

STAGE 3 CONVERSATION SIMULATIONS

PURPOSE

These simulations train the trainee to design, calibrate, and revise commitments across multiple accountability interactions.

Stage 3 requires the trainee to manage a commitment as a developing behavioral agreement rather than a static number.

The trainee must determine:

whether the commitment is well designed;

whether it is sufficiently controllable;

whether it meaningfully advances the goal;

whether the measurement type fits the work;

whether the baseline is appropriately calibrated;

whether a minimum or stretch target is being misused;

whether temporary conditions justify temporary adjustment;

whether repeated performance justifies structural recalibration;

whether successful completion is sustainable;

whether the commitment itself is preserving avoidance;

and whether the commitment structure continues to serve the goal as circumstances and evidence change.

INSTRUCTIONS

For each simulation:

Read only the current interaction.

Evaluate the commitment as it exists at that point.

Write the exact response you would send.

Record any change to the commitment.

Continue only after completing the current interaction.

Do not retroactively redesign earlier commitments after seeing later information.

Preserve client ownership throughout.

SIMULATION 1 — FROM VAGUE INTENTION TO ACCOUNTABLE COMMITMENT

Client Goal

Find a new professional position.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"I'm really going to focus on my job search this week."

What is the design problem?

What information is needed?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"My résumé is done. I have about 12 positions saved, and I could probably spend five or six hours on this."

What behavior appears most consequential?

What commitment type fits?

Design a possible commitment:

Write the response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"What if I commit to getting two interviews?"

What design problem appears?

Write the response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"Okay. I'll submit three qualified applications."

Is this clear?

Is it substantially controllable?

Is it reviewable?

What still needs clarification, if anything?

Write the response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

What changed between the original intention and final commitment?

Why is "focus on the job search" inadequate despite being sincere?

SIMULATION 2 — SUPPORT ACTIVITY BECOMES A SUBSTITUTE

Client Goal

Build a consulting practice.

Relevant History

Website, pricing, CRM, invoicing, and service descriptions are complete.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"This week I'm going to improve the website."

What design concern arises?

What should the Accountabili-Buddy establish?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"There is nothing technically wrong with the website. I just think it could look better."

What action appears more consequential?

Write the response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"Fine. I'll contact 20 prospects."

Historical maximum:

Three contacts in one week.

What new design problem appears?

What information is needed?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"I have enough time for about five quality contacts."

What baseline currently appears supportable?

What could serve as stretch?

Your response:

INTERACTION 5

Client:

"Five baseline. Eight stretch."

What should be recorded?

Why must those remain distinct?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

How did the case move from low-value commitment design to calibration?

SIMULATION 3 — THE HIDDEN STRETCH TARGET

Client Goal

Exercise consistently.

Baseline

Three workouts.

Stretch

Five workouts.

INTERACTION 1**Client:**

"I'm committing to three. Five would be a great week."

Your response:**INTERACTION 2****Following week:**

Client completes four.

Client:

"I failed because I didn't get five."

What confusion is present?**Write the response:****INTERACTION 3****Client:**

"I know three was the official number, but five is what I really expect from myself."

What should happen before the next accountability period?**Write the response:****INTERACTION 4****Client:**

"Okay. Three is the actual commitment. Five is optional stretch."

Following week:

Three completed.

How should the result be recorded?

Write the response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why is a hidden baseline professionally problematic?

SIMULATION 4 — CHRONIC OVERCOMMITMENT

Client Goal

Complete professional certification.

Commitment

Six study sessions weekly.

Results

Week 1: 2 Week 2: 3 Week 3: 2

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"Six again."

Is identical recommitment necessarily unreasonable yet?

What should be examined?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Week 4 result:

2 of 6.

Client:

"Six again."

What has changed?

What evidence now deserves more weight?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"I have three reliable study periods. A fourth is sometimes possible."

What does this suggest about six?

Write the response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"But six is what I should be doing."

