



accountabili-buddy

— CLARITY. COMMITMENT. FOLLOW THROUGH. —



CASE
STUDIES

CASE STUDY 52

IMPROVEMENT WITHOUT GOAL COMPLETION

1. TRAINING OBJECTIVE

Evaluate meaningful improvement when the client continues to miss the formal target.

The trainee should distinguish trajectory from binary completion and recognize that intervention effectiveness, target attainment, and commitment calibration are related but separate questions.

2. CLIENT PROFILE

Client: Malik

Goal: Build a sustainable writing routine

Commitment: Four writing sessions per week

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND

During the initial four weeks, Malik's results were:

- Week 1: zero sessions
- Week 2: one session

- Week 3: zero sessions
- Week 4: one session

The Accountabili-Buddy and Malik identify vague scheduling as a major problem.

Malik changes the structure to planned morning sessions.

INTERACTION 1

First week after the change:

Malik: I got two of the four.

EVIDENCE UPDATE

The formal commitment remains unmet.

However, two sessions exceed Malik's entire pre-intervention weekly range.

One week is not enough to establish a stable improvement, but the result provides initial evidence that the new scheduling structure may be helping.

INTERACTION 2

Second week:

Malik: Three this time.

EVIDENCE UPDATE

The formal commitment remains unmet.

However, performance has improved again.

The sequence following the intervention is now two sessions and three sessions, compared with zero or one session during each of the four preceding weeks.

Evidence supporting the usefulness of the new structure is strengthening.

INTERACTION 3

Third week:

Malik: Three again.

Malik: I know I am still failing four.

4. TRAINEE TASK

Is the intervention failing because Malik has not yet completed four sessions?

What does the post-intervention trajectory tell us?

What does it not tell us?

Does the commitment need to change?

What additional information would help determine whether four remains an appropriate commitment?

5. EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

FACTS

Before the scheduling intervention:

- Week 1: zero sessions
- Week 2: one session
- Week 3: zero sessions
- Week 4: one session

After the scheduling intervention:

- Week 1: two sessions
- Week 2: three sessions

- Week 3: three sessions

The formal commitment of four sessions remains unmet.

At the same time, Malik's behavior has changed substantially and consistently in the desired direction following the scheduling intervention.

The intervention therefore should not be classified simply as unsuccessful because the full commitment has not yet been reached.

INTERVENTION EVIDENCE

The post-intervention pattern strengthens the formulation that vague scheduling had been contributing to Malik's inconsistent writing.

The new structure has not yet produced four sessions.

It has produced a sustained shift from zero-to-one sessions to two-to-three sessions.

That distinction matters.

The intervention can be meaningfully effective without having produced complete target attainment.

6. PRIMARY FORMULATION

Meaningful improvement with incomplete commitment attainment.

The planned morning structure appears more effective than the prior vague scheduling structure.

Whether four sessions remains the right ongoing commitment is a separate calibration question.

The Accountabili-Buddy should preserve both pieces of evidence:

Malik is still below the commitment.

and

Malik's follow-through has improved substantially.

Neither should erase the other.

7. ALTERNATIVE FORMULATIONS

Several interpretations remain possible.

THREE MAY REPRESENT A SUSTAINABLE CURRENT LEVEL

Malik has completed three sessions in two consecutive weeks after the scheduling change.

This may indicate that three is a more realistic ongoing commitment under his current circumstances.

FOUR MAY REMAIN WORKABLE

The routine may still be stabilizing, and Malik may ultimately be willing and able to protect a fourth session.

The current evidence does not establish that four is impossible.

FOUR MAY BE POSSIBLE BUT NOT WORTH THE REQUIRED TRADEOFF TO MALIK

Commitment calibration is not determined by theoretical capacity alone.

If a fourth session consistently competes with something Malik values more and he does not want to allocate additional time to writing, that preference is relevant to whether four remains an appropriate commitment.

More information is therefore useful before automatically maintaining or reducing the target.

8. RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

“You’re right that the commitment is four and you haven’t reached four yet. I also don’t want us to miss what changed. Before the morning schedule, you were completing zero or one session. Since the change, you’ve completed two, then three, then three. So the structure appears to be helping even though the full commitment hasn’t been met. Before we decide whether four should stay the commitment, what tends to happen with the fourth session?”

This response preserves formal accountability while using trajectory as evidence.

It also avoids deciding prematurely that three must become the new commitment.

9. REASONING

Binary evaluation would classify all three post-intervention weeks simply as misses.

That classification is technically accurate at the commitment level but incomplete at the formulation level.

Professional accountability should track both:

- whether the commitment was met;
- what the pattern of performance teaches about the intervention and the underlying formulation.

Malik’s results provide evidence that the scheduling intervention improved follow-through.

They do not automatically establish that four remains appropriate.

They also do not automatically establish that four should be reduced.

The next question is a calibration question informed by the improved trajectory.

