

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to Functional Behavioral Assessment

The external variables of which behavior is a function provide for what may be called a causal or functional analysis. We undertake to predict and control the behavior of the individual organism. This is our “dependent variable”—the effect for which we are to find the cause. Our “independent variable”—the causes of behavior—are the external conditions of which behavior is a function. Relationships between the two—the “cause–effect relationships” in behavior—are the laws of a science. A synthesis of these laws expressed in quantitative terms yields a comprehensive picture of the organism as a behaving system.

—B. F. SKINNER (1953, p. 35)

This statement by Skinner over 65 years ago captures the very essence of this book. Merely describing and classifying behavior is insufficient. To effect positive outcomes for students, we need to discover the variables that directly influence their behavior and then arrange an environment that promotes desired behaviors. Although traditional psychological assessments *identify, describe, and classify* (i.e., diagnose) the problems experienced by students, they rarely explore the underlying “causes” of student behavior or inform practical solutions. In contrast, functional behavioral assessments (FBAs) both *describe* behavior and *illuminate the functional, “cause–effect” relations* between behavior and the environment. *When we understand these relations—the “why” or the “function” of behavior—we are well positioned to design and implement effective and individualized interventions.*

Remember, behavior does not occur “out of the blue” or in a vacuum. Rather, behavior is the product of dynamic interactions among a complex array of variables that exist within individuals and their social environments. Only by identifying the relationships between the unique characteristics of individual students and the contextual variables that trigger and reinforce their behavior can we truly begin to understand why they behave the way they do. And, once we understand how these complex variables interact to evoke and maintain behavior, we can work strategically and collaboratively with students, teachers, and their families to develop personalized interventions that lead to socially significant and meaningful behavior change.

A FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Applied behavior-analytic research demonstrating functional relationships between interfering behavior and environmental antecedents and consequences began gaining momentum in the 1960s, and a dramatic shift in the conceptualization of interfering behaviors occurred in the early 1980s. In a groundbreaking and seminal study, Iwata, Dorsey, Slifer, Bauman, and Richman (1982) presented an assessment methodology for identifying the environmental antecedents and consequences that directly controlled (i.e., “caused”) the severe interfering behaviors exhibited by individuals with developmental disabilities. Moreover, they demonstrated that behaviors that appeared similar (e.g., self-injurious head banging) could have entirely different causes.

Iwata and colleagues’ (1982) research was the genesis of a paradigm shift that gave consideration to the environmental etiology of interfering behaviors as the basis for selecting treatment procedures (Mace & Roberts, 1993). This new approach was in stark contrast to the status quo of that era, when treatment plans were typically developed on the basis of (1) practitioner preference, (2) diagnostic classifications, (3) evidence for the effectiveness of strategies applied to behaviors that looked similar, and/or (4) fads and unproven theories. This paradigm shift stimulated a tremendous wave of empirical research showing that interventions selected with regard to the *functions* of interfering behaviors were more effective than interventions selected exclusively on the basis of the *forms* (i.e., topography) of interfering behaviors. This means, for example, that the most effective interventions for interfering behaviors maintained by “escape from tasks” would be very different than the most effective interventions for interfering behaviors maintained by “access to attention.” The following examples illustrate the distinction between form and function.

- Chris, a 7-year-old student diagnosed with an emotional disability, engages in shouting, swearing, and throwing of materials when asked to complete science lab worksheets.
- Arlene, a 12-year-old student with a diagnosis of intellectual disability, displays high-pitched vocalizations and throws work materials when teachers work directly with her peers in the classroom.
- Felix, a 14-year-old student with a diagnosis of autism, exhibits inappropriate verbalizations and throws objects in a variety of settings, at different times of the day, and in the presence of varied peers and staff members.

