

## Writing Goals, Objectives, and Activities

### What are Goals and Objectives?

Goals are long-range, broad, general statements describing a desired condition or future toward which the library will work.

Objectives are short range and describe the results to be achieved

An activity is a set of tasks that accomplish an objective.

### Types of Goals

Public library goals generally fall into (or are a mix) of two categories:

- Service goals: relate directly to the service your funded project will provide to its special clientele. Example: people with limited English proficiency are provided with leisure reading material in their primary language.
- Management goals: relate to resources, facilities, staffing, funding, or some other managerial function. Example: *The library has staff specifically trained to work with clientele who have disabilities.*

### Types of Objectives

Objectives are written for each goal but may also relate to more than one goal.

Statements of objectives should include:

1. The particular outcome desired (e.g., To increase the number of people with disabilities as registered borrowers)
2. The measurement of achievement (e.g., by 50 percent)
3. The time frame (e.g., by the end of the funding year)

Here are two types of objectives:

- Developing new services or operations. Example: *To establish three new outreach programs for older adults during the current fiscal year.*
- Maintaining or improving the quality of an existing service or operation. Example: *To increase circulation per capital of literacy materials by the end of the current fiscal year*

### Criteria for Goals

Goals should:

1. Describe an ideal condition or state that the library believes important
2. Be stated in a declarative sentence.
3. Be free of library jargon.

### Criteria for Objectives

Ask yourself:

1. Is the objective related to at least one goal?
2. Does the objective begin with an action verb, for example, to provide, to increase, to establish, to conduct?
3. Is the objective an end and not a means to an end?
4. Does the objective include a date by which it will be accomplished?
5. Does the objective specify "what" and "when" and not discuss "why" and "how"?

6. Is the objective measurable or verifiable, that is, how will librarians know if the objective has been achieved?
7. Does the objective specify a single result to be accomplished?
8. Are there a number of different ways in which the objective could be accomplished?
9. Is the objective "actionable," that is, is it realistic that the library can develop activities to accomplish this objective?
10. Is the objective understandable and written clearly and simply?

### **Samples:**

Primary Goal: Members of the community with limited English proficiency are able to find materials and services to pursue their own learning and meet their individual information needs.

Objective 1: To obtain the use of three meeting room facilities outside the library for programming activities for members of the community with limited English proficiency;

Activity 1: Draft document of requirements for meeting venues.

Activity 2: Identify potential meeting venues within the city limits.

Activity 3: Contact meeting venues and gather policies, fees, and schedules.

Activity 4: Select 3 meeting venues.

Activity 5: Schedule 3 meetings.

Objective 2: To increase adult attendance per capita for programs related to self-improvement for individuals like limited English proficiency by 25% by the end of the funding year.

Activity 1: Locate prior statistics for program attendance.

Activity 2: Identify program interest needs by contacting individuals working with target population.

Activity 3: Plan publicity campaign.

Activity 4: Develop evaluation and data collection instruments.

Primary Goal: To increase the proportion of the older adult population served by the library.

Objective 1: To increase the number of registered borrowers in the system to 50 percent of the total older adult population.

Objective 2: To provide training in basic reading skills to at least 100 people with English as second language each year.

### Sources:

- McClure, Charles R., et al. *Planning & Role Setting for Public Libraries*. Chicago; London: American Library Association, 1987.
- Palmour, Vernon, et al. *A Planning Process for Public Libraries*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1980.

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<https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~l388k3lr/assignments/grant/writinggoals.html>