

**DESCRIPTION**

Behaviour Analysis is a method of collecting information objectively about the content of the behaviour shown by individuals operating in groups and about the content of the behaviour of the group as a whole.

One or more observers carry out the analysis. They observe the group in action and identify each contribution made by each member of the group, categorise that contribution and record it against the name of the contributor and the category (see Appendix A for an example). At the end of the group activity, totals are made on the Analysis Sheet for categories and contributions from each individual and from the group as a whole.

The analysis is used to give feedback to individuals and/or to the group as a whole on their contributions and the nature of their contributions. Learners can use this feedback as the basis on which they plan to modify their behaviour in future group interactions. The modified behaviour in turn can be analysed and feedback given on the extent, nature and effects of the change.

**USES OF BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS**

This method can be used to increase the awareness of the learners of the kind of behaviour they use in social interactions. This can help them to modify behaviour where this is appropriate, and generally, to develop skill in a wide range of social interactions at work, both in one-to-one situations and in larger groups. For example, it has been used in social skill training in the following areas:

- Working in teams and groups
- Participating in meetings
- Customer contact
- Telephone selling
- Selection and appraisal interviewing
- Negotiating
- Consensus seeking

**ASSUMPTIONS**

There are four major assumptions underlying this approach to developing social skills:

**Behaviour matters**

The individual's behaviour in social interaction influences the behaviour of the other person or persons involved and the results achieved by the interaction.

**No single style is correct for all situations**

The object of Behaviour Analysis is not to influence learners to use certain types of behaviour labelled "good" or "bad". The emphasis is on identifying the kind of behaviour used so that the participants can then consider how appropriate it is to the situation and to what the participants are trying to achieve. The situation may demand different roles and different patterns of behaviour from different participants, e.g. the role of chairing a meeting usually required the person to exercise control over the other participants and therefore to use the kind of behaviour which would not be acceptable from any of the other participants.

**Behaviour must be observed accurately**

If change is to take place and social skills are to be developed, accurate, clear and precise information is needed on the kind of behaviour participant's use. Incomplete, ambiguous and subjective information will distort feedback to the learner and is likely to be rejected.

**People can plan and control their own behaviour**

The ability to use behaviour appropriate to the situation and to the participant's objectives is a skill, which can be developed with practice and feedback.

**DEFINING A BEHAVIOUR CATEGORY**

The need to observe behaviour accurately implies that the behaviour categories used in the analysis should be clearly defined. Before including a behaviour category in the analysis, the trainer should ensure that it meets the following criteria. It must:

Describe a behaviour, which can change during training

Be meaningful to both the trainer and the learner

Be readily identifiable during the interaction

Be behavioural, i.e. it must categorise observable behaviour without the need for interpretation of what is going on "beneath the surface" about attitudes, motives, emotions, etc.

Permit a high level of reliability between observers (i.e. when more than one observer is present at an interaction in which that behaviour is used, all the observers will have identified it as having been used).

Define a relatively simple unit of behaviour distinct from the other categories used.

The categories commonly used in group observation are listed and defined in Appendix B. It is important that any categories used should be defined in this way, for the benefit of both the observers and the learners.

**OBSERVERS**

The observers have a demanding role to play in Behaviour Analysis. They need to have a thorough knowledge of the distinction between the various categories used. They also need to be sensitive to what is being said and how it is said in the interaction so that it can be recorded accurately. They must have sufficient practical experience of using Behaviour Analysis to be able to provide consistently reliable information.

It is important that observers are able to select the categories so that they can analyse particular situations.

In providing feedback, the observer's aim is to assist learners to modify behaviour to meet their objectives. It is NOT to try to impose the observer's own ideas of what they should do.

People carrying out the role of observers should be briefed on the context, purpose and objectives for the learning event they are observing. They may also require training themselves on both the concept of behaviour analysis and the practical process of recording observations.

#### **ADVANTAGES**

- Behaviour Analysis concentrates on observable behaviour and is therefore more readily accepted by learners rather than methods that explore attitudes, motives and emotions.
- It provides immediate, detailed, objective and non- threatening feedback on social skills performance.
- It can be learnt quickly and applied immediately to real-life situations.
- It provides the learners with a means of modifying their behaviour and giving them an awareness of their existing behaviour.
- It is highly flexible; it can be adapted to develop specific sets of behavioural skills.

#### **DISADVANTAGES**

- It requires skilled observers who can provide consistently reliable information.
- An observer can only cope with a few behaviour categories.
- It tends to concentrate on verbal behaviour and pay less attention to nonverbal behaviour.
- It provides feedback on the number and type of contributions rather than on the quality of these contributions, or when these contributions were made.
- The selection of categories appropriate to a particular situation is difficult.
- It does not provide information on which contributions were made to which people.

**Appendix A**

<b>NAME</b>											
<b>CATEGORY</b>											
Proposing											
Giving Information											
Supporting											
Building											
Seeking Information											
Summarising											
Disagreeing											
Bringing In											
Shutting Out											
Defending/Attacking											
Testing											

## Appendix B

## BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS

<b>Proposing</b>	A behaviour which puts forward a new suggestion, proposal or course of action	"Let's deal with that when we come to item 5". "I suggest that we talk about the overall structure first and get down to the details later."
<b>Giving Information</b>	A behaviour that offers facts, opinions or clarifications to other people.	"We can buy these items for Rs50 each". "There should be no problem completing the job on time".
<b>Supporting</b>	A behaviour that makes a conscious and direct declaration of agreement or support for another person or their ideas and opinions.	"Yes I agree with Radha" "That is a good idea." "Radha is right. That's what we should do."
<b>Building</b>	A behaviour that is usually in the form of a proposal, which extends or develops a proposal made by another person.	"Yes that's an excellent idea. And if we costed it in detail we could present it as an alternative."
<b>Seeking Information</b>	A behaviour that seeks facts, opinions or clarification from another person.	"How much would that cost"? "When would that happen"? "Can you tell me the facts on which your view is based"?
<b>Summarising</b>	A behaviour, which summarises, or otherwise restates in a compact form, the content of previous discussions or events.	"So were saying that we ought to go ahead with this project that we must not spend more than two lakhs and we can't start before May."
<b>Disagreeing</b>	A behaviour which states a direct disagreement or which raises objections to another person's concepts or opinions	"That idea wouldn't work here." "No, you're wrong. It's not like that". "The figures show it's not true".

<b>Bringing In</b>	A behaviour, which invites views or opinions from a member of the group who is not actively participating in the discussion.	“Radha, administration is your job. What do you think?” “Could I ask Radha what her feelings are, as the representative of the general office”?
<b>Shutting Out</b>	A behaviour that excludes, or attempts to exclude another person.	Any interruption. Any attempt to “talk over” what someone else is saying
<b>Defending or Attacking</b>	A behaviour that attacks another person either directly, or by defensiveness. Defending/attacking behaviours usually involve value judgements and often conveying emotional overtones. Note that defending or attacking is usually about people not issues.	“That idea can’t work”. “It”s not my fault. It”s not my job to update records”. “Why can’t you do what you promised to do”.
<b>Testing Understanding</b>	A behaviour that seeks to establish whether an earlier contribution has been understood.	“So, you think we should upgrade our IT system now”? “Is Radha suggesting that we ought to cost the project first, before ordering new equipment”?