aims for maximum impact. Do they accurately represent the scope of the change? Do they help rectify the program need?

5 **Time-Bound Deadlines.** Specify a timeline for achieving your objectives to create a sense of urgency and accountability.

Below is a list of some random SMART objectives just so that you can get a feel for them. (No, these are not real examples, they are made up!) Notice anything? Does the ORDER in which the SMART objective is built matter?

- The SMO team will be able to **identify** how to send Part Number requests to the 3PO team by the end of this chapter.
- By the end of this course, SSE's will be able to **list** three ways that an Opportunity can be created in the D365 system.
- By the end of this training, LGPE team members will be able to **match** at least 4/5 measurable

objectives to their assessment counterparts.

Another way to create objectives is to use the ABCD Method

1. **A: Audience.** Who the learning objective is for
2. **B: Behavior:** What the students will be able to do, know, or think. This is where your verbs come in. Use only 1 action verb. Avoid verbs that have vague meanings that are not clearly measurable. (No "understand" or "know" verbs!).
3. **C: Condition:** The circumstances or context in which the learning will take place
4. **D: Degree:** How well or how much the behavior must be performed

Here's an example of an ABCD objective, not using Blooms Taxonomy:

- The SMO team, using the ServiceNow system, will be able to **send** Part Number requests to the 3PO team with 80% accuracy.

ERP/CRM

However, in ERP/CRM Tools training, creating SMART or ABCD objectives in their truest form creates a VERY LONG objective. We need shorter and more concise objectives, but that doesn't mean we get to skimp out on the needed elements.

So we start by defining the T (Time-Bound) or C for condition with a statement like this:

By the end of this course....
By the end of this eLearning....

Then we define the WHO (S for Specific) or Audience (A)

- By the end of this course, SMO team members...
- By the end of this learning, SSE will be able to:

Without KPI's we cannot realistically measure the outcomes, so we can skip the measurable outcomes or degree items of these. Instead, we'll add them into the passing score for the quiz. At LGPE, we measure passing at 80%. Therefore, we'll tell our learner at quiz start that they need to pass with 80% or higher, and that will suffice for our measurable outcomes.

The A for Achievable is not something that's written explicitly, but is something that we must look at when writing our objectives.

Is it possible that "**The SMO team will be able to identify how to send Part Number requests to the 3PO team by the end of this chapter**." ? Did we write the chapter so that this is possible? If not, we either need to adjust the chapter or rewrite the objective to ensure it's achievable.

Next we come to verbs. I recommend sticking with Blooms Taxonomy, but you can use whatever verb list you are comfortable with. (LGPE does not mandate this.) However, when choosing a verb, you MUST ensure that is can be directly measured.

Take a moment to think about the verbs you choose here.. can you design an assessment question for the verb *define*? What about *identify*? How about *understand*? If the answer is NO, then do not use that verb!

Now, take that a step further. How you assess the learner is dependent on the type of learning being provided. Can we adequately assess an essay style question/answer in an eLearning format? Can we determine if their summarization of something is correctly answered?

For our purposes, we must also weed out any verbs that we cannot properly assess in an eLearning environment.

Below is an example of our previous objectives rewritten to a shorter form.

- **Identify** how to send Part Number requests
- **List** three ways to create an opportunity

- **Match** objectives to assessment questions
- **Send** Part Number requests to the 3PO team

Here are some Blooms Taxonomy verb lists for you to look at. NOTE: They do not remove words that are not measurable, so be careful!

PDF **BloomsTaxonomy.pdf**
105 KB

PDF **Blooms-Taxonomy-Action-Verbs.pdf**
197.3 KB

PDF **BloomsVerbsAlphabetized.pdf**
310.3 KB

One Final Note

It is also important to align VERB TENSE. For example:

- Identifying
- Select
- predicted

These verbs all have different verb tenses. Please ensure that the tense you choose is consistent throughout your course.

Lesson 2 of 6

Cognitive Domains

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No objective course would be complete...

If we didn't take a moment to talk about Cognitive Domains.

