

# **Lululemon Executive Function Skills Resource Packet**

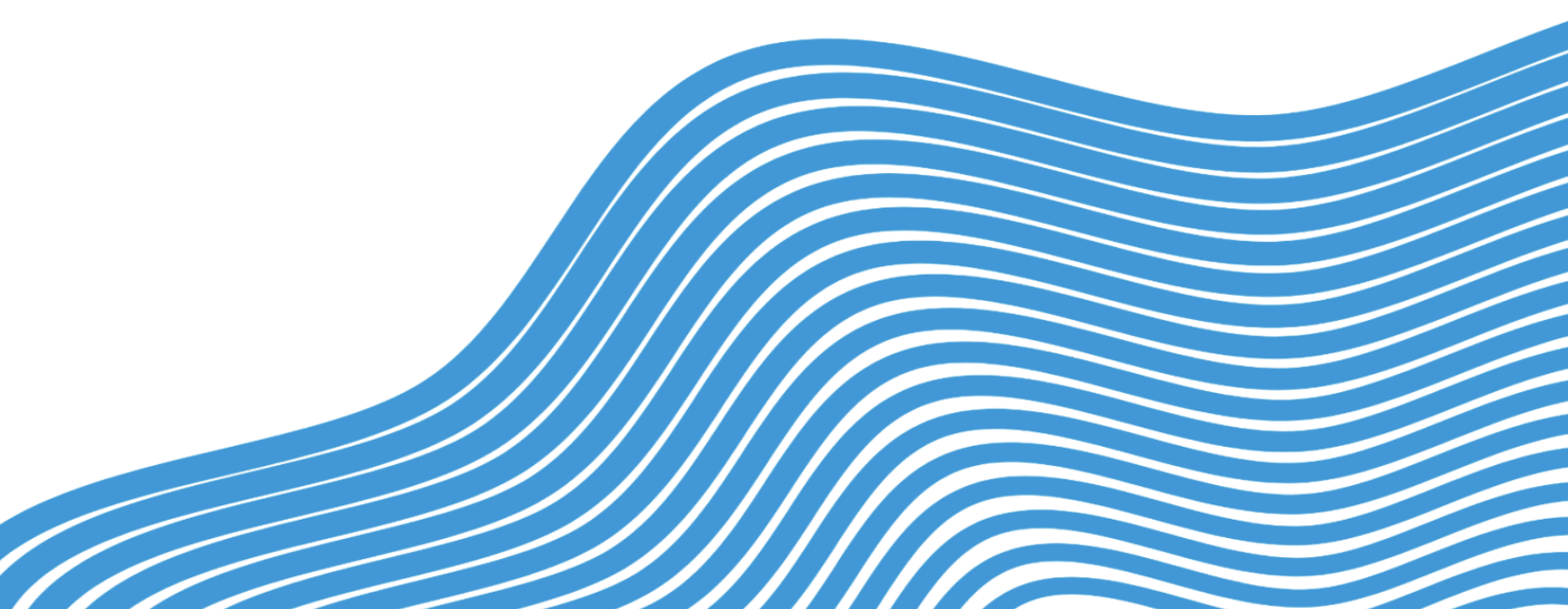
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## What is executive function?

Executive function (EF) is the complex set of cognitive processes that allow you to achieve your goals. Whether your goal is as small as leaving your house early enough to get coffee before work and still be on time, or as big as hitting a yearly sales goal, there are the skills needed to get you there.



### An EF deficit may show up as:

- Poor time management, leading to difficulty in allocating time effectively for tasks and activities
- Disorganization in space and materials
- Frequently late or absent from appointments or commitments
- Missed deadlines due to forgetfulness or avoidance
- Difficulty following instructions or processes
- Challenges in adapting to unexpected changes or disruptions
- Procrastination and difficulty initiating tasks or requirements

Remember, individuals with EF deficits may not exhibit all of these signs, and the severity of the challenges can vary from person to person. Supporting individuals with EF deficits involves understanding their unique struggles and implementing strategies tailored to their needs.

### **How to help:**

- Establish a planning system (Google Calendar, planner, planning apps, etc.)
- Emphasize the importance of basic needs (sleep, diet, exercise)
- Break down large projects into smaller chunks and practice “reverse engineered” planning
- Set up accountability systems like alarms or reminders in their phone
- Encourage and model self-advocacy
- Establish clear and consistent routines and expectations
- Build time into the week for self-reflection

## **Working with Neurodiverse Staff**

Neurodiverse employees often have the gifts of creativity and innovation. Workplaces that support neurodiverse staff promote better conversations and ideas, which improves both other employees’ experiences as well as the customer experience.

