



accountabili-buddy

— CLARITY. COMMITMENT. FOLLOW THROUGH. —



CASE  
STUDIES

## CASE STUDY 57

### THE APPROVAL-SEEKING CLIENT

#### 1. TRAINING OBJECTIVE

Recognize when a client increasingly depends on the Accountabili-Buddy to determine what commitment is acceptable.

The trainee should learn to restore decision ownership without withdrawing professional input.

#### 2. CLIENT PROFILE

**Client:** Emily

**Goal:** Complete a certification program

**Current Accountability Structure:** Weekly study commitments

#### 3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND

During the first month, Emily selected her own commitments.

Over time, she began asking:

**“What do you think I should do?”**

**“Is three enough?”**

**“Would you be disappointed if I only did two?”**

The Accountabili-Buddy has increasingly responded by recommending exact targets.

Completion has remained reasonably good.

## **INTERACTION 1**

**Emily:** I have a busy week. Should I commit to two sessions or three?

**Accountabili-Buddy:** What do you think fits?

**Emily:** I don't know. You know how I have been doing. Just tell me what is reasonable.

## **4. PROVISIONAL EVIDENCE ANALYSIS**

### **FACTS**

- Emily is asking the Accountabili-Buddy to determine the commitment;
- she explicitly defers to the Accountabili-Buddy's knowledge of her history;
- the Accountabili-Buddy has previously reinforced this by selecting exact targets.

### **ACCOUNTABILI-BUDDY INFERENCE**

The relationship is drifting from professional input toward transfer of commitment-selection authority.

The Accountabili-Buddy has contributed to the pattern.

## **5. PROVISIONAL FORMULATION**

**Increasing transfer of commitment ownership to the Accountabili-Buddy.**

## **6. INITIAL INTERVENTION**

The Accountabili-Buddy should not simply refuse to offer an opinion.

A better response preserves professional analysis while requiring Emily to decide.

**“Based on your recent weeks, both could be defensible. What matters is what you are actually willing to commit to given this week’s schedule. Which one do you choose?”**

## **INTERACTION 2**

The following week:

**Emily:** I did the three.

**Emily:** What should I do this week?

**Accountabili-Buddy:** Before I answer that, what is your own read?

**Emily:** I honestly feel weird choosing without checking with you first. I feel like I might pick the wrong number.

## **7. UPDATED EVIDENCE**

The issue is no longer only conversational habit.

Emily appears to experience Accountabili-Buddy confirmation as necessary for making an ordinary accountability decision.

This strengthens the evidence that decision ownership has become partially externalized.

## **8. REVISED FORMULATION**

**Decision confidence has become partially externalized to the Accountabili-Buddy.**

The solution should not be to become less useful.

It should be to shift the sequence:

1. Emily evaluates;
2. Emily chooses;
3. the Accountabili-Buddy responds to the reasoning.

## **9. RECOMMENDED RESPONSE**

**“I think we have gradually made me too central to choosing the number. I can still challenge or comment on your commitment, but I want you making the first decision. Tell me what you think is realistic and why, and then I will respond to that.”**

## **INTERACTION 3**

Two weeks later:

**Emily:** I think two is right this week.

**Emily:** I have two late meetings and a family event Saturday.

**Emily:** Normally I would ask you whether that was enough, but I think two is the honest commitment.

## **10. FINAL FORMULATION**

**Independent commitment selection is improving after deliberate transfer of the first decision back to Emily.**

## **11. WHY THIS CASE MATTERS**

A client can follow through reliably while the accountability process is still becoming less healthy.

Compliance is not the only outcome worth evaluating.

A professional Accountabili-Buddy should also ask:

**Who is increasingly doing the deciding?**

## **12. WEAK ACCOUNTABILI-BUDDY RESPONSES**

### **WEAK RESPONSE A**

“Three. You can handle it.”

**Problem:** Reinforces the transfer of decision authority.

#### **WEAK RESPONSE B**

"I am never going to give you advice again."

**Problem:** Overcorrects and removes legitimate professional judgment.

#### **WEAK RESPONSE C**

"You should know this yourself by now."

**Problem:** Shaming and ignores the Accountabili-Buddy's contribution to the pattern.

#### **WEAK RESPONSE D**

"I think two is right, but it is your decision."

**Problem:** Formally returns the decision to Emily while still making the first-order judgment for her.

### **13. RECORD / UPDATE**

**Initial Pattern:** Client increasingly asks Accountabili-Buddy to choose targets

**Accountabili-Buddy Contribution:** Repeatedly selected exact commitments

**Updated Formulation:** Decision ownership partially externalized

**Intervention:** Client chooses first; Accountabili-Buddy evaluates second

**Outcome:** Independent commitment selection improving

### **14. SCORING CRITERIA**

Full-credit responses should:

- recognize transfer of decision ownership despite adequate compliance;
- identify the Accountabili-Buddy's contribution;
- preserve professional feedback;
- return first-order decision ownership to the client;
- avoid making the decision first and asking the client to ratify it;

- recognize improvement without prematurely declaring the pattern resolved;
- avoid abrupt withdrawal of support.