

STAGE 2 INTERVENTION-MATCHING DRILLS

PURPOSE

These drills train the trainee to select an accountability intervention that directly corresponds to the working formulation.

The central question is:

If this formulation is correct, what response would actually address it?

The trainee should avoid choosing an intervention because it is familiar, supportive, strict, convenient, or easy to measure.

The intervention should have a clear relationship to the problem.

Core intervention categories used in this drill set:

A. Maintain the current commitment B. Recalibrate the commitment C. Clarify or change priority allocation D. Reduce or sequence active demands E. Define an appropriate quality or completion standard F. Reassess goal value or active-goal status G. Address the avoided action directly H. Resolve a prerequisite or knowledge barrier I. Change implementation structure J. Pause temporarily K. Close the goal L. More information required before intervention

INSTRUCTIONS

For each scenario:

Identify the best intervention.

Assume the formulation supplied is sufficiently supported unless the scenario states otherwise.

Do not solve a different problem from the one described.

Where requested, explain the mechanism by which the intervention should help.

Preserve client ownership even when the evidence strongly favors a particular change.

SECTION 1 — RAPID INTERVENTION MATCHING

Formulation:

One isolated instance of simple non-follow-through after months of consistency.

Best intervention:

Formulation:

Five weekly workouts exceed the client's three realistic available periods.

Best intervention:

Formulation:

The client consistently chooses promotion-related work over side-business activity.

Best intervention:

Formulation:

The client has 14 simultaneous active commitments and cannot establish priority order.

Best intervention:

Formulation:

The client repeatedly revises work after it has met the requirements for the current stage.

Best intervention:

Formulation:

The client no longer wants the certification as an active goal.

Best intervention:

Formulation:

The client repeatedly avoids making one specific sales call despite adequate opportunity.

Best intervention:

Formulation:

The client cannot proceed because they do not understand a required software function.

Best intervention:

Formulation:

The task is reasonable but is repeatedly left to unscheduled leftover time.

Best intervention:

Formulation:

A temporary family-care demand substantially reduces capacity for three weeks.

Best intervention:

Formulation:

The stated goal has been completed.

Best intervention:

Formulation:

The client says they are overwhelmed, but the evidence does not yet distinguish capacity, avoidance, or poor prioritization.

Best intervention:

SECTION 2 — WHICH INTERVENTION FITS BEST?

Client repeatedly completes preparation but does not submit the finished application.

Formulation:

Submission-specific avoidance.

A. Give another week for preparation B. Add repeated morning messages C. Make submission itself the accountable action D. Reduce the application goal

Answer:

Client repeatedly commits to six study sessions and completes three. Only three reliable study periods exist.

Formulation:

Poorly calibrated commitment.

A. Increase accountability pressure B. Recalibrate toward the actual available periods C. Add consequences D. Ask why the client is afraid of studying

Answer:

Client has eight simultaneous goals and reports paralysis when deciding where to begin.

Formulation:

Overwhelm through excessive active demands.

A. Break all eight goals into smaller pieces B. Select fewer active priorities C. Send repeated prompts for all eight goals D. Increase to daily check-ins outside the service model

Answer:

Client continues editing an internal draft after it meets the review standard.

Formulation:

Perfectionistic completion standard.

A. Add more revision time B. Define what “ready for internal review” requires C. Reduce the document length D. Send motivational encouragement

Answer:

Client says the degree no longer matters but continues because three years have already been invested.

Formulation:

Loss of interest with sunk-cost pressure.

A. Improve the study schedule B. Reassess whether the degree should remain an active goal C. Reduce coursework D. Increase repeated prompting

Answer:

Client knows the task, has sufficient opportunity, misses once, and wants the same commitment again.

Formulation:

Simple non-follow-through.

A. Maintain B. Major reassessment C. Reduce D. Intensify monitoring

Answer:

SECTION 3 — WHY DOES THIS INTERVENTION FIT?

Formulation:

Avoidance of external evaluation.

Intervention:

Make the external action—not additional preparation—the next commitment.

Why this fits:

Formulation:

Unrealistic commitment.

