



accountabili-buddy

— CLARITY. COMMITMENT. FOLLOW THROUGH. —



CASE
STUDIES

CASE STUDY 61

THE GOAL THAT KEEPS SURVIVING EVERY REVIEW

1. TRAINING OBJECTIVE

Recognize when a client repeatedly reaffirms a goal verbally while providing little behavioral evidence of active endorsement.

2. CLIENT PROFILE

Client: Jenna

Goal: Learn conversational French

Current Commitment: Three lessons per week

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND

For four months, the goal has repeatedly been reviewed because of low engagement.

Each time Jenna says:

“Yes, I still want it.”

Actual performance remains zero to one lesson per week.

She prioritizes other activities consistently.

INTERACTION 1

Accountabili-Buddy: We have asked several times whether French still deserves active accountability, and every time you say yes. But four months of behavior says it keeps losing to other things. What do you think that means?

Jenna: I really do want to speak French someday.

Jenna: I just do not seem to want to study it right now.

4. PROVISIONAL EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

FACTS

- Long-term desire remains;
- current behavioral investment is minimal;
- the goal repeatedly loses priority;
- Jenna distinguishes “someday” desire from current willingness to study.

ACCOUNTABILI-BUDDY INFERENCE

The problem may not be whether the goal is valued in the abstract.

It may be incorrectly classified as an **active goal**.

5. PROVISIONAL FORMULATION

Enduring aspirational goal without current active priority.

6. INITIAL INTERVENTION

The Accountabili-Buddy should distinguish:

- future aspiration;
- current accountability target.

“It sounds like French is still something you want in your life, but not something you are currently choosing to work on consistently. Do you want to stop treating it as an active goal for now?”

INTERACTION 2

Jenna: That feels weird because I do not want to give it up.

Accountabili-Buddy: Pausing active accountability is not the same as deciding you will never learn French.

Jenna: Then yes. I think I want to stop pretending it is a current priority.

7. UPDATED FORMULATION

The issue was not loss of all interest.

It was failure to distinguish aspiration from active commitment.

8. RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

“Then we can close it as an active accountability goal without closing it as a future possibility.”

INTERACTION 3

Two months later Jenna initiates:

“I have a trip to France next spring. I actually want to restart French now.”

A new active goal is established under changed circumstances.

9. FINAL FORMULATION

Goals can remain personally meaningful without deserving active accountability at all times.

10. WHY THIS CASE MATTERS

Repeatedly asking:

“Do you still want the goal?”

may be too crude.

A client can truthfully answer yes while still not prioritizing current action.

The better distinction is:

Do you want the outcome eventually, and do you want to work on it now?

11. WEAK ACCOUNTABILITY-BUDDY RESPONSES

WEAK RESPONSE A

"If you really wanted it, you would do it."

Problem: Collapses long-term value and current priority into one concept.

WEAK RESPONSE B

"Then quit French."

Problem: Creates unnecessary finality.

WEAK RESPONSE C

"Keep setting one lesson until motivation comes back."

Problem: Preserves nominal accountability without meaningful current endorsement.

12. RECORD / UPDATE

Goal: Conversational French

Long-Term Value: Still present

Current Behavioral Priority: Low

Revised Formulation: Future aspiration incorrectly treated as active goal

Decision: Jenna chooses to pause active accountability

Later Development: Goal reactivated when circumstances changed

13. SCORING CRITERIA

Full-credit responses should:

- distinguish aspiration from current priority;
- avoid false binary continue/quit framing;
- permit deliberate pause;
- avoid equating low current engagement with absence of all desire;
- preserve future reactivation.