

FBA-BIP Webinar Series Transcript

Part 2 - Conducting a Functional Behavior Assessment

Slide 1

This webinar series on conducting Functional Behavior Assessments and writing Behavior Intervention Plans consists of 4 parts.

You can access the handouts by clicking on the link in the “About This Webinar” box to download the participant handouts for Part 2. Before you begin, pause now to download, print or in some other way be able to access the handouts. You will be using these throughout the webinar.

Slide 2

You should have completed Part 1, an Overview of Function Based Thinking, prior to participating in this webinar. Welcome to Part 2, the process of conducting a Functional Behavior Assessment or FBA.

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The purpose of this webinar is to familiarize practitioners with the 4-step process of conducting a Functional Behavior Assessment, or FBA, and allow practitioners the opportunity to practice the process with data from a student example.

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These handouts are associated with this webinar: the glossary of terms, a series of blank data collection forms, sample student data for Myron and an Operationally Defining Behavior handout.

As you watch the webinar, you can pause at any time to discuss or review the handouts. You will be directed to pause the webinar when it would be helpful to review and reflect on the content.

Finally, we will provide next steps to prepare you for Part 3, Developing the Behavior Intervention Plan or BIP.

Slide 5 (HO 1)

The glossary, provided in the Overview, and here in Part 2, will help you as you work your way through this series of webinars.

It is essential that we are all using consistent language. We will especially be focusing on the Functional Behavior Assessment process, creating an operational definition, collecting data, and developing a hypothesis statement in this webinar. Pause the webinar and take a few minutes to review the vocabulary.

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What is a Functional Behavior Assessment?

Functional Behavior Assessment is a **problem-solving process** for identifying the events that reliably **predict** and **maintain** problem behavior.

The primary objective of the FBA is to gather **evidence** to **develop** and **support a hypothesis statement** predicting the **function of the behavior** and to use this information to design the positive Behavior Intervention Plan.

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A Functional Behavior Assessment is based upon the following assumptions:

Challenging behaviors do not occur in a vacuum

Behaviors occur in response to an identifiable stimuli or the antecedent

What follows a behavior, the consequence, makes the behavior more or less likely to occur in the future

Behavior is a form of communication, for example “I need you to help me.” “This work is too hard.” “Please, talk to me.”, etc.

Behaviors serve a function and have a purpose. The two functions or purposes are

- to get or obtain something OR
- to avoid or escape something

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The FBA process is comprised of 4 steps.

Step 1: Define the problem behavior

Step 2: Devise a plan to collect the data

Step 3: Compare and analyze the data

Step 4: Develop a hypothesis statement

We will look at each of these steps individually in this webinar, and provide examples and an opportunity for you to practice each step with some sample student data.

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Step 1 in this process is to define the problem behavior. In doing so, you will use specific, observable, measurable terms.

This means you will be looking at behavior that

- Can be seen,
- Can be counted, timed or rated
- Has a beginning and an end and
- Can be repeated

Using specific, observable, measurable terms to define the behavior is called the operational definition.

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As was just indicated, when behavior is well defined we call it the operational definition. This means everyone is on the same page with what you mean when you use a descriptor. For example, one person's interpretation of 'aggressive', 'loud', or 'disrespectful', may not match another person's interpretation.

Look at the examples and non-examples on the slide

A good operational definition would be:

Johnny says things like 'You can't make me', 'I don't have to do what you say', 'You're not my boss'

A non-example for the same type of behavior would be

Johnny is disrespectful.

A good operational definition on the next behavior would be

Johnny interrupts class by making noises with his mouth, by tipping over his chair, by shouting out answers without being called on

A non-example for the same type of behavior would be

Johnny is disruptive.

And finally, a good operational definition of the last behavior on the slide would be

Johnny refuses to get out of line when asked, refuses to pick up materials when dropped, refuses to begin work when asked to do so

A non-example of that same behavior would be

Johnny is defiant.

Slide 11 (HO 2)

Now you try creating operational definitions for these common behaviors. You can find this document, titled **Operationally Defining Behavior**, in your handouts for this module.

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Let's consider the behavior of Suzy in Step 1 of the FBA process, defining the behavior.

The teacher has identified that Suzy is disruptive in the classroom. However, the description of the problem behavior needs to be clear for everyone to understand exactly what's happening with Suzy.

Look at both columns on this slide. Which one provides a clearer picture of what the teacher is seeing in the classroom? (Pause) The operational definition column tells us what to look for. Take a look at the definition in that column. Suzy interrupts, talks out, and jokes, disrupting instruction in the classroom.

Is this observable? Can someone see Suzy talking out and joking in class? Yes.