The *forms* of interfering behaviors exhibited by Chris, Arlene, and Felix are very similar (i.e., all three individuals engage in inappropriate vocal behaviors and throw objects/materials), but the *functions* of the interfering behaviors are very different. FBA results indicated that Chris’s interfering behaviors resulted in negative reinforcement (escape from and/or avoidance of difficult tasks); Arlene’s interfering behaviors produced positive reinforcement (access to staff attention); and Felix’s behaviors were maintained by automatic reinforcement (sensory stimulation). Again, in each of these examples, the interfering behaviors were similar in form, but the triggers and reinforcing consequences were strikingly individualized.

Interventions based solely on the *topography* of behaviors are basically a crapshoot and often require artificially potent reinforcement and intrusive punishment procedures

to compete with the unknown reinforcers maintaining interfering behaviors (Mace, 1994). In contrast, interventions matched to the *function* of behavior typically result in effective and efficient outcomes by (1) altering the motivation to engage in interfering behaviors, (2) minimizing the reinforcement for interfering behaviors, and (3) arranging the delivery of reinforcers for socially appropriate alternative behaviors. Consider how different interventions based on function might look for Chris, Arlene, and Felix:

- An intervention package for Chris might involve minimizing task difficulty, escape extinction (i.e., no longer stopping instruction when interfering behaviors occur), providing robust reinforcement for task participation, and instructing him to request assistance or a brief break.
- For Arlene, treatment might involve providing attention contingent upon the absence of interfering behaviors for increasingly longer periods of time, attention extinction (i.e., withholding social attention when interfering behaviors occur), delivering robust social attention contingent on appropriate behaviors, and teaching a more appropriate means of obtaining adult attention.
- For Felix, interventions might consist of providing noncontingent access to toys or activities that produce sensory stimulation or teaching more functional behaviors that produce sensory input. Preference or reinforcer assessments also might be conducted to identify competing reinforcers that could be delivered contingent on appropriate behaviors or the absence of interfering behaviors.

The World Is Not Flat and How Functional Analysis Rocked My World

In my early years as a school psychologist in Iowa, I (Steege) was struggling to develop effective interventions for students with disabilities to successfully address behaviors such as self-injury, aggression, tantrums, and property destruction, among others. In the mid-1980s, I attended the Association for Behavior Analysis convention and met Brian Iwata. This was my first “close encounter” with functional analysis. This introduction to an empirical analysis of behavior–environment relationships to identify child-specific functions of behavior was mind-blowing and completely changed the way I would conduct psychological assessments and conceptualize cases forever. This was tantamount to humankind first discovering that the world is not flat, finding out that the earth revolves around the sun, and watching the Beatles on *The Ed Sullivan Show* (“Yeah, yeah, yeah”). Armed with this newfound technology and fueled with support from my mentor, Dave Wacker, we conducted school-based functional analyses of self-injurious behavior, matched treatments to functions of behavior, implemented function-based treatments with precision, and collected data to demonstrate that the interventions were effective (see Steege, Wacker, Berg, Cigrand, & Cooper, 1989, published in the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*). This kick-started a career of teaching, research, clinical services, and supervision centered on functional behavioral assessment—and I’ve never looked back.

WHAT IS FBA?

Functional behavioral assessment (FBA) is the systematic and formal use of evaluation to identify the functions of behavior. Simply put, it is a process for understanding the variables that contribute to the occurrence of interfering behaviors. FBAs are conducted to answer two basic questions:

1. Why does the student exhibit interfering behaviors?
2. What can we do to reduce interfering behaviors and increase appropriate behaviors?

When conducting FBAs, practitioners identify and describe the relationships between the unique characteristics of students and the contextual variables that motivate and reinforce their behavior. Using these assessment results, school-based teams are able to work in concert with students and their families to develop person-centered interventions that result in socially meaningful behavior change. In sum, *FBAs describe the problem (interfering behavior), identify the underlying causes (functions) of the interfering behavior, and pinpoint function-based strategies to promote desired behavior change.*

Interfering Behavior

Throughout this book, we use the term *interfering behavior*, instead of *problem behavior*, *challenging behavior*, *inappropriate behavior*, or *dysfunctional behavior*.

