

Functional Assessment and Intervention Design

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Your name:

Animal's name, species, breed (if applicable), and age:

List three things about this animal that you really like. Be sure to operationalize any constructs, e.g., what does the animal do that you might call "affectionate" or "good with kids"?

STEP 1: Observe and operationally define the target behavior.

Describe in observable, measurable terms one behavior the animal does that you would like to reduce:

STEP 2: Identify distant and immediate antecedents.

2a: Identify distant antecedents: What "relevant background" conditions may indirectly affect the problem behavior?

Does the animal have any medical or physical conditions, and if so, is the animal on medication or under other treatment for them?

Describe the animal's diet and eating routines:

Describe the animal's typical activity schedule:

Describe the animal's typical rest and sleep schedule:

Describe the animal's enclosure or living area:

2b. Identify immediate antecedents, including setting events, motivating operations, and discriminative stimuli: What predicts, sets the occasion for, or signals the problem behavior to occur? What antecedent events or conditions strengthen or weaken the reinforcer?

Setting events: When does the target behavior occur (times of day)?

Setting events: Where does the problem behavior occur? Physical setting, location, indoors/outdoors, a particular room, etc.

Setting events: Does the problem behavior occur when certain items or equipment are present, e.g., food bowls, leashes, toys, chews?

Setting events: Who is present when the problem behavior occurs? People, other dogs, specific people/animals?

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Setting events: With whom is the problem behavior most likely to occur?

Setting events: Does the problem behavior occur during a specific activity?

Motivating operations: What antecedent events or conditions strengthen or weaken the value of the reinforcer? E.g., a bird that has just flown for half an hour will find the opportunity to fly less reinforcing.

Discriminative stimuli: Does the problem behavior immediately follow a caregiver's demand or request?

Discriminative stimuli: What environmental event, stimulus, or condition, including the behavior of the caretaker, is the most immediate predictor of the behavior?

Discriminative stimuli: What appears to "cue" the behavior?

2c: Under what conditions does the problem behavior NOT occur?

STEP 3: Identify the consequences that maintain the problem behavior, i.e., the immediate purpose the behavior serves for the animal.

What does the animal gain by behaving this way, e.g., attention, access to an item or activity, or sensory stimulation?

What does the animal avoid by behaving this way, e.g., a demand or request, proximity to a person or other animal, or sensory stimulation?

To what extent does this species' wild environment support the behavior, i.e., what function might the behavior serve at the natural history level?

STEP 4: Develop a summary statement. For each problem behavior, and each situation in which the problem behavior occurs, describe the relationship between the antecedents, the behavior, and the consequences. Use the table below to organize your answer.

Example:

Distant antecedents: Parrot was rehomed after spending his first six months in a dark basement with nine other parrots. He was malnourished and had limited contact with his caretakers. He now lives with me and no other parrots.

Setting event: Caged in a bedroom.

Motivating operation: Several hours with no direct human attention.

Immediate antecedent: I walk by the bedroom.

Behavior: Parrot vocalizes loudly and repetitively.

Consequence: I go to the cage.

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Distant antecedents:

Setting events/ motivating operations	Immediate antecedent	Behavior	Consequence

STEP 5: Identify what the animal can do instead of the problem behavior.

5a. Identify a replacement behavior. What behavior the animal already knows could serve the *same purpose* as the problem behavior, i.e., provide the *same consequences*?

Example: Rather than bite the harness, the dog can back away from the harness in order to avoid the harness going over his head.

5b. Identify a desired behavior. What behavior do you ultimately want the animal to exhibit?

Example: The dog can put his own head through the harness to in order to get a treat and a walk.

Identify any prerequisite skills for this new behavior: What, if anything, does the animal need to learn before you can teach the desired behavior?

STEP 6: Identify ineffective interventions: What has already been tried to change this behavior?

STEP 7: Identify antecedent change strategies: Can I do something differently or change something about the environment so that the problem behavior does not occur in the first place?

I can make adjustments related to when the problem behavior occurs by:

I can make adjustments related to where the problem behavior occurs by:

I can make adjustments related to who the behavior occurs with by:

I can make adjustments related to the activity during which the behavior occurs by:

I can adjust some aspect of the antecedent environment by adding, removing, or changing an item or condition such as:

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Other adjustments that I can make:

STEP 8: Identify teaching strategies: What new skills will the animal need to successfully demonstrate the desired behavior, and how and when will they be taught?

What new skills are needed?

Who will provide the training?

When will the training take place?

Where will the training take place?

How often will the training take place?

Do new skills need to be trained in a specific sequence?

After training, how and how often will opportunities for practice be provided?

