- Objectives describe what the designed artifact will be like, that is, what the final object will be and what qualities it will have. As such, objectives detail attributes and are usually be characterized by present participles such as “are” and “be.”

- Functions describe what the object will do, with a particular focus on the input-output transformations that the artifact or system will accomplish. As such, functions transform inputs to outputs, and are usually characterized by active verbs.
FIGURE 4.1 (b) The cover on the black box has been removed, or made transparent. Notice that in order to transform the inputs into outputs, a large number of secondary functions are required. If our design responsibilities (or our curiosity) demanded it, we could also remove the covers on some or all of these functions. Notice also that this design calls for the heat to be allowed out of the box on its own. In many designs, we would add a specific function, "dissipate heat," and then decide on a strategy for doing so.
FIGURE 4.2 Part of a function-means tree for a cigarette lighter. (Functions are shown in rectangles, while means are shown in trapezoids.) Notice that there are different subfunctions that result from different means. It is often the case that conceptual design choices will result in very different functions at the preliminary and detailed design stages.