



Executive Functioning

Ours and Our Children

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AGENDA

What	How Long
Redefining Executive Function	5 minutes
Expected Outcomes	5 minutes
Looking Inward: Personal Reflections	12 minutes
→ Individual time	- 6 min
→ Sharing out- whole group	- 6 min
Projecting Out: Our Spaces	36 minutes
→ What do children need?	
◆ Ideal space web	- 12 min
◆ What am I doing that works?	
◆ What do I need to improve?	- 12 min
→ What do I honestly need to change or learn?	- 12 min
Take-Aways/ Accountability	15 minutes

Meaning of Executive Function

1. **Working Memory**- the part of the brain that allows for remembering, utilizing, and adapting information on a short term basis.
2. **Mental Flexibility**- one's ability to sustain attention and shift attention relative to environmental needs.
3. **Self-Control**- the ability to prioritize and categorize what is important, and our actions and reactions to various stimuli in our environment

Why this approach?

- EF is a big trend right now and most schools are expected to have a plan for teaching it
- It can be uncomfortable to teach something that is not your strong suit
- We are built to make systems—good or bad. If we aren't efficiently meeting our own needs, how are we teaching students to meet theirs?

The challenge we face...

All executive function skills are learned.
Yes, we have varied degrees of tools
naturally available to us, but the
strategies and skills that are developed
are created through relationships and
environment.

Outcomes

- Working knowledge of executive functions
- Our executive functioning strategies (good and bad) impact our students/children
- Develop a list of effective executive functioning strategies for your setting

Reflection

Use the list and T-chart provided to sort your answers:

- Well-developed strategies (front)
- Strategies that are not serving me (back)

Share out— So what?

What did you discover about your own executive functioning?

What does this actually mean?

What is the impact?

Implications for our lives

- How do our own skills impact the environment we create for children?

Needs

1. Take a moment to read the list of environmental and relational needs.
2. What do we need to add?

In an ideal situation...

- Use your list of needs to build out a web focusing on either relational or environmental factors in a setting
- Each need should have at least one corresponding support strategy

In my space...

- Take a moment to look at your ideal space web and start to mentally sort what is already happening and what is not.
- Use your first pen or boxes to mark the strategies (outermost layer) that are already happening in your space.
- Use your second pen or bullets to mark the strategies that are not yet in place.
- Make a key to remind yourself which is which.

Honest Moment

- Look at all the strategies you have highlighted.
- Consider the following statements and questions:

For things you are doing, is it the right thing? Is it efficient? Does it work for your students, or is it more about your needs? Have you tried it another way? Take some notes next to a strategy you would like to spruce up.

For things you are not doing, what support do you need to make it happen? Plan how you could implement an additional strategy in your classroom.

Reflection

Look at all of the thinking work, discussion, and self-reflection you have completed.

Use the final sheet in your packet to dedicate yourself to two things (write them down!)

1. **CHANGE** something you are currently doing to make it more effective for you **AND** your students
2. **IMPLEMENT** something you haven't done before, but recognize as a need

Feel free to contact us...

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