Interfering behaviors: Behaviors that are disruptive to the learning of the student or others; behaviors that interfere with the student's progress or performance of skills.

To understand the FBA process, it is important to keep in mind the behavior-analytic foundations from which it was derived. These foundational “big ideas” include the following:

- Behaviors are learned and can be changed.
- No two individuals are the same, and each student's learning history is unique. FBA seeks to uncover the learning history that shaped each student's current behaviors.
- Students who present with similar interfering behaviors (e.g., aggression, self-biting, and verbal refusal) may engage in these behaviors for very different reasons due to their unique learning histories. Intervention is most effective when behavior support plans directly address the *student-specific* causes or functions of behavior.
- Interfering behaviors exhibited by a single student may serve different purposes in different situations. Intervention is most effective when behavior support plans directly address the *multiple* causes or functions of behavior.
- Information collected during the FBA process directly informs the design of individually tailored, evidence-based interventions that are matched to the functions of interfering behaviors.

FBA METHODS

On a pragmatic level, the FBA process considers the goodness of fit among students and their environments, which include current behavioral supports, the school curriculum, instructional methodologies, social relationships, and a host of other variables. Accordingly, school-based practitioners need to gather information about a wide range of variables to

conduct a comprehensive FBA. Considerations include (1) the immediate classroom environment; (2) the student's academic, communication, social, and emotional strengths and weaknesses; (3) motivational variables; (4) sources of reinforcement; and (5) reinforcement contingencies. A combination of interviews, rating scales, curriculum-based assessments, direct observations, preference assessments, and/or experimental analyses therefore may be needed to address referral questions and complete a comprehensive FBA (Steege & Pratt, 2012). In the context of this book, we classify these diverse procedures into four basic categories:

1. Indirect assessment
2. Descriptive assessment
3. Experimental analysis
4. Treatment analysis

Figure 1.1 illustrates the flow and purpose of each category of assessment when evaluators approach the FBA process from a problem-solving framework.

Indirect Assessment

Indirect assessment methods are characterized by the assessment of behavior using information provided by teachers, parents, staff, and in some cases the referred student. Record reviews and interviews are the primary indirect FBA procedures, and behavior-analytic interviews are particularly valuable for (1) identifying and defining interfering behaviors, (2) selecting data-recording procedures that are matched to the dimensions of the behaviors, and (3) forming tentative hypotheses regarding the function(s) of behaviors. *A word of cau-*

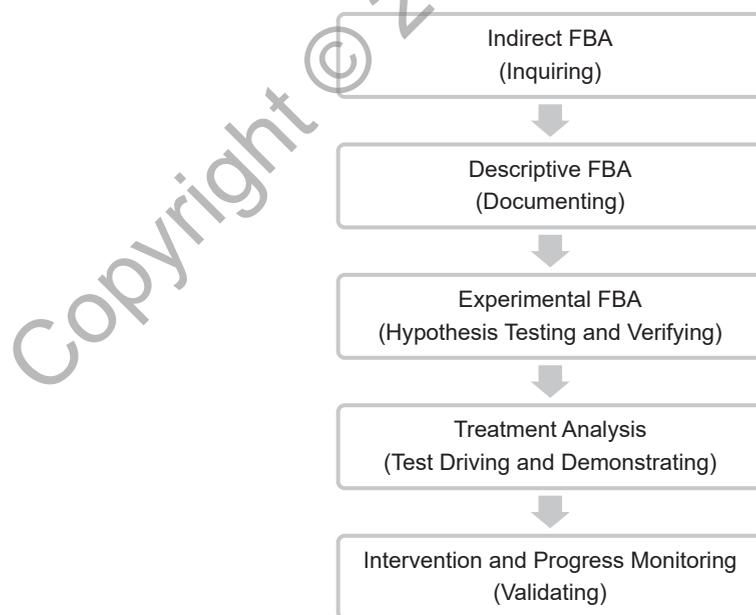


FIGURE 1.1. Categories of assessment procedures and the FBA process.

tion here: Due to their relative efficiency and cost-effectiveness, conducting an FBA using only indirect FBA procedures may be tempting. However, filling out a one-page form or simply conducting brief informal interviews may not constitute a valid FBA. Indeed, such practice often results in inaccurate results, faulty hypotheses, and ineffective interventions. In Chapter 7, we review indirect FBA procedures that are designed to “tease out” potential functions of behavior for further investigation.

