

BACB 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Task List Items

Content Area D: Fundamental Elements of Behavior Change

Item		Description
D-01	Use positive and negative reinforcement.	Positive and negative reinforcement are basic concepts in both teaching new skills and the functional analysis of challenging behavior. It is essential that supervisees be able to assess the reinforcers for their clients for teaching programs, as well as recognize reinforcers that are natural in the environment and those that may be inadvertently reinforcing undesired behavior.
D-02	Use appropriate parameters and schedules of reinforcement.	How effective a reinforcer may be depends on several factors, including immediacy and magnitude of the reinforcer, and response effort of behavior required to obtain reinforcement. The schedule of reinforcement will also have clinical implications in terms of resistance to extinction and response distribution.
D-03	Use prompts and prompt fading.	Effective prompt delivery is crucial for making sure that desired behaviors are shown and that response effort does not decrease. There is a danger, however, of creating prompt-dependency if prompt-fading procedures are not effectively implemented. Ensuring that the prompt level and fading plan is prescribed as well as regularly reviewed diminishes the likelihood of prompt dependency and lack of progress.

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Item		Description
D-04	Use modeling and imitation training.	A client who learns to imitate a model's behavior effectively is a more efficient learner than one who must have each behavior shaped and/or chained. Clients who have been taught generalized imitation, wherein they have generalized the skill of imitation and can imitate any novel behavior of the model are in the best position to rapidly acquire appropriate behavior in new social situations.
D-05	Use shaping.	Shaping is one of the most basic teaching techniques. The creation of new behavior through the reinforcement of successive approximations is a fundamental skill that every behavior analyst should master. Shaping to criterion before moving on is crucial for program success.
D-06	Use chaining.	Chaining is a fundamental teaching procedure for teaching multi-step behaviors. It is important that the supervisee is able to task analyze complex, multi-step behaviors and to effectively teach those skills using various chaining procedures (e.g., forward chaining, backward chaining, total task presentation). Most commonly, task analyses are used in teaching daily living skills, vocational skills, life skills, and play/leisure skills.

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Item		Description
D-07	Conduct task analyses.	Once a task analysis is designed, the mechanics of how it should be carried out must be decided. One consideration is which type of chain should be used (forward, backward, or total task presentation). It is also important to decide if visual, verbal or textual prompting strategies are needed. Lastly, if a given step is not being acquired, consideration of how to alter teaching procedures to enhance skill acquisition is needed.
D-08	Use discrete-trial and free operant arrangements.	Discrete-trial training (DTT) is sometimes considered synonymous with Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). It is imperative that behavior analysts and the general public understand that DTT is only one component of ABA. Free operant arrangements allow the client to respond based on their own schedule and initiation as opposed to DTT, where responding is controlled by the presentation of stimuli from the clinician.
D-09	Use the verbal operants as a basis for language assessment.	Language underlies most learning in typically developing children, yet is often impaired or deficient in individuals with intellectual impairments and developmental disabilities. Behavioral approaches have been found to be effective at increasing language skills with these individuals. An understanding of verbal operants and how to assess the client's current level of language, as well as to develop teaching programs to target new language skills, is important for any behavior analyst working with individuals with language deficits.

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Item		Description
D-10	Use echoic training.	Echoics are the basis for spoken language and are a critical target of language intervention for children with autism. Developing echoic behavior leads to the acquisition of other verbal behavior. A well-established echoic repertoire on the part of the client allows the clinician to use vocal modeling as a prompting procedure during intervention.
D-11	Use mand training.	Skinner introduced the term mand as one of six primary verbal operants in his book <i>Verbal Behavior</i> (1957). Mands are often one of the initial skills targeted with clients who have language deficiencies. This involves teaching the client to make requests. A mand is a verbal operant in which the response is reinforced by a distinct consequence and is therefore under the functional control of relevant conditions of deprivation or aversive stimulation.
D-12	Use tact training.	Skinner used the term tact to describe a verbal operant which is controlled by a nonverbal stimulus and is maintained by nonspecific social reinforcement or generalized reinforcement. Commonly, a tact is also referred to as a label. The tact is a 3-term-contingency, that of a stimulus, a response, and a consequence, which is reinforcement. A verbal response is occasioned by the presence of a stimulus, such as when you say "cat" in the presence of a cat. In this scenario, "cat" is more likely to be reinforced by the listener than saying "dog", showing the importance of the third event, reinforcement, in relation to the stimulus (cat) and response ("cat").

