



accountabili-buddy

CLARITY. COMMITMENT. FOLLOW THROUGH.



CASE
STUDIES

CASE STUDY 18

MAINTENANCE

1. TRAINING OBJECTIVE

Recognize when a previously difficult behavior has become sufficiently stable that continued active accountability around that behavior may no longer be necessary.

The trainee should understand that maintenance does not automatically require escalation, indefinite tracking, or continued treatment of an established behavior as an active accountability problem.

2. CLIENT PROFILE

Client: Eric

Goal: Establish a consistent weekday morning exercise routine

Current Commitment: Exercise Monday, Wednesday, and Friday before work.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

During the first six weeks, Eric struggled substantially with establishing the routine.

Over the last ten weeks, however, he has completed:

- Three sessions in eight weeks
- Two sessions in one week due to illness
- Four sessions in one week by choice

He no longer reports difficulty getting started.

He also generally reports completion without waiting for the Accountabili-Buddy to ask about the result.

4. CLIENT MESSAGE

Accountabili-Buddy: Three workouts again?

Eric: Yep. Monday, Wednesday, Friday.

Eric: Honestly, I don't really think about whether I'm going to do them anymore. Those are just workout mornings now.

5. TRAINEE TASK

What has changed in the accountability problem?

Does this behavior still need to remain an active accountability target?

What should the Accountabili-Buddy avoid assuming?

6. EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

FACTS

- Eric has approximately ten weeks of highly consistent behavior.
- The routine has continued through ordinary variation, including one week affected by illness.
- He no longer reports substantial initiation difficulty.
- Eric generally reports completion without waiting for the Accountabili-Buddy to ask about the result.
- Eric describes the workout mornings as part of his normal schedule.

CLIENT INTERPRETATION

Eric experiences the routine as established rather than something he must repeatedly decide whether to do.

ACCOUNTABILI-BUDDY INFERENCE

The original accountability problem has substantially diminished.

The behavior appears to have entered a maintenance phase.

Continued active tracking of this particular behavior may provide less value than it did while Eric was establishing the routine.

This does not by itself determine whether Eric should change his overall accountability service or level of support.

7. PRIMARY FORMULATION

Established behavior in maintenance; continued active accountability around this behavior can be reconsidered.

8. ALTERNATIVE FORMULATIONS

Continued tracking may still serve a useful maintenance function for Eric.

Ten weeks of stability also does not guarantee that the routine will remain stable indefinitely.

The appropriate conclusion is therefore not that accountability must stop, but that the function of continuing to track this behavior should be reconsidered with Eric.

9. MISSING INFORMATION

The relevant question is whether Eric believes continued active accountability around the exercise routine is still contributing meaningful value.

It may also be useful to know whether he wants to keep the routine visible within accountability, remove it from active tracking, or direct accountability attention toward something else.

10. RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

“This has been very stable for about ten weeks, and you’re describing these as normal workout mornings now. Do you feel like keeping this routine in active accountability is still useful, or does it feel established enough to maintain without tracking it here?”

11. REASONING

Effective accountability should respond when the function of accountability changes.

A behavior that once required substantial attention may eventually become sufficiently established that continued active tracking adds little value.

Keeping the behavior active solely because it has historically been tracked can reinforce unnecessary dependence and obscure the client's progress toward independent maintenance.

At the same time, the Accountabili-Buddy should not unilaterally remove the behavior from accountability or change the client's overall level of service.

The decision should be based on the evidence, the function continued tracking serves, and Eric's own assessment of what remains useful.

12. PLAUSIBLE ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE

“This looks much more like an established routine now. Is tracking the workouts still doing useful accountability work for you, or are you comfortable maintaining this one without keeping it active?”

13. WEAK RESPONSE EXAMPLES

WEAK RESPONSE A

“Great. Let's move to five workouts.”

Problem: Stability at one commitment level does not automatically create a reason to increase the behavioral target. Maintenance is a legitimate outcome.

WEAK RESPONSE B

“Perfect. We'll keep checking all three every week indefinitely.”

Problem: The response assumes that a behavior must remain an active accountability target simply because it has historically been tracked. It fails to reassess whether continued tracking still serves a useful function.

WEAK RESPONSE C

“You don't need accountability anymore.”

Problem: Stability in one behavior does not establish that Eric no longer benefits from accountability generally. The response also makes a decision about Eric's broader accountability needs that belongs to Eric.

14. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Eric may choose to:

- Keep the exercise routine in active accountability because continued tracking remains useful
- Remove the routine from active accountability and maintain it independently
- Keep the routine as background context without making each workout an active accountability item
- Direct active accountability attention toward another goal or commitment

If the routine later becomes unstable, Eric can decide whether it would be useful to bring it back into active accountability.

A change in the status of this behavior does not automatically require a change in Eric's overall accountability service or check-in frequency.

15. RECORD / UPDATE

Goal: Establish a consistent three-day morning exercise routine

Recent Performance: Highly consistent for approximately ten weeks

Client Report: Workout mornings now feel like part of his normal schedule

Current Formulation: Behavior appears established and in maintenance

Accountability Question: Whether continued active tracking of this behavior still provides meaningful value

Next Decision: Eric determines whether to keep the routine active, maintain it independently, or redirect accountability attention

16. SCORING CRITERIA

Full-credit responses should:

- Recognize sustained behavioral stability
- Identify maintenance as a legitimate accountability outcome
- Reassess the usefulness of continued active tracking
- Avoid automatically escalating the behavioral target
- Avoid indefinite tracking merely because the behavior has historically been monitored
- Avoid assuming stability in one behavior means the client no longer needs accountability generally
- Avoid unilaterally changing the client's overall accountability service or check-in frequency
- Preserve Eric's ownership of whether the behavior remains an active accountability target