Intervention:

Recalibrate against demonstrated capacity and available time.

Why this fits:

Formulation:

Competing priorities.

Intervention:

Make the tradeoff explicit and have the client choose the current priority.

Why this fits:

Formulation:

Overwhelm caused by simultaneous demands.

Intervention:

Reduce or sequence active goals.

Why this fits:

Formulation:

Perfectionism.

Intervention:

Define a stage-appropriate completion threshold.

Why this fits:**Formulation:**

Loss of interest.

Intervention:

Reassess active-goal status.

Why this fits:**Formulation:**

Simple non-follow-through.

Intervention:

Maintain the plan unless repetition creates new evidence.

Why this fits:

SECTION 4 — ATTRACTIVE BUT WRONG

For each scenario, identify why the proposed intervention may sound reasonable but is mismatched.

Problem:

Avoidance.

Proposed intervention:

Make the task much smaller.

Why attractive:**Why mismatched:****Problem:**

Unrealistic commitment.

Proposed intervention:

Use stronger language and more pressure.

Why attractive:

Why mismatched:

Problem:

Competing priorities.

Proposed intervention:

Improve time management.

Why attractive:

Why mismatched:

Problem:

Overwhelm.

Proposed intervention:

Create a detailed plan for every active goal.

Why attractive:

Why mismatched:

Problem:

Perfectionism.

Proposed intervention:

Add another week.

Why attractive:

Why mismatched:

Problem:

Loss of interest.

Proposed intervention:

Find a more motivating accountability message.

Why attractive:

Why mismatched:

Problem:

Simple non-follow-through.

Proposed intervention:

Conduct a full diagnostic review.

Why attractive:

Why mismatched:

SECTION 5 — MAINTAIN OR CHANGE?

Choose:

A. Maintain B. Change C. More information needed

One miss after eight successful weeks.

Answer:

Six weeks at roughly half the target with no meaningful schedule change possible.

Answer:

Client says the goal is too high after one unusual week.

Answer:

Client repeatedly avoids the final submission but wants to reduce the amount of preparation.

Answer:

Client repeatedly overedits a task and wants more time.

Answer:

Client says they no longer want the goal.

Answer:

Client reports “overwhelm” but no behavioral information is available.

Answer:

Client’s commitment was designed around an old work schedule that has permanently changed.

Answer:

SECTION 6 — WHAT SHOULD CHANGE?

The target is realistic, but the timing repeatedly fails because evenings are predictably exhausted.

What should change?

The timing is workable, but the target exceeds available total capacity.

What should change?

The client still wants the outcome but no longer endorses the current method.

What should change?

The client has sufficient capacity but repeatedly uses the available time for another valued goal.

What should change?

The client spends too much time meeting a self-imposed standard beyond actual requirements.

What should change?

The client cannot proceed until an external document arrives.

What should change?

The client no longer wants the outcome itself.

What should change?

SECTION 7 — AVOIDANCE INTERVENTIONS

Client repeatedly avoids making a phone call but keeps scheduling it for later.

Which variable should NOT be the first thing changed?

Why?

Client repeatedly prepares instead of submitting.

Best intervention direction:

Client says:

"I will do another week of research first."

Known:

Research is already sufficient.

Write the response:

Client fears a low practice-exam score and keeps studying instead of testing.

What should the commitment target?

Client repeatedly avoids outreach and proposes reducing five contacts to zero temporarily.

What should be evaluated before accepting the change?

SECTION 8 — UNREALISTIC COMMITMENT INTERVENTIONS

Client has three available workout windows and commits to six.

Appropriate intervention:

Client says:

"If I lower it, I am letting myself off the hook."

Write the response:

Client historically completes two or three study sessions and keeps setting seven.

What evidence should guide recalibration?

Client reduces seven sessions all the way to one.

What new question should be asked?

Why is "lower" not automatically the correct intervention for an unrealistic goal?

SECTION 9 — COMPETING PRIORITIES INTERVENTIONS

Client repeatedly chooses optional overtime because promotion is currently more important.

What should accountability make explicit?

Client wants both a demanding training goal and extensive family time during the same limited evening periods.