Is this measurable? Can you count the number of times she talks out within a given amount of time? Yes.

Could a clear beginning and end be identified? Can you identify when she begins talking and when she stops talking? Yes.

Could this behavior be repeated? Does this behavior happen over and over, or is this a one-time or sporadic occurrence? Your observations would provide this information.

Could you answer these questions in the same way with the definition in the first column?
Disrupts classroom instruction. (Pause) Likely not.

Slide 13 (HO 2)

Let's consider another example student. This time we will be focusing on Myron. The teacher has identified that Myron is disrespectful to authority figures. However, the description of the problem behavior needs to be clear for everyone to understand exactly what is happening with Myron.

Look at both columns on this slide. What could the operational definition include to better describe what Myron is actually doing? Remember, the operational definition tells us what to look for.

Pause the webinar and consider some observable, measurable, clear examples of what Myron might be doing that could be considered disrespectful. You might want to use your **Operationally Defining Behavior** handout as a guide.

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Here are some examples of what Myron might be doing that a teacher could find disrespectful. Lays his head down, refuses to answer when spoken to, rolls his eyes, says "What!?!!" or "I don't care!" when given directions. Did you come up with some of these same behaviors?

Ask yourself these questions about the terms you used:

Is this behavior observable? Can someone see Myron doing the behavior you listed? If, yes, continue to the next question.

Is this behavior measurable? Can you count the number of times he does the behavior you listed in a given amount of time?

Could a clear beginning and end be identified? Can you identify when he begins to exhibit the behavior, and when he stops?

Could this behavior be repeated? Does this behavior happen over and over, or is this a one-time or sporadic occurrence?

If you were able to answer these questions with a 'yes', then you are likely catching on to what operationalizing a behavior would look like. Remember, we do this so everyone who works with this student has the same definition of what to look for, count and record when it comes to gathering information about this behavior.

Slide 15 (HO 3 a-e)

Step 2 in the FBA process is to devise a plan to collect data. We have provided examples in the handouts for you to use, in addition to other options available through your district or other resources. The important thing is that the **process** remains consistent, regardless of the form you choose to use.

Though the word "assessment" is part of FBA, in reality, the majority of the information needed to do the FBA already exists, and we simply collect it and put it together. We clarify from others

what they have seen, look at the documentation we already have, and have a conversation with the student.

When doing an FBA through the use of existing information, you are simply gathering what is already available. You are not gathering any new information so you will fill out any documentation based on this existing information. Gathering this information can be done in two ways, directly or indirectly.

This could mean talking with other teachers or gathering information via an informal checklist about what they have noticed in their classroom, in their own observation of the student. It could also mean reviewing past records of the student, talking with the student's parent about what might be going on at home or what they have noticed. It might also mean having a conversation with the student about the behavior.

If the student receives special education services, and during this process, you determine you actually need to gather additional information through observation or other methods, you must stop and go through the reevaluation process.

If, however, this student is not a student who receives special education services, and some additional data is required, you would develop the plan for how you would gather that information. If at any time, you suspect a disability, you would stop and make a request for consideration of a special education evaluation.

Slide 16 (HO 3e)

We are going to walk through how to devise a plan to collect data on a student named Suzy. The first thing you will want to do is review the records you have on Suzy and document relevant information. The form you see on the slide is The Record Review form from your handout packet. This is one example of a resource you can use to gather this information.

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You will want to have conversations with parents, teachers and the student herself about the behavior. Document the results of those conversations on the form. This will help you gain a better understanding of when, where and why this behavior is occurring.

This is not new information. It is based on what is currently happening with the student

Slide 18 (HO 4)

Please refer to this handout in Myron's case study from the handout link. Pause the webinar to review this page. This is an example of some of the information we have gathered about Myron through a record review. We have gathered data from office referrals, minor discipline issues within the classroom, attendance and tardy information as well as grade information. There was no relevant health or IEP information to gather for Myron.

Slide 19 (HO 4)

One of the other ways to gather information about Myron is to talk with those people he interacts with on a regular basis. Interview forms can be used to gather this type of data or you

may ask others to fill out the answers to some prompted questions. Parents, teachers and the student himself are good sources for this information. Please refer to the interview forms for Myron in his case study.

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Step 3 in the FBA process is to compare and analyze the data you've collected. In this step, you are going to need to organize and analyze everything you know and/or have gathered about this particular behavior in order to make your hypothesis statement. If you remember from the Overview, the environment is a critical factor in why students do what they do. Some of the questions to consider are on this slide.

- How do the antecedent events relate to the behavior?
- Do you see any patterns?
- What typically occurs before the behavior?
- Is there any place that the behavior never occurs?
- Are there particular people who are always involved?
- Any time frame that it typically occurs?

