

**EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING:
GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING OBJECTIVES & PROPOSED STRATEGIES**

Learning objectives should describe what you will learn, not what you will do.

As you prepare your learning objectives, think about the reasons why you are doing this work and what you want to gain from it, intellectually and personally.

Some tips to keep in mind for developing effective learning objectives:

- Use concise terms that suggest measurable goals, such as identify, improve, define, compare, understand, apply, solve, write, contrast, initiate, develop, etc.
- Be creative! Consider the theories or texts you have covered in your courses, identify specific career or professional information you wish to acquire, and/or ask your prospective site supervisor what learning opportunities their organization can provide.

Strategies should describe the specific processes or tasks that will help you meet your objectives.

- Will you undergo orientation or training of any kind?
- Will you have responsibility for a specific task or project?
- Will you attend any meetings? Can you interview professionals at your experiential learning site?
- What kinds of daily tasks will you undertake?
- Will you do any professional reading at the site?

Sample Learning Objectives	Sample Proposed Strategies
To understand how public policy is developed and enacted in the state legislature.	By following legislation, researching legislative histories, reviewing public policy texts, interviewing Assembly staff and lobbyists, observation in daily/weekly meetings.
To develop a preliminary network with public relations professionals.	Develop a data file of new contacts; conduct informational interviews with agency professionals and clients; attend professional conferences; write follow-up thank you letters.
To improve my theoretical and practical understanding of group communication.	Observe interaction in project meetings for leadership styles, roles, critical and creative thinking techniques, decision-making techniques, non-verbal communication, and kinds of group tasks.

A good rule of thumb in drafting these learning objectives and strategies is to provide one of each per credit hour.

You may wish to prepare a draft of your learning objectives and strategies to take with you when discussing the Experiential Learning Contract with your site supervisor and instructor of record. Asking for their assistance in finalizing your objectives gives you the opportunity to clarify what your goals are and to receive feedback on them. Such a discussion may help your supervisor think of additional possibilities for you in terms of projects, meetings, conferences, training, etc.