Descriptive Assessment

Descriptive assessment methods involve direct observation and real-time recording of interfering behaviors and associated antecedents and consequences (Thompson & Borrero, 2011). Observations are conducted in natural settings (e.g., classrooms, cafeteria, hallways, gym, playground), and data-recording procedures range from anecdotal (e.g., writing a narrative description of behaviors and relevant variables) to highly systematic (e.g., documenting the occurrence of target behaviors and events during 6-second intervals). Typically, the school-based evaluator completes the descriptive FBA, but there are situations in which direct observation by the evaluator is not possible. For example, when the target interfering behavior occurs infrequently or unpredictably, it may be difficult to schedule an observation. In these situations, other school-based staff may be able to assist with the process. For example, Cipani and Schock (2011) described and illustrated an A-B-C (antecedent, behavior, consequence) descriptive analysis method in which teachers, parents, or paraprofessionals observed and recorded relevant antecedents and consequences associated with target interfering behaviors.

Descriptive FBA procedures have two major purposes. First, these procedures are helpful for documenting the severity (e.g., frequency, duration, and intensity) of interfering behaviors to confirm the need for intervention and establish a baseline for evaluating the effects of subsequent interventions. Second, descriptive FBA procedures are valuable for identifying the contextual variables *associated* with interfering behaviors. *Another word of*

Fake Functions

Sometimes an event immediately precedes or follows a behavior but actually has nothing to do with the real function of the behavior. Consider the following example.

Watson and Steege (2003) reported on a case study of a young man (Chris) residing in a group home who had a long history of aggression (i.e., pulling others' hair). During an informal preference assessment, Chris was asked to choose between a bran muffin and a piece of toast. The evaluator explained in detail the differences between the muffin and the toast and then said, “I like toast and I like bran muffins. They're both wicked good. Is there one you like more? Pick one.” Chris then grabbed the evaluator's hair with both hands and held on tightly for about 4 minutes. During a debriefing of the incident, the evaluator said, “Obviously he hates both toast and muffins.” A subsequent assessment compared verbal prompts and nonverbal prompts and found that aggressive behaviors were more likely to occur following verbal as opposed to nonverbal prompts. We then implemented the preference assessment using nonverbal prompts, and aggressive behaviors did not occur. In short, Chris hated excessive verbalizations, not toast and muffins. By the way, Chris definitely preferred bran muffins. So, in this case, the toast and muffins were associated variables. The function of aggression was to escape excessive verbal prompts.

caution here: Just as correlation does not mean causation, association does not mean function. In order to confirm hypotheses regarding functional relationships between interfering behaviors and contextual variables, a functional analysis is required. In Chapter 8, we discuss and illustrate the use of a variety of descriptive assessments to identify associated antecedents and consequences of interfering behavior.

Experimental Analysis

Experimental analysis refers to an assessment model in which environmental events are systematically manipulated and examined within single-case experimental designs (Betz & Fisher, 2011). Using this approach, a functional relationship is confirmed when a change in one variable (antecedents and/or consequences) reliably influences levels of interfering behavior. In other words, these procedures involve an experimental analysis of the cause–effect relationships between interfering behaviors and specific, predetermined antecedents and/or consequences. The basic methodology involves (1) systematically manipulating antecedents (e.g., presenting academic tasks) and/or consequences (e.g., withdrawing academic expectations and materials following interfering behavior), (2) recording occurrences of interfering behaviors within each assessment session, and (3) comparing behavioral levels and trends across assessment conditions. We discuss and illustrate experimental assessment approaches such as functional analysis in Chapter 9.

