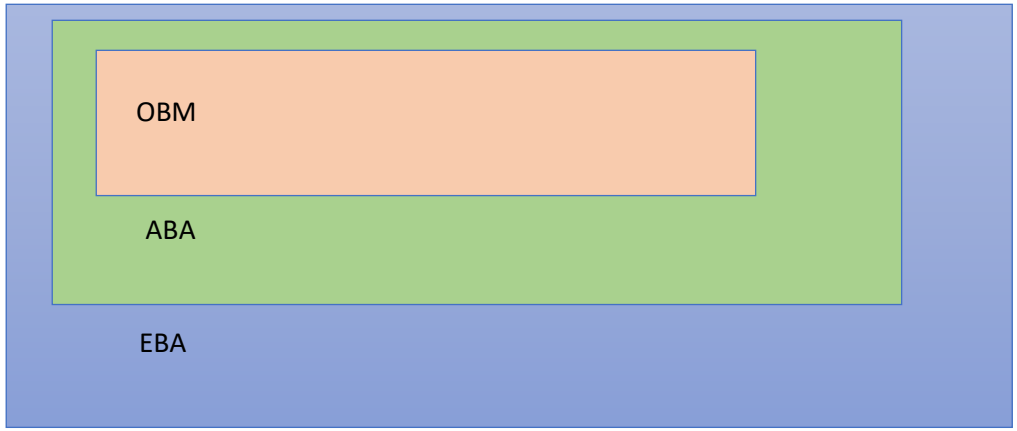
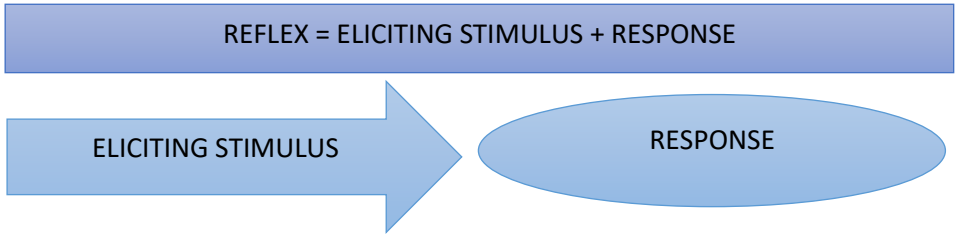
Trainer guide OBM Foundation level training – Answers to student workbook questions

Based on OBM Foundation training Student Workbook version 4.1., dated January 6th, 2026.

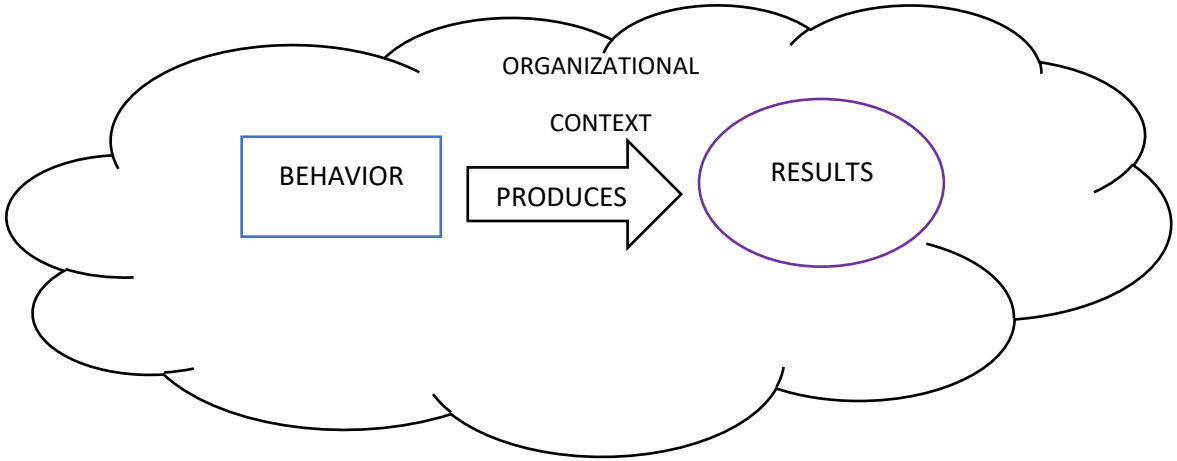
CONFIDENTIAL: FOR ACCREDITED AND GECERTIFIED OBM FOUNDATION LEVEL TRAINERS ONLY

Slide number	Questions, Discussions and Answer indications
8	**Common approach to organizational change**
	Discuss: what are common approaches to organizational change? Which steps are usually taken *to start a change initiative*? **Answer:** A very common approach to organizational change is: - Leaders explain why, what, when to change; - Leaders explain what will happen if we do *not* change; - Leaders say they aim for a change in '*mindset'*, an increase in '*awareness'* and of course: a change in behavior; This approach seldomly is effective, therefore leaders usually try again, only this time: "*louder, longer and meaner*" (Daniels, 2014).
	Question: what is – according to e.g. McKinsey - the average success rate (as a %) of organizational change initiatives? **Answer:** Success rate is about 25% to 30%. This also depends of course on your definition of success. Interestingly, 'behavior' is always in the top 3 reasons for failure. Most change initiatives fail, because they fail to effectively address behavioral and cultural issues.
9	EBA, ABA & OBM
	EBA = Experimental Behavior Analysis **ABA =** Applied Behavior Analysis • Experimental Behavior Analysis: experimental investigation of behavior in (controlled) laboratory settings; • Applied Behavior Analysis: apply what has been learned from EBA; • Organizational Behavior Management: apply what has been learned from EBA and ABA in business settings.

	How are EBA, ABA and OBM linked? Complete the diagram: 
12	Respondent behavior
	Exercise: complete the diagram  **Question: What is a more commonly used term for '*respondent behavior*'?** **Answer:** Reflex

	Exercise: name three examples of *unconditioned* respondent behavior **Answer** • 1. Saliva reflex • 2. Pupil reflex • 3. Knee-jerk reflex (Patella reflex) • 4. Coughing reflex (note: we refer to the physiological reason, to clear windpipe or even lungs to improve airflow, and NOT as a means to get attention) • 5. Sneezing reflex • 6. Getting goosebumps
13	Operant Behavior
	Exercise: name two examples of operant behavior **Answer:** • 1. walking • 2. talking (any active and observable human action which requires controlled muscle movement) **Question: Which test checks if operant behavior is also *active behavior*?** **Answer:** Dead man's test
14	**Operant of Respondent?**
	1. Waving at your colleague to say '*Hi*!' — 1. operant 2. Coughing/Sneezing — 2. respondent (although people cough sometimes to get attention, then it would be an operant behavior) 3. Writing down a word on a piece of paper — 3. operant 4. Clapping your hands — 4. operant 5. A gland producing insuline — 5. respondent 6. Shooting a basketball through a hoop — 6. operant 7. Getting goosebumps — 7. respondent 8. Using sign language — 8. operant 9. Folding your arms across your chest — 9. operant

15	Behavior or VGAS?
	1. Climbing the stairs — 1. behavior 2. Being creative — 2. VGAS (generality) 3. Acting like a professional — 3. VGAS (generality) 4. Sharpening a pencil — 4. behavior 5. Saying: '*We must be more proactive*!' — 5. behavior 6. Lying on the floor with one arm across your chest — 6. VGAS (static condition) 7. Doing the dishes — 7. behavior 8. Taking responsibility — 8. VGAS (generality) 9. Wearing glasses and a hat — 9. VGAS (static condition)
16	Exercise: list the behaviors
	Exercise: write down, or underline all *observable operant behaviors* you can find in this story. **Answer:** Anna, a CEO, walks around in her office in circles, thinking. She faces a real challenge! Some things finally need to change around here, if we wish to serve our customers better, she mumbles. Anna considers her options. We need to be more customer focused, obviously. Our people need to understand and live our corporate values. Being more transparent and more proactive should be a top priority for each and everyone of us! She has a plan. To communicate her ideas for her change initiative, Anna takes her laptop, and starts working on a presentation for her management team.

17	Performance
	Exercise: complete the diagram 
18	Results
	Exercise: name three *results* you produce at work • 1. documents • 2. records in computer systems • 3. drawings on a whiteboard after a team meeting Note: results may also be virtual, as long as the performer can leave the result behind when they leave their work. **Exercise: what test does a *result* have to pass?** **Answer:** Leave-it test (Gilbert, 1978)

21	Classic conditioning
	Question: What is a more common term for '*conditioning*'? **Answer:** learning **Exercise: briefly describe the *2 main steps* of the experiment which Pavlov conducted to condition a dog to salivate at the sound of a bell:** 1. stimulus pairing: associating a bell sound and food 2. stimulus substitution: replacing the food by the sound of a bell
22	Operant conditioning
	Discuss: '*Operant conditioning*' is based on '*learning from consequences*'. In this learning process, does it matter if these consequences are positive or negative? **Notes:** even though people most likely prefer positive consequences over negative consequences, both positive and negative consequences equally affect the learning process. In other words, it does not matter for the learning process itself.

23	Types of behavior – learning process
	Exercise: add the *learning process* for respondent and operant behavior **TYPES OF BEHAVIOR AND THEIR LEARNING PROCESS** **Respondent** / **Unconditioned** / **No learning process** **Respondent** / **Conditioned** / **Stimulus Pairing** **Operant** / **Conditioned** / **Reinforcement**
25	**Function 1: S**
	The first function in the list is: Sensory stimulation, biological causes **Exercise: Name 2 examples of operant behaviors that fulfill this function** **Answer:** 1. doing something exiting, like going to a concert of your favorite band and sing and dance while they perform; 2. responding to something that happens in/to your body, like scratching an itch.

26	**Function 2: E**
	The second function in the list is: Escape Behavior that serves this function can be *reactive* and *proactive*: ***'Reactive'* means:** Behavior *terminates* an ongoing, undesired situation or activity **Example:** you switch off your alarm clock when it wakes you up from your sleep ***'Proactive'* means:** behavior *prevents* the performer getting caught in an undesired situation **Example:** pressing the brake pedal to slow down your car, while approaching an intersection
27	**Function 3: A**
	The third function in the list is: Attention This behavior basically aims at experiencing a *social consequence* Behavior, serving this function, can help the performer to get what they want **question: can you name an example?** **answer:** in a restaurant you notify the waiter you wish to order a drink, or a meal **Behavior, serving this function, can also help the performer *to escape / prevent what they don't want*** **question: can you name an example?** **answer:** You yell for help, after you fell into cold water because you can't get out by yourself.
28	**Function 4: T**
	The fourth function in the list is: Tangibles and Preferred items **Via operant behavior we *interact with our environment*. Through this behavior we try to obtain, or produce:** 1. Tangible objects: anything you can touch, grab, or hold 2. Preferred items, which not necessarily are tangibles. For example: points you earn while playing a computer game.

29	Exercise: name the function(s)
	1. Jumping out of a plane, wearing a parachute — 1. Sensory stimulation (fun), escape (when plane is on fire) 2. Putting on your seat belt — 2. Escape (prevent injury from accidents, prevent tickets for not wearing them) 3. Baking cookies — 3. Tangibles (the cookie itself), sensory stimulation (the smell of fresh cookies) 4. Cleaning up your desk, before leaving for home — 4. Escape (preventing someone taking something from your desk) 5. Pressing keys on your computer keyboard — 5. Escape (if you must produce a report before deadline), preferred item 6. Raising your hand in class — 6. Attention, biological (if you just want to stretch a tight muscle) 7. Locking your car at the parking lot — 7. Escape (prevent the car, or its contents, from being stolen) 8. Inserting a coin in a slotmachine and press '*Play*' — 8. Sensory stimulation (exited to see if you win, you enjoy the lights/sounds) **Key message:** there is no single correct answer. The function of a behavior changes if the context changes. A single behavior can serve various functions, depending on the context in which the behavior occurs! If you wish to understand the function the behavior serves, you must check with the performer.
33	Consequences
	Exercise: complete this table

Consequence	Effect on the frequency of the preceding behavior
You get what you want	Behavior frequency increases, or stays the same
You don't get what you don't want	Behavior frequency increases, or stays the same
You get what you don't want	Behavior frequency decreases quickly
You lose something you have, You don't get what you want	Behavior frequency decreases over time

<table>
<tr><td>38</td><td>Conclusions</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Discuss: what did you learn from the ABC analysis and Consequence analysis exercise?
Notes:

- Important note: when analyzing consequences, ALWAYS take the perspective of the PERFORMER.</td></tr>
<tr><td>41</td><td>Strategies to influence behavior</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>
<table>
<tr><td>Exercise: complete this table</td><td>Behavior frequency INCREASES, or is MAINTAINED</td><td>Behavior frequency DECREASES</td></tr>
<tr><td>Stimulus is ADDED as a result of preceding behavior</td><td>POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT</td><td>PUNISHMENT</td></tr>
<tr><td>Stimulus is REMOVED as a result of preceding behavior</td><td>NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT</td><td>PENALTY</td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
<tr><td>45</td><td>Antecedents: Characteristics</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Question: what is the main characteristic of antecedents?
Answer: Antecedents always precede behavior, but do NOT cause behavior</td></tr>
</table>

46	Antecedents in working environments
	Exercise: name 3 antecedents in your working environment: 1. process descriptions, procedures, working instructions, knowledge, tools and equipment to do your job 2. environmental conditions, such as daylight and temperature 3. behavior of other people: colleagues, superiors, customers, etc.
47	Trust and Respect
	• **Discuss: what does it mean to you, '*to respect another person*'?** • **Notes:** this is a very personal matter and answers will vary. No right or wrong
50	Consequences follow behavior in two ways
	Exercise: Name the 2 ways in which a consequence (positive, or negative) can follow a behavior: **1.** automatic – consequences automatically follow your behavior **2.** social – somebody else responds to your behavior This is true for all types of consequences: positive and negative, immediate, future, certain and uncertain.
51	Reinforcer
	Discuss: what is the main difference between a *reward* and a *reinforcer*? **Notes:** all reinforcers are rewards, but not all rewards are a reinforcer. See section 7.3.7 in the textbook. *Reward*: can be anything, which is perceived as valuable, interesting, or welcomed by the receiver. The person(s) *presenting* the reward *hopes* that this reward will increase future performance. This is not necessarily true. *Reinforcer*: anything that follows a behavior and strengthens (or maintains) that behavior. The performer wants to perform again to get the reinforcer again. Performance increases (or is maintained at a specific maximum level) as a result of the produced reinforcer.

52	Deprivation
	Question: can you name two situations of *deprivation?* **Answer:** **1.** When feeling hungry (food deprivation), thirsty (water deprivation), or tired (sleep deprivation) **2.** When feeling ignored, or any situation in which you are not recognized for good performance (attention deprivation)
53	Satiation
	Question: can you name two situations of *satiation?* **Answer:** **1.** When you have binge-watched enough episodes of your favorite TV series and you want to stop watching it **2.** When you heard your favorite pop song too many times on a single day and don't want to hear it anymore
54	Positive Reinforcement, R+
	Exercise: why is this consequence called '*Positive reinforcement*', R+? ***Positive*, because:** as a result of a behavior something the performer wants (a reinforcer) is ADDED, or produced ***Reinforcement,* because:** the performer wants to repeat the behavior to get that same reinforcer again (it strengthens behavior) **Exercise: select an option:** positive reinforcement maximizes / ~~minimizes~~ performance
55	Extra effort
	Question: what usually happens *to you* if you *do not show* the extra effort? **Answer:** usually nothing bad happens if you do not show the extra effort

56	Negative Reinforcement, R-
	Exercise: why is this consequence called '*Negative reinforcement*', R-? ***Negative*, because:** as a result of a behavior something the performer does not like (an aversive stimulus) is REMOVED, or AVOIDED ***Reinforcement,* because:** every time the aversive stimulus occurs, the performer will act to escape, or avoid the aversive stimulus (the aversive stimulus thus strengthens escape, or avoidance behavior) **Exercise: Three characteristics of behavior maintained by R- are:** 1. minimum performance levels 2. compliance 3. J-curve performance graphs
57	R- in an organization
	Exercise: name three work-related situations that signal R- 1. deadlines are used to ensure certain performance levels 2. negative talk about others, especially management/superiors 3. making mistakes is avoided at all costs. People tend to cover-up any mistakes made
58	Punishment, P+
	Exercise: why is this consequence also called '*Positive punishment*', P+? ***Positive*, because:** as a result of a behavior something is ADDED, or produced ***Punishment,* because:** the added consequence is something the performer does not like or want (a punisher) which quickly stops the behavior **Question: how would you describe *the main effect* that P+ has on behavior?** **Answer:** P+ suppresses behavior

59	P+, when to apply punishment
	Exercise: name three situations that justify the use/application of P+ **1.** the performer is doing something illegal **2.** the performer is doing something which is dangerous to themselves, or others **3.** the performer is doing something immoral / unethical (including written or unwritten rules)
60	Penalty, P-
	Exercise: why is the consequence '*Penalty*' also called '*Negative punishment*', P-? ***Negative*, because:** as a result of a behavior something the performer values is REMOVED ***Punishment,* because:** the behavior that causes the performer to lose something of value will stop
61	P- can lead to extinction
	Question: if *extinction* is *applied deliberately*, what is the most important factor to make this type of intervention effective? **Answer:** you must be 100% consistent to make this intervention effective **Discuss: Let's say, you are experiencing P-, because certain behavior is being ignored. What happens to you emotionally?** **Notes:** most people experience feelings of anger, or frustration, if a certain behavior no longer produces the expected reinforcer, such as attention.
62	Punishment Trap
	Question: P+ and P- are (too) often used to influence behavior in business environments. Why? **Answer:** this is because the person that applies P+ or P-, in many cases immediately gets the effect they seek. E.g. the punished people change their behavior, or stop what they are doing. Getting something you want most likely reinforces the preceding behavior. In this case: the punishing behavior is reinforced.

64	Responding to problem behavior
	Discuss: why is P+ *not a good strategy* for permanently dealing with problem behavior? **Notes:** because P+ suppresses behavior by adding something the performer does not like. It *does not remove the cause of the problem behavior*. Problem behavior produces R+ for the performer. Adding punishment in response to the problem behavior does not solve the problem.
65	Differential Reinforcement of Alternative behavior (DRA)
	Discuss: describe a situation in which DRA is *not an effective response* to problem behavior **Notes:** DRA is not effective in any situation where you have *no control over the reinforcer* following the behavior you wish to modify. To make DRA effective, you as influencer, should be able to withhold reinforcement. In other words: DRA is effective if you, as influencer, can determine the conditions for reinforcement: - Timing - Frequency - Amount If the performer emits any form of *unwanted behavior/problem behavior*, you must *not reinforce*.
71	Specifying Performance
	Exercise: describe the Activity Trap in your own words **Answer:** specifying activities (behavior) *before* you have clearly specified the desired results.
72	Characteristics of specifications
	Exercise: fill in the missing words in the following two sentences: 1. **Specifying performance:** accurately describe RESULTS first, then accurately describe BEHAVIOR 2. **For specifying behavior,** we apply the MACRO *test* (or BOMBA in Dutch)

73	Specifying behavior: MACRO
	Exercise: name the five aspects of MACRO • **M:** Measurable • **A:** Active • **C:** Controllable • **R:** Reliable • **O:** Observable
75	Barriers to measurement
	Discuss: what is, *most likely*, the *main reason* for resistance to performance measurement? **Notes:** in most cases *the main reason* for resistance to performance measurement is the fear that measurement results will be used against the performer(s). In other words: measurement is perceived as an antecedent for punishment.
76	Measurement methods
	Two measurement methods are: **1.** counting **2.** judging **Question: which measurement method is often used in business environments?** **Answer:** judging **Question: which measurement method do/would you prefer as an employee, and why?** **Answer:** most people prefer counting, because it is a more objective and transparent way of measuring performance.

78	ABC Analysis
	Question: what is the purpose of the *initial ABC Analysis & Consequence Analysis*: **Answer:** its purpose is to better understand the current measurement results **Exercise: complete the abbreviations:** - **CUB:** Current Undesired Behavior - **CDB:** Current Desired Behavior - **DFB:** Desired Future Behavior Note: behavior is considered to be *undesired* if it does not match the specifications (Step 1 in the protocol). Note: the specifications for CDB and DFB are identical. Only the conditions under which these behaviors are emitted are different in terms of A and C.
80	Performance Feedback
	Discuss: how is *performance feedback* different from *regular feedback*? **Notes:** Regular feedback usually is given in situations where one person is unhappy about another person's behavior. In many cases, regular feedback is exchanged in the form of an opinion. E.g. "*It is my observation that you are always talking too loud on the phone. Therefore, I can't focus on my work, which bothers me. This has to stop, wouldn't you agree?*" Usually, there is no link with specified performance. Performance feedback is data and information, *linked to specified performance*. The interpretation of the data and information is preferably done by the *performer*. The performer can decide to adjust their behavior, based on the performance feedback.

81	Performance Feedback: A or C?
	Discuss: would you consider *performance feedback* to be an A or a C? **Notes:** Performance Feedback can be seen, both as an A and as a C. Performance Feedback arises AFTER performance has been delivered. So, you can see it as a consequence of performance. On the other hand: you want to use the feedback for *improving future performance*. From that perspective, performance feedback is an antecedent. **Question: how is performance feedback *meant to be used in OBM*?** **Answer:** performance feedback is meant to be used as an antecedent for future performance.
82	Ineffective verbal feedback: Sandwich method
	Discuss: why is the Sandwich feedback method considered to be *flawed and ineffective*? **Notes:** the Sandwich is flawed and ineffective, because people quickly learn what's going on. First you get a compliment, just to prepare you for a form of negative feedback. The compliment gets ignored. People are waiting for and focusing on the negative comment. The positive comments, no matter how well intended, are lost as sincere opportunities for positive reinforcement.
84	Effective goal setting
	Question: what most likely happens to motivation if goals are *not attainable*? **Answer:** motivation usually drops to a minimum quickly if goals are not attainable **Question: what most likely happens to motivation if goal attainment is *not paired with R+*?** **Answer:** motivation usually drops as well, if goal attainment is not paired with R+. If goal attainment is not paired with R+, then goal attainment most likely is ignored (P-). One of the expected effects of P- is a reduction in performance.
85	Shaping
	Discuss: what leadership qualities are required to be able to shape performance? **Notes:** leaders should be able to accurately specify the desired performance. They need to step back a little and allow for people to make mistakes and learn from their mistakes. Leaders should be trained in catching people in the act of doing something well, in stead of catching people for making mistakes. Leaders need to understand the power of positive reinforcement.

87	Finding reinforcers
	Exercise: list 2 examples of what you would perceive as a reinforcer. **Compare notes with the student next to you. What is your conclusion?** The conclusion is that reinforcers may differ from person to person. What is reinforcing to you may be punishing to me, and vice versa. **Question: can you name the three ways of finding Reinforcers: TAO?** **T:** Try **A:** Ask **O:** Observe
88	Schedules of Reinforcement
	Question: can you name the two *basic schedules of reinforcement?* **Answer:** **1. Continuous schedule of reinforcement** **2. Intermittent schedule of reinforcement**
89	Intermittent Schedules of Reinforcement

Exercise: **complete the table**	**Fixed**	**Variable**
Number of correct responses (behaviors)	FIXED RATIO	VARIABLE RATIO
The amount of time	FIXED INTERVAL	VARIABLE INTERVAL

	Question: can you name a real-life example of *each intermittent schedule*? **Notes:** **Fixed ratio**: piecework, couriers who are paid per package delivered **Variable ratio**: gambling **Fixed interval**: planned, weekly inspections **Variable interval**: checking your email messages, monitoring for systems outages, firemen waiting to respond to fire.
91	How to evaluate
	Question: what is the most effective way to evaluate an OBM intervention? **Answer:** you start with step 6 in the protocol and work your way back to step 1.
92	Conclude
	Discuss: who should be involved in this evaluation activity? **Notes:** preferably all performers are involved. Allow for storytelling. What happened? Tell us how you dealt with problem x, what happened next? How does it feel to actually improve? Etc. The *pitfall* is to evaluate with managers only, looking at the numbers and KPI scores.