

Executive Skills Definitions

How We Organize and Plan Things

Organization: Knowing where I put things

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

Time Management: Know about how long a task will take and what the deadline is

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.

Planning/ Prioritization: Deciding what steps to take

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 is important to focus on and what is not important.

How We React to Things

Response Inhibition: Seeing the consequence before I say or do something

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.

Flexibility: Going with the flow, accepting change

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

Emotional Control: Keeping my cool when frustrated

The ability to manage emotions in order to achieve goals, complete tasks, or control and direct behavior.

Stress Tolerance: Managing my stress

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

Metacognition: Evaluating how I'm doing

The ability to stand back and take a bird's eye view of yourself in a situation, 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?")

How We Get Things Done

Task Initiation: Getting started without a delay

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

Sustained Attention: Paying attention, even when I don't feel like it

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

Goal-Directed Persistence: Sticking with my goal

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

Working Memory: Remembering what I did and what I need to do

The ability to hold information in memory while performing complex tasks. It incorporates the ability to draw on past learning or experience to apply to the situation at hand or to project into the future.