Bloom's Taxonomy and Learning Domains

There is more than one type of learning. A committee of colleges, led by Benjamin Bloom (1956), identified three *domains* of educational activities:

- o **Cognitive**: mental skills (*Knowledge*)
- o **Affective**: growth in feelings or emotional areas (*Attitude*)
- o **Psychomotor**: manual or physical skills (*Skills*)

Domains can be thought of as categories. Trainers often refer to these three categories as KSA (Knowledge, Skills, and Attitude). This taxonomy of learning behaviors can be thought of as "the goals of the learning process." That is, after a learning episode, the learner should have acquired new *skills*, *knowledge*, and/or *attitudes*.

This compilation divides the three domains into subdivisions, starting from the simplest behavior to the most complex. The divisions outlined are not absolutes and there are other systems or hierarchies that have been devised in the educational and training world. However, Bloom's taxonomy is easily understood and is probably the most widely applied one in use today.

This is a useful guide for sexual violence prevention educators as they develop training curricula. A program should aim to include items from each of the learning domains, and particularly from the psychomotor/behavioral domain, which focuses on skills for applying information and changing behavior. This is also a good tool for developing evaluations: the verbs used below can help you to understand the kinds of domains or learning spheres that your program aims to address.

The Cognitive Domain

The cognitive domain (Bloom, 1956) involves knowledge and the development of intellectual skills. This includes the recall or recognition of specific facts, procedural patterns, and concepts that serve in the development of intellectual abilities and skills. There are six major categories, which are listed in order below, starting from the simplest behavior to the most complex. The categories can be thought of as degrees of difficulties. That is, the first ones must normally be mastered before the next ones can take place.

Category	Key Words (verbs)
Knowledge: Recall data or information.	**Key Words**: defines, describes, identifies, knows, labels, lists, matches, names, outlines, recalls, recognizes, reproduces, selects, states.
Comprehension: Understand the meaning,	**Key Words**: comprehends, converts, defends,

translation, interpolation, and interpretation of instructions and problems. State a problem in one's own words.	distinguishes, estimates, explains, extends, generalizes, gives an example, infers, interprets, paraphrases, predicts, rewrites, summarizes, translates.
Application: Use a concept in a new situation or unprompted use of an abstraction. Applies what was learned in the classroom into novel situations in the work place.	**Key Words**: applies, changes, computes, constructs, demonstrates, discovers, manipulates, modifies, operates, predicts, prepares, produces, relates, shows, solves, uses.
Analysis: Separates material or concepts into component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood. Distinguishes between facts and inferences.	**Key Words**: analyzes, breaks down, compares, contrasts, diagrams, deconstructs, differentiates, discriminates, distinguishes, identifies, illustrates, infers, outlines, relates, selects, separates.
Synthesis: Builds a structure or pattern from diverse elements. Put parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure.	**Key Words**: categorizes, combines, compiles, composes, creates, devises, designs, explains, generates, modifies, organizes, plans, rearranges, reconstructs, relates, reorganizes, revises, rewrites, summarizes, tells, writes.
Evaluation: Make judgments about the value of ideas or materials.	**Key Words**: appraises, compares, concludes, contrasts, criticizes, critiques, defends, describes, discriminates, evaluates, explains, interprets, justifies, relates, summarizes, supports.

The Affective Domain

The affective domain (Krathwohl, Bloom, Masia, 1973) includes the manner in which we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes. The five major categories are listed from the simplest behavior to the most complex:

Category	Key Words (verbs)
Receiving Phenomena: Awareness, willingness to hear, selected attention.	**Key Words**: asks, chooses, describes, follows, gives, holds, identifies, locates, names, points to, selects, sits, erects, replies, uses.
Responding to Phenomena: Active participation on the part of the learners. Attends and reacts to a particular phenomenon. Learning outcomes may emphasize compliance in responding, willingness to respond, or satisfaction in responding (motivation).	**Key Words**: answers, assists, aids, complies, conforms, discusses, greets, helps, labels, performs, practices, presents, reads, recites, reports, selects, tells, writes.
Valuing: The worth or value a person attaches to a particular object, phenomenon, or behavior. This	**Key Words**: completes, demonstrates, differentiates, explains, follows, forms,

ranges from simple acceptance to the more complex state of commitment. Valuing is based on the internalization of a set of specified values, while clues to these values are expressed in the learner's overt behavior and are often identifiable.	initiates, invites, joins, justifies, proposes, reads, reports, selects, shares, studies, works.
Organization: Organizes values into priorities by contrasting different values, resolving conflicts between them, and creating an unique value system. The emphasis is on comparing, relating, and synthesizing values.	**Key Words**: adheres, alters, arranges, combines, compares, completes, defends, explains, formulates, generalizes, identifies, integrates, modifies, orders, organizes, prepares, relates, synthesizes.
Internalizing values (characterization): Has a value system that controls their behavior. The behavior is pervasive, consistent, predictable, and most importantly, characteristic of the learner. Instructional objectives are concerned with the student's general patterns of adjustment (personal, social, emotional).	**Key Words**: acts, discriminates, displays, influences, listens, modifies, performs, practices, proposes, qualifies, questions, revises, serves, solves, verifies.

The Psychomotor/Behavioral Domain

The psychomotor domain (Simpson, 1972) includes physical movement, coordination, and use of the motor-skill areas. Development of these skills requires practice and is measured in terms of speed, precision, distance, procedures, or techniques in execution. The seven major categories are listed from the simplest behavior to the most complex:

Category	Key Words (verbs)
Perception: The ability to use sensory cues to guide motor activity. This ranges from sensory stimulation, through cue selection, to translation.	**Key Words**: chooses, describes, detects, differentiates, distinguishes, identifies, isolates, relates, selects.
Set: Readiness to act. It includes mental, physical, and emotional sets. These three sets are dispositions that predetermine a person's response to different situations (sometimes called mindsets).	**Key Words**: begins, displays, explains, moves, proceeds, reacts, shows, states, volunteers.
Guided Response: The early stages in learning a complex skill that includes imitation and trial and error. Adequacy of performance is achieved by practicing.	**Key Words**: copies, traces, follows, react, reproduce, responds
Mechanism: This is the intermediate stage in learning a complex skill. Learned responses have become habitual and the movements can be	**Key Words**: assembles, calibrates, constructs, dismantles, displays, fastens, fixes, grinds, heats, manipulates, measures, mends, mixes,

performed with some confidence and proficiency.	organizes, sketches.
Complex Overt Response: The skillful performance of motor acts that involve complex movement patterns. Proficiency is indicated by a quick, accurate, and highly coordinated performance, requiring a minimum of energy. This category includes performing without hesitation, and automatic performance.	**Key Words**: assembles, builds, calibrates, constructs, dismantles, displays, fastens, fixes, grinds, heats, manipulates, measures, mends, mixes, organizes, sketches. NOTE: The Key Words are the same as Mechanism, but will have adverbs or adjectives that indicate that the performance is quicker, better, more accurate, etc.
Adaptation: Skills are well developed and the individual can modify movement patterns to fit special requirements.	**Key Words**: adapts, alters, changes, rearranges, reorganizes, revises, varies.
Origination: Creating new movement patterns to fit a particular situation or specific problem. Learning outcomes emphasize creativity based upon highly developed skills.	**Key Words**: arranges, builds, combines, composes, constructs, creates, designs, initiate, makes, originates.

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