What calibration distortion appears?

Write the response:

INTERACTION 5

Client:

"Three is realistic. Four could be stretch."

Does this structure fit?

Why?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

At what point did persistence become disregard for available evidence?

SIMULATION 5 — PROTECTIVE UNDERCOMMITMENT

Client Goal

Find a new job.

Demonstrated Capacity

Three qualified applications weekly.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"I want one application every two weeks."

What should the Accountabili-Buddy avoid assuming immediately?

What should be asked?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"I know I could do three. I just do not want another week where I miss the commitment."

What mechanism becomes clearer?

Is the proposed commitment meaningfully calibrated?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"What if I commit to two?"

What should determine whether two is appropriate?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"Three is realistic. Two is mostly emotional protection."

What baseline now appears better supported?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why is high completion probability not enough to establish good calibration?

SIMULATION 6 — TEMPORARY CAPACITY CHANGE

Client Goal
Maintain regular exercise.

Normal Baseline
Four workouts weekly.

INTERACTION 1

Client:
“My mother is having surgery and I’ll be helping her for three weeks. I think I can manage one or two workouts.”

What type of adjustment is indicated?

Should the old baseline disappear?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:
“Let’s call two my new baseline.”

What distinction should be made?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Three weeks later:
The caregiving demand has ended.

Client:
“I’ve been doing two. Should we just keep it?”

What should happen before deciding?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"My old schedule is available again and four still fits."

What calibration direction is supported?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why are explicit review points important during temporary reductions?

SIMULATION 7 — STRUCTURAL CAPACITY CHANGE

Client Goal

Exercise regularly.

Old Baseline

Five sessions.

New Circumstance

Client permanently changes jobs.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"I only have three reliable workout periods now."

What does this suggest about the current commitment?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"But five was my baseline for years."

What role should historical capacity play?

Write the response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"It feels like going to three means I'm becoming less disciplined."

What distinction is needed?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"Three fits the life I actually have now."

What should be recorded?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why is maintaining an obsolete baseline not necessarily more accountable?

SIMULATION 8 — SUCCESSFUL BUT UNSUSTAINABLE

Client Goal

Complete a business plan.

Commitment

Two major sections weekly.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"Done again. Two sections."

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"I keep doing all of it Sunday night and finishing around 3 a.m."

What new issue appears?

Does completion remain accurate?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"But the commitment works. I'm hitting it."

What distinction should the Accountabili-Buddy make?

Write the response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"I could move one section to Wednesday and keep one on Sunday."

What does this represent?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why should outcome completion and process sustainability be tracked separately?

SIMULATION 9 — SUCCESS DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY MEAN MORE

Client Goal

Maintain three weekly workouts.

History

Eight consecutive successful weeks.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"All three again."

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"Shouldn't we increase now?"

What information matters?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"Three still takes real effort, and honestly three is the level I want to maintain."

What calibration decision fits?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"So staying at three doesn't mean I'm not progressing?"

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

What would have justified progression instead?

SIMULATION 10 — PROGRESSION IS SUPPORTED

Client Goal

Improve cardiovascular fitness.

Commitment

Three training sessions weekly.

History

12 weeks fully completed.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"Three feels easy now, and I want more challenge."

What does this suggest about the current commitment?

What should not happen automatically?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"Let's jump to six."

What concern arises?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"What about four as the new baseline and five as stretch?"

Does this appear reasonable?

What evidence would the next weeks provide?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why should progression itself be calibrated?

SIMULATION 11 — BASELINE, MINIMUM, AND TEMPORARY CONDITIONS

Client Goal

Complete certification.

Baseline

Four study sessions.

Minimum During Travel

One session.

INTERACTION 1

Travel week result:

One.

How should the result be recorded?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Travel ends.

Client:

"I like one. It is easy to hit."

What problem may develop?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"Can I just keep one as my new baseline?"

Normal capacity has returned.

What should be examined?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"I'm mostly choosing one because I like knowing I won't miss."

What formulation now applies to the calibration problem?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

What function did the minimum originally serve?

What function was it beginning to serve later?

SIMULATION 12 — COMMITMENT TYPE CHANGES WITH PROJECT STAGE

Client Goal

Write a nonfiction book.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"I'm going to finish Chapter 4 this week."

Relevant context:

Research requirements remain unclear.

What design concern exists?

What commitment type may fit better?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client chooses:

"Three 60-minute research-and-drafting sessions."

Is this workable?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Three weeks later:

Research is complete.

Two known sections remain.

Client:

"Should we keep using time blocks?"

What has changed?

What commitment type may now fit better?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"Then I'll complete the final two sections by Sunday."

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why should commitment form change as uncertainty changes?

SIMULATION 13 — PERFECTIONISM DISTORTS APPARENT CAPACITY

Client Goal

Write 1,000 words weekly.

Results

300, 400, 250, 350.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"I think 1,000 is unrealistic. Let's make it 300."

What should be investigated before accepting the reduction?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"I spend forever revising every sentence before I move on."

What mechanism may be depressing output?

What should be tested?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

New commitment:

Draft without line editing until session ends.

Result:

900 words.

What does this teach?

Should 300 become baseline?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

“So maybe the target wasn’t the whole problem.”

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why can performance history be misleading when another mechanism constrains performance?

SIMULATION 14 — AVOIDANCE DISTORTS CALIBRATION

Client Goal

Grow freelance business.

Target

Five prospect contacts.

Results

1, 2, 1, 2.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"Five is too much. I want one."

What remains uncertain?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"I have time for three quality contacts. Five would be rushed."

What calibration conclusion now becomes reasonable?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"One still feels safer because I know I won't miss."

What secondary mechanism appears?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"Three baseline. Five stretch."

Does this fit the evidence?

Your response:

INTERACTION 5

Results over three weeks:

3, 3, 4.

Should the baseline automatically become four?

What should determine the next adjustment?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why were both calibration and avoidance relevant?

SIMULATION 15 — TOO MANY INDIVIDUALLY REASONABLE COMMITMENTS

Client Goals

Fitness Business Certification Spanish

Proposed commitments require:

Fitness: 4 hours Business: 5 hours Certification: 4 hours Spanish: 3 hours

Available discretionary time:

10 hours.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"Each one is realistic by itself."

What system-level problem exists?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"I don't want to give anything up."

What should the Accountabili-Buddy clarify?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"What if I shrink every commitment?"

Is that necessarily sufficient?

Why?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"I think business and certification need to be primary for the next two months. Fitness can stay maintenance, and Spanish can pause."

What has improved?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why must calibration sometimes occur at the goal-system level before the individual commitment level?

SIMULATION 16 — DECISION COMMITMENT

Client Goal

Complete an advanced degree.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"I keep setting study goals, but honestly I don't know whether I want the degree anymore."

What problem exists with continuing ordinary execution commitments?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"Should I make deciding the commitment?"

When would that be appropriate?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client chooses:

"By Friday, decide whether the degree remains an active goal after reviewing the career value, remaining cost, and what I want now."

Is this a reviewable decision commitment?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Friday:

Client:

"I decided to close the goal."

What happens to study commitments?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why can a decision commitment be more accountable than continuing activity around an unresolved goal?

SIMULATION 17 — RETROACTIVE REDEFINITION

Commitment

Submit three applications.

INTERACTION 1

Result:

Two submitted.

Client:

"Two is pretty good. Let's call it complete."

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

“Why does it matter? I still made progress.”

What distinction should be made?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

“So I can be proud of two and still record two of three?”

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why is accurate accounting compatible with positive evaluation?

SIMULATION 18 — CLIENT REJECTS CALIBRATION ADVICE

Historical Evidence

Three sessions appear sustainable.

Client chooses five.

INTERACTION 1

Accountabili-Buddy recommends three.