STEP 9: Identify reinforcement procedures: What will I do to increase the occurrence of the replacement and desired behaviors?

9a. Identify potential reinforcers:

Food:

Items:

Activities:

Interactions:

People:

9b: Establish criteria: What specifically must the animal do to earn these reinforcers?

9c: Determine the schedule of reinforcement: How frequently will a correct response earn the animal the above reinforcers? Typically a continuous schedule (a reinforcer for every correct response) is best.

STEP 10: Identify reduction procedures: What will I do to decrease the occurrence of the problem behavior?

I will ignore each occurrence by:

I will otherwise prevent reinforcement of each occurrence by:

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I will interrupt and redirect from each occurrence of the behavior by:

I will implement time out from positive reinforcement by:

Other strategies:

STEP 11. Other implementation details: What other details or explanations would help another person implement this plan accurately and consistently?

STEP 12: Summarize the functional assessment and alternate behavior paths:

12a: Fill in the table below (typing over the placeholders), using Figure 1 as a guide:

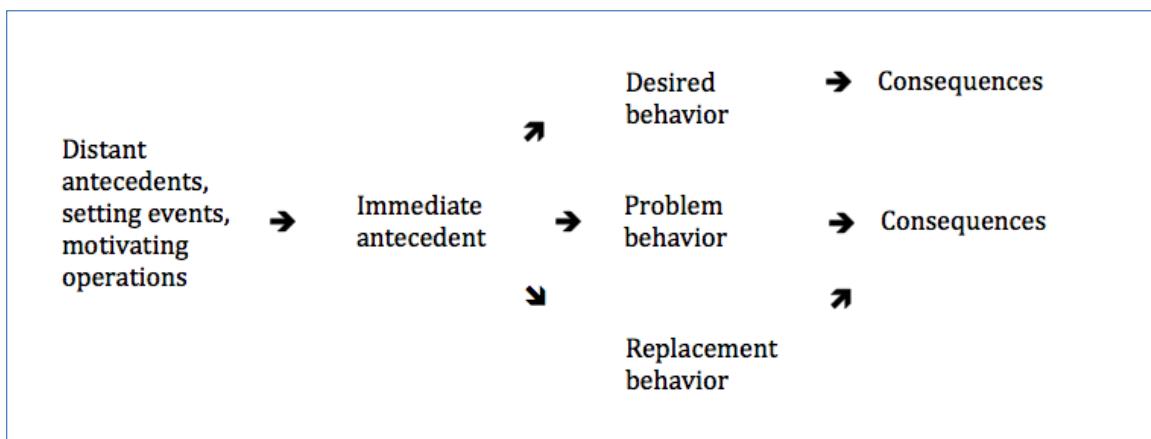


Figure 1: Functional assessment of target behavior (center row) and alternate behavior paths

		Desired behavior	Consequences
Distant antecedents, setting events, motivating operations	Immediate antecedent	Problem behavior	Consequences
		Replacement behavior	

12b. Summarize antecedent and consequence changes and new skills to be taught by filling in the table below:

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Antecedent changes	Consequence changes	New skills to be taught

STEP 13: Explain how this intervention plan makes the problem behavior:

13a: Irrelevant? How will this plan arrange the environment to avoid the problem conditions in the first place?

13b: Inefficient? Efficiency might refer to the effort required to perform the behavior, the number of times the behavior must be performed to earn reinforcement, or the delay between behavior and reinforcement.

13c: Ineffective? How will this plan prevent or remove reinforcement for the problem behavior?

STEP 14: Tracking change: How can I monitor the animal's behavior so I have a reliable record of progress and can continue or modify the intervention as needed?

14a. Describe how data will be collected:

Frequency count of target behavior throughout the day

Frequency count of replacement/desired behavior throughout the day

Frequency count during a specific time period (specify time period)

Timing duration of target behavior

Timing duration of replacement/desired behavior

Other:

14b. Describe how outcomes will be evaluated: This program will be considered successful if what outcome is achieved by the animal and the caregivers, under what conditions?

You may use the forms below to track data or come up with your own.

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Event Recording Form

Learner's Name:

Trainer Name:

Behavior definition (in specific, observable, measurable terms):

Date: _____ Time Period of Observation: _____

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Partial Interval Recording Form

Learner's Name: Caregiver:

Behavior Definition (in *specific, observable, measurable* terms):

Date: Total Observation Time: Length of each interval:

X: behavior present in _____ intervals O: behavior absent in _____ intervals.

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ANALYSIS OF INTERVENTION DATE:

- Desired decrease in problem behavior Desired increase in replacement behavior
 Undesired increase in problem behavior Undesired decrease in replacement

Action to be taken: Continue plan Modify plan Plan for generalization

Plan for action:
