

## Executive Function: Why Doesn't Everyone Think Like Me?

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# **Executive Function**



The mental processes that enable us to...

- Plan
- Focus Attention
- Remember Instructions
- Juggle Multiple Tasks
   Successfully



## Beyond BookSmart

### **EXECUTIVE FUNCTION DEVELOPMENT**

When do skills typically emerge?

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Emerging Skills

Learning to pay attention Learning to control behavior & impulses Shifting behavior to follow rules Following 2-3 step directions



### HIGH SCHOOL

#### Emerging Skills

Learning to think & behave flexibly Organizing & planning projects or activities with friends or classmates Adapting to changing rules Deepening self-awareness



### MIDDLE SCHOOL

### **Emerging Skills**

Learning to think ahead to plan actions & to solve problems Managing & following a daily routine Modifying behavior in changing environments





## Why is Executive Function Important to me as a Leader?



Using strategies to set & achieve

meaningful goals

### COLLEGE

Emerging Skills

Using Executive Function skills to be independent and productive Self-monitoring of productivity & performance Consistent impulse control across different environments







## **Executive Skills Questionnaire**





### **Executive Skills Questionnaire**

Read each item below and then rate that item based on the extent to which you agree or disagree with how well it describes you. Use the rating scale below to choose the appropriate score. Then add the three scores in each section. Use the key at the end of the questionnaire to determine your executive skill strengths (two to three highest scores) and weaknesses (two to three lowest scores).

	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly agree		
Item	n					Y	our score	
1.	I don't jump to	conclusions				-		
2.	I think before I	speak.						
3.	l make sure l ha	we all the fa	cts before	take action				
						TOTAL		
4.	l have a good m	emory for f	acts, dates,	and details.				
5.	5. I am very good at remembering the things I have committed to do.							
6.	I seldom need r	eminders to	complete t	asks.				
						TOTAL		
	My emotions seldom get in the way of my job performance.							
8.	Little things do at hand.	not affect n	ne emotiona	lly or distra	ct me from	the task		
9.	When frustrate	d or angry, I	keep my co	ol.				
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11.	Procrastination	is usually no	ot a problem	for me.				
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17.	When I have a lot to do, I can easily focus on the most important things.							
18.	I typically break	k big tasks d	ow <mark>n int</mark> o su	otasks and ti	imelines.			
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## **Response Inhibition**

The capacity to think before you act – this ability to resist the urge to say or do something allows us the time to evaluate a situation and how our behavior might impact it.





# **Working Memory**

The ability to hold information in memory while performing complex tasks.

Incorporates the ability to draw on past learning or experience to apply to the situation at hand or to project into the future.





## **Emotional Control**

The ability to manage emotions to achieve goals, complete tasks, and direct behavior





# **Task Initiation**

The ability to begin projects without undue procrastination, in an efficient or timely fashion.





## **Sustained Attention**

The capacity to keep attention on a situation or task in spite of distractibility, fatigue or boredom.





## **Planning and Prioritizing**

The ability to create a road map to reach a goal or to complete a task. It also involves being able to make decisions about what's important to focus on and what's not important.





# Organization

The ability to create and maintain systems to keep track of information or materials.





# **Time Management**

The capacity to estimate how much time one has, how to allocate it, and how to stay within time limits and deadlines. It also involves a sense that time is important.





# Flexibility

The ability to revise plans in the face of obstacles, setbacks, new information, or mistakes. It relates to an adaptability to changing conditions.





# Metacognition

The ability to stand back and take a bird's-eye view of oneself in a situation. It is an ability to observe how you problem solve. It also includes self-monitoring and self-evaluative skills (for example, asking yourself, "How am I doing?" or "How did I do?")





## **Goal Directed Persistence**

The capacity to have a goal, follow through to the completion of the goal, and not be put off by or distracted by competing interests.





## **Stress Tolerance**

The ability to thrive in stressful situations and to cope with uncertainty, change, and performance demands.







### Neuroplasticity







### Neuroplasticity









## BRAIN AGILITY



### Mindset Mastery







## Worksheet 1

- What are your three executive skills strengths and your three weaknesses?
- 2. What aspects of your job do you find easiest and hardest?
- 3. How can you use this information?



## Using Strengths More Effectively



- Draw on strengths more often and more effectively
- Use a strength to compensate for a weakness



## Worksheet 3

- 1. Enter an area of weakness in the first column.
- 2. Answer the questions in the next three columns.
- 3. Make the last column an action step "What will you do?"

>



## Working with People Whose Profiles Differ from Yours





## Working with People Whose Profiles Differ from Yours

- Divide job tasks based on executive skill strengths
- Talk things through using "I" statements





## Supervising Someone with Executive Skill Weaknesses That Interfere with Job Performance

- Explore changes in responsibilities that are a better match
- Identify environmental supports that might minimize the impact
- Incorporate executive skills into annual performance reviews

## Executive Skills Questionnaire



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- The 4 Brain Superpowers You Need to Be a Successful Leader, According to Neuroscience, Leigh Buchanan <a href="http://bit.ly/2nISAXN">http://bit.ly/2nISAXN</a>
- Infographic: When Do Executive Function Skills Typically Emerge in Children? <u>http://bit.ly/2B9mg3t</u>

## **Contact Information**





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