Item		Description
D-13	Use intraverbal training.	Skinner (1957) used the term intraverbal to describe verbal behavior under the control of other verbal behavior. Clients with language impairments rarely develop intraverbals without intensive instruction. Careful consideration of antecedent control is crucial to highlight when teaching intraverbals. Verbal does not mean vocal, it means that the response is reinforced by the actions of a listener, due to that listener's reinforcement history. An intraverbal is a verbal response that is evoked by a verbal discriminative stimulus, in which the response has no point-to-point correspondence due to a history of generalized conditioned reinforcement.
D-14	Use listener training.	Skinner (1957) discusses listener behavior. Clients with language disabilities often have a great deal of difficulty developing the listening skills necessary to acquire language. Teaching listener responding (formally known as receptive skills) focuses on the skills of paying attention when someone speaks, attending as an audience to the speaker, and responding to the speaker's behavior. The client's "understanding" of what the speaker is saying is measured by both verbal and nonverbal responses. If the client's response is nonverbal, it is classified as listener behaviors (formally known as receptive language).

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Item		Description
D-15	Identify punishers.	In keeping with the BACB Compliance Code and the Least Restrictive Treatment model, behavior analysts emphasize reinforcement-based procedures. It is essential, however, that supervisees understand the nature of punishment-based procedures and know how and when such procedures should and should not be used. Discuss common misconceptions of punishment by laypeople and that in ABA we only refer to procedures as punishment if behavior is effectively decreased.
D-16	Use positive and negative punishment.	In keeping with the BACB Compliance Code and the Least Restrictive Treatment model, behavior analysts emphasize reinforcement-based procedures. It is essential, however, to understand the nature of punishment-based procedures and know how and when to use these procedures. The positive and negative distinction that is most commonly associated with reinforcement is every bit as valid when considering punishers. Discuss how in punishment, the term positive means to add an aversive stimulus, while negative means removal of an appetitive stimulus.
D-17	Use appropriate parameters and schedules of punishment.	In keeping with the BACB Compliance Code and the Least Restrictive Treatment model, behavior analysts emphasize reinforcement-based procedures. It is essential, however, to understand the nature of punishment-based procedures for both practical and ethical reasons. Behavior analysts must know when these procedures should be used and how to implement them.

Item		Description
D-18	Use extinction.	Extinction is one of the most basic of behavioral procedures, which involves reducing a behavior by not delivering a reinforcer when the behavior occurs. It is important to recognize when a behavior is being inadvertently reinforced, and how to implement an extinction procedure by terminating the occurrence of reinforcement for that behavior. Behavior analysts must be cognizant of the extinction burst and plan for it in designing extinction procedures. It is also important to use extinction procedures in conjunction with positive reinforcement systems.
D-19	Use combinations of reinforcement with punishment and extinction.	Behavior reduction procedures such as extinction are more successful if paired with reinforcement procedures that teach new skills to replace behavior targeted for reduction. Behavior analysts must implement programs that replace problem behavior with socially adaptive behavior, not just target behavior for reduction. Additionally, the use of reinforcement plans can mitigate the undesirable side-effects of punishment and extinction, such as counter-aggression, avoidance, and the extinction burst.

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Item		Description
D-20	Use response-independent (time-based) schedules of reinforcement (i.e., noncontingent reinforcement).	Noncontingent reinforcement (NCR) can serve as a treatment unto itself, and is also a way to pair reinforcement for other purposes. Noncontingent reinforcement can be a powerful method to reduce problematic behavior. It involves giving the client access to a reinforcer frequently enough that they are no longer motivated to exhibit undesired behavior to obtain that same reinforcer. A classic example of NCR is a teacher giving attention during each one-minute interval in group instruction so the client has no motivation to seek the teacher's attention while instructing the class.



	Item	Description
D-21	Use differential reinforcement (DRO, DRA, DRI, DRL, DRH).	<p>Differential reinforcement is the process by which the frequency of a desirable behavior is increased while the undesirable alternative behaviors are eliminated. Differential reinforcement is used when the desired behavior already occurs occasionally and when there is an available reinforcer. Differential reinforcement of other behavior (DRO) is a reinforcement procedure in which reinforcement is delivered for any response <i>other than</i> a specific target behavior. This procedure results in a decrease in that specific target behavior because that behavior is never followed by reinforcement; thus, it weakens in the future. Differential reinforcement for alternative behavior or incompatible behavior (DRA/I) is the process by which the frequency of a desirable behavior is increased while the undesirable alternative behaviors are eliminated. Differential reinforcement of alternative or incompatible behaviors is used when the desired behavior already occurs occasionally and when there is an available reinforcer. Differential reinforcement for lower rates (DRL) of behavior is when reinforcement is available for low rates of the challenging behavior with a successive decrease over time. Differential reinforcement for higher rates (DRH) of behavior is when reinforcement is available for rates of the desirable behavior with a successive increases over time.</p>