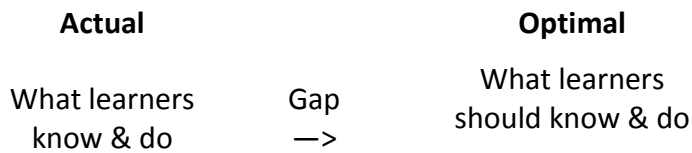


## Identifying Educational Gaps

Needs assessment is the systematic process of gathering information and using it to determine instructional solutions to close the gap between.



Identification and analysis of CME needs provide the basis for developing educational objectives. The planning committee should ask the following questions:

- How prevalent is the need among the target audience?
- How many different assessment sources indicated this need?
- How significantly will the unfulfilled need hinder health care delivery?
- How directly is the need related to actual physician performance?
- How likely is it that a CME activity will improve practice behavior?
- Are sufficient resources available to effectively address this topic?
- How receptive will the target audience be to a session on this topic?

### Types of needs assessment to submit with application

*Inferred needs* which may be derived from the following:

- New methods of diagnosis or treatment
- Availability of new medication(s) or indication(s)
- Development of new technology
- Input from experts regarding advances in medical knowledge
- Acquisition of new facilities or equipment
- Legislative, regulatory, or organizational changes effecting patient care

*Verbalized needs and interests* which may be derived from the following:

- Requests submitted on participants' activity evaluation forms
- Formal surveys of potential participants (mail and Internet-based)
- Informal comments
- Patient problem inventories compiled by potential participants
- Consensus of faculty members within a department or service area

*Proven needs* which are based on objective external data sources. These needs may be derived from the following:

- Epidemiological data
- Quality assurance/audit data
- Re-credential review
- Morbidity/Mortality
- Statistics Infection control data
- Surgical procedures statistics
- Professional society requirements
- Journal articles/literature citations
- News media