

PBS PRACTICE DESIGN

Turn the Dial: Turning Up Data Collection

The Practitioner's Playbook: Practical levers to design environments, reduce friction, and support better outcomes.



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**It often starts with a single,
frustrating question.**

**“ Why won't they just
collect the data? We
know it will help. ”**

This is a familiar feeling. You see the potential for data to unlock progress, but the family isn't engaging. It can feel like a roadblock, but it's actually a signal. The question isn't *why won't they*, but *where are they* on their journey?

When Partnership Stalls, So Does Progress

Misinterpreting a family's hesitation as simple 'non-compliance' has significant costs:



Incomplete FBAs

Without consistent data, our understanding of behaviour is based on guesswork, not evidence.



Ineffective Plans

Interventions miss the mark, leading to frustration for everyone.



Eroded Trust

Families feel judged or unheard, weakening the therapeutic alliance that is essential for long-term success.

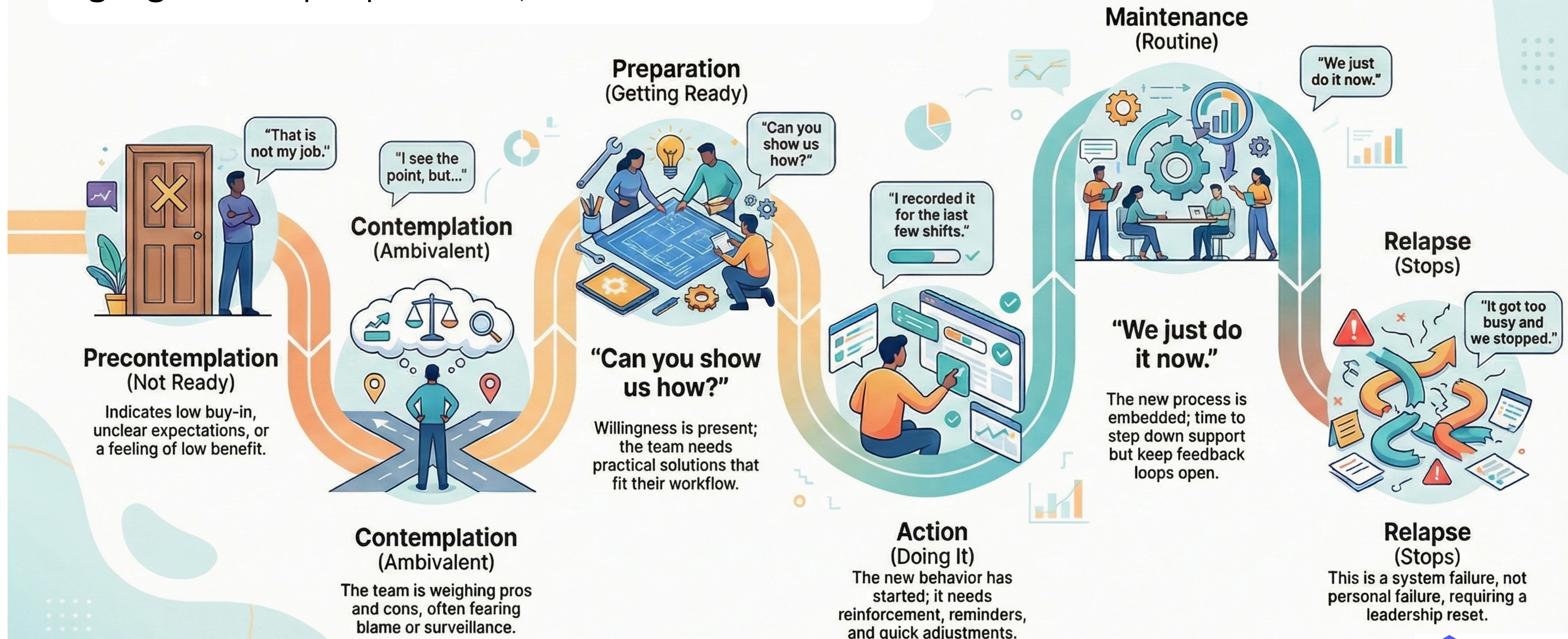


Practitioner Burnout







Pushing for data against a headwind is exhausting and demoralizing.

