### Part 1: Unique Aspects of the Practical Functional Assessment Approach

1. Closed-ended indirect assessments (MAS, QABF, FAST) are not used in the process

2. Extensive descriptive assessments (those requiring more than 15 min) are not part of the process

3. An open-ended interview (see page below) is always part of the process

4. A standard 4 or 5 condition analysis (with the play condition as the control, e.g., Iwata et al., 1982) is not part of the process

5. A two-condition analysis designed from the open-ended interview is always part of the process

6. We synthesize multiple contingencies into one test condition, if the interview suggests the contingencies are operating simultaneously

**Notes:**

- **IISCA:** Interview-informed, synthesized contingency analysis
- **EO:** Establishing Operation
- **BCBA:** Board Certified Behavior Analyst
Open-Ended Functional Assessment Interview
Date of Interview: ______________

Developed by Gregory P. Hanley, Ph.D., BCBA-D
(Developed August, 2002; Revised: August, 2009)

Child/Client: ____________________________
Respondent: ____________________________
Respondent's relation to child/client: ____________________________
Interviewer: ____________________________

RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION
1. His/her date of birth and current age: ___-___-_______ ___yrs ___mos Male/Female
2. Describe his/her language abilities.
3. Describe his/her play skills and preferred toys or leisure activities.
4. What else does he/she prefer?

QUESTIONS TO INFORM THE DESIGN OF A FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

To develop objective definitions of observable problem behaviors:
5. What are the problem behaviors? What do they look like?

To determine which problem behavior(s) will be targeted in the functional analysis:
6. What is the single-most concerning problem behavior?
7. What are the top 3 most concerning problem behaviors? Are there other behaviors of concern?

To determine the precautions required when conducting the functional analysis:
8. Describe the range of intensities of the problem behaviors and the extent to which he/she or others may be hurt or injured from the problem behavior.

To assist in identifying precursors to dangerous problem behaviors that may be targeted in the functional analysis instead of more dangerous problem behaviors:
9. Do the different types of problem behavior tend to occur in bursts or clusters and/or does any type of problem behavior typically precede another type of problem behavior (e.g., yells preceding hits)?

To determine the antecedent conditions that may be incorporated into the functional analysis test conditions:
10. Under what conditions or situations are the problem behaviors most likely to occur?
11. Do the problem behaviors reliably occur during any particular activities?
12. What seems to trigger the problem behavior?
13. Does problem behavior occur when you break routines or interrupt activities? If so, describe.
14. Does the problem behavior occur when it appears that he/she won’t get his/her way? If so, describe the things that the child often attempts to control.

To determine the test condition(s) that should be conducted and the specific type(s) of consequences that may be incorporated into the test condition(s):
15. How do you and others react or respond to the problem behavior?
16. What do you and others do to calm him/her down once he/she engaged in the problem behavior?
17. What do you and others do to distract him/her from engaging in the problem behavior?

In addition to the above information, to assist in developing a hunch as to why problem behavior is occurring and to assist in determining the test condition(s) to be conducted:
18. What do you think he/she is trying to communicate with his/her problem behavior, if anything?
19. Do you think this problem behavior is a form of self stimulation? If so, what gives you that impression?
20. Why do you think he/she is engaging in the problem behavior?
<table>
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<tr>
<th>To address concerns regarding</th>
<th>Consider…</th>
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<tr>
<td>.... the time required to conduct an analysis</td>
<td>scheduling brief (3 to 5-min) sessions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>conducting an analysis informed by an open-ended interview consisting of only a single test condition and intimately matched control condition</td>
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<td>synthesizing contingencies</td>
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<td>....the complexity of an analysis</td>
<td>conducting an analysis informed by an open-ended interview consisting of only a single test condition and intimately matched control condition</td>
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<td>....the difficulty “selling” the analysis to constituents</td>
<td>building a therapeutic relationship with parents and teachers via open-ended interviewing</td>
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<td>describing the practical and humane reasons for understanding function prior to treating problem behavior</td>
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<td>describing how reinforcement-based treatments are more likely following a proper functional analysis</td>
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<td>using analogies to explain the logic and acceptable risks inherent in a properly designed functional analysis,</td>
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<td>emulating the conditions they described as being important to problem behavior in your analysis</td>
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<td>....the danger to the client and person conducting the analysis</td>
<td>conducting the analysis in an environment that allows for the problem behavior to occur safely</td>
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<td>including clearly signaled contingencies and continuous schedules of programmed consequences in test conditions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>scheduling brief (5-min) sessions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>conducting an analysis informed by an open-ended interview consisting of only a single test condition and intimately matched control condition</td>
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<td>arranging for putative reinforcers to be provided for precursors and dangerous behavior in the test condition</td>
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<td>synthesizing all contingencies suspected of influencing problem behavior</td>
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<td>.... low-rate problem behavior</td>
<td>acknowledging that because putative establishing operations are repeatedly arranged in functional analyses, differentiated analyses can be obtained even for reportedly low rate behavior</td>
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<td>extending the durations of sessions and assessments</td>
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<td>conducting analyses only when problem behavior is occurring</td>
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<td>conducting additional open-ended interviews or observations to discover idiosyncratic factors that may be included in analyses</td>
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<td>.... covert problem behavior</td>
<td>conducting the analysis in a baited environment and in the absence of others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>conducting a reinforcer analysis in which the likely reinforcers for problem behavior are available concurrently and or for arbitrary responses of similar effort</td>
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Supplemental Notes

