

tools of the trade

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Analyzing Goals

Goal Analysis. Robert F. Mager. Belmont, California: Fearson Publishers, Inc., 1972. 144 pp. \$6.95 (paper).

Preparing Instructional Objectives. 2nd ed. Robert F. Mager. Belmont, California: Fearson Publishers, Inc., 1975. 144 pp. \$6.95 (paper).

In evaluating the outcomes of Extension programs, we're frequently concerned about how well our program goals and objectives have been met. Often, we become frustrated because we soon discover that our goals are too unclear or ambiguous to be easily measured. Mager's two books can help us more clearly define expected program outcomes.

Mager's *Goal Analysis* provides a step-by-step method for producing well-defined, meaningful goals, whether we're concerned about changes in knowledge, skills, behavior, or attitudes. Special attention is given to the identification of learner performances that can be used to assess the degree of goal attainment. Like most of his books, *Goal Analysis* is written in an easy-going, entertaining style that offers many examples and opportunities to practice the skills he teaches.

The second edition of *Preparing Instructional Objectives* is an excellent companion to *Goal Analysis*. It contains many more examples and practice opportunities than the first edition. A particularly useful addition is the discussion of common problems with instructional objectives. In addition to helping us write measurable objectives, this book helps us to do a better job of providing instructional activities that are more likely to lead to actual practice change.

Most Extension professionals will be able to read either book in a couple of hours. The examples and practice opportunities help ensure the transfer of skills into practice. Both books are "musts" for the Extension professional who's concerned about planning, conducting, and evaluating educational programs—and this includes just about all of us.

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