From Resistance to Routine:

The Stages of Readiness to Change Model helps us to gauge where people are at, and meet them there!

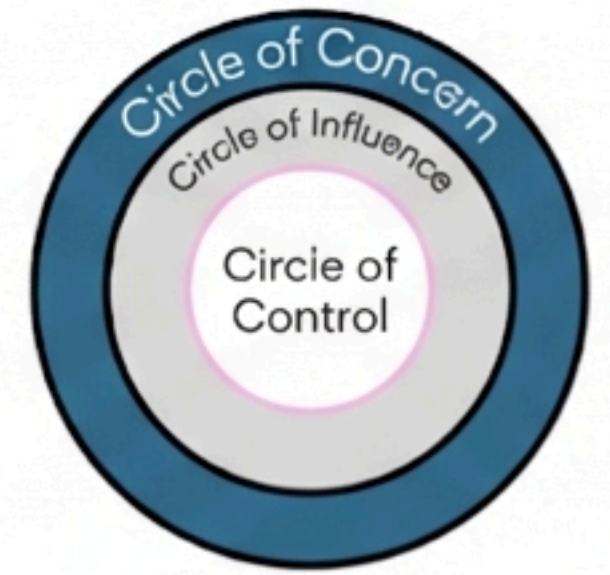


From Insight to Action: Aligning Your Approach (examples)

If the Family is in...	They are Feeling...	Your Most Effective Action Is...
 Precontemplation	Overwhelmed, distrustful	Build trust. Solve an immediate, unrelated problem. Do not push for data.
 Contemplation	Hopeful but low-confidence	Reassure. Co-design a tiny, low-burden starting point. Define success clearly.
 Preparation	Willing but needs a plan	Provide a clear, simple plan. Scaffold the process and offer check-ins.
 Action	Building momentum	Reinforce effort. Provide quick feedback. Show them how the data is being used.
 Maintenance	Creating a habit	Celebrate the habit. Step down the intensity to ensure it's sustainable.
 Relapse	Over capacity, discouraged	Re-connect and simplify. Re-clarify the purpose and shorten the next 'burst' of collection.

Where to Put Your Energy —

We can only influence so much, so let's use our energy deliberately



Control

- | Your communication
- | Tools and forms
- | Training & feedback
- | Cadence



Influence

- | Readiness & confidence
- | Routines & prompts
- | Shared trust
- | Team alignment



Out of Control

- | Long-term culture
- | Family history
- | System constraints
- | External events

1. Engagement Begins at Referral

Buy-in is seeded before any forms appear.
This is your first implementation lever.

- **Respond early:** Set a calm, capable tone immediately.
- **Clarify goals:** Define exactly what the referral asks and what success looks like.
- **Signal usage:** Explain how data will be used and when they will see feedback.
- **Set boundaries:** Be clear on what will be tracked and the duration of the “burst” of higher intensity data versus a “lighter” approach



2. Clarify Roles from the Outset

Our Role (PBS)



Assess and clarify clinical questions



Design tools and teach the method



Coach, adjust, and close the loop

Their Role (Team)