The assessment commitments outlined in this presentation are described in:


### Part 2: Unique Aspects of the Treatment Approach

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Our treatments are always evaluated from the effective test condition of the functional analysis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Our function-based treatments are skill-based yielding the skills of communication, toleration, and compliance, and skills are maintained with unpredictable and intermittent reinforcement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>We always increase the complexity, flexibility, and/or interactional nature of the FCR before teaching delay/denial tolerance</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>We always explicitly teach delay/denial tolerance (see below) and use the delayed reinforcer to shape up either compliance or independent play</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>We work hard to ensure that the process is agreeable and outcome is meaningful to both children and parents (eventually teach caregivers to implement the treatment in the most challenging contexts).</td>
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### Five Critical Aspects of Delay/Denial Tolerance Training

1. Always provide *immediate* reinforcement for some FCRs and some tolerance responses (TRs).

2. Teach an appropriate response to *multiple cues* of delay, denial, or disappointment.

3. *Progressively increase* the average amount of behavior (not just time) required to terminate the delay.

4. Terminate the delay for *various amounts of behavior* (sometimes expect very little behavior; sometimes request larger or more complex types of behavior during the delay).

5. Probably *best to not signal* how much behavior is required to terminate the delays.
Task analysis for Practical Functional Assessment and Skill-Based Treatment

Once the open-ended functional assessment interview is complete, use the form below to design an IISCA and a skill-based treatment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym and age:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Language abilities:</td>
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1. **Describe the problem behaviors and their precursors** (that will yield the reinforcers in the test condition).

2. **Describe the reinforcers to be synthesized.** (These are provided following problem behavior and their reported precursors in the test condition and continuously in the control condition.)

3. **Describe the synthesized establishing operation.** (This situation is presented at the beginning or the test session and intermittently during the test session, e.g., after 30 seconds of synthesized reinforcement).

4. **Relying on the information above, describe your IISCA.**

   **Who:**

   **Where:**

   **Materials:**

   Test:

   Control:
Once the IISCA is complete (control over problem behavior has been shown), use the form below to design a skill-based treatment that will strengthen the life skills of communication, toleration, and compliance via intermittent and unpredictable reinforcement of each.

5. **Describe the initial and then more complex communication response (i.e., the better mand) to produce the reinforcers; also describe how you will teach that behavior.**

   Initial functional communication response (FCR):

   Complex FCR:

   Teaching procedures:

6. **Describe which denial/delay signals you will use, which tolerance response(s) you will teach, and how you will teach the tolerance response.**

   Delay/Denial signals:

   Tolerance response (TR):

   Teaching procedures:

7. **In general, describe the things you would like the child to do when they cannot have their reinforcers. These are the behaviors that will be instructed or expected during the delay that will be strengthened via the termination of the delay.**
8. Now be more specific: List the amount and type of behavior that will be expected while the delays are progressively increased.

Tip: We usually start by expecting very little and easy behavior and make initially small than larger advances over time. The final set of behaviors should be related to the goals of the child, parent, and teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of behavior</th>
<th># or duration</th>
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Final Integrity Checklist:

• **Immediate sr for FCRs some of the time?** ___ **What %?** ____________
• **Immediate sr of TRs some of the time?** ___ **What %?** ____________
• **Delays end when expected amount of behavior occurs?** ___
• **No signals of exact amount of behavior required to end the delay?** ___
• **Variable durations of reinforcement?** ___

Here is an example treatment schematic:
Supplemental Notes

FCT: Functional Communication Training; FCR: Functional Communicative Response; EXT: Extinction; BL: Baseline

TBPD: Time-based progressive delay; CBPD: Contingency-based progressive delay; SBT: Skill-based treatment

The SBT consists of intermittent and unpredictable reinforcement of three life skills (communication, toleration, and compliance)

The treatment commitments outlined in this presentation are described in:


