



accountabili-buddy

CLARITY. COMMITMENT. FOLLOW THROUGH.



**REFERENCE
SHEETS**

REFERENCE SHEET 4

BARRIER DISCRIMINATION GUIDE

A missed commitment does not explain itself.

Similar client language can arise from very different problems. The Accountabili-Buddy must determine which explanation best fits the available evidence before choosing an intervention.

AVOIDANCE

Typical Presentation

"I kept putting it off."

"I had time, but I found other things to do."

"I kept working around it instead of doing it."

Look For

- Usable opportunity existed
- One particular task remains untouched
- Lower-priority tasks get completed
- Repeated preparation without decisive action
- Client approaches the task and disengages
- Relief when the task is postponed

Useful Question

"Was the problem genuinely not having time, or did you have opportunities and keep putting it off?"

Or:

“What is different about this task from the ones you are completing?”

Common Wrong Response

Automatically shrinking the task or improving scheduling when scheduling is not the primary barrier.

UNREALISTIC COMMITMENT

Typical Presentation

“I never had enough time to do all of that.”

“Looking back, I do not know where five sessions were supposed to fit.”

Look For

- Insufficient actual opportunities
- Repeated performance far below target
- Target based on an ideal rather than the real schedule
- Commitments requiring resources that are not available
- Consistent mismatch between expected and actual capacity

Useful Question

“Was the commitment itself realistic given the week you actually had?”

Common Wrong Response

Treating poor calibration as lack of motivation.

COMPETING PRIORITIES

Typical Presentation

“Something more important came up.”

“Work displaced it.”

Look For

- Legitimate time-sensitive obligations
- Deliberate tradeoffs
- Repeated displacement by the same category
- Whether the competing activity was mandatory or chosen

Useful Question

"Was this an unusual conflict, or is this goal consistently losing to something you value more right now?"

Common Wrong Response

Treating every competing priority as an excuse.

OVERWHELM**Typical Presentation**

"There is too much."

"I do not know where to start."

Look For

- Many simultaneous active goals
- Difficulty prioritizing
- Switching among tasks
- Several commitments abandoned at once
- Everything experienced as urgent

Useful Question

"Which one or two of these actually matter most right now?"

Or:

"Is the problem that there is objectively too much, or that everything is being treated as equally urgent?"

Common Wrong Response

Making every task smaller while leaving all of them active.

PERFECTIONISM

Typical Presentation

"It is not ready."

"I keep fixing it."

"I hate showing unfinished work."

Look For

- Extensive revision
- Repeated restarting
- High effort with low completion
- Difficulty defining finished
- Final-quality standards applied to drafts
- Reluctance to release or submit

Useful Question

"What does this actually need to accomplish before it is ready for this stage?"

Or:

"Is this required quality or preferred quality?"

Common Wrong Response

Adding more time.

LOSS OF INTEREST

Typical Presentation

"I do not really care anymore."

"If I were choosing today, I would not start this."

Look For

- Goal no longer valued
- Relief at the idea of stopping
- Continued commitment based mainly on "should"
- Original reason no longer applies
- Capability exists, but desire has changed

Useful Question

"Do you still want the outcome, or do you mainly feel obligated to finish because you started?"

Common Wrong Response

Improving the execution plan for a goal the client no longer wants.

DISCOURAGEMENT

Typical Presentation

"Maybe I should quit."

"I do not think I can do this."

Look For

- Goal remains emotionally important
- Withdrawal follows repeated difficulty
- Client still expresses desire for the outcome
- Confidence has declined more than interest

Useful Question

"If you knew you could succeed, would you still want this?"

Common Wrong Response

Assuming the client has lost interest.

SIMPLE NON-FOLLOW-THROUGH**Typical Presentation**

"Nothing happened. I just did not do it."

Look For

- Reasonable goal
- Adequate opportunity
- No identified barrier
- Isolated occurrence
- Client still endorses the goal

Useful Question

Often, none is needed beyond:

"Do you want the same commitment again?"

Common Wrong Response

Inventing a psychological explanation because the miss feels too simple.

POOR PLANNING**Typical Presentation**

"I kept thinking I would fit it in."

Look For

- Sufficient aggregate time
- No protected execution window
- Task repeatedly left to leftover time
- Client remembers but never assigns when it will happen

Useful Question

"When exactly is this going to happen?"

Common Wrong Response

Reducing a reasonable target.

MISSING EXPERTISE**Typical Presentation**

"I keep opening it and I do not know what to do."

Look For

- Genuine attempts
- Repeated technical confusion
- Missing knowledge
- Client cannot identify the next step
- Other comparable tasks completed reliably

Useful Question

"What specifically do you need to know or get help with before you can proceed?"

Common Wrong Response

Treating inability as unwillingness.

FAST DISCRIMINATION QUESTIONS

When uncertain, consider:

Capacity

Was there realistically enough time and energy?

Opportunity

Did a usable opportunity actually exist?

Selectivity

Is everything stalled, or one particular action?

Goal Value

Does the client still want the outcome?

Standard

Is the task actually unfinished, or merely not ideal?

Priority

What consistently wins when this goal competes with something else?

Competence

Does the client know how to perform the action?

History

What does previous performance tell us?

THE CORE RULE

Do not diagnose from the client's first label.

"I am overwhelmed."

"I forgot."

"I had no time."

"The goal was unrealistic."

These are starting points for reasoning, not automatic conclusions.