

# EXECUTIVE SKILLS PROFILE

## Understanding Your Planning, Self-Control and Monitoring Skills<sup>1</sup> (Revised April 23, 2018)

You may have never heard of “**Executive skills**” or “**executive function skills**” but they are skills that you use every day -- 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 completing a training program, or saving for a down payment for a house. They also help us achieve smaller goals like getting to work on time or completing the paperwork to get childcare.

This profile will help you get to know yourself better by looking at how well you: plan and prioritize, control your actions, emotions and behavior to get things done, and monitor your progress to see if you are on track.

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read each item and then think about how well it describes you. Use the rating scale to choose the best score. If the item doesn’t describe you at all, circle 1, *strongly disagree*. If it describes you very well, circle 6, *strongly agree*. Often, you’ll find that you’re somewhere in between so circle one of the numbers from 2 to 5 that describes you best. Be as honest as possible—the more honest you are, the more you’ll learn about yourself.

2. Total each section in the box on the right. Here’s an example:

Organization ( <i>Knowing where I put things</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I am an organized person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	12
I keep my space neat and have things where they belong.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I organize my work before I start doing it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

3. Now, look back over your whole profile. Your highest scores indicate what you do easily (strengths). Your lowest scores are the areas that are harder for you (challenges).

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Peg Dawson and Richard Guare, Copyright Guilford Press (2012,2016). This adaptation was done in conjunction with the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities for use with employment and human service programs.

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<b>Planning / Prioritization</b> ( <i>Deciding what steps to take</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I have a clear plan for what I need to do each day.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I focus on the most important things when I have a lot to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I break big tasks down into smaller tasks and set deadlines to get them done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

<b>Time Management</b> ( <i>Knowing about how long a task will take and what the deadline is</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I finish what I plan to do by the end of the day.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I am good at guessing how long it takes to do something.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I am on time for appointments and activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

<b>Organization</b> ( <i>Knowing where I put things</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I am an organized person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I keep my space neat and have things where they belong.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I organize my work before I start doing it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

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<b>Task Initiation</b> ( <i>Getting started without a delay</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
No matter what the task, I believe in getting started as soon as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I do things I say I'll do, without putting them off.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Even if interrupted, I finish jobs before the last minute.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

<b>Response Inhibition</b> ( <i>Seeing the consequence <u>before</u> I say or do something</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I listen before I draw conclusions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I think before I speak.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I get all the facts before I take action.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

<b>Emotional Control</b> ( <i>Keeping my cool when frustrated</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I do what I am supposed to do, even if I get frustrated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I keep my cool, even if my feelings are hurt.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I keep my temper in check.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

<b>Sustained Attention</b> ( <i>Paying attention, even when I don't feel like it</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I stay focused on what I am doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I keep working until the job is done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I find it easy to get back on track and complete what I started.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

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<b>Stress Tolerance</b> ( <i>Managing your stress</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I enjoy working in a highly demanding, fast-paced environment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
A certain amount of pressure helps me do my best.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I find it easy to manage a changing work schedule.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

<b>Goal-Directed Persistence</b> ( <i>Sticking with your goal</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I am driven to meet my goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I give up short-term pleasures to work on long-term goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I set goals and I work on meeting them the best I can.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

<b>Working Memory</b> ( <i>Remembering what I did and what I need to do</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I have a good memory for facts, dates and details.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I am very good at remembering the things I am supposed to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I set reminders to get things done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

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<b>Metacognition</b> ( <i>Evaluating how you're doing</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I can review a situation and see how I could improve.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I know when I am doing a good job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I easily recognize when a job is a good match for my skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

<b>Flexibility</b> ( <i>Going with the flow, accepting change</i> )	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Tend to disagree	4 Tend to agree	5 Agree	6 Strongly Agree	Total
I respond well to unexpected events.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I easily adjust when plans change.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I am flexible and adjust well to new situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

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## Executive Skills Profile Summary

Look back over each skill and mark your score for each section on the summary sheet below. Put your three highest and your three lowest scores in the boxes on the right. Your highest scores indicate what you do easily (strengths). Your lowest scores are the areas that are harder for you (opportunities for improvement).

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