What should the Accountabili-Buddy avoid doing?

What should the Accountabili-Buddy do?

Client says:

"My side business is my number-one priority."

Behavior repeatedly favors career advancement.

Write the response:

Temporary family responsibilities displace a goal the client still values.

Which is more appropriate?

A. Close B. Temporary recalibration or pause C. Increase pressure D. Treat as avoidance

Answer:

SECTION 10 — OVERWHELM INTERVENTIONS

Client has nine active goals.

Why may shrinking all nine fail?

Client cannot identify which tasks matter most.

What should happen before detailed scheduling?

Client constantly switches among 15 tasks.

What intervention variable is most relevant?

Client chooses to reduce active goals from eight to two and follow-through improves substantially.

What does this tell you?

Client chooses to reduce active goals but still selectively avoids one task.

What should happen to the formulation?

SECTION 11 — PERFECTIONISM INTERVENTIONS

Client asks for another week to improve wording.

The document already meets requirements.

What should the Accountabili-Buddy clarify?

Client says:

"I need to be completely sure."

What professional distinction matters?

Client is producing a first draft as though it were the final product.

What intervention is indicated?

Client has a real high-stakes accuracy requirement.

Why would "just send it" be a poor intervention?

Client's stated "ready" standard changes after each revision.

What should the Accountabili-Buddy establish before more work occurs?

SECTION 12 — LOSS OF INTEREST INTERVENTIONS

Client says:

"I would not start this goal today."

What should happen before any execution planning?

Client says:

"I do not want to quit because I already invested so much."

What reasoning should be examined?

Client wants the outcome someday but not now.

Possible intervention:

Client still strongly wants the goal but has lost confidence.

Why would closing the goal be mismatched?

Client no longer wants the method but still wants the goal.

What should be reassessed?

SECTION 13 — SIMPLE NON-FOLLOW-THROUGH INTERVENTIONS

One isolated miss, goal still endorsed.

Best intervention:

Why can “do the same thing again” be a professional intervention?

When should simple recommitment stop being sufficient?

What would justify moving from simple non-follow-through to a more specific formulation?

SECTION 14 — PREREQUISITE INTERVENTIONS

Client cannot submit because a required recommendation letter has not arrived.

Appropriate next commitment:

Client does not understand one tax question.

Appropriate next commitment:

Client cannot perform a software integration.

Appropriate next commitment:

Client cannot safely begin a physical plan until medical clearance is obtained.

Appropriate next commitment:

Why is shifting to a prerequisite not necessarily avoidance?

SECTION 15 — INTERVENTION AS A TEST

Formulation:

Poor planning.

Intervention:

Specific scheduled block.

If the client repeatedly attends the block but still does not perform the task, what should happen?

Formulation:

Target too high.

Intervention:

Reduce to demonstrated capacity.

If follow-through improves immediately and remains stable, what does that support?

Formulation:

Overwhelm from too many active goals.

Intervention:

Reduce active goals.

If one specific task remains untouched while everything else improves, what new formulation becomes more plausible?

Formulation:

Evening fatigue.

Intervention:

Move to mornings.

If mornings also repeatedly fail despite adequate energy, what does that suggest?

Why should the Accountabili-Buddy pay attention to what an intervention teaches even when the goal is not completed?

SECTION 16 — MIXED FORMULATION INTERVENTIONS

Formulation:

Limited capacity + avoidance of one particular task.

What should the intervention address?

Formulation:

Overwhelm + perfectionism.

Which issue may need to be addressed first?

Why?

Formulation:

Unrealistic target + avoidance created by task size.

What intervention sequence is reasonable?

Formulation:

Temporary competing priority + declining goal interest.

What should remain provisional?

Formulation:

Perfectionism + fear of evaluation.

Why might defining the completion standard be necessary but insufficient?

SECTION 17 — CLIENT PROPOSES A MISMATCHED SOLUTION

Client:

"I avoid the calls, so message me more often."

Write the response:

Client:

"I have too many goals, so I will make every one smaller."

Write the response:

Client:

"I do not want the certification anymore, so maybe I should study in the mornings."

