

AAC Considerations Matrix for Person-Directed Planning Toolkit

Considerations Matrix

This matrix of information provides planning facilitators with a comprehensive (but not exhaustive) list of things to consider when creating partner communication strategies with planning recipients. The considerations are meant to be analyzed in relation to the information collected through communication context interviews and observations conducted in *Phase 2*.

The matrix provides the planning facilitator with more detailed information on how the planning recipient can use AAC to communicate. The matrix is designed to provide a hierarchy of communication ability from basics (i.e. being able to answer yes/no only), to higher communication ability levels (i.e. being able to make social statements).

In reviewing information from *Phase 2*, the planning facilitator confirms the planning recipient's AAC ability level by checking off all applicable categories included in the matrix. Communication factors are provided to assist the planning facilitator in answering whether or not the planning recipient is truly able to use AAC at each of the levels.

Once a level of communication ability has been determined, the planning facilitator identifies the applicable strategies listed in the matrix as the basis for their draft *PDP Partner Communication Strategies*.

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PDP Partner Communication Strategies Template

Once the planning facilitator has given some thought to the considerations presented in the *Considerations Matrix*, the following template is completed. The PDP Partner Communication Strategies Template is meant to assist the planning facilitator in developing communication strategies for each of the major topics discussed in the *Planning Phase*.

Below is a sample of a completed template to give you an idea of how it is to be used:

Appendix D

PDP Partner Communication Strategies Template

Planning Category	Communication Strategy
1. Vision	<p>When asking questions about his vision for the future, try to have pictures of current life activities and ask yes/no questions to ensure that he understands the locations, events, people, etc... on his current board. Verify that he knows about talking about the here and now and then the future. Use a calendar to help with comprehension. Also indicate what you think his gestures mean and ask if you understand him correctly.</p> <p>Try to find very concrete photos of possible life situations, label and describe them to the individual. Ensure that he understands the meaning behind the picture and then ask yes/no questions about them. Verify the answers by asking the question in slightly different ways and see if you get the same answer.</p>
2. Getting to Know You	<p>Spend some time communicating with the individual and talk about the pictures on his board. Ask what is important or what he likes to do/have the most. Ask the family to help you with the activities that the individual might like to do and have a discussion about what it is that they like about those activities. Watch his facial expressions for clues to help you determine if this is a liked or disliked activity. Also watch his body movements. He will start to rock when your questions are becoming too difficult for him to understand.</p>
3. About Your Relationships	<p>Ask parents to try to get pictures of the important people in the individual's life. Determine first that he recognizes all of the people. Ask it in a yes/no format and watch for the head movement to indicate if he knows the person. Have a discussion about what he does with the person in the photo using yes/no questions. Point to pictures on the communication board to help with focus and possible reference items (e.g. point to picture of football, then the picture of John and talk about going to watch football games with John at the local school).</p>
4. Your Gifts Talents and Abilities	<p>Try to get parents/friends to get pictures of the individual doing lots of different activities. Talk about the pictures and in very concrete terms, talk about the things he is able to do. Talk about what is easy or hard to do. Talk about what he can do that some of his friends may or may not be able to do. Also talk about things he can't do but make sure that it is done in a positive manner.</p>
5. How You Communicate	<p>Talk about the use of his gestures and facial expressions. Say things like, "When I see you nod your head, I think you mean yes, is that right? Talk about items on the communication board. See how relevant they are in his current life.</p>
6. Your Participation and Contribution	<p>Try to get pictures of current life activities with the individual in the pictures. Discuss what he does on a daily basis by first pointing to the picture and then asking yes/no questions. If you need to ask "Wh- questions", make them very simple and only use What, Who and When questions. Why and How questions are too difficult. Try to ask a "Wh- question" that can be answered with one of the pictures on the board</p>

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7. Your Needs	This will be a very difficult area to try to get answers for. Try to not lead the questioning and/or allow others to answer for him. If possible, find a variety of pictures that address the possible needs. Ensure first that he understands each picture. Since he is using a communication board, you can put out more than one picture at a time for him to make a choice with them. Watch his facial expressions when he is looking at the pictures. Body movements may tell you if he does not understand or like the picture.
8. Goals	This will be a very difficult area to try to get answers for. Try to phrase the sentences and questions in a concrete way. Do not use abstract speech because he will not understand it. Try to use pictures to help comprehension. Watch gestures and body movements to indicate comprehension.
9. Setting Your Goals	This will be a very difficult area to try to get answers for. Try to phrase the sentences and questions in a concrete way. Do not use abstract speech because he will not understand it. Try to use pictures to help comprehension. Watch gestures and body movements to indicate comprehension.