Client:

“I understand your reasoning. I still choose five.”

What should the Accountabili-Buddy do?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Result:

Three of five.

Client:

“See? Three happened.”

What should be recorded?

What did the week teach?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

“I still want five.”

What can the Accountabili-Buddy appropriately say?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

What is the difference between preserving ownership and pretending to agree?

SIMULATION 19 — STABLE SUCCESS AND COMMITMENT REVIEW

Client Goal

Maintain a weekly financial review.

History

16 consecutive weeks completed independently.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

“Do we need to change the commitment just because I have been consistent?”

What should determine whether the commitment itself needs to change?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

“The weekly review still fits my goal and takes the right amount of effort.”

What does this suggest about the current commitment?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

“Part of me thinks I should make the review harder just because I have been successful.”

What distinction should the Accountabili-Buddy make?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

The commitment remains one weekly financial review.

Behavior remains stable for two more months.

What does this evidence support about maintaining versus changing the commitment?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why does stable success not automatically require increasing or otherwise changing a well-calibrated commitment?

SIMULATION 20 — CLIENT OWNERSHIP DURING RECALIBRATION

Client Goal

Complete three study sessions weekly.

Current Situation

The client has completed three study sessions weekly for eight weeks.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

“Since I have been consistent, should we automatically increase this to five?”

What should be examined before changing the commitment?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"Three still takes meaningful effort, and three is the level I actually want to maintain."

What does this add to the calibration decision?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"But if you think five is better, I'll do five."

What ownership issue appears?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

The Accountabili-Buddy explains the evidence and recommendation without assigning a new number.

The client chooses to maintain three sessions.

What does this demonstrate about professional judgment and client ownership?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why must the Accountabili-Buddy distinguish recommending a calibration change from deciding the commitment for the client?

SIMULATION 21 — NEW BEHAVIOR, NO HISTORY

Client Goal

Begin consistent networking.

INTERACTION 1**Client:**

"How many people should I contact each week?"

No performance history exists.

What should the Accountabili-Buddy avoid doing?

What information matters?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2**Client:**

"I think three sounds realistic."

How should the initial commitment be treated?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3**Week 1:**

Three completed easily.

Week 2:

Three completed easily.

Client:

"Should we move to six?"

What should be considered?

Your response:

INTERACTION 4

Client:

"I have time for five and want faster progress."

What does this add?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why is initial calibration partly experimental when no behavioral history exists?

SIMULATION 22 — KNOWN BEHAVIOR, STRONG HISTORY

Client Goal

Maintain a writing practice.

History

Six months at three sessions weekly.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"I feel inspired. Let's make it eight this week."

What should history contribute?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"But this week really is unusually open."

What might be reasonable?

How could baseline and stretch be used?

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client chooses:

Baseline three.

Stretch six.

Result:

Six.

Should six become the new baseline automatically?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

How can exceptional weeks be used without confusing them with sustainable baseline capacity?

SIMULATION 23 — MAINTENANCE VS. TRIVIALITY

Client Goal

Maintain current fitness.

Commitment

Three sessions.

History

Six months stable.

INTERACTION 1

Client:

"Three is easy now."

Does easy automatically mean increase?

Your response:

INTERACTION 2

Client:

"My goal is maintenance, and three is enough for that."

Calibration decision:

Your response:

INTERACTION 3

Client:

"What if I reduce to one? That would be even easier."

What distinction appears?

Your response:

SIMULATION REVIEW

Why can an easy commitment be appropriately calibrated in one context and undercommitted in another?

SIMULATION 24 — FINAL INTEGRATED STAGE 3 CASE

Client Goal

Build a service business.

INITIAL CONVERSATION**Client:**

"I'm going to work really hard on the business this week."

What design problem exists?**Your response:****NEW INFORMATION**

Business infrastructure is complete.

Prospecting has been minimal.

Client:

"I'll spend another week improving the website."

