

Glossary of Terms

Accidental Prompts: Prompts or subtle hints that you did not intentionally provide.

Accommodations: Forms of structure within the classroom or workplace that help an individual access information, navigate the physical environment, communicate, and perform tasks to an adequate performance level.

Autism Spectrum Disorder: Autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are a range of neurodevelopmental disorders that affect an individual's communication, socialization, and flexibility in behavior/thinking. Because autism is a spectrum disorder, the presence and intensity of these characteristics may vary greatly from person to person.

Antecedents: Any events that come prior to a behavior or response and have some effect on the occurrence of the behavior or response.

Approximation: A behavior which resembles the target behavior and can be molded over time into that target behavior; an earlier "version" of a target behavior.

Attribution: Process of recognizing key details in the environment and in the behavior of others that identify why something is happening. Attribution requires connecting the significant details of a situation to understand the behavior of others. Attribution is a foundation skill for the development of perspective-taking.

Backward Chaining: A procedure in which the last sub-skill or step within a total skill is targeted for independent performance, while the steps that preceded it are prompted through. When the last step in the chain is performed with independence and accuracy across learning trials, the second to last step is targeted for independent performance, and so on.

Career Planning: Uses initial and ongoing assessments of an individual's strengths, interests, goals, and needs to identify and develop marketable skills for employment.

Central Coherence: It is theorized that individuals with ASD over-focus on parts and details, rather than perceive the meaningful whole. Thus, they display weak central coherence. One with weak central coherence may struggle to see "the forest from the trees."

Chaining Skills: The process of adding steps to existing skills to systematically build on an individual's ability to complete more complex tasks. *See* Forward Chaining, Backward Chaining, and Total Task Chaining.

Communication Closure: The process of a message being initiated by one individual and receiving a response by another.

Communication System: An individually tailored system that gives the individual the power to express their wants and needs, their choices, their feelings, and their ideas. For some individuals, those communication systems might come in the form of basic up to advanced scripts that identify key verbal and non-verbal components within an exchange.

Community Access: Is increased with an individual's competence and understanding in areas of shopping, consumer skills, and accessing community recreation options. Developing skills for planning outings, using online resources, and budgeting can lead to more independence by helping a person learn to cope with situational frustration, avoid dangerous situations, and reduce unplanned purchases.

Consequence: The event following a behavior, which might have some effect on the future occurrence of that behavior under similar conditions. This event might increase the future occurrence of the behavior (reinforcing consequence), it might decrease the future occurrence of the behavior (punishing consequence), or it might not have any effect on the future occurrence of the behavior (neutral consequence).

Coping Cards: Concise visual supports to help individuals with ASD cope with stressful, overwhelming, confusing, or frustrating situations. Coping cards present brief information about what to do in these situations. While they are taught and practiced beforehand, they are generally a tool to be used *in the moment*.

Coping Comics: A visual strategy to teach how to appropriately handle a social situation through comics or drawings which depict a quick conversation or interchange that is either written or left blank for the student to generate responses.

Daily Living Skills: General, day-to-day activities that promote healthy, enjoyable independence. Daily living skills include such activities as washing hands, bathing, oral hygiene, shaving, grocery shopping, planning and preparing meals, washing dishes, house cleaning, laundry, and yard care.

Environmental Design: The arrangement of furniture, materials, work/activity areas, and transition spaces to support focus on expected behaviors and tasks within an environment. Also referred to as "physical structure," environmental modifications," or "environmental arrangements."

Extrinsic Consequences: (*Extrinsic* Motivators) When the consequence is one that is artificially connected to the behavior (extrinsic in nature), this behavior may be less likely to generalize to other contexts. That artificial or extrinsic consequence might not operate in other contexts because you are not there to deliver it, or the environment simply is not conducive to that artificial reinforcer. The use of these may be necessary at times, however.

Fading: The systematic removal of a prompt from the learning situation. Fading involves careful attention to timing (see time-delay).

Finished Area: A designated space where items are placed at the completion of a task.

Forward Chaining: A procedure in which the first sub-skill or step within a total skill is targeted for independent performance, while the steps that follow are prompted through. When the first step in the chain is performed with independence and accuracy across learning trials, the second step is targeted for independent performance, and so on.

Functional Assessment: The process of systematic observation and data collection in order to identify the specific events before the behavior (antecedents) and after the behavior (consequences) that might influence the occurrence of the behavior. This information can then be used to design interventions that systematically manipulate those antecedents and consequences in effort to change the behavior.

Generalization: The process of transferring skills taught under one condition to other conditions. This includes transferring the skills to other settings, to other people, to other materials and stimuli, and to other activities.

Gradual Release Model: A framework for the modeling and practice stage of direct instruction. It is characterized by this sequence: I perform, You watch; I perform, You help; You perform, I help; You perform, I watch.

Graphic Organizers: A form of visual support that helps an individual visually represent and sort concepts, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Hard Skills: Vocational skills necessary to complete the tasks of a job. *See Soft Skills.*

Holistic Perspective: Seeing the big picture; perceiving the whole and not just its parts; seeing the “forest from the trees,” so to speak.