Bloom's Taxonomy is a way of thinking about different levels of learning, and it's broken down into six cognitive domains. Each level represents a step up in how deeply we understand and interact with information.

1. **Remember** – This is the base level, where you're just trying to *remember* facts and information, like remembering a friend's phone number or a list of grocery items. It's all about recalling what you've learned.
2. **Understand/Comprehend** – Here, you're not just remembering information, but actually *understanding* it. You can explain it in your own words or describe what it means. Imagine reading a recipe and knowing what each ingredient does to make the dish taste good.
3. **Apply** – This step is about *applying* what you've learned to real-life situations. If you've learned how to solve a math problem, here you'd use that method to

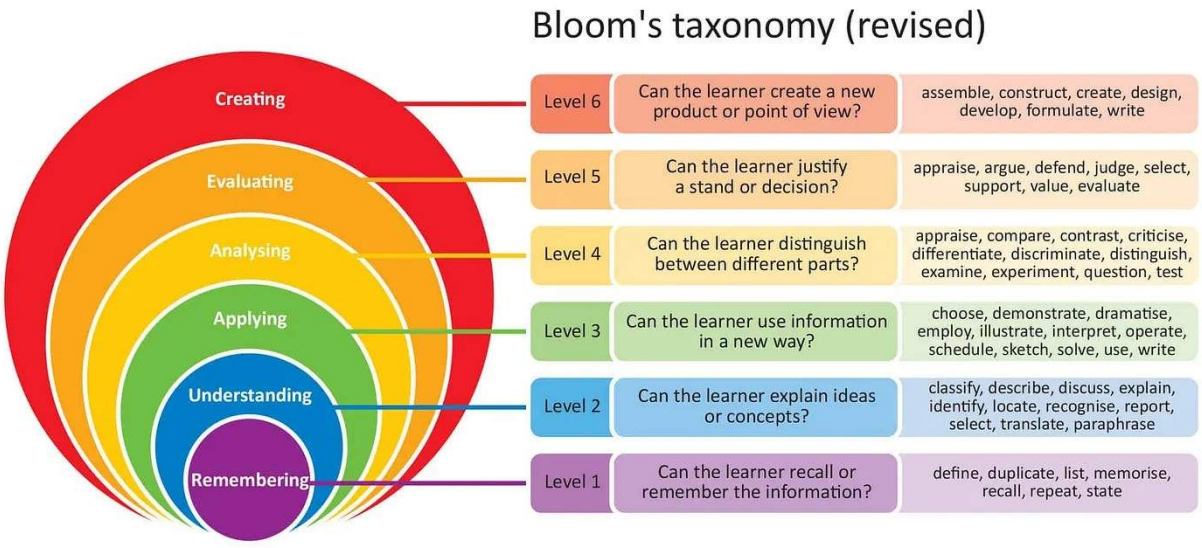
solve a new, similar problem in a different situation.

4. **Analyze** – At this level, you're looking closer and *analyzing* the parts of something to understand how they connect. Like, if you're playing a game, you figure out the different strategies by breaking down what works and what doesn't.

5. **Evaluate** – This level is about *judging* or making decisions based on what you know. Think about reviewing a movie; you use what you know about storytelling, acting, and effects to decide if it was good or not and why.

6. **Create** – The top level is all about *creating* something new with what you've learned. You take the knowledge you've gained through all the other levels and use it to make something original—like writing a story, building a model, or designing an experiment.

Each level builds on the last, helping us grow in how we think and use information. Starting with simple remembering, you gradually get to the point where you can create something totally new!



Why it matters...

Knowing which level your learners are at in Bloom's Taxonomy is super important because it helps you create lessons that match their current abilities and challenge them just enough to keep them growing.

Imagine learning like building with blocks. If someone is still trying to *remember* the basics, like facts or definitions, but you start teaching at a high level where they need to *analyze* or *create* new ideas, it'll feel like too much too soon. They'll get frustrated, lost, or may not be able to make the connections they need.