Treatment Analysis

Although it is not typically considered part of the FBA process, we include treatment analysis as an FBA method. Treatment analyses provide a data-based assessment of (1) the effectiveness of a single intervention or (2) the relative effectiveness of two or more interventions. These analyses involve the use of single-case experimental designs to evaluate the effectiveness of function-based interventions that were recommended after the completion of indirect assessments, descriptive assessments, and/or functional analyses. In Chapter 12, we discuss and illustrate applications of treatment analysis within the FBA process.

FBA AND PHILOSOPHY

Yes, this book is designed as a practical guide for school-based practitioners. Please bear with us, though! We believe that the underlying philosophy and theoretical framework for the FBA process are just as important as the methodological details. The philosophical orientation that guides our implementation of FBA procedures is based on a commitment to *philosophical doubt*, *empiricism*, *interactionism*, *behavioral compassion*, and *behavioral empathy*. Read on!

Philosophical Doubt

Healthy skepticism promotes a scientific approach to understanding human behavior. When conducting FBAs, we enter the assessment process with an open mind and test multiple

hypotheses to confirm functional relationships and disconfirm “fake” hypotheses. The following quotes from the Dalai Lama (2009) illustrate the concept of philosophical doubt, which guides all behavior-analytic inquiries:

- “It is with an objective mind endowed with curious skepticism that we engage in careful analysis.”
- “When there is skepticism, constant inquiry takes place.”
- “One of the reasons science progresses is because it persistently inquires and performs experiments on the basis of genuine objectivity.”
- “Careful analysis indicates that a rough or incomplete analysis is not adequate.”
- “Logic and epistemology texts emphasize the need for proving the truth of an assertion based on sound reasoning rooted in direct observation.”
- “With a careful analysis, our conclusions are more stable and sound.”

Empiricism

We endorse a data-based problem-solving model of practice that is rooted in the application of evidence-based assessments and interventions. From our perspective, data rules! Or, to paraphrase from a popular movie, “Show me the data!”

Interactionism

Human behavior is the result of dynamic interactions among multiple variables that are always in a state of “ebb and flow.” This is comparable to weather-related variables (e.g., temperature, wind flow, humidity, dew point, wind speed, high- or low-pressure systems, and jet streams) that interact to produce weather conditions ranging from “calm with fair skies” to the “perfect storm.” As you will learn in subsequent chapters, when we conduct FBAs, we evaluate the relative influences of many variables that contribute to interfering behavior. And when we develop function-based interventions, we address each of these contributing variables.

Behavioral Compassion

When we begin the FBA process we are mindful that behavior is learned. We are mindful that parents, teachers, siblings, friends, community members, and others do not “conspire” or plan for students to acquire interfering behaviors. Nor do students set out to learn interfering behaviors and adopt them as enduring components of their behavioral repertoires. Without explicitly expressing this idea, the following statements illustrate behavioral compassion:

- “Behavior is learned. Interfering behavior is not your fault.”
- “My job is to understand why these interfering behaviors occur and figure out what we can do to help you eliminate these behaviors while learning useful and appropriate behaviors to meet your needs.”
- “I care enough to (1) conduct comprehensive assessments to understand the nature

of the problem, (2) use assessment data to design individually tailored interventions, (3) conduct ongoing assessments to monitor potential shifts in behavioral function, (4) collect data to objectively determine the personal effectiveness of your treatment, and (5) modify treatments that are no longer effective.”

Behavioral Empathy

When conducting an FBA, we find it useful to consider each student’s unique *point of view*. We seek to understand how each student navigates his or her educational and social worlds, and we figuratively:

- Crawl inside the student’s skin to see the world from the *perspective of the student*.
- Experience how the student, given his or her unique personal characteristics, interacts with the environment.
- See how this dynamic interaction between personal characteristics and environmental events shapes interfering behaviors.

