

EX Factor: Executive Functions

Exec. Functions	Indicators	Strategies/Interventions
Task Initiation <i>The ability to begin projects without undue procrastination, in an efficient or timely fashion.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can't get started on a task on his/her own • Puts off long term assignments • Has meandering thoughts and uses associative thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Clear, concrete expectations ❖ Interactive checklists ❖ Timers ❖ Private work space ❖ Reflection & reinforcement!
Flexibility <i>The ability to revise plans in the face of obstacles, setbacks, new information, or mistakes; it relates to adaptability to changing conditions.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gets stuck on one problem solving strategy • Gets upset by unexpected changes to schedule or plans • Doesn't look for new resources to help solve a problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Visuals ❖ Frameworks & scaffolds ❖ Discussing "thinking flexibly" ❖ Social Thinking ❖ Reflection & reinforcement!
Sustained Attention <i>The capacity to maintain attention to a situation or task in spite of distractibility, fatigue, or boredom.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to complete class work on time • Stops work before finishing it • Can't refocus after interruptions • Has difficulty staying focused on a task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Timers ❖ Incentives ❖ Limit visual distractors ❖ Incorporate interests ❖ Reflection & reinforcement!
Organization <i>The ability to arrange or place things according to a system.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't write down assignments • Loses books and/or papers • Doesn't keep belongings neat and in appropriate location • Can't keep backpack organized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Binder ❖ Guided notes ❖ Checklists ❖ Graphic organizers ❖ Color coding ❖ Reflection & reinforcement!
Planning & Prioritization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't know where to start an assignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Task analysis ❖ Plan discussion

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<p><i>The ability to create a roadmap to reach a goal or to complete a task.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can't develop a timeline for long-term projects • Has difficulty breaking an assignment into smaller parts • Tries to do a little bit of everything at once 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Calendars ❖ Time estimations ❖ Reflection & reinforcement!
<p>Time Management <i>The capacity to estimate how much time one has, how to allocate it, and how to stay within time limits and deadlines.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't work efficiently • Can't estimate how long it takes to do something • Doesn't complete work on time • Has difficulty following a timeline to complete work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Timers & visuals ❖ Clear expectations ❖ Schedules & checklists ❖ Day planners ❖ Reflection & reinforcement!
<p>Working Memory <i>The ability to hold information in memory while performing complex tasks.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forgets or can't follow directions • Leaves homework at home • Doesn't remember to hand in work • Has difficulty remembering instructional sequences after instruction • Doesn't bring home appropriate materials • Loses things in the classroom and other places • Doesn't follow classroom procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Task lists ❖ Verbal & nonverbal reminders ❖ Timers & visuals ❖ Reflection & reinforcement!
<p>Metacognition <i>The ability to stand back and take a bird's-eye view of oneself in a situation; the ability to self-monitor and self-evaluate.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't have effective study strategies • Has difficulty catching or correcting mistakes • Makes careless errors • Fails to check work • Doesn't ask for help when needed • Doesn't attempt to solve problem first on his/her own before asking for help • Can't accurately evaluate own work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Comic Strip Conversations ❖ Self-monitoring ❖ Goal-setting ❖ Reviewing video ❖ Reflection & reinforcement!

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Response Inhibition <i>The capacity to think before acting.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks out in class • Interrupts others • Says things without thinking • Acts impulsively (verbal and/or physical) • Has difficulty waiting his/her turn • Doesn't recognize the reactions of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Priming ❖ Schedules & timers ❖ Visual reminders ❖ Coping tools ❖ Reflection & reinforcement!
Emotional Control <i>The ability to manage emotions in order to achieve goals, complete tasks, or control or direct behavior.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freezes on tests • Gets frustrated when makes mistakes • Stops trying in face of challenge • Throws temper tantrums • Isn't aware of own feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Coping & relaxation tools ❖ Visual reminders ❖ Sensory tools ❖ Reflection & reinforcement!
Goal-Directed Persistence <i>The capacities to have a goal, follow through to the completion of the goal, and not be put off by or distracted by competing interests.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't see connection between homework and long term assignments • Doesn't follow through to achieve stated goals • Resents having too much homework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Schedules & looking ahead ❖ Clear goals ❖ Self-monitoring progress ❖ Reflection & reinforcement!
Stress Tolerance <i>The ability to thrive in stressful situations and to cope with uncertainty, change and performance demands.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angry when asked to correct something • Shuts down • Sensitive to criticism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See strategies under Emotional Control • Acknowledge the frustration • Allow manageable alternatives and decision-making