

The Difference Between a Goal and an Objective

What is a Goal?

A goal is a broad statement of what the program hopes to accomplish. Examples include:

- Influence policymakers to bring a family perspectives to policymaking issues that affect the health and well being of New Mexicans.
- To motivate food stamp participants to eat foods that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Food Guide Pyramid.
- To conduct applied research with the goal of collecting data on water use of turf grasses, turf grass irrigation, and irrigation efficiency.
- Evaluate the effects of drip irrigation and mulch on water savings, weed growth and production of sweet corn in northern New Mexico.
- Reduce the crime rate in the neighborhood targeted by the program.
- Restore a sense of well-being to victims of crime.
- To disseminate information on turf grass and related issues to extension agents.

What is an Objective?

An objective is a specific, measurable condition that must be attained in order to accomplish a particular program goal. There are many different ways to specify objectives; the program and evaluator should choose the method that works best for each situation. Examples of program objectives include:

- 50% of learners will be able to report making knowledgeable decisions about food purchases after completion of the eight week course.
- Improve by one grade level reading scores for 80% of the juveniles who complete the program.
- Tourism in the community will increase 10% over the next year as new strategies for hospitality are employed.
- Plant pathology program participants will increase their understanding of biotic and abiotic plant disorders by 25% by the end of the program.
- Parents of young children will report being more confident about caring for their children after reading the newsletter for 6 months.