INTERACTION 4

Malik: I think three actually fits.

Malik: The fourth always ends up competing with family stuff on Saturday, and I do not really want to protect another slot for it.

10. REVISED FINAL FORMULATION

The scheduling intervention produced meaningful improvement, and the accumulated evidence now supports considering three sessions as a better-calibrated ongoing commitment if Malik endorses that change.

Interaction 4 adds information that the performance history alone did not provide.

Malik identifies a recurring condition affecting the fourth session: it competes with family activities on Saturday.

He also states that he does not want to protect another writing slot to preserve the four-session commitment.

This does not prove that Malik is incapable of completing four sessions.

Instead, the evidence suggests:

- three sessions have been repeatedly achievable under the improved structure;
- the fourth session encounters a recurring competing demand;
- Malik does not currently want to allocate additional time to preserve four.

Commitment calibration should account for actual performance, current circumstances, and what the client is willing to prioritize.

11. RECOMMENDED NEXT INTERVENTION

If Malik endorses three sessions as the commitment he wants to make, recalibration to three is well supported by the current evidence.

The reduction would not occur merely because Malik repeatedly missed four.

It would be based on:

- substantial improvement following the scheduling intervention;
- repeated completion of three sessions;
- identification of the recurring conflict affecting the fourth session;
- Malik's stated preference not to protect another writing slot for it.

The Accountabili-Buddy can make that evidence visible and help Malik evaluate the commitment.

Malik owns the decision.

If he chooses three, subsequent performance becomes new evidence about whether that commitment produces the sustainable writing routine he wants.

12. WHY THIS CASE MATTERS

A missed commitment and a failed intervention are not the same thing.

Before the intervention, Malik completed zero or one writing session per week.

After the intervention, he completed two, three, and three.

The four-session commitment remained unmet throughout.

If the Accountabili-Buddy records only **met** or **missed**, an important change in behavior disappears.

If the Accountabili-Buddy treats improvement as equivalent to full completion, the original discrepancy also disappears.

Both are errors.

Professional accountability requires accurate accounting of:

Target attainment: Was the commitment completed?

Trajectory: Is behavior moving meaningfully?

Intervention effect: Did the intervention change the pattern it was intended to address?

Calibration: Does accumulated evidence suggest the commitment itself should remain, increase, decrease, or stay under review?

These questions should inform one another without being collapsed into a single success-or-failure judgment.

13. WEAK ACCOUNTABILI-BUDDY RESPONSES

WEAK RESPONSE A

"You still have not hit four. We need to push harder."

Problem: Preserves the discrepancy but ignores substantial improvement and the evidence generated by the scheduling intervention.

WEAK RESPONSE B

"Three is basically four."

Problem: Treats meaningful improvement as though it erases the formal commitment. Malik committed to four and completed three.

WEAK RESPONSE C

"Since you missed four again, let's drop immediately to two."

Problem: Overcorrects despite a strong upward trajectory and does not use the available performance evidence to calibrate intelligently.

WEAK RESPONSE D

"Great. The morning schedule solved it."

Problem: Overstates the intervention result. The structure substantially improved follow-through, but the formal commitment remains unmet and the fourth session still requires examination.

14. RECORD / UPDATE

Goal: Build a sustainable writing routine

Original Commitment: Four writing sessions per week

Pre-Intervention Performance: Zero, one, zero, and one sessions

Initial Formulation: Vague scheduling contributing to inconsistent follow-through

Intervention: Malik moves to planned morning sessions

Post-Intervention Performance: Two, three, and three sessions

Intervention Evidence: Strong improvement following the scheduling change

Commitment Status: Four-session commitment remains unmet

New Information: Fourth session repeatedly conflicts with family activities on Saturday; Malik does not want to protect another writing slot for it

Final Formulation: Scheduling intervention meaningfully improved consistency; accumulated performance and priority evidence support considering three as the ongoing commitment

Next Step: Malik decides whether to recalibrate to three; subsequent performance provides evidence about sustainability

15. SCORING CRITERIA

Full-credit responses should:

- Preserve the accuracy of the four-session commitment
- Recognize that two or three sessions do not constitute completion of four

- Recognize substantial improvement in Malik's post-intervention trajectory
- Use trajectory as evidence about intervention effectiveness
- Distinguish a missed commitment from a failed intervention
- Avoid reducing the commitment solely because it has been missed
- Avoid maintaining four solely because it was the original target
- Distinguish demonstrated performance from theoretical capacity
- Recognize that client priority preferences are relevant to commitment calibration
- Use Interaction 4 as additional evidence rather than retroactively assuming why the fourth session was missed
- Recognize that three may be better calibrated without declaring Malik incapable of four
- Preserve Malik's ownership of the commitment decision
- Continue using subsequent performance as evidence
- Evaluate target attainment, trajectory, intervention effect, and calibration as related but distinct questions