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As mentioned in the previous slide, you are going to take all of the information that you gathered and use it to develop your hypothesis statement. This step is critical in the development of a good hypothesis statement. **DO NOT** skip this step. Here again, we have provided an example of one form on the slide for our practice student. There are other options available in the handouts for you to use or your district may have other resources. The important thing is that the **process** remains consistent, regardless of the form you choose to use.

Slide 22 (HO 4)

Use Section 3 of the *Adapted FACTS* form for Myron to fill out Section 4, which is the example you see on this slide. Once again, this is only a sample of the type of form you can use to compare and analyze all of the existing information you have collected about Myron. The important step is to analyze the information. The way you choose to do that is up to your individual building or district.

Pause the webinar and refer to Myron's case study to complete Section 4.

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When analyzing the data, it is important to keep in mind whether this is a "will" or a "skill" issue. We need to know the student has the ability to perform the expected skill or behavior before we develop the behavior plan. If the student doesn't have the skill, our behavior plan will include teaching the skill. If the student has the skill but doesn't perform it reliably, we will focus more on practice and feedback. Remember, study skills, organizational skills, and social skills are all skills important in schools, just like academic skills.

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Now we are ready to do Step 4. Step 4 in the FBA process is to develop the hypothesis statement.

Using your best educated guess to explain the reason, or the **function** of the behavior, develop the statement to define the “why” of the behavior. Use your hypothesis frame to develop that statement. A hypothesis may not always be correct but it is a place to start.

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When developing our hypothesis statement for Suzy, we use what we already know and have recorded on our data gathering forms to complete the antecedent, problem behavior and consequence chart.

We know from this information that when certain peers are around and Suzy is asked to do independent work, she will joke, talk out and disrupt the class because her peers laugh and respond to her with attention. Therefore, we have concluded that her motivation for doing this behavior is to obtain peer attention.

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After you have determined the information from the frame, you will want to develop your hypothesis statement for the student. This is an example of a template you could use to develop that statement.

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The hypothesis statement for Suzy would be:

During content area classes, when Suzy is asked to work independently, she will joke, talk out, disrupt because peers laugh and respond; therefore, the function of the behavior is to obtain peer attention. This is more likely to occur when specific friends are around.

Slide 28 (HO 4)

Using Section 8 of the *Adapted FACTS* form and the other information you have gathered on the *Adapted FACTS* data gathering forms, develop the hypothesis statement for Myron.

Pause the webinar and work through Step 4 with Myron’s case study materials.

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This is one example of the way you could have written the operationally defined problem behavior statement for Myron. How does this compare to what you wrote?

Slide 30 (HO 4)

This is an example of the antecedent statement you might have developed for Myron. Again, how does this compare to the antecedent statement you wrote?

Slide 31 (HO 4)

The setting events for Myron appear to be during group work or reading/writing narrative text. Did you come up with something different?

Slide 32 (HO 4)

And finally, the consequences of Myron's behavior include the teacher providing assistance, changing the task or sending Myron away from the group. Therefore, the function of his problem behavior appears to be to avoid tasks.

How does this compare to the consequences you noted and to your final conclusion about the function of Myron's behaviors?

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After you have determined the information from the frame, you will want to develop your hypothesis statement for the student. This is an example of a template you could use to develop that statement.

Slide 34 (HO 4)

The hypothesis statement you could have developed for Myron might have looked like this: During reading/writing, when Myron is given directions to read or write independently, he will lay his head down, refuses to answer when spoken to, rolls his eyes, says "What??" Or "I don't care!" when given directions. As a result, the teacher gives assistance, reduces the workload or sends him out of the room, therefore the function of the behavior is to avoid the task. This is more likely to occur when the student has trouble with the work.

Did yours look similar to this? What parts were different?

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After viewing part 2, you will have become familiar with the 4-step process of conducting a Functional Behavior Assessment or FBA.

You will also have had opportunities to practice the FBA process using data from student examples.

Remember, the FBA is not a one-shot process. Information and data gathered from varied sources helps create a more accurate picture of the student from which you can make decisions. Stick to the facts....gut feelings have no place in an FBA. What is the evidence to support your thoughts?

You will now be prepared to proceed to Part 3, The Behavior Intervention Plan, where you will use the FBA data to make a plan for supporting the student.

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How can you begin using this information right now?

Follow the steps in the process for a student whose behavior concerns you. Use one the provided forms, or another form that works for you. There is no specific requirement for the form. It is the process that matters.

This concludes Part 2, The Functional Behavior Assessment.

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