



## Executive Function Disorder

Executive Function may be called the command and control center of the brain. Children and adults use it to perform activities such as planning, organizing, paying attention to and remembering details, and managing time and space. Although often considered a new catch-all term for disorganization, neuropsychologists have been studying all the skills related to executive function for many years.

Executive Function disorders usually surface in the early school years. Early interventions that develop skills to manage this learning disability can be useful for a lifetime.

In school, at home, or in the workplace, people use executive function to:

- *Make plans*
- *Keep track of time and finish work on time*
- *Keep track of more than one thing at once*
- *Evaluate ideas and reflect on one's work*
- *Change one's mind and make ongoing corrections while thinking, reading, and writing*
- *Ask for help or seek more information when needed*
- *Engage in group interactions*

If you struggle with executive function, try these strategies:

- *Take step-by-step approaches to work; rely on visual organizational aids.*
- *Use tools like time organizers, computers or watches with alarms.*
- *Prepare visual schedules and review them several times a day.*
- *Ask for written directions along with oral instructions whenever possible.*
- *Plan and structure transition times and shifts in activities.*
- *Create checklists and "to do" lists, estimating how long tasks will take.*
- *Break up big assignments and establish time frames for completing each piece.*
- *Use visual calendars to keep track of assignments, due dates, chores, and activities.*
- *Write the due date on top of each assignment.*
- *Organize work space; minimize clutter.*
- *Consider having separate work areas with complete sets of supplies for different activities.*
- *Schedule a weekly time to clean and organize the work space.*
- *Make a checklist for getting through assignments. For example, a student's checklist could include: get out pencil and paper; put name on paper; put due date on paper; read directions; etc.*
- *Meet with teacher or supervisor on a regular basis to review work; troubleshoot problems.*

Source:

National Center for Learning Disabilities, *What is Executive Function*

<http://www.ncld.org/ld-basics/ld-aamp-executive-functioning/basic-ef-facts/what-is-executive-function>

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