On the other hand, if a learner is already at a higher level—maybe they're good at *applying* or *analyzing* ideas—and you only give them activities focused on *remembering*, they'll get bored. They won't be challenged, and their skills might not improve.

When lessons are aligned with the learner's level, it's like giving them a ladder where each step is the right size for them to climb. They can work through each level with enough confidence to succeed, and enough challenge to grow. This makes learning more enjoyable and keeps them moving forward without feeling overwhelmed or bored.

How do you know where to start?

This is where the **Audience/Learner Analysis** comes in to play–

Here, you dive into *who* the learners are. What are their current skill levels, roles, backgrounds, and learning preferences? Understanding the audience helps to tailor the content and delivery style to make learning relevant and engaging.

This is your chance to determine not only what they know, but how deeply they know it.

They may be able to recall the facts, but unable to perform the task in the right sequence, or they can perform the task with job aids to follow but not teach it to someone.

Want to know more about what goes into a Learner analysis? Check out this How to post:

247TEACH

Lesson 3 of 6

Aligning Assessments

JG **Jennifer Gupta**

Effective Alignment Strategies

Aligning learning objectives with assessments is crucial for ensuring that students achieve the desired outcomes. By clearly defining what students need to know and be able to do, educators can create assessments that accurately measure these objectives. This alignment helps in identifying gaps in instruction and provides a clear roadmap for both teaching and learning.

One effective strategy for aligning objectives is to use backward design. This approach starts with the end goals in mind and plans assessments and instructional activities accordingly. By focusing on the desired outcomes from the beginning, educators can ensure that all elements of the course are geared towards achieving these goals. This method not only enhances the coherence of the course but also improves student engagement and success.

Understanding Backwards Design

The Backwards Design Model is a strategic approach to instructional design that begins with the end in mind. Educators first identify the desired learning outcomes and then work backwards to develop assessments and instructional activities that align with those outcomes. This ensures that all elements of the course are focused on achieving the specified objectives.

By starting with clear goals, the Backwards Design Model helps educators create more effective and targeted assessments. This method encourages a deeper understanding of the material, as students are assessed on their ability to meet the predefined objectives. Ultimately, this approach leads to a more cohesive and purposeful learning experience.

Backwards Design Model

More information on the Backwards Design Model can be found here.

TAKE ME THERE

Lets start with our objectives from the previous lesson:

- **Identify** how to send Part Number requests
- **List** three ways to create an opportunity
- **Match** objectives to assessment questions
- **Send** Part Number requests to the 3PO team

Take a second to think about HOW you would assess these? What types of questions would you ask the learner?

CONTINUE

How do you measure the verb *identify*? You could:

- have the learner pick out the correct way to do this task from choices that include the correct & several incorrect answers
- point to the correct place on the screen (Hotspot questions)

- sorting activities - sort the correct way into 1 bin and the incorrect ways into another bin

How do you measure the verb *list*? You could:

- have the learner type in the listed items into a text entry field
- have the learner drag and drop list items in a correct order
- sorting activities - sort the correct items for a list into one side and the incorrect listed items into the other side

How do you measure the verb *match*? You could:

- sorting activities - match the correct items together

How do you measure the verb *send*? You could:

- create a simulation for them to demonstrate sending
- create hotspot questions for them to show how to send

When choosing assessment types for objectives, provide a variety of assessment types to your learner!

ALSO - we **NEVER** create true/false questions!

Tools

There are many tools that can help you with this process. Backwards Design has an alignment tool, Blooms has a neat wheels, and I've seen others floating around. Use what works for you, and please share what you find!

Blooms Taxonomy Wheels

There are a LOT of Blooms taxonomy wheels out there.. Some may even be specific towards e-Learning… they generally look similar to this, with the verbs in the middle, and the outside ring with all of the things a student can do to demonstrate the verb.

