

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOALS

Goals, like the whole process of instructional technology, are operational on several levels. One can isolate goal statements subscribed to by state departments of education (or state educational agencies) and by school districts in their curriculum statements. Schools within districts will ordinarily have developed formal goal statements. The emphasis in this book is pragmatic and applicable to the specific classroom or even the specific learner. Goals written on the district/state level are probably too broad to be of specific usefulness to the specific classroom effort. This is not to imply that goals written by the instructional designer are to be substituted for the district or state goals (we do not generally have that privilege); rather the district/state goals need to be modified to suit classroom needs. These goals can be considered (if necessary) in addition to those goals mandated by authority, or at least complimentary to those goals. The goals of the district/state will be more likely achieved when they are modified to serve the needs of learners at the local level.

Goals are frequently unclear, but complications are the fault of the goal designer. Goals need not be complex or abstract. For genuine, realistic learning, goals should be written as overtly and concretely as they can be written. Their formulation and application are critical to the instructional process. A goal ought to state the exact aim, purpose, or end to any course of action. The statement is a point of departure from which the more specific and complete operational objectives are developed

Goals Should be Written in Terms of Learner Behavior, Not Teacher Behavior

From the learner's perspective a goal is a consequence he expects to attain. Since goals direct an effort, the teacher's role is to write a goal and to arrange a motivational strategy, which will encourage the learner to learn. The strategy is to provide a rationale from the point of view of the learner.

Goals can be described in the broadest of terms. Such terms as "to know," "to understand," "to appreciate," "to grasp the significance of" are acceptable. Even though the use of broad terms is "acceptable," the use of operant terms expedites the effect of the goal statement.

Goals, however, are reached through the achievement of objectives. Objectives, unlike goals, must be written operationally; that is, in performance terms. They must specify the intended or terminal behavior, the conditions within which the behavior will be manifested, and the standard or minimally acceptable level at which the learner will exhibit the terminal behavior. Chapter 4 is devoted to writing operational objectives.