Independent Living Skills: Various life skills needed for entering adulthood, such as budgeting, daily living skills, accessing transportation and resources, and safety awareness.

Instructional Scaffolding: Similar to prompting; involves a teacher providing a student with assistance, then withdrawing assistance gradually.

Intermittent: Not continuous, at times variable and unpredictable in frequency. When an employee completes his reports on time and with no errors, sometimes he is praised by his supervisor, and sometimes he is not. The employee’s efficient, accurate work is reinforced on an intermittent basis.

Intrinsic Consequences: (*Intrinsic* Motivators) Consequences that are more natural and likely to occur in real life. When the consequence is one that is naturally connected to the behavior, it is more likely that this behavior will generalize to other contexts because those same contingencies between behavior and consequence naturally exist in those other contexts.

Job-Seeking Skills: The social communication behaviors, and organizational and time-management skills necessary to find and get a job. This includes obtaining references, networking, writing cover letters, conducting online or door-to-door job searches, submitting applications, navigating online pre-employment screening assessments, and interviewing for jobs.

Learned Helplessness: When a student refuses or avoids independently engaging in a task because he believes he will fail.

Left to Right To-Do List: One type of to-do list; often uses bins or containers to arrange materials and keep items together for easy access. This type of to-do list allows clear visual-spatial organization of an activity through orientation similar to reading a book: Left-Start to Right-Finish.

Manipulation: Refers to the method of interacting with a schedule or to-do list, such as checking-off, crossing-out, matching icons, or putting picture cards in a “finished” envelope.

Matching To-Do List: One type of to-do list; uses pictures, symbols, colors, or word cues to organize the items to be completed. Matching to-do lists are usually oriented top-to-bottom or left-to-right with detachable icons which are matched to corresponding icons on nearby bins, containers, or trays.

Modeling: Demonstrating or showing how a task is performed, often to introduce or define the desired behavior or skill. Modeling may also be used in the form of a prompt to help an individual practice a skill.

Motivation: The student's desire, interest, level of engagement.

Object Schedule: The most concrete level of schedule in comparison to picture and written schedules. Thus, an object schedule is most appropriate for very young children and individuals with more significant cognitive challenges.

Orientation: Readiness; attention to the relevant cues; focus.

Perspective-Taking: Process of recognizing what a person is thinking in a situation. Once a person has the skill of identifying details of human behavior and circumstance (Attribution), can we define 'the thoughts' of the other person? Perspective-taking requires reading more complex details like facial expression, body language, and tone of voice to use in social problem-solving.

Physical Structure: *See* Environmental Design.

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS): A low-tech tool that emphasizes an intentional communicative exchange that is initiated by the individual with ASD. The PECS is considered an evidence-based best practice for individuals who require an augmentative communication device. The development of PECS is largely due to the work of Andrew Bondy and Lori Frost.

Picture Schedule: Used for individuals between the level of an object and written schedule. The individual should be able to easily understand the meaning and representation of photographs, icons, or drawings. A picture schedule may also include written text which supports the images.

Pivotal Response Treatments (PRT): An intervention method that uses a developmental approach and applied behavior analysis procedures. The targeted, or pivotal areas in this approach are motivation, responsivity to multiple cues, self-initiations, and self-management, as growth in these areas can promote collateral improvements in non-targeted skills and in generalized contexts. The development of PRT is largely due to the extensive work of Robert and Lynn Koegel.

Priming: "Pre-practice;" familiarizing the student with materials and activities before instruction occurs. In situations where a student is resistant to change, it involves getting agreement on the problem, getting agreement on the solution, and creating the motivation for change. This process often includes the use of graphic organizers and social narratives to visually represent the problem and to help one adjust their perspective.

Prompts: The temporary supports that you provide as the individual is learning a skill. Your goal is to fade out all of the prompts to ensure that the individual is attending to *natural cues* in the environment. These prompts might be verbal, physical, gestural, modeling, or positional in type.

Reinforcement: A process or procedure where an event follows a behavior, and that event *increases* the likelihood of that behavior occurring again under similar conditions. If the behavior does not increase in the future under similar conditions, then technically, reinforcement did not occur.

Reinforcer: A specific event, or consequence, which follows a behavior which *increases* the future frequency of that behavior under similar circumstances.

Role-Play: To engage in repeated practice or rehearsal opportunities in a simulated situation. Visual supports such as role-play cards, cue cards, or scripts might be used to keep the student successful as he “acts out” what to do and say in a given scenario.

Schedule: A visual support that organizes the school or work day and tells the individual with ASD where he will go that day. Schedules help focus attention on daily responsibilities and allow the individual to predict and understand what is happening during the day.

Scripts: A concrete set of written and /or picture cues which provide the directions and words to be used in a specific situation.

Self-Advocate: An individual who is able to identify his strengths and interest, make his needs known, and actively seek information for decision-making.

Self-Determination: The knowledge and skills that enable one to make decisions, set and pursue goals, solve problems, examine outcomes, and self-advocate.

Self-Regulation: An individual’s ability to recognize and appropriately respond to personal emotional and behavioral challenges, such as coping with stressful tasks, conditions, or co-workers.

Shaping: The differential reinforcement of progressively closer steps, or “approximations,” towards a target behavior.

Situational Stories: Individually tailored, brief stories that describe and explain a certain behavior.

Social Narrative: An individually tailored story (in written and/or picture format) to help the student understand and use the key details within a common event or social situation.

Soft Skills: Social communication skills and behaviors which may not pertain to the actual defined job requirements, but are necessary for success. Some soft skills include the ability to carry on a conversation, understanding and responding to emotions and body language, regulating personal impulses, and respecting personal space.

S.O.S.! “**S**ocial Communication - **O**rganization & Self-Direction - **S**elf-Regulation of Emotions.” S.O.S.! refers to the broad set of rules and behaviors associated with success in a work setting. They are necessary to sustain a positive working environment and involve general rules of work behavior, rules and behaviors during breaks, and the skills necessary for self-control of emotions, anxiety, and frustration.

Task Analysis: The process of breaking down a task or skill into *teachable* units. In many cases, it is not appropriate to attempt to teach the entire skill all at once. Rather, you must first task analyze the skill to identify the critical features and sub-skills that actually comprise that skill.

Theory of Mind: The ability to attribute mental states to oneself and to others, and to understand that others have knowledge, beliefs and intentions that are different from one's own.

Thought Stories: Much like coping comics by using drawings or comics to explain why something happened or what someone is thinking in order to promote perspective-taking. Whereas coping comics illustrate conversational dialogue, thought stories illustrate unspoken thoughts.

Time Delay: Used to fade out prompting and promote independent responding. As the student is expected to perform a particular skill, the instructor briefly pauses (waits) before issuing any prompt, in effort to provide the opportunity for the student to independently display the skill. As the student displays increasing independence with the skill, the instructor gradually increases the amount of wait time before issuing any prompt.

To-Do List: Visually clarifies a series of activities for an individual by answering 4 questions: *1) What am I doing? 2) How much am I doing? 3) When am I finished? 4) What's next?* Also referred to as a “work system” or “activity system.”

Total Task Chaining: The entire sequence is targeted for independent performance in each teaching session. Prompts are faded at each step in the sequence until the student ultimately performs the entire sequence independently. Note that the prompts might be faded out more quickly in one step versus another.

Transition Planning: The process of preparing an individual for the “next step,” such as leaving school and entering the job market, or moving on to post-secondary education. Transition planning is a methodical process of assessing skills and interests, identifying core strengths and challenges, developing key skills for success, recognizing community and natural resources, and setting reachable goals. Planning should begin in middle and high school years and focus on aspects such as vocational skills, independent living, continuing education, and resource management.

Video Modeling: Shows someone performing the expected behavior and may include an audio narrative over the video that defines the expected behavior.

View2Do Program: Our web-based program included with the JobTIPS Transition Toolbox. This program offers over 4,000 images and provides a user-friendly tool to create and store individualized visual schedules, communication systems, social narratives, role-play scripts, and more.

Visual Clarity: Draws or engages the individual's attention to important and relevant information. Includes such methods as labeling, highlighting or bolding text, or color-coding.

Visual Cues: Something added to the core structure of the environment, the schedule, the to-do list, and other visual supports. The cue turns up the “visual volume,” so to speak, on that core structure. These include such features as containers, labels, stabilization methods, bolding, highlighting, or color-coding. Three components to the implementation of visual cues: Visual Instructions, Visual Organization, Visual Clarity.

Visual Instructions: These clarify how to perform a task or provide the sequence of steps required; can be a part of the to-do list or the individual may retrieve the specific task from a to-do list and find the visual instructions within the task.

Visual Organization: Uses space and containers to organize the materials and limit the student's focus of attention to the relevant details.

Visual Supports: Tools such as communication systems and scripts, schedules, to-do lists, graphic organizers, social narratives, video models, and visual cues. They are effective in making materials and environments more meaningful and allowing individuals with ASD to live and work more productively and independently.

Vocational Skills: Concrete skills needed to be independent and successful at a job; often the specific skills outlined in a job description. *See Hard Skills.*

Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCA): Mid to high tech tools that provide the individual with an augmentative means to expressively communicate.

Waiting: *See Time-Delay.*

Work System: *See To-Do List.*

Written Schedule: The most appropriate format of a schedule for an individual who reads automatically and fluidly. If reading is an emerging skill, the written schedule will not support independence in movement. In that case, use pictures alone or add them to a simple written schedule.

Written To-Do List: One type of to-do list; this is a simple, written list of things to be done. Whereas a written schedule provides information of *where* to go, the written to-do list provides the supplemental information for a specific activity from the schedule by indicating *what, how much, when is it finished, and what's next?*