

Behavior Toolkit

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Teaching new behaviors to learners in your care is not rocket science: It's behavior science! Anyone can be a successful teacher when they know how behavior works. Follow the steps and the flowchart below to improve your teaching outcomes.

Part 1: Tool Assembly

Use the following steps to define the behavior the learner WILL DO; arrange their environment to make the right behavior easier; and, identify short-term and long-term reinforcers to teach and maintain the new behavior.



1. **Define the behavior you want the learner to do; this is the target behavior:**

- × What does this behavior look like?
- × Can you describe it without saying what the behavior isn't? Without saying "Stop being X" or "Stop [verb]ing"?
- × Can you describe it without using any "labels"? (see List 1)



2. **Split the target behavior into smaller steps to shape:**

- × Think of ways the behavior can be divided into smaller responses to make the behavior easier to learn.



3. **Create a supportive environment before the behavior occurs:**

- × What in the environment has prevented this behavior in the past?
- × What can you change in the surroundings to make the behavior easier to do?
- × What cues will signal the learner to do the behavior?
- × What prompts will clarify the target behavior, e.g. modeling, verbal instructions, or physical assistance?



4. **Identify long-term reinforcers, i.e., the naturally occurring benefits of this behavior for the learner:**

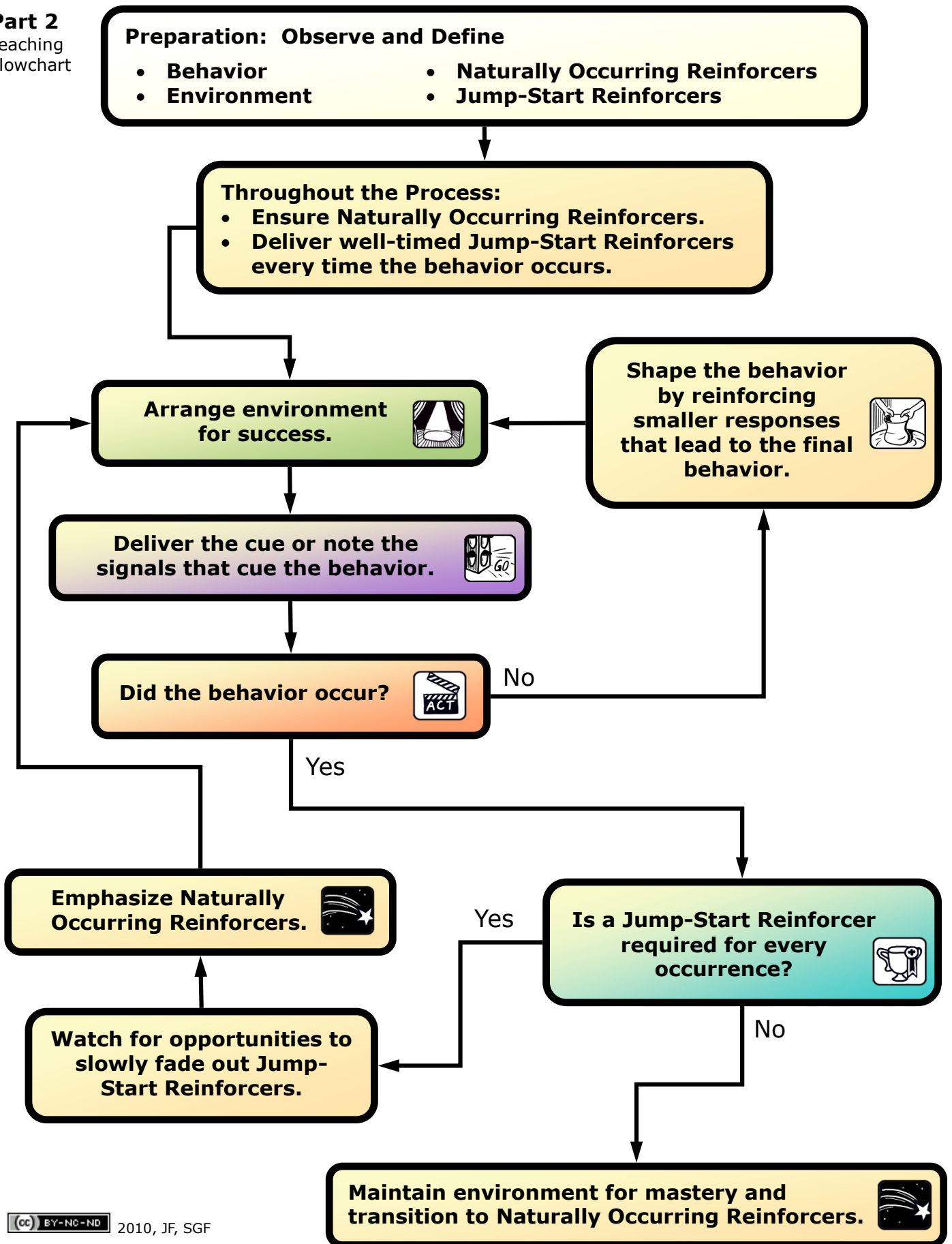
- × What is the natural outcome of this behavior?
- × Is it worthwhile enough for the learner to maintain the behavior in the long run?
- × Consider the different types of reinforcers: tangible items, social interaction, activities, sensory stimulus and escape from aversive events



5. **Identify short-term "jump-start" (contrived) reinforcers for teaching this behavior:**

- × What extraordinary reinforcers will initially motivate the learner to do this behavior?
- × Are these reinforcers specific and customized to this learner?
- × Can these reinforcers be faded-out as the behavior is mastered, so that only naturally occurring reinforcers maintain the behavior?
- × Examples: praise, edible treats, gentle touch, toy, etc.

Part 2
Teaching
Flowchart



List 1. Commonly used labels that don't describe behavior

None of the following words describe behavior in a functional way. Refer to this list as you describe the behavior to check if you've used a label. Create your description in terms of what the behavior looks like.

abnormal
aggression
aggressive
always
angrily
angry
antics
argumentative
arrogant
bashful
bossy
careless
chaotic
cheerful
childish
childlike
clingy
cocky
confused
constantly
controllable
controlling
crazy
cross
decent
derogatory
despondent
dictating
dictator
difficult
disagree
disagreeable
disloyal
disobedient
disobey
disorderly
disorganized
distracted
dominate
dominating
domineering
emotional
emotionally
emotions
expectation
expectations
expecting
expects
funny
grudge
grudgingly
happy
hates

horrific
hyper
hyperactive
immodest
impatient
impolite
incorrect
indecent
infantile
intention
intentional
intentionally
intentions
irreverent
irritable
jealous
kind
king
loyal
mean
messing
messy
micromanage
micromanaged
micromanaging
modest
nasty
neurotic
never
normal
obedient
odd
oppressive
ornery
overbearing
patient
pesky
polite
presumptuous
pretentious
prince
princess
proud
psychotic
pushy
queen
questioning
quirky
radical
rash
refusal
refuse
refuses

relentless
resent
resentful
rowdy
rude
savage
shy
silly
slob
sloppy
sly
snarky
sneaky
stern
strange
stubborn
submissive
tame
terrible
territorial
testing
testy
tidy
timid
touchy
tough
tyrannical
unattached
unbelievable
uncaring
uncontrollable
unfocused
unhappy
unkind
unlimited
unreal
unrealistic
unrealistic
unreasonable
unrelenting
unreliable
unresponsive
unruly
untidy
unwilling
upset
vague
weird
wild
wildly
wrong
wrongly