

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT

Commonly Used Assessment Tools Via Structured Interviews

CEU Requirements for IN-ABC

- Each participant has registered by printing and signing name.
- IN-ABC members have the \$15 processing fee waived. Non-members writing a check, pay to IN-ABC.
- Each participant needs to complete the survey.
- Receive a copy of the certificate for proof of your CEU. You receive 1 CEU for each hour of participation.
- Copy of power point is posted at www.inabc.org

What is an FBA?

- ❑ Collection of methods or procedures used to obtain information about antecedents, behaviors, and consequences to determine the reason or function of the behavior.
- ❑ Multimethod strategy, not a single test or approach.
- ❑ Goal is to determine the purpose of the behavior so that appropriate interventions can be applied to decrease the problem behavior.

Until we know the function of the person's behavior, we cannot design appropriate interventions to make the problem behavior irrelevant, inefficient, and ineffective for the person.

-Gena P. Barnhill 2005

Indirect Methods of Assessment

- Collection of information from historical records, questionnaires, behavioral rating scales and checklists, and structured interviews.
- Easy to conduct and doesn't take much time.
- A great deal of information can be quickly obtained.

Disadvantages of Indirect Method of Structured Interviews

- ❑ Several informants are needed.
- ❑ Each informant must rely on his or her memory of events.
- ❑ Possibility that the informant interprets the checklist item or question differently than was intended by the author of a given rating scale or checklist.

Structured Interviews

- ❑ Can provide information about the problem behavior, antecedents, and consequences.
- ❑ The information can be used to generate hypotheses about the function of the behavior.
- ❑ The information collected should be clear and objective.
- ❑ Should describe environmental events without inferences and interpretations.

An Effective Interview...

- ❑ Determines an operational definition of the problem or target behavior.
- ❑ This objective description of a behavior uses terms that are specific, observable, and measurable.
- ❑ Does not require guessing as to what the behavior looks like.
- ❑ Is NEVER given to the informant to fill out on own...need an actual live interview.

Example of an operational definition:

Physical aggression is defined for Sally as “grasping or pulling another person’s hair with her fingers.”

NOT

“aggressive and out of control”

An operational definition includes

- Frequency
- Duration
- Intensity
- When the behavior occurs

Functional Behavioral Assessment Interview

- See worksheet copyrighted 2004 by PRO-ED, Inc.
- See form from Kansas Institute for Positive Behavior Support.
- See “Brendan’s Functional Assessment Interview” adapted from Functional Assessment and Program Development for Problem Behavior. Brooks/Cole Publishing (1997), Pacific Grove, CA.

Motivation Assessment Scale (MAS; Durand & Crimmins, 1992)

- Commonly used for people with severe developmental disabilities.
- 16-item questionnaire that takes approximately 10 minutes to complete.
- Items are correlated to four likely maintaining variables:
 1. Gain social attention, both negative and positive
 2. Gain access to tangible objects or in response to the withdrawal of tangible reinforcers
 3. Escape from or to avoid people or activities
 4. Experience sensory feedback or stimulation

Motivation Assessment Scale (MAS; Durand & Crimmins, 1992)

- Information obtained from indirect assessment based on behavior that has already occurred.
- The construct validity is ambiguous and so MAS should be used in conjunction with other instruments to assess the functional characteristics of problem behavior.

MAS Administration

- Complete in an interview format individually with several informants.
- All informants must agree on the behavior description.
- Identify the setting that each informant spends the majority of time with the individual.
- Circle the answer to each question.

MAS Scoring

- Place the number from each answer by the corresponding question on page 2.
- Add the total of each maintaining variable for the “Total Score”.
- Divide the Total Score by 4 for the “Mean Score”.
- The highest Mean Score is considered the maintaining variable for that behavior.

Functional Assessment Screening Tool (FAST; Iwata & DeLeon, 2002)

- Items are correlated to four likely factors that may influence the occurrence of problem behavior:
 1. Social reinforcements (attention/preferred items)
 2. Social reinforcement (escape)
 3. Automatic reinforcement (sensory stimulation)
 4. Automatic reinforcement (gain attention)

Functional Assessment Screening Tool (FAST; Iwata & DeLeon, 2002)

- Used for screening purposes only.
- Administered with several informants that interact frequently with the individual.
- The results have to be used as a guide for conducting direct observations in several environments.
- Observation verifies likely behavioral functions.

FAST Administration

- Complete direct interview with the informant.
- The description of the behavior problem is agreed upon by all informants.
- Separately interview several informants.
- The “relationship” information is very important.

FAST Scoring

- Have each informant answer yes or no to the 18 situations.
- In the “Scoring Summary” box, circle the number of each situation the informant answered “yes”.
- Total how many items were circled “yes” for each maintaining variable.
- The highest total is considered the “likely maintaining variable” of that given behavior.

Questions About Behavioral Function (QABF; Matson & Vollmer, 1995)

- Allows for efficient assessment of observable behavior.
- 25-item questionnaire designed to identify potential behavioral functions.
- The results have better reliability than other more widely used indirect tools of assessment.

Questions About Behavioral Function (QABF; Matson & Vollmer, 1995)

- Five likely factors that may influence behavior:
 1. Attention
 2. Escape
 3. Non-social
 4. Physical
 5. Tangible

QABF Administration

- Completed via a direct interview format with someone familiar with the individual.
- All informants must agree on the definition of the given behavior.
- The informant ranks each situation on a scale of 0 to 3.

QABF Scoring

- The number under each of the five factors correlate to the number of situation on page 1.
- Place the “value” the informant gave for each situation (0-3) at each number of the situation on the scoring page.
- Add the total for each factor.
- Circle that total for each factor in the box.
- Connect the circled numbers from each factor moving from left to right. It will appear as though it is a line graph.
- The highest number is considered the strongest indicator for the particular function of that behavior.