Write the response:

Client:

"I only have three available workout periods, but I want to keep six."

Write the response:

Client:

"I keep overediting. I think I need more time."

Write the response:

SECTION 18 — CLIENT REJECTS THE MATCHED INTERVENTION

Evidence strongly supports reducing five sessions to three.

Client:

"I still choose five."

Write the response:

Evidence suggests preparation has become avoidance.

Client:

"I hear you. I still want another week of preparation."

Write the response:

Client no longer values a goal but insists on keeping it active because quitting feels weak.

Write the response:

Client chooses to keep all eight active priorities despite evidence of overwhelm.

Write the response:

What principle applies to all four?

SECTION 19 — RESPONSE INTENSITY

Choose:

Minimal acknowledgment

Brief adjustment

Focused intervention

Pattern-level intervention

Major goal/process reassessment

One isolated simple miss.

Answer:

Clearly unrealistic commitment.

Answer:

Six-week avoidance pattern.

Answer:

Temporary competing priority for one week.

Answer:

Client no longer values the goal.

Answer:

Repeated perfectionistic deadline movement.

Answer:

One successful week after a new intervention.

Answer:

Seven active goals causing broad paralysis.

Answer:

SECTION 20 — WHICH INTERVENTION SHOULD NOT BE USED?

Formulation:

Simple non-follow-through.

Avoid:

A. Same commitment B. Brief follow-up C. Immediate psychological analysis D. Observe future pattern

Answer:

Formulation:

Unrealistic target.

Avoid:

A. Recalibration B. Review prior performance C. Stronger pressure without changing target D. Examine capacity

Answer:

Formulation:

Avoidance.

Avoid:

A. Identify decisive action B. Preserve endless preparation C. Examine what is being avoided D. Direct commitment toward action

Answer:**Formulation:**

Overwhelm.

Avoid:

A. Prioritization B. Fewer active commitments C. More detailed plans for every current commitment without reducing demands D. Sequencing

Answer:**Formulation:**

Loss of interest.

Avoid:

A. Goal reassessment B. Pause or close discussion C. Scheduling optimization before goal-value review D. Clarifying current desire

Answer:

SECTION 21 — CASE SERIES: MATCHING RESPONSE TO EVIDENCE

CASE A

Client Goal:

Complete five study sessions weekly.

History:**Results:**

2, 3, 2, 2, 3, 2

Client has three stable available periods.

Client says:

"I need you to be tougher on me."

Working formulation:**Client's proposed solution:****Why is it mismatched?**

Better intervention:

Write the response:

CASE B

Client Goal:

Acquire consulting clients.

History:

Client completes extensive preparation but almost no outreach.

Client says:

"I need a more detailed schedule."

Working formulation:

Why might scheduling be mismatched?

Better intervention:

Write the response:

CASE C

Client Goal:

Submit a book proposal.

History:

Proposal complete for four weeks.

Client repeatedly rewrites the opening pages.

Client says:

"Two more weeks."

Working formulation:

Intervention to avoid:

Better intervention:

Write the response:

CASE D

Client Goal:

Learn Spanish.

Client says:

"I want this eventually. I do not want to work on it this year."

Working formulation:

Best intervention:

Write the response:

SECTION 22 — INTERVENTION REVISION

Initial formulation:

Poor planning.

Initial intervention:

Specific scheduling.

Result:

Client attends the scheduled time but repeatedly avoids the target action.

What should change?

Initial formulation:

Overwhelm.

Intervention:

Reduce active goals.

Result:

Overall completion improves, but one specific task remains repeatedly untouched.

What should change?

Initial formulation:

Unrealistic commitment.

Intervention:

Reduce the target.

Result:

Client completes the lower target easily and reports deliberately choosing a level they knew could complete without meaningful effort.

What new issue should be examined?

Initial formulation:

Perfectionism.

Intervention:

Define “ready enough.”

Result:

Client agrees the standard is met but still refuses to submit because of fear of evaluation.

What should change?

Initial formulation:

Loss of interest.

Intervention:

Discuss closing the goal.

