

Preface

Thinking and Acting Like a Behavioral School Counselor

As the title of this text may suggest, the pages that follow will provide descriptions and illustrations of the use of various behavioral strategies, including the performance of functional behavioral analyses, the use of operant conditioning, and various other similar procedures. But this is only part of the focus of this text.

The unique value of *Thinking and Acting Like a Behavioral School Counselor* is that it goes beyond the presentation of a theory and assists the readers to step into that theory, embrace it as an organizational framework and then—and most importantly—employ it to guide their procedural thinking when confronted with client information.

TEXT FORMAT AND CHAPTER STRUCTURE

Procedural knowledge, or the ability to know what to do when the student does this or that, is a hallmark of the expert counselor. Research suggests that procedural knowledge is acquired as the result of practice accompanied by feedback. Practice and feedback will be central to this text.

Case illustrations, case presentations with analyses of counselor actions and the decision-making processes underlying them, along with guided-practice activities, will be employed as “teaching tools” throughout the text. The book will be organized around the following parts. Part I introduces the reader to a reflective practitioner model of school counseling (Chapter 1) and the fundamentals of a behavioral orientation (Chapter 2). With these as foundations, Part II provides the reader with specific behavioral interventions targeting the development of desired behavior (Chapter 3), the reduction of undesirable behaviors (Chapter 4), and the replacement of behavior by way of counterconditioning (Chapter 5).

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The final part of the book, Part III, invites the reader to first “observe” the thinking of a school counselor operating from a behavioral-orienting framework (Chapter 6) and then to actually apply a behavioral-orienting framework to case materials (Chapter 7).

As with all texts of this nature, this book is but a beginning. For school counselors, embracing the value and efficacy of a behavioral framework to guide their reflective practice additional training, supervision and professional development is a must. Hopefully, *Thinking and Acting Like a Behavioral School Counselor* provides a good springboard to that end.

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