



Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Part 4: Practices in Adult Learning

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Chapter 15: Some Guidelines for Using Learning Contracts

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Learning Contracts

Why use learning contracts?

- Provides an understanding between the organization and the learner to achieve mutual goals
- Learner develops a sense of ownership/commitment to plan
- Clarifies learning objectives clear for the learner and supervisor

How to Develop a Learning Contract

- Step 1** • Diagnose your learning needs
- Step 2** • Specify your learning objectives
- Step 3** • Specify your learning resources and strategies
- Step 4** • Specify evidence of accomplishment
- Step 5** • Specify how the evidence will be validated
- Step 6** • Review your contract with consultants
- Step 7** • Carry out the contract
- Step 8** • Evaluate your learning

Key Terms

❖ Learning need

- ✓ The gap between where you are now and where you want to be in regard to a particular set of competencies

❖ Competency

- ✓ The ability to do something at some level of proficiency
- ✓ Usually composed of a combination of knowledge, understanding, skill, attitude, and values

Step 1

❖ **Diagnose your learning needs**

- ✓ Construct a model of the competencies required to perform the role excellently
- ✓ Assess the gap between where you are now and where the model says you should be in regard to each competency



Step 2

❖Specify your learning objectives

- ✓Translate each of the learning needs diagnosed in Step 1 into a learning objective
- ✓Describe what you will learn, not what you will do

Learning Contract for:			
Name _____			
Activity _____			
Learning Objectives	Learning Resources and Strategies	Evidence of Accomplishment of Objectives	Criteria and Means for Validating Evidence

Step 3

❖ **Specify your learning resources and strategies**

- ✓ Describe how you propose to go about accomplishing each objective
- ✓ Identify the resources you plan to use
- ✓ Identify the strategies you will employ

Step 4

❖ Specify evidence of accomplishment

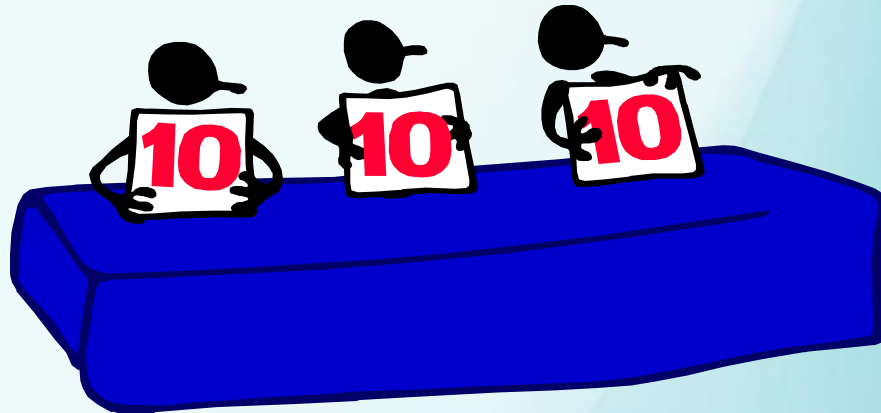
- ✓ Describe what evidence you will collect to indicate the degree to which you have achieved each objective

Type of Objective	Examples of Evidence
Knowledge	Reports of knowledge acquired, as in essays, examinations, oral presentations, audiovisual presentations, annotated bibliographies.
Understanding	Examples of utilizations of knowledge in solving problems, as in action projects, research projects with conclusions and recommendations, plans for curriculum change, etc.
Skills	Performance exercises, videotaped performances, etc., with ratings by observers.
Attitudes	Attitudinal rating scales; performance in real situations, role-playing, simulation games, critical incident cases, etc., with feedback from participants and/or observers.
Values	Value rating scales; performance in value clarification groups, critical incident cases, simulation exercises, etc., with feedback from participants and/or observers.

Step 5

❖ Specify how the evidence will be validated

- For each objective
 - ✓ Specify the judging criteria for each objective
 - ✓ Indicate how the evidence will be judged according to these criteria
 - ✓ Who will judge, how are they qualified



Step 6

❖ Review your contract with consultants

- Questions to ask about the contract for optimal benefit
 - ✓ Are the learning objectives clear, understandable, and realistic; and do they describe what you propose to learn?
 - ✓ Can they think of other objectives you might consider?
 - ✓ Do the learning strategies and resources seem reasonable, appropriate, and efficient?
 - ✓ Can they think of other resources and strategies you might consider?
 - ✓ Does the evidence seem relevant to the various objectives, and would it convince them?
 - ✓ Can they suggest other evidence you might consider?
 - ✓ Are the criteria and means for validating the evidence clear, relevant, and convincing?
 - ✓ Can they think of other ways to validate the evidence that you might consider?

Step 7



❖ Carry out the contract

- ✓ Do what the contract calls for
- ✓ Revise your contract as you go along

Step 8

❖ **Evaluate your learning**

- ✓ Have consultants examine your evidence and validation data and give their judgment about its adequacy

Reflection Questions

- 1. What are the steps in creating a contract?**
- 2. What learning contract step or steps do you think give learners the most difficulty?**