

## Title: Executive Functions

Executive function are the skills used to manage resources and self to achieve a goal. They help you organize, prioritize, start, and finish tasks. They are the skills an executive needs.

The eight types of executive functions:

1. Inhibition - stopping behaviors at the appropriate time.
2. Shifting - transitioning from one activity or situation to another.
3. Emotional control - modulating emotional response given the situation.
4. Initiation - starting behaviors independently.
5. Working memory - retaining information for the duration of a task.
6. Planning/organization - preparing for current and future tasks.
7. Organization of materials - managing belongings and spaces.
8. Self-monitoring - measuring and reflecting on one's own performance.

Together, executive functioning skills help us set goals, plan our time and materials, and accomplish tasks.

Executive dysfunction is when an individual has trouble using executive functioning skills and has a variety of causes. Students with executive dysfunction may appear disorganized, unmotivated, distracted, or forgetful. Remember, students with executive dysfunction are not being intentionally defiant or disorderly and they are not lazy. These skills do not come naturally, but these students are trying and may see their struggles as failures.

Question: How can instructors help students with executive dysfunction? Answer: Universal Design!  
Examples of universal design to help with executive dysfunction: rubrics, scaffolding, low-stakes assessment, formative assessment, modeling your approach, and frequent & concrete feedback.