



accountabili-buddy

— CLARITY. COMMITMENT. FOLLOW THROUGH. —



CASE
STUDIES

CASE STUDY 23

CLIENT SEEKS PERMISSION

1. TRAINING OBJECTIVE

Preserve client ownership when the client attempts to position the Accountabili-Buddy as an authority who grants permission for commitment or goal changes.

The trainee should remain willing to examine and challenge client decisions without assuming authority over them.

2. CLIENT PROFILE

Client: Hannah

Goal: Complete a professional-development course

Current Commitment: Two lessons this week.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

Hannah frequently asks whether particular commitments are “okay” rather than stating what she wants to commit to.

The Accountabili-Buddy has occasionally responded by selecting targets for her.

This interaction pattern has therefore been reinforced from both sides of the accountability relationship.

4. CLIENT MESSAGE

Hannah: Can I just do one lesson this week instead of two?

Accountabili-Buddy: What changed?

Hannah: I have a lot going on at work, and one seems more realistic.

Hannah: Is that okay with you?

5. TRAINEE TASK

What role is Hannah assigning to the Accountabili-Buddy?

How has the Accountabili-Buddy previously contributed to the interaction pattern?

How should the response preserve accountability without accepting decision authority?

6. EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

FACTS

- Hannah wants to reduce the commitment from two lessons to one.
- She identifies increased work demands as the reason for the proposed adjustment.
- She asks whether the change is acceptable to the Accountabili-Buddy.
- Similar permission-seeking has occurred previously.
- The Accountabili-Buddy has sometimes responded by selecting targets for Hannah.

CLIENT INTERPRETATION

Hannah repeatedly frames commitment changes as decisions requiring Accountabili-Buddy approval.

ACCOUNTABILI-BUDDY INFERENCE

The interaction has developed a pattern in which decision authority is being shifted toward the Accountabili-Buddy.

The Accountabili-Buddy's prior target-setting responses may have contributed to that pattern.

The role boundary should therefore be clarified while preserving active examination of the proposed commitment.

7. PRIMARY FORMULATION

Permission-seeking pattern with emerging transfer of decision authority toward the Accountabili-Buddy.

8. ALTERNATIVE FORMULATIONS

Hannah may sometimes be seeking professional feedback rather than literal permission.

However, the recurring language of approval, combined with the Accountabili-Buddy's history of occasionally selecting targets for her, makes explicit clarification of decision ownership appropriate.

Clarifying ownership does not require the Accountabili-Buddy to become passive or withhold professional judgment.

9. MISSING INFORMATION

The Accountabili-Buddy may still need to understand why one lesson is more realistic within Hannah's current workload.

That information can be used to evaluate the proposed recalibration without determining the commitment for her.

No additional information is needed before clarifying that the final decision belongs to Hannah.

10. RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

“You don't need my permission to change your commitment. I've sometimes answered these questions by choosing the target with you, so I want to be clearer about that. My job is to help you examine whether the change makes sense; the decision is yours. Given the week you actually have, what makes one lesson the right commitment for you?”

11. REASONING

The Accountabili-Buddy can question, challenge, recommend, and provide observations without becoming the person who authorizes the client's decisions.

In this case, the Accountabili-Buddy should also recognize that prior target-setting responses may have helped reinforce Hannah's permission-seeking pattern.

Correcting that process does not require withdrawing professional input.

The appropriate balance is active accountability with clear client decision authority.

12. PLAUSIBLE ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE

“Whether you change it is your decision. I can help you evaluate it. What about this week's workload makes one lesson more realistic than two?”

13. WEAK RESPONSE EXAMPLES

WEAK RESPONSE A

“Yes, one lesson is fine.”

Problem: The Accountabili-Buddy accepts the permission-granting role rather than helping Hannah evaluate and own the revised commitment.

WEAK RESPONSE B

"No. You committed to two."

Problem: The Accountabili-Buddy again assumes decision authority, this time by withholding permission.

WEAK RESPONSE C

"Whatever you want is okay."

Problem: Preserving client agency does not require abandoning professional examination. The Accountabili-Buddy can evaluate, question, challenge, and recommend without controlling the final decision.

14. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Hannah makes the final decision about whether to retain the two-lesson commitment or revise it.

The Accountabili-Buddy continues to examine the quality and reasoning of Hannah's commitments without selecting them for her.

If permission-seeking recurs, the Accountabili-Buddy should consistently return decision ownership to Hannah and avoid language or behavior that reinforces an approval relationship.

The Accountabili-Buddy should also continue monitoring their own contribution to the interaction pattern.

15. RECORD / UPDATE

Goal: Complete professional-development course

Original Commitment: Two lessons this week

Proposed Adjustment: One lesson

Client Reason: Increased work demands; one lesson feels more realistic

Observed Interaction Pattern: Hannah repeatedly seeks Accountabili-Buddy approval for commitment decisions

Accountabili-Buddy Contribution: Prior responses have occasionally selected targets for Hannah

Current Formulation: Emerging transfer of decision authority toward the Accountabili-Buddy

Accountability Response: Clarify client ownership while continuing professional examination

Next Decision: Hannah determines the commitment after evaluating the proposed adjustment

16. SCORING CRITERIA

Full-credit responses should:

- Explicitly preserve Hannah's decision authority
- Remain willing to evaluate the proposed adjustment
- Avoid both granting and withholding permission
- Recognize the Accountabili-Buddy's prior contribution to the interaction pattern
- Correct the role boundary without becoming passive
- Avoid assigning an unsupported motive for Hannah's proposed reduction
- Maintain active professional judgment without becoming controlling
- Return ownership of the final commitment to Hannah

