

Executive Skills Profile (Version 1.0, February 23, 2015)

A Look at How You Organize Things, React to Things, and Get Things Done

Adapted from work by Peg Dawson & Richard Guare, Authors of *Smart but Scattered* <http://www.smartbutscatteredkids.com/>

WHAT ARE EXECUTIVE SKILLS?

“**Executive skills**” is probably a phrase you haven’t heard before but you’ll see that they are skills that you use every day – and we’re all good at some and not so good at others. They are skills we use to manage our life and achieve our goals. They help us accomplish big goals, like finishing school or a training program, getting a job, and saving up for a down payment for a house. They also help us achieve smaller goals and everyday tasks like getting to work on time, completing the paperwork to get child care, enrolling in a training program, getting ready for a job interview, or getting the laundry done.

WHAT IS THIS?

This profile will help you get to know yourself better by looking at how well you

- Organize Things
- React to Things
- Get Things Done

The questions will help you to think about things you may already know about yourself in a new light. It will help you see what moves you forward – your strengths—and what might hold you back – your weaknesses.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read each item and then rate that item based on the extent to which you agree or disagree with how well it describes you. Use the rating scale to choose the best score. Circle the number that corresponds to your answer. Be as honest as possible—the more honest you are, the more you’ll learn about yourself. .

Here’s an example:

		1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree
#	I have trouble getting here on time every morning.	1	2	3	4	5	6

2. Put the score for each of the sections on the scoring sheet that says, “My Executive Skills Profile,”
3. Now, look back over your whole profile. Your highest scores indicate strengths (what you do easily). Put these in the strengths box.

How do you see yourself using these strengths in your day-to-day life?

4. Now, look back over your profile again. Your lowest scores are the areas that are harder for you. Put these in the opportunities for improvement box.

Which of these do you feel most hold you back? How so?

My Executive Skill Profile	Total Score on Section
A. Organization (Keeping Things in Order)	
B. Time Management (Using Time Well)	
C. Planning/Prioritization (Planning Ahead)	
D. Response Inhibition (Think, Then Act)	
E. Flexibility (Going with the Flow)	
F. Emotional Control (Staying Cool)	
G. Metacognition (Stepping Back)	
H. Task Initiation (Getting Started)	
I. Sustained Attention (Staying Attentive)	
J. Goal-Directed Persistence (Sticking With It)	
K. Stress Tolerance (Dealing with Stress)	
L. Working Memory (Remembering)	

**My Executive Skill Strengths
(Three highest scores)**

**My Executive Skill Opportunities for Improvement
(Three lowest scores)**

Executive Skills

A Closer Look at What It All Means

How We Organize and Plan Things

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

Time Management (Managing Time): To manage time well, we first have to believe that time is important. It also requires being able to estimate how much time it will take to do something and how much time we have, decide how we'll use it, and stay within the time limits and deadlines we've agreed to.

Planning/Prioritization (Planning Ahead): The ability to create a roadmap to reach a goal or to complete a task. This also involves being able to make decisions about what's important to focus on and what's not important.

How We React to Things

Response Inhibition (Going Slow – Think, Then Act): This is all about thinking before we act. When we take it slow, we resist the urge to say or do something that we might regret later.

Flexibility (Going with the Flow): This is about switching up when things change or get in our way. When we are highly flexible, we adapt when we run into obstacles, setbacks, new information or mistakes.

Emotional Control (Staying Cool): The ability to manage emotions in order to achieve goals, complete tasks, or control and direct behavior.

Metacognition (Stepping Back): When we “step back” we take a look at how we are acting – and how we handle ourselves. When we are good at this, we ask ourselves, “How am I doing?” or “How did I do?” or “How did what I did affect other people?”

How We Get Things Done

Task Initiation (Getting Started): This is the ability to begin projects without finding reasons to keep putting them off. It's about taking that first step ... as little as it might be.

Sustained Attention (Staying Attentive): Everyone gets distracted, tired and bored. But, this is about how well we can pull ourselves back from that – in order to stay attentive to the person or task that is right in front of us.

Goal-Directed Persistence (Sticking with It): This is being able to have a goal, follow through to the completion of the goal, and not be put off by or distracted by competing interests.

Stress Tolerance (Dealing with Stress): As smart as it is to try and avoid stressful situations, the truth is that we do sometimes fall into stressful situations. When we deal with this well, we can do well even when faced with uncertainty, change and high demands.

Working Memory (Remembering): The ability to hold information – or past experiences—in our minds while doing something new. When we remember well, we build on what we've learned before.