

Basic Rules And Suggestions For Writing With Objectivity

OBJECTIVE is –

- IMPARTIAL - neutral, not taking sides
- FACTUAL - accurate, detailed and precise

A FACT -

- Has actual existence
- Actually occurred
- Can be perceived by the senses
- Can be measured

For example –

Joey did not eat his dinner vs. I think Joey was eating snacks all afternoon.

Mary was lying at the bottom of the steps vs. I think Mary fell down the stairs.

Keisha has a 2 inch gash on her forehead vs. Keisha got hurt and there's blood all over the place.

GOOD OBJECTIVE WRITING -

A. Does Not Have -

1. **Opinions-** Alice was aggressive when I told her to leave another client alone. To make this factual you would have to say what Alice did that made you think she was aggressive. *For example, "I saw Alice punch a client four times on her back?"* Opinions are your own personal thoughts or point of view.
2. **Conclusions-** Jerry is agitated. It's from the new meds.
Conclusions are your own personal end of the story.
3. **Theories-** Bill refused to do his laundry because he's having a bad day.

All of these things have something in common. They are all "subjective". These are all based on each person's own perceptions.

B. Good objective writing answers –

Who? What? Where? and WhenBUT NOT Why!!

C. Good objective writing is detailed and precise-

John was aggressive. (No)

John slapped another client on the face. (Yes)

Robert was angry and cursed the staff. (No)

Robert said, "F*** you, you Bastard." (Yes)

Maria was inappropriate (No)

Marie took her shirt and bra off in the living room. (Yes)

Someone reading your report should be able to close their eyes and see a movie of what you are describing.

D. Again, say what you saw, what you heard, what was done...

Describe the who, what, when, where...

E. Avoid General Statements.

F. Don't demean people you are writing about.

Avoid statements such as "She is a slob," "He's a retard," "He is lazy."

G. Do not use another client's name in a report.

You may have to write two reports.

For example, one about client that was hurt and one about the client who did the hurting.

REPORTS MUST BE COMPLETED AND GIVEN TO YOUR SUPERVISOR IMMEDIATELY, IF POSSIBLE, BUT DEFINITELY BY THE END OF THE SHIFT ON THE DAY THAT THE INCIDENT OCCURRED.

SUGGESTION

Practice writing reports based on what you actually saw.

You can practice this skill on the bus, on the train, in a waiting room, waiting on line in the supermarket or even while watching a TV show. Be an observer for two or three minutes and then write what you saw.

Replace any opinions with what you saw that made you think the person was . . . agitated, or angry, or excited, or frustrated, etc.

The benefit of getting good at report writing is that it will save you time and reduce your stress.