Executive Function Skills and Its Effects on Student Performance - Secondary Level

Kc Nelson-Oliveria, SERC

Learner Outcomes

- Increase understanding of the 11 Executive Functioning Skills
- Will review strategies to support development of executive function skills through a PBIS Framework

A Career Life Changing Perspective

- IQ test scores, under optimal test conditions, account for 40% to 50% of current expected achievement.
- Thus, 50% to 60% of student achievement is related to variables “beyond intelligence”.

What are Executive Function Skills?

- Set of intrinsic skills or mental processes
- Develop gradually
- Needed for academic and social success
- Observable behaviors
- Can be explicitly taught

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Type</th>
<th>The ability to...</th>
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<tr>
<td>Impulse Control</td>
<td>Resist the urge to say or do something allowing time to evaluate situation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Memory</td>
<td>Hold information in mind and use it to complete a task</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional Control</td>
<td>Manage feelings in order to achieve goals, complete tasks, or control behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustained Attention</td>
<td>Maintain attention to a situation or task in spite of distractions, fatigue, or boredom</td>
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<td>Task Initiation</td>
<td>Begin projects without undue procrastination, in an efficient or timely fashion</td>
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<td>Planning/ Prioritizing</td>
<td>Create steps to reach a goal and make decisions about what to focus on</td>
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<td>Organization</td>
<td>Create and maintain systems to keep track of information or materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>Determine how much time have, how to allocate it, and how to stay within time limits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>Adapt plans in face of obstacles, setbacks, new information, or mistakes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal-Directed Persistence</td>
<td>Have a goal, follow through to completion, and not be put off or distracted by competing interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Monitoring</td>
<td>Observe oneself in situation; monitor and evaluate how problem solve</td>
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Dawson & Guare 2010
Strategies

Weekly Planning Sheet

for the week of:

Assignment Sheet

Do ex A and B in wkbk.

Check spelling

Assign. Completion Overhead # 8

Assign. Completion Overhead # 9
Strategic Instruction Process

Integrating EF into Daily Instruction

• What are the general EF skills needed to engage in the learning?
• What are the critical EF skills for completing the designed learning activity?

Resources

• Dawson, P. & Guare, R. 2010. Executive Skills in Children and Adolescents: A Practical guide to Assessment and Intervention, 2nd ed. The Guilford Press. NY, NY.
The SERC Library (www.ctserc.org/library) offers more than 10,000 resources for educators and families, including:

- books;
- instructional materials;
- tests;
- journals;
- DVDs;
- online databases and topical Lib Guides; and
- children's books.

Contact Info:

Kc Nelson-Oliveria, Consultant, nelson-oliveria@ctserc.org