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What is Executive Functioning?

- It is the main function of the pre-frontal cortex.
- Executive functioning enables us to memorize, focus, apply concepts, plan and complete tasks that reflect one's ability.

Why use the 8 Pillars of Executive Functioning to define and help set learning goals?

- Direct instruction and strategies help develop executive functioning.
- People often respond to suggestions that are concrete and connected to their work.

How else can we effectively use the 8 Pillars of Executive Functioning?

- We can develop a common language when discussing performance.
- One or more of the 8 pillars are weak in those challenged by feeling overwhelmed or experiencing an emotional challenge. Thus we can help use the pillars to develop support plans.

Executive Functioning: *No Mind Left Behind*. 2006. Dr. Adam Cox

<i>Term</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Strategies</i>
Initiation	begins tasks, does not avoid work, starts independently	A check list, work with a coach, monitor in chunks, make a plan and then start work in the Centre, or with advisor etc.
Flexibility	adjusts behaviour and thinking, able to analyze from multiple perspective, can move from one task to another	Use charts to keep other ideas “visible”, transition from one activity or concept, give an overview off what is being taught.
Sustaining Attention	Is able to track and follow directions, block distractions, tolerate repetition, remain quiet to comprehend	Chunk directions, use an timed overview (i.e. first half of class, we will be doing...), use non-verbal cues (i.e. a tap on the shoulder)
Organization	uses school binders and locker effectively, has material needed, know where to find notes or information needed	Have exemplars available (i.e. a model binder), assess organization, value note-taking in collaborative activities, use frequent check ins.
Planning	coordinates multi-step projects, considers consequences of actions, can prioritize, can note factors that impact plans	Make planning a part of a project, have student submit plans with evidence of starting the work, discuss “what ifs”,
Working Memory	retains information needed to apply to tasks or new learning, recalls procedural steps, rarely loses belongings	Use charts to organize information, have student write brief notes while writing, start classes with “what did we learn last class?”, have student jot down what would need to be remembered in order to answer short answer or essay questions.
Self Awareness	pick up on social cues, uses appropriate vocal volume, is able to make and sustain friends, has acceptable behaviour	“Name it”...be sensitive but label the behaviour and what would be acceptable, praise when behaviour is appropriate...and again, “name it!”, set up social groups with a purpose, i.e. a work group and assign roles.
Managing Emotions	able to shrug off or recover from minor disappointments, can control emotional impulses, does not overreact	Figure out what triggers emotions, objectify by talking about choices, develop strategies for pausing, offer support