

EXECUTIVE SKILLS PROBLEM CHECKLIST

Sometimes, we just need more practice. Place a check mark where you notice that you struggle in. Place a star next to your strengths. Remember SOAPS: Self – honesty with yourself.

Response Inhibition

- Rushing through work to just get it done
- Not having patience to produce quality work
- Giving up on homework when encountering an obstacle
- Having trouble doing homework when there are more fun things to do

Working Memory

- Writing assignment instructions without enough detail to understand later
- Forgetting to take home necessary materials or take materials to class
- Forgetting to hand in work
- Forgetting long-term projects or upcoming tests (due dates or in general)
- Not paying attention to classroom instructions/task directions
- Trouble remembering multiple directions or multiple problem steps
- Losing materials
- Forgetting to complete assignments
- Forgetting to check agenda/assignment book
- Not recording when an assignment is due

Emotional Control

- Getting really irritated when an assignment is hard or confusing
- Finding it hard to get started on assignments because of perfectionism or fear of failure
- Freezing when taking tests and doing poorly despite studying long and hard
- Not seeing the point of an assignment and finding it hard to motivate yourself to do it

Task Initiation

- Not knowing how to get started
- Believing the task will “take forever”
- Believing my performance won’t meet expectations
- Seeing the task as tedious, boring, or irrelevant
- Finding other things to do rather than starting homework
- Having difficulty getting back to work after breaks

Sustained Attention

- Taking frequent breaks when working
- Taking breaks that are too long
- Externally distracted—sights, sounds, technology: please specify _____
- Internally distracted—thoughts, states, moods, daydreams: _____
- Rushing through work—sloppy/mistakes
- Not knowing how long I can sustain attention or when the best study time is
- Not recognizing when I'm off task

Planning & Prioritization

- Not making or not knowing how to make a study plan
- Can't break down long-term projects into smaller tasks and timeliness
- Having difficulty taking notes or studying because I can't distinguish important from nonimportant
- Not using or not knowing how to use agenda/assignment book
- Spending too much time on less important elements—can't prioritize
- Planning unrealistically (i.e. fail to take into account obstacles in the plan)

Flexibility

- Struggling with assignments that require creativity or are open-ended
- Getting stuck on one solution or one way of looking at a problem
- Having trouble coming up with topics or ideas of things to write about
- Having difficulty coming up with "Plan B" if the first attempt didn't work

Organization

- Not using or knowing how to design an organizational system
- Not being able to find things in notebooks or backpacks
- Losing assignments or important papers
- Not having a neat study area
- Losing electronic data—forget where work is stored or what name it's filed under

Time Management

- Overestimating how long it will to do a task (therefore never starting)
- Underestimating how long it will take to do a task (therefore running out of time)
- Chronically late

- Having difficulty juggling multiple assignments and responsibilities
- Overcommitted—too many obligations
- Lacking a sense of time urgency
- Relying on deadline as motivator

Goal-directed Persistence

- Not having a long-term goal
- Having a long-term goal but lacking a realistic plan to achieve it
- Not seeing how daily actions impact goal attainment
- Not seeing studying as important and making minimal effort as a result
- Giving up in the face of an obstacle
- Having a “good-enough” mentality that affects quality work
- “Not on the radar”—seeing work as not relevant

Metacognition

- Can't accurately evaluate skills (i.e. expect to do well on test even though previous tests showed poor performance, expect to go to college without academic record and skills)
- Can't identify appropriate study skills
- Can't plan or organize a writing assignment
- Can memorize facts but missing the larger context (better at multiple-choice than essays)
- Can understand larger contexts but missing important facts (better at essay questions)

REFLECTION

How can I help you?

What specifically can you do to improve?

Were you surprised or have you known that you need to work on these skills? It's okay. We're not perfect!