

## Executive Functioning Deficits

### Definition:

Executing functioning is the ability to think abstractly and to plan, initiate, sequence, monitor, and stop complex behavior. It is the higher order cognitive skills necessary for independent, goal-directed behavior. In most people, these skills are not fully developed until the mid-twenties.

### The Symptoms:

Students with executive functioning deficits will have difficulty utilizing feedback, managing inhibitions, initiating tasks, problem solving, managing time, staying on task, anticipating, planning, strategizing, organizing, inhibiting, monitoring, shifting, initiating, self-regulating, adapting, judging, deciding. Deficits may contribute to students not seeking help or not reporting a disability, and college students with executive dysfunction are twice as likely to be on academic probation.

### Technology that can help:

- read and write software
- text to speech software
- fact-mapper (UBmag.me/factmapper)
- Inspiration visual writing mapping ([www.inspiration.com](http://www.inspiration.com))
- Livescribe and Echo smart pens
- Evernote organization software ([www.evernote.com](http://www.evernote.com))
- Notability ([www.gingerlabs.com](http://www.gingerlabs.com))
- Pomodoro ([www.online-timers.com/pomodoro-timers](http://www.online-timers.com/pomodoro-timers))

### How to be successful in college:

- Keep up attendance in classes; don't start skipping
- Use a planner to keep track of classes, meetings, homework assignments, etc. Actually schedule when you will take time to study or complete homework and stick to that schedule
- Have interim deadlines for assignments; break tasks into steps and schedule for yourself when to have pieces done so that the tasks are done on time
- Take the time for self-reflection; journal or at least pause to think each day about what you have done well and what needs improvement
- Conduct frequent check-ins with your instructors to evaluate how well you are staying on track (briefly before or after class or with a brief email)
- Reward yourself for tasks you have completed on time or for doing well in areas of difficulty—have some candy or do an activity you really enjoy
- Ask for help when needed, from friends, parents, instructors, counselors, etc