

**Your 3 Month CME Planning Tool.**  
 Use this format to plan your CME activities each quarter, i.e. every 3 months. Report your achievement of Outcomes with the Quarterly Effectiveness Focus Group Review requirement.



# Linking Needs to Outcomes

## Essential Area 2

Linking needs to results, linking needs and result to learning objectives, and linking needs, results, and objectives to outcomes.

\*CME Event or RSC: \_\_\_\_\_ List Topics in No. 3.

**Step 1: Select Sources of Needs.** See the chart below for an example of how to initially organize your needs assessment.

### Types of Needs Assessments for Planning a CME Activity

Select two or more sources of needs by Category: **PROVIDE DOCUMENTATION**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPERT NEEDS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARTICIPANT NEEDS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBSERVED NEEDS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS
Planning Committee	Previous related evaluation summary	Hospital/clinic quality assurance analysis	Evidence of offerings from other CME providers
Departmental Chair	Focus panel discussions/interviews	Other clinical observances	Lay press
Activity faculty	Needs assessment survey	Mortality/morbidity data	Direct-to-consumer ads
Expert panels	Other requests from physicians	Epidemiological data	Other societal trends
Research findings	Requested by affiliated institutions or physician groups	National clinical guidelines (NIH, NCE, AHRQ, etc.)	
Required by a medical school authority		Specialty society guidelines	
Required by governmental authority/regulation/law		Database analyses (e.g., Rx changes, diagnosis trends)	

**Step 2. Synthesize your needs.** Boil down all of the needs you reviewed into just those that will be used to build your activity. Synthesize the final list into bulleted statements. You might end up with four to eight key needs.

**Write those bulleted needs down.**

1.
2.
3.
4.

5.
6.
7.
8.

**Step 3. State a desired educational result.** Take each of the bulleted needs and ask yourself, “What do I intend to achieve from this educational activity relative to that specific need?” This is a fundamental step that is frequently missing in the planning process. If you are able to make these “results statements,” you will immediately have an educational activity that is well-focused, and you should be able to measure its outcomes. *CME is trying to help you link identified need to desired result.* Use the example below for your documentation.

**Identified need example:** The American Heart Association guidelines state that high levels of hyperlipidemia in patients with diabetic co-morbidity is the cause of increased morbidity in those patients.

**Your Identified Need:**


**Desired Result example:** Identify your diabetic patients; screen for hyperlipidemia; place on appropriate lipid lowering medication(s).

**Your Desired Result: (Form your activity Topic here!)**


**Step 4: Prepare learning objectives.** Now that you know the need and desired result, you can prepare learning objectives that are written in terms of physician performance or patient health outcomes. Visualize learning objectives as the stepping stones that take you from the identified need to the desired educational result. Each set of need/results statements should have at least one learning objective. Consider writing your objectives in the second person (“you” or “your” phrases) so that the physician personally identifies with the objective, e.g.:

**Objective example:** Decrease cardiovascular events of your diabetic patients with hyperlipidemia by improving their cholesterol profiles.

**Your Objective(s):**

1.
2.

3.

**Step 5. Link Needs, Results, and Objectives to Outcomes.** Always prepare your outcomes questions during the planning process. Take each need/result statement and ask yourself what one question can be asked of learners about how they implemented change in their practice. The outcomes question may be the educational results statement flipped into a question. Use this example as a guide:

**Outcomes question example:** Have you implemented measures that would lower cholesterol for diabetic patients in your practice? If the answer is no, what barriers have prevent this?

**Your Outcomes question(s):** (Ask your participants these questions on the Quarterly Participant Impact Study Form)


**Your Outcomes question can be posed to your participant learners after your event, i.e., within a time period that you select. Or, in support of the Quarterly CME Effectiveness Requirement. This document should be turned in as proof of quarterly planning your event and as support for your Quarterly CME Effectiveness Review.**



**If your event is supported by pharmaceutical education grants,**  
*This protects you by assuring that your vendors are fully complying with PhRMA and OIG rules, and ensures that you invest in outstanding education.*