

In an evidence-based practice approach, outcome evaluations must include not only the measures but also analysis of the extent to which the measured results can be attributed to the program rather than to coincidence or alternative explanations.

Goal versus Objective

Goals and objectives are necessary components of the Local Evaluation Plan and the Project Work Plan. These common terms are sometimes used interchangeably because both refer to the intended results of program activities. Goals are longer-term than objectives, more broadly stated and govern the specific objectives to which program activities are directed.

In proposals, goals are defined by broad statements of what the program intends to accomplish, representing the long-term intended outcome of the program².

Examples of goal statements⁷:

- To reduce the number of serious and chronic program participants.
- To reduce the number of program participants with addiction-related needs.
- To increase the amount of in-custody treatment provided to program participants.

Objectives are statements of specific, measurable aims of program activities. Objectives detail the tasks that must be completed to achieve goals. Descriptions of objectives in the proposals should include three elements⁹:

- 1) Direction – the expected change or accomplishment (e.g., improve, maintain);
- 2) Timeframe – when the objective will be achieved; and
- 3) Target Population– who is affected by the objective.

Examples of program objectives⁸:

- By the end of the program, drug-addicted participants will recognize the long-term consequences of drug use.
- To place eligible participants in an aftercare service within two weeks of release to ensure participants accountability and community safety.
- To ensure that participants carry out all of the terms of their probation.
- To place eligible participants in job training within 8 weeks.

⁷ *Id.* at p. 4.

⁸ *Id.*