PDF

3-Blooms-Taxonomy-Wheel-Color-5.pdf

345.9 KB

Aligning Objectives to Assessments

Tools and downloads to help

TAKE ME THERE

Identify desired result (Learning Objectives)	Determine acceptable evidence of student learning (Assessment)	Points
Identify how to send Part Number requests	have the learner pick out the correct way to do this task from choices that include the correct & several incorrect answers **(Multiple-choice)**	
List three ways to create an opportunity	have the learner **drag and drop** list items in a correct order	
Match objectives to assessment questions	**sorting** activities - match the correct items together	
Send Part Number requests to the 3PO team	create **hotspot** questions for them to show how to send	

Using a table

Using a table to ensure alignment helps me. As a visual learner, this layout helps me to ensure that my (a) verbs match in tense (b) I have alignment between my objective and my assessment (c) I have varying types of assessment questions (d) I have at least 1 assessment question for each objective (yes, you can have more than 1 if it's in the best interest of the learner). (e) I can set out the points for each question, determine weight/value and ensure that they add to 100%, AND that it's passable with a 80%

Looking at the table above, how would you award points? Could a learner pass this at 80%? Would you add more questions?

Lesson 4 of 6

Assessment

JG **Jennifer Gupta**

Question

01/05

Which of the following is a component of the SMART criteria for defining clear and measurable learning objectives?

- ◯ Specific
- ◯ Sustainable
- ◯ Scalable
- ◯ Strategic

Question

02/05

What is the primary purpose of the backwards design model in instructional design?

- ◯ To assess student performance through standardized tests
- ◯ To align learning objectives with desired learning outcomes
- ◯ To create engaging and interactive learning activities
- ◯ To ensure compliance with educational standards

Question

03/05

Why is aligning learning objectives with outcomes crucial for effective instructional design?

- It helps in reducing the overall course duration.
- It allows for more creative and flexible lesson plans.
- It ensures that all students receive the same grades.
- It ensures that the goals set at the beginning of a course are met by the end.

Question

04/05

What is a key characteristic of effective learning objectives?

- They focus solely on the content to be covered.
- They are broad and flexible to allow for various interpretations.
- They are designed to be challenging and unattainable to push learners.
- They are clearly defined to ensure everyone understands the objective without ambiguity.

Question

05/05

What is the primary focus of backward design in instructional planning?

- Focusing on the content to be covered and then determining the learning objectives.
- Using standardized tests as the primary method of assessment.
- Planning instructional activities first and then developing assessments.
- Starting with the end goals in mind and planning assessments and instructional activities accordingly.

Lesson 5 of 6

Discussion Questions

JG **Jennifer Gupta**

Question 1

Did ALL of the assessment questions you just answered ALIGN with the objectives at the beginning of the course? (They are listed here for your reference)

1. Which of the following is a component of the SMART criteria for defining clear and measurable learning objectives?
2. What is the primary purpose of the backwards design model in instructional design?
3. Why is aligning learning objectives with outcomes crucial for effective instructional design?
4. What is a key characteristic of effective learning objectives?
5. What is the primary focus of backward design in instructional planning?

Question 2

What is the importance of aligning objectives with assessment questions?
Is it important for the ID? Is it important for the learner?

Question 3

How does it make you feel when you are faced with test questions that do not align with the stated course objectives?

Lesson 6 of 6

Practice

JG Jennifer Gupta

These 4 objectives need some help. Feel free to flip the cards and ask yourselves the questions on the back as you practice re-writing them.

Students will learn the programming language, Python.

What is the problem with this objective? How could you rewrite it?

Students will know the elements from the periodic table.

What is the problem with this objective? How could you rewrite it?

The student will understand the importance of the major battles that occurred during the American Revolution.

What is the problem with this objective? How could you rewrite it?

To acquaint the clinician with the key clinical features necessary for the diagnosis of common rheumatic diseases.

What is the problem with this objective? How could you rewrite it?

This objective also needs help, but the back of this card has some broken out objectives already created. Take a look at some of the suggestions once you've tried your hand at rewriting it!

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to understand the basics of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

- Select appropriate ingredients for a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
- Assemble a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
- Consume a peanut