

Determining the Function of Challenging Behaviors

Using The MOTIVATION ASSESSMENT SCALE (Durand & Crimmins, 1986)

1. **With a partner**, discuss a student you have encountered that has challenging behaviors. Knowing what you now know about the functions and communicative intent of behavior, process the questions and be ready to share (on chart paper):

- Describe the student's behavior in OBSERVABLE terms
- What do you hypothesize is the purpose of the student's behavior? What are they trying to communicate? (recall the functions of behavior)
- Using the **Motivation Assessment Scale (Durand & Crimmins, 1986)**, DETERMINE the function/purpose of the behavior by completing the survey and calculations.
- Was your original hypothesis correct? Not correct?
- What did you learn about the function of the behavior by completing the MAS?
- How might you prevent the behavior from occurring? How might you change the who, what, where of the activity to prevent the behavior from occurring?
- What new skills does the student need to learn in order to get their needs met in an acceptable way?

2. **On your own:** Complete a Professional Educator Reflection addressing the following questions. Write at least 1-2 double spaced pages in response to these questions:

- ❖ What have you learned about the importance of determining the function or communicative intent of challenging behaviors that you didn't previously consider?
- ❖ What are the implications of this for you as a professional educator?
- ❖ What practices might you alter or increase as a result of this new learning?