Record agreed measures in windows



Implement strategies as trained

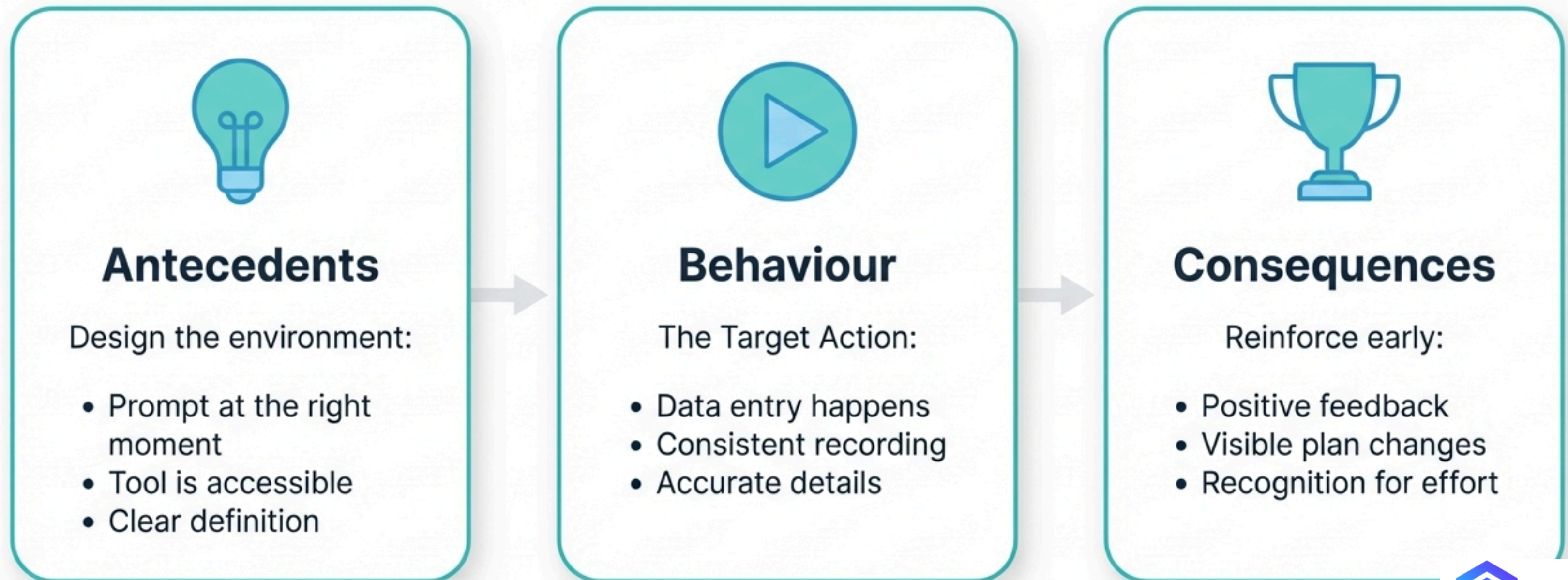


Flag barriers early for adjustment



3. Apply a PBS Lens to Stakeholders

Treat data entry like any behaviour: it has functions, barriers, and reinforcers.



