

H. Objectives in Team and Task Management

This handbook gives a considerable emphasis to the value and use of objectives. It suggests that the design team use objectives as an organizing device and that evaluations be organized largely around objectives. These short term teams can make good use of objectives, but the objectives that make the difference are the ones that the implementation team develops and works with. A team can seldom work effectively with objectives developed by someone else. Besides, with its chance to come to know and understand the project environment the team can be expected to come up with better objectives. Your team needs its own objectives, to serve its own purpose, following its own definitions. They should be consistent with the design team's objectives, but the important thing is that you follow your own criteria.

Writing objectives requires information, thought, analysis and discussion. This presents a good opportunity to involve the team as a team. This involvement will likely give better analysis than is possible otherwise, but it also encourages team member participation, which always improves chances for success. Project team participation in this exercise is not inconsistent with the concept of officing the team with host institution units. Host institution interests can be better reflected in the team's plans, if team is dispersed. There may come a time when host institution personnel will be involved with the team in reviewing and revising objectives.

Objectives need to be revised as the situation changes or as you accumulate more information and understanding of it. They need to be under continual (or periodic) review, and that requires monitoring and evaluation.

Objectives need to be stated correctly. They are most useful when:

- They are stated as declarative statements.
- They describe a future state or situation (not simply a process or set of activities.)
- They contain the specifics related to a problem solution.
- They can probably be accomplished within project constraints.

You can deal with a hierarchy of objectives, i.e. have short term objectives that are means for moving toward a long-term objective. This ranking of objectives should not get too complicated or detailed. For detailed planning, use other management devices such as the activity network or Delta Chart.

You can deal with objectives that are common for the team, or with individual objectives or subgroup objectives.