We then apply this perspective to help students learn alternative ways to get their needs met.

FBA AND PROBLEM SOLVING

The National Association of School Psychologists’ (NASP) *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* (2010a) and the Behavior Analysis Certification Board’s (BACB) *Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts* (2014) both clearly support a problem-solving approach to practice. The following seven phases illustrate how a problem-solving model is central to FBA, and the Appendix includes the Functional Behavioral Assessment Rating Scale (FuBARS), which supports adherence to this model.

Phase 1: Identification and Description of Interfering Behavior

The purposes of this initial phase are to (1) identify the behaviors that interfere with students’ acquisition of skills or performance of appropriate behaviors (academic and social) and (2) determine the need for assessment and intervention. This phase typically includes interviews, record reviews, and direct observations. Most critically, the evaluator needs to clearly and unambiguously describe each interfering behavior and arrive at an operational definition. A behavior has been operationalized when all members of the school team agree on the definition and are able to observe and accurately record the behavior (Steege & Watson, 2009). In this phase, we consider the following questions:

- What are the specific behaviors that led to the referral?
- What do these behaviors look like?
- When do these behaviors typically occur (setting, time, activity, persons)?
- Which behavior(s) are the priority for intervention?

- Do the behaviors pose a safety risk for the student or others?
- Do the behaviors limit access to minimally restrictive environments?
- How do the behaviors interfere with adaptive, academic, and/or social–emotional functioning?
- What strategies have been implemented? And how effective have these interventions been?

Phase 2: Recording Current Levels of Interfering Behaviors

During this phase, direct observation and recording of interfering behaviors is conducted to estimate the present levels and severity of interfering behaviors. There are several procedures that may be used to record behaviors (e.g., frequency, duration, intensity, latency, permanent product, performance-based, partial interval, whole interval, and momentary time sampling), and there is no one best procedure. Rather, the selection of behavior-recording procedures depends on the dimensions of the behavior (i.e., form, presentation) and the available resources (i.e., time, applicability to the setting, skills of observers/recorders). The resulting estimates of behavior ultimately serve as a benchmark (baseline) to be used as a point of comparison when evaluating the effectiveness of subsequent function-based interventions. Key questions at this phase include:

- To what degree does the behavior interfere with academic or social functioning?
- How often does the behavior occur?
- For how long does the behavior occur?
- What is the relative intensity of the behavior?

Phase 3: Identifying and Describing Antecedent, Consequence, and Associated Variables

At this phase, the primary questions are:

- What are the events that trigger interfering behavior?
- What are the consequences that reinforce (strengthen) interfering behavior?
- What individual variables are associated with interfering behavior?

FBA procedures may involve any combination of indirect assessment, descriptive assessment, and/or experimental analysis. The choice of procedures is determined by the interfering behavior and the skills and experience of the evaluator. The goal is to gather information about the individual variables, antecedent variables, and consequence variables that contribute to occurrences of interfering behavior.

Phase 4: Conceptual Synthesis

At this phase, the evaluator pulls it all together by integrating assessment data to arrive at hypotheses about the functions of behavior. Here the evaluator needs to consider the principle of *interactionism* by examining the manner in which individual and environmental

variables interact to trigger and maintain interfering behaviors. The goal is to synthesize assessment data, offer an explanation of the “causes” of interfering behavior, and develop a comprehensive conceptualization of the problem that needs to be solved.

Phase 5: Linking Assessment Data to Interventions

The ultimate goal of the FBA is to identify potentially effective function-based interventions. For example, identification of functional antecedent variables informs the design of proactive interventions that reduce the probability of the interfering behavior, and identification of functional consequence variables guides the development of intervention strategies that avoid reinforcing the interfering behavior and provide sufficient reinforcement to strengthen replacement behavior. It is also important to take into consideration the dynamic relationships among antecedent, individual, and consequence variables. Therefore, behavior support plans need to be sensitive to the interactive effects of these variables and provide for the flexible delivery of intervention strategies. The key questions at this phase include:

- Which evidence-based options are available to modify functional antecedents?
- Which evidence-based options are available to modify functional consequences?
- Which replacement behaviors and skills need to be taught, and what evidence-based instructional and reinforcement procedures are available?
- Which intervention strategies are feasible, acceptable, and minimally intrusive?
- Which intervention strategies will result in opportunities for both naturally occurring supports and reinforcement?