Identify, validate and address barriers



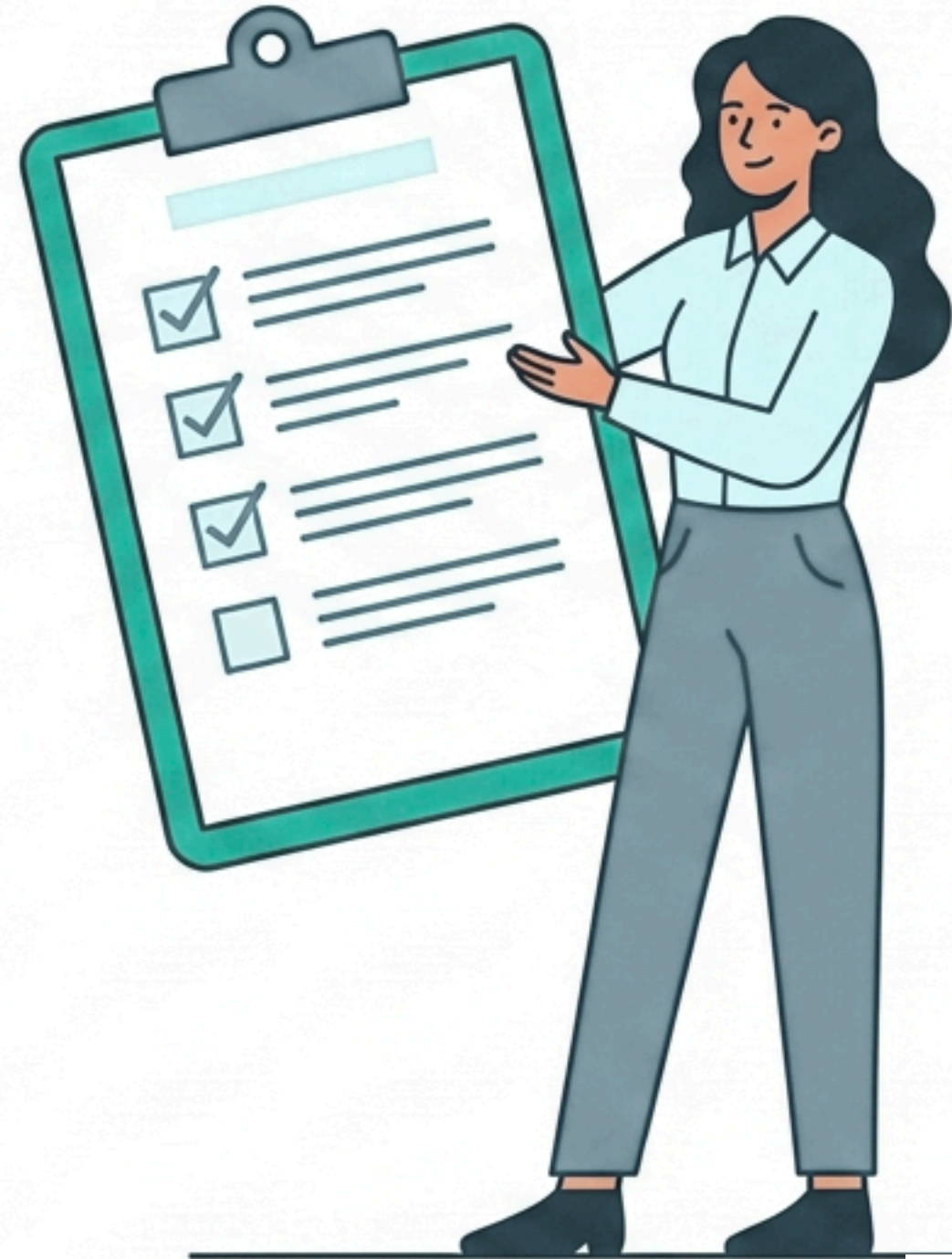
4. Make the Ask Very Clear

Clarity Checklist

- Purpose: What decision will this support?
- Scope: Exactly what counts (examples/non-examples).
- Duration: How often and for how long?
- Logistics: Where does the tool live?

Micro-skills

Validate (“That makes sense”), Ask Permission (“Can I share why?”), and Scale Confidence (“0-10, how doable is this?”).



5. Reduce Friction & Build Capability



The Tool

Short, checkbox-heavy, and fits the setting seamlessly.



Training

Demonstrate, practise, and clarify exactly 'what counts'.



Prompts

Provide one cue at the exact right moment.



Feedback

Respond within days, not weeks. Quick loops build trust.



Strategy: When to Adjust Intensity of Data Collection

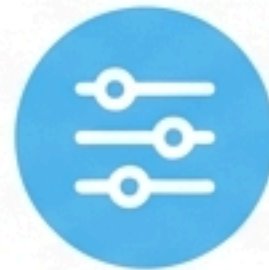
Some data beats no data. Increase intensity only when stakes are high.



Ultra-Light

Burden: Low

Method: 1-minute tally or incident-only logs. Good for long-term monitoring.



Practical

Burden: Balanced

Method: Tally + simple intensity anchors. Brief ABC-lite for major events.



High-Detail

Burden: Short Burst

Method: Full ABC + intensity/duration. Negotiate a short, time-limited window.

Let people know you'll start with high detail, and reduce intensity with time

6. Make Data Visible & Meaningful



If stakeholders never see the data used, collection dies. Feedback is reinforcement.