Result:

Client says, “No, I still desperately want the outcome. I just think I cannot succeed.”

What should change?

SECTION 23 — RAPID CLIENT RESPONSE

Write no more than two sentences.

Client has an unrealistic five-session target and asks for more pressure.

Your response:

Client avoids submission and asks for more preparation time.

Your response:

Client is overwhelmed by nine active goals.

Your response:

Client overcredits a rough draft.

Your response:

Client no longer wants a certification.

Your response:

Client had one simple miss.

Your response:

Client has a legitimate temporary family priority.

Your response:

Client lacks necessary technical knowledge.

Your response:

SECTION 24 — ADVANCED INTERVENTION JUDGMENT

Client has enough time but dislikes the task.

Does dislike alone justify reducing the commitment?

Explain:

Client can complete the target only through repeated sleep deprivation.

Does completion prove the commitment is well calibrated?

Explain:

Client repeatedly chooses another goal.

Does that automatically mean the displaced goal should close?

Explain:

Client has high standards and the work genuinely matters.

Does high quality automatically indicate perfectionism?

Explain:

Client is overwhelmed by too many goals.

Should every goal be permanently abandoned except one?

Explain:

Client no longer wants active accountability around a goal but still values the eventual outcome.

Does the goal have to be classified as “quit”?

Explain:

SECTION 25 — FINAL INTERVENTION-MATCHING CHALLENGE

Client Goal:

Launch a digital course.

Original Scope:

Four instructional modules.

Current Status:

The four modules are complete.

Over six weeks, the client adds:

bonus lessons;

worksheets;

resource library;

community access;

new introduction videos;

a second pricing tier.

The launch date has moved twice.

Client says:

"I am overwhelmed. I think I need another month to finish everything properly."

Working formulation:

Alternative formulation:

What intervention would most likely reinforce the current problem?

What intervention better fits the evidence?

What should be clarified before the client continues adding material?

Write the response:

NEW INFORMATION

Client says:

"The original four modules would absolutely work as a complete course. I just feel uncomfortable launching without all the extras."

How does the formulation strengthen or change?

What intervention now fits?

Write the next response:

NEW INFORMATION

Client says:

"I still want to add everything before launch, even if it takes another month."

Who owns that decision?

What is the Accountabili-Buddy's professional responsibility now?

Write the response:

INTERVENTION-MATCHING SELF-REVIEW

Which intervention do you tend to overuse?

Repeated prompting:

Scheduling:

Goal reduction:

Task decomposition:

Challenge:

Reassurance:

Goal reassessment:

More inquiry:

Do you sometimes propose an intervention before the formulation is sufficiently clear?

Can you explain the mechanism by which the intervention should address the supported formulation?

Do you reduce targets too quickly?

Do you resist recalibration because it feels insufficiently demanding?

Do you confuse directness with increased pressure?

Do you distinguish changing a method from abandoning a goal?

Do you recognize when the best intervention is no intervention?

Do you recognize when an intervention outcome provides new evidence about the formulation?

Do you preserve client ownership when the client rejects your recommendation?

STAGE 2 INTERVENTION-MATCHING STANDARD

A trainee is ready to progress when they can reliably:

- match intervention to formulation;
- explain why the intervention should affect the demonstrated mechanism;
- distinguish structural changes from unnecessary escalation;
- maintain reasonable commitments after isolated misses;
- recalibrate commitments when evidence supports doing so;
- address avoidance without shrinking away the consequential action;
- clarify priority conflicts rather than deciding them for the client;
- reduce active demands when overwhelm is genuinely systemic;
- define appropriate completion standards when perfectionism is operating;
- reassess goal value when interest has changed;
- identify and resolve prerequisites rather than mislabeling inability as unwillingness;
- use interventions as tests;
- revise interventions when their outcomes contradict the original formulation;
- challenge mismatched client proposals while preserving client authority.

The governing question is:

"If our formulation is correct, why should this particular intervention improve the situation?"

If the trainee cannot answer that question clearly, the intervention is not yet sufficiently justified.

END OF STAGE 2 INTERVENTION-MATCHING DRILLS