Functions of Objectives

1) For the facilitator

Objectives are the bases for making instructional (design and facilitation) decisions. They help in planning the lesson sequence. They help in making a choice of a particular (learning) technique.

Having a good set of objectives can be very useful in helping the facilitator assess learner progress. The facilitator may want to repeat or revise units of learning, and objectives (that are) clearly stated and recorded can influence the decision to repeat or revise.

2) For the learner

Objectives can provide motivation for learners by having them see what it is that can be expected from participation in a course or program. In fact, a set of well-written objectives can help prospective learners decide whether they will join the activity. While the learners are in the activity, objectives can be helpful in evaluating the learners' progress. It is often argued that adult learners come to learning events with their own sets of objectives. This is quite true and the learners can then see whether their objectives are the same as the prescribed objectives. If not, the prescribed objectives may be modified so that the event is more likely to meet the learners' needs.

3) For the evaluator

Having a set of objectives provides a means for the evaluator to collect data about the degree to which objectives have been met – without having to attempt to state the objectives after the learning has been completed.

4) For the administrator

Objectives allow the administrator to have a basis for accountability. In fact, the objectives for the program may well be the bases for the selection of staff. Objectives can also provide a communication link between the agency (sponsoring organization) and the public:

☐ The facilitator knows what s/he is attempting to do, and the learners know exactly what is expected of them

☐ Objectives provide a focus, a sense of direction

☐ Objectives allow for evaluation of learner performance

☐ Objectives provide for effective planning

☐ Objectives communicate exactly what a program will entail, and how learning performances will be evaluated

☐ Objectives provide a blueprint of the program

☐ Objectives describe conditions, behaviour, and standards of performance and become clear, succinct descriptions of course content

Source: Brack. Adapted by StFX.