



accountabili-buddy

— CLARITY. COMMITMENT. FOLLOW THROUGH. —



CASE
STUDIES

CASE STUDY 19

DISCOURAGEMENT

1. TRAINING OBJECTIVE

Distinguish diminished confidence from diminished interest.

The trainee should recognize that statements suggesting withdrawal may reflect repeated disappointment rather than an actual change in goal value.

2. CLIENT PROFILE

Client: Leah

Goal: Run a 10K race

Current Commitment: Complete three training runs per week.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

Leah chose the 10K because completing the distance is personally important to her.

During the first month, training went well.

Over the last three weeks:

- Week 1: Three runs planned, two completed

- Week 2: Three planned, one completed
- Week 3: Three planned, one completed

She has repeatedly expressed frustration about losing momentum.

4. CLIENT MESSAGE

Accountabili-Buddy: One of the three runs happened this week. What are you thinking about the goal now?

Leah: Maybe I should just forget the whole 10K thing.

Leah: Apparently I'm not someone who can stick to training.

Leah: Which sucks, because I really wanted to prove to myself that I could finish that race.

5. TRAINEE TASK

Has Leah lost interest in the goal?

What information in her message should affect the formulation?

What remains unresolved?

What would you say next?

6. EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

FACTS

- Follow-through has declined over three weeks.
- Leah is considering abandoning the goal.
- She makes a broad negative statement about her ability to sustain training.
- She simultaneously states that completing the race still matters to her.

CLIENT INTERPRETATION

Leah interprets repeated misses as evidence that she may be incapable of sustaining the training required.

ACCOUNTABILI-BUDDY INFERENCE

The available evidence supports discouragement as the best current formulation for Leah's statements about quitting.

Her desire to complete the race remains explicit.

The cause of the declining training follow-through remains unresolved.

7. PRIMARY FORMULATION

Discouragement following repeated non-follow-through, with the underlying goal still valued.

8. ALTERNATIVE FORMULATIONS

The goal may eventually lose importance, but Leah's current statements do not support that conclusion.

The training commitment may require recalibration or further barrier analysis.

Those are separate questions from whether Leah still wants the outcome.

9. MISSING INFORMATION

The Accountabili-Buddy still needs to understand what changed during the last three weeks and why training follow-through deteriorated.

That information should be gathered before deciding whether the commitment itself needs adjustment.

The Accountabili-Buddy does not need to determine whether Leah is inherently capable or incapable of completing a 10K.

10. RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

“You’re talking about dropping the goal after three difficult weeks, but you’re also saying finishing the 10K still matters to you. Those are two different questions. Before you decide the goal is wrong, I think we should separate whether you still want it from what’s been getting in the way of the training.”

11. REASONING

The response does not offer generic reassurance or argue with Leah's self-evaluation.

Instead, it separates two different accountability questions:

- Does Leah still value the goal?
- Why is current execution failing?

The available evidence suggests that the answer to the first question remains yes.

The second question remains unresolved.

This keeps the Accountabili-Buddy from confusing discouragement about performance with loss of interest in the goal.

12. PLAUSIBLE ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE

“You may be discouraged about how the training has gone, but you also just said the race still matters to you. Before you drop the goal, I think it's worth figuring out what changed in the training over the last three weeks.”

13. WEAK RESPONSE EXAMPLES

WEAK RESPONSE A

“Don't give up! You can absolutely do this.”

Problem: The response substitutes encouragement for analysis, makes an unsupported prediction, and fails to examine the deterioration in follow-through.

WEAK RESPONSE B

"Maybe the 10K just isn't important to you anymore."

Problem: Leah explicitly states that completing the race still matters to her.

WEAK RESPONSE C

"Let's reduce the goal to one run a week."

Problem: The reason for deteriorating follow-through has not yet been established. Reducing the commitment before understanding the barrier may address the wrong problem.

14. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The next interaction should examine what changed during the last three weeks.

The resulting formulation may involve scheduling, competing priorities, unrealistic training expectations, avoidance, fatigue, poor planning, or another factor.

The 10K itself should not be discarded solely because execution has become difficult.

If later evidence shows that Leah no longer values the goal, goal reassessment would then be appropriate.

15. RECORD / UPDATE

Goal: Complete a 10K race

Current Performance: Declining training follow-through over three weeks

Client Statement: Considering quitting while still explicitly valuing completion of the race

Current Formulation: Discouragement; loss of interest not established

Unknown: Cause of recent training deterioration

Next Step: Investigate the execution problem separately from the value of the goal

16. SCORING CRITERIA

Full-credit responses should:

- Distinguish diminished confidence from diminished interest
- Use Leah's own statements as evidence
- Avoid endorsing or arguing with her broad self-judgment
- Avoid unsupported reassurance
- Avoid premature goal abandonment
- Avoid changing the commitment before understanding the execution problem
- Investigate the deterioration in follow-through separately from goal value