What concern now arises?**Your response:****NEW INFORMATION**

Client agrees prospecting is the consequential action.

Client:

"I'll contact 20 people."

History:

Maximum previously completed: three.

What issue arises?**Your response:**

NEW INFORMATION

Client:

"I have time for five quality contacts. Twenty would be rushed."

What baseline is supported?

Your response:

NEW INFORMATION

Client:

"I'd rather make it one because then I know I'll succeed."

What new calibration concern appears?

Your response:

NEW INFORMATION

Client chooses:

Baseline: five.

Stretch: eight.

Week 1 result:

Five.

Client:

"Great. Eight should be baseline now."

What should happen?

Your response:

Weeks 2-5 results:

5, 6, 5, 6.

Client:

"What does that tell us?"

Your response:

NEW INFORMATION

Client reports that six requires no meaningful additional strain and wants faster growth.

What becomes reasonable?

Your response:

NEW COMMITMENT

Baseline: six.

Stretch: eight.

Following four weeks:

6, 6, 7, 6.

What does the evidence suggest?

Your response:

FINAL DEVELOPMENT

After several months, client independently completes six contacts consistently and says:

"Six feels stable now. Do we need to change the commitment again?"

What commitment-review question now appears?

Your response:

FINAL CASE REVIEW

Identify the major Stage 3 decisions across the case.

Initial commitment-design correction:

Consequential-action correction:

Overcommitment correction:

Undercommitment correction:

Baseline/stretch distinction:

Progression decision:

Long-term commitment review:

What would have happened if the Accountabili-Buddy had accepted every client-proposed number without challenge?

What would have happened if the Accountabili-Buddy had dictated every commitment?

What does this case demonstrate about the relationship between ownership and professional judgment?

STAGE 3 CONVERSATION SIMULATION SELF-REVIEW

For each simulation, ask:

- Did I distinguish the goal from the commitment?
- Did I make the accountable behavior substantially controllable?
- Did I ensure the commitment was reviewable?
- Did I select the right measurement type?
- Did I avoid unnecessary precision?
- Did I identify low-value support work that displaced consequential action?
- Did I use prior performance when calibrating?
- Did I distinguish one unusual result from a pattern?
- Did I identify chronic overcommitment?
- Did I identify protective undercommitment?
- Did I distinguish baseline, minimum, and stretch targets?
- Did I distinguish temporary from structural capacity changes?
- Did I evaluate sustainability independently from completion?
- Did I avoid increasing automatically after success?
- Did I avoid reducing automatically after a miss?
- Did I recognize when maintenance was correct?
- Did I recognize when progression was supported?
- Did I calibrate across the client's entire commitment system?
- Did I recognize when another mechanism distorted apparent capacity?
- Did I preserve client ownership when I disagreed?
- Did I maintain accurate reporting rather than redefining commitments after the fact?
- Did I preserve client ownership while making evidence-based calibration recommendations?
- Did my response remain usable in an actual conversation?

STAGE 3 CONVERSATION SIMULATION STANDARD

A trainee is ready for Stage 3 formal assessment when they can manage commitments longitudinally.

That means they can:

- convert intentions into behavioral agreements;
- correct poor commitment design before tracking begins;
- use actual performance as evidence;
- distinguish isolated variation from persistent mismatch;

calibrate upward and downward without using ambition or comfort as the primary standard;
identify when behavior outside the commitment is distorting apparent capacity;
preserve baseline, minimum, and stretch distinctions;
adapt commitments to temporary and structural changes;
evaluate sustainability as well as numerical completion;
maintain commitments when change is unnecessary;
progress commitments when evidence supports progression;
reduce accountability when independent performance makes external structure less necessary;
and preserve client authority without surrendering professional judgment.

The governing principle is:

A commitment should remain stable long enough to generate useful evidence, but not so stable that the Accountabili-Buddy ignores what the evidence is showing.

END OF STAGE 3 — CONVERSATION SIMULATIONS