Phase 6: Implementation

We all agree that the key to the success of an intervention plan is committed and accurate implementation. The best of plans implemented incorrectly, or perhaps not at all, is usually ineffective and may even worsen the problem. Adherence to the components of the intervention (treatment integrity) may be maximized by asking the following questions at this phase:

- Do staff understand the components of the plan?
- Do staff understand how the components of the plan directly address the functions of the behaviors?
- Do staff have confidence that the plan will be effective?
- Do staff have the resources to implement the plan?
- Are staff adequately trained to implement the components of the plan? (*Note: We recommend using a behavioral skills training model of support.*)

Phase 7: Progress Monitoring

Both NASP and the BACB endorse a data-based decision-making approach to practice. This requires collecting and analyzing data to (1) determine the effectiveness of the intervention and (2) serve as the basis for modifying or “tweaking” the intervention plan.

SUMMARY

The need for comprehensive, rigorous, and objective assessment of interfering behaviors is obvious, and it is *imperative*, both ethically and legally, to conduct FBAs to inform the design of interventions. There are a wide range of FBA methods available, and a common question we hear from students, supervisees, practitioners, and workshop participants is, “Is one FBA procedure better than others?” Well, there is no one *best* FBA procedure. The optimal approach depends on a variety of factors, including (1) the characteristics of the student being assessed, (2) the dimensions of interfering behaviors, (3) the setting and available resources, (4) the knowledge and expertise in applied behavior analysis of those we interview, (5) the degree of the evaluator’s familiarity with the student, and (6) the experience and competency of the evaluator, among others. To address the diverse referral questions that arise within school settings, evaluators need to be well trained and experienced in a wide range of FBA procedures. It is naive to expect that we can assess all behavior issues with a single “cookie-cutter” approach (i.e., the standard assessment battery). Instead, evaluators need a well-stocked arsenal of assessment methods to conduct flexible, individualized FBAs.

This book is intended to be a resource that provides school-based practitioners with conceptual models and applied procedures for assessing behaviors that interfere with students’ academic, social, emotional, and adaptive functioning. All of the models and procedures presented in this book are designed to assist the practitioner in understanding why students display particular behaviors in particular settings at particular times. Our approach to FBA follows a problem-solving process that flexibly employs an array of assessment methodologies to understand the “whys” of behavior, inform the design of individualized behavioral supports, and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. Thus, we do not equate FBA with one specific methodology. Rather, we view FBA as an amalgamation of techniques that have a common purpose: *identifying the variables that control a behavior and using that knowledge to design individualized and effective interventions.*

To reiterate, this book will not tell the evaluator which FBA procedures to use. Nor will we provide a formulaic approach that can be applied to all FBAs. Conducting FBAs is an investigative process, so think of yourself as a behavioral Sherlock Holmes. When the “game is afoot” we need, of course, to be methodological, but also flexible in designing and executing individually tailored assessments.

Putting the Fun in Functional Behavioral Assessment

Hey folks, one of my (Steege) mottos is “If it isn’t fun, it’s not worth doing.” Throughout this book we have embedded vignettes and examples that are intended to be both educational and humorous. Of course, when we take on the responsibility of conducting an FBA we are all business. After all, our ultimate goals are to (1) understand and describe the variables that evoke, occasion, and reinforce behavior; (2) use those data to design and implement function-based and evidence-based interventions; and (3) collect data to document the effectiveness of interventions. We intersperse humor to engage the reader and to provide intermittent reinforcement. So, have fun!