Conducting a Goal Analysis

Goal Analysis

Because of its complexity, instructional analysis, which is the identification of all of the skills and knowledge that should be included in the instruction, is broken into two steps, goal analysis and subordinate skills analysis. Goal analysis, the process of determining the major components of the instructional goal, focuses on the following question: *What exactly would a person be doing if that person were demonstrating that he or she already could perform the goal?*

Goal analysis is broken into two steps, the classification of the goal statement and the description of what a student will be doing when he or she is performing the goal.

Classification

The first step of a goal analysis, classification, requires that the goal statement is categorized into one of Robert Gagne’s domains of learning. The four targeted domains are listed below:

- **Psychomotor Skills.** The characteristics of these skills are that the learner must carry out muscular actions, with or without equipment, to accomplish exact results.
- **Intellectual Skills.** These skills require the learner to perform some cognitive activity such as discrimination, forming concepts, applying rules, and problem solving. For the purpose of instructional analysis, Gagne’s fifth domain of learning, cognitive strategies, can be classified as intellectual skills.
- **Verbal Information.** Goal statements that require learners to provide specific responses to specific stimuli, such as stating and listing should be categorized as a verbal information skill.
- **Attitudinal Skills.** If a goal statement asks learners to choose to do make particular choices or decisions to act under particular circumstances, it can be classified as an attitudinal skill.

Performance Description

Performance description, or the description of what a student will be doing when he or she is performing the goal, is best done in step-by-step fashion. The steps can encompass larger processes for older students, but should be more precise for young learners. This step of the goal analysis is best done through the use of conventional flowcharts, with each block containing a verb describing an observable behavior. The steps will then be broken down into subordinate steps.

A performance description can be linear if the process is simple:

Or it might require a decision followed by alternate paths:

If a flowchart requires more than one line, a circle is used for continuation: