

# 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:**

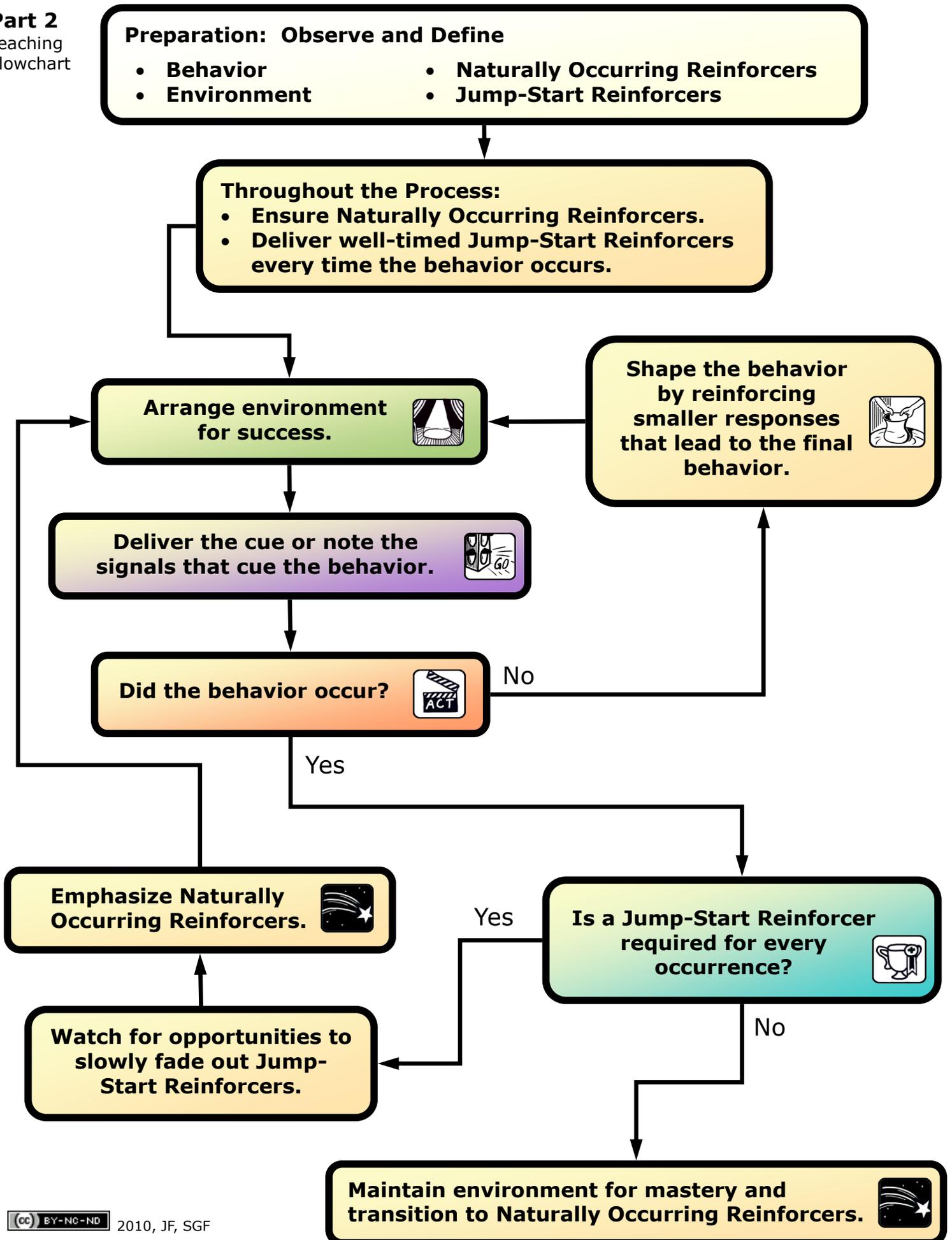
- × What is the natural outcome of this behavior?
- × Is it worthwhile enough for the learner to maintain the behavior in the long run?
- × Consider the different types of reinforcers: tangible items, social interaction, activities, sensory stimulus and escape from aversive events



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	horrific	relentless
aggression	hyper	resent
aggressive	hyperactive	resentful
always	immodest	rowdy
angrily	impatient	rude
angry	impolite	savage
antics	incorrect	shy
argumentative	indecent	silly
arrogant	infantile	slob
bashful	intention	sloppy
bossy	intentional	sly
careless	intentionally	snarky
chaotic	intentions	sneaky
cheerful	irreverent	stern
childish	irritable	strange
childlike	jealous	stubborn
clingy	kind	submissive
cocky	king	tame
confused	loyal	terrible
constantly	mean	territorial
controllable	messing	testing
controlling	messy	testy
crazy	micromanage	tidy
cross	micromanaged	timid
decent	micromanaging	touchy
derogatory	modest	tough
despondent	nasty	tyrannical
dictating	neurotic	unattached
dictator	never	unbelievable
difficult	normal	uncaring
disagree	obedient	uncontrollable
disagreeable	odd	unfocused
disloyal	oppressive	unhappy
disobedient	ornery	unkind
disobey	overbearing	unlimited
disorderly	patient	unreal
disorganized	pesky	unrealistic
distracted	polite	unrealistic
dominate	presumptuous	unreasonable
dominating	pretentious	unrelenting
domineering	prince	unreliable
emotional	princess	unresponsive
emotionally	proud	unruly
emotions	psychotic	untidy
expectation	pushy	unwilling
expectations	queen	upset
expecting	questioning	vague
expects	quirky	weird
funny	radical	wild
grudge	rash	wildly
grudgingly	refusal	wrong
happy	refuse	wrongly
hates	refuses	