- **Share patterns:** Use accessible visuals frequently.
- **Check validity:** Ask “Does this match what you see?”
- **Link to action:** Show exactly how data led to a plan tweak.
- **Close the loop:** Data → Insight → Plan Change → Improved Day.

7. Stay Present: The Check-in Cadence

Consistent practitioner presence is an implementation strategy.

Adapt your cadence based on your assessment of the team. Below are examples only.

High Risk

Every 1-3 days

Brief touchpoints
early on to stabilize.

Low Capability

Every 2-3 days

Support teams with
high turnover or low
confidence.

Mixed

Twice Weekly

Transition to weekly
as patterns emerge.

High Capability

Weekly

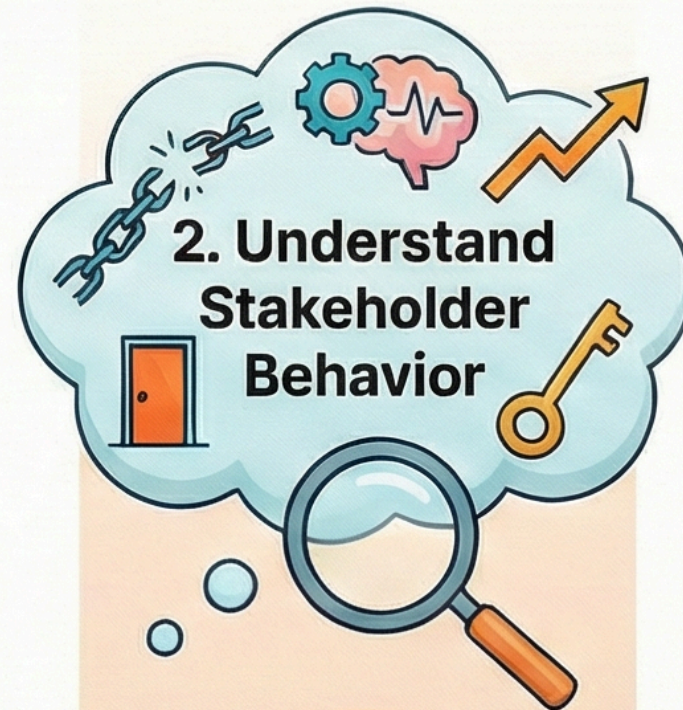
Move to fortnightly
once habits are set.

A Blueprint for Effective Stakeholder Engagement

1. Start Strong: Define Roles at Referral



From the very first interaction, clearly outline your role and stakeholder responsibilities.



Identify potential barriers and motivators for stakeholder participation, just as for a client.

3. Communicate with Clarity & Empathy



Clearly explain your rationale, empathize with objections, and co-create solutions together.

4. Simplify Data Collection

Make providing data as easy as possible through training, demonstrations, and early feedback.



5. Share Insights & Stay Connected



Frequently present data in accessible ways and seek feedback to reinforce participation.



"Stakeholder relationships are the glue that make or break the achievement of the best outcome." This collaborative approach is essential for improving the life of a person with a disability.

Safety and Limitations Statement

For general information and practitioner guidance only. This template does not replace a comprehensive behaviour assessment, clinical supervision or organisational policies. It is not a standalone tool for managing high-risk behaviour or restrictive practices.

Workshops: Join our 2026 PBS Workshop Series

All sessions run 12pm–4pm AEDT

5 March 2026

Workshop 1: Foundational Skills in Positive Behaviour Support

12 March 2026

Workshop 2: Functional Behaviour Assessment

19 March 2026

Workshop 3: Positive Behaviour Support Interventions and Implementation

26 March 2026

Workshop 4: Restrictive Practices & Supported Decision Making

2 April 2026

Workshop 5: The Written Plan – Functional Behaviour Assessment and Positive Behaviour Support Plans

on Zoom

PBS Group Supervision

Professional Development

Elevate your skills with our Core, Proficient, Advanced and Specialist level PBS supervision groups.



Core

Proficient

Advanced

Specialist