### **Tips for Managers**

What might seem simple or intuitive to neurotypical employees can be anxiety-provoking for neurodiverse employees. Neurodiverse employees also often process information differently than their neurotypical peers, and require further explanation of instructions or more time to think through tasks. Managers can support their employees by:

- Provide information in multiple different formats
- Set clear expectations and accountability
- Provide templates for how to advocate
- Ask specific rather than general self-reflection questions
- Ask questions, reassess when needed
- Periodically revisit performance requirements
- Create daily rhythms and routines for your employees

## How to Advocate

Self-advocacy is the ability to speak up for yourself and your needs. Many employees struggle to advocate for themselves for a variety of reasons, and this skill is particularly challenging for employees early on in their career and neurodiverse employees.

### Why Employees Don't Advocate

- They are intimidated
  - Regardless of how friendly and open you are, employees are often intimidated by their managers. Beyond creating space for your employees to advocate for themselves, actively encourage advocacy in your workplace.
- They don't know what to ask for
  - If employees don't realize they need support, they won't be able to advocate for themselves. Incorporate self-reflection into your routines with employees so they develop a better awareness of where their opportunities for growth are.
- They don't know how to ask for what they need or want
  - Many employees will not understand how they are supposed to approach their managers, or what language they should use in different situations. Provide scripts and templates to your employees to make this easier for them.
- Outdated stigmas prevent them from asking for help, and they feel alone/different
  - If an employee is struggling, especially if they are aware that they are struggling because of a neurodiverse diagnosis, they sometimes have trouble requesting "extra" support. Whenever possible, make support options available to everyone to reduce stigma.

### Advocating Face-to-Face

One of the best ways to support your staff with face-to-face advocacy is to provide scripts. Scripts allow employees to see examples of the type of language that should be used when advocating in different situations. An advocacy script may look like:

*Manager:* Hey Megan! How has your first week gone for you so far? Is there anything you need from me?

*Employee:* I know that I am supposed to check-in on customers when they enter the store, but I always feel uncomfortable and like I don't know what to say to them. Can you please give me some examples of how I could greet customers?

*Manager:* Great question! Before your break, can you come find me and we will review some of the training that talks about how to greet customers. That way we can see if the training makes sense, or if you would like some other examples or resources.

*Employee:* That sounds great, I'm scheduled for my break in about an hour, so I'll find you then. I think I remember that section of the training, but some more examples would be really helpful.

*Manager:* Sounds good! I'll think of some more examples for you in the meantime.

## **Advocating over Email**

For advocating over email, templates can be provided to better support your staff. In addition to templates, you should set clear guidelines over what communications need to be done over email rather than face-to-face, like time-off requests.

*Subject:*

Time Off Requests: [list dates]

*Email:*

Hi [manager name],

I would like [dates] off in order to [list reason for request]. Please let me know if I need to help find coverage for those days, or if there is anything I should know before I take time off.

Thanks so much,  
[Employee name]

## Self-Reflection

Taking time each week to think about what went well, and what you'd like to see change for the next week is one of the best ways to recognize and implement improvements in your workplace. The best questions you can ask your employees are the ones that you think will give you solutions to multiple problems.

### Self-Reflection Questions for Managers

1. What went well for me, personally, this week?
2. What went well for the store this week?
3. Were there any stand-out employees this week? Why?
4. Did I hit my goals for the week?
5. Did the store hit its goals for the week?
6. Were there any low-points this week, for me personally?
7. Were there any low points this week for the store?
8. Were there any low-points this week for my employees?
9. What would I like to see go differently next week?
10. What changes can I make to see that thing go differently next week?

### Self-Reflection Questions for Employees

1. What went well for you this week?
2. What didn't go well for you this week?
3. Are there any systems you currently find challenging?
4. Were there any customer interactions you enjoyed?
5. Were there any customer interactions you wish could have gone differently?
6. Is there anything you need from me to better support you?
7. Do you feel like there is anything you would like to be better trained on?
8. Are you hitting your personal goals?
9. Are you contributing to the store goals?
10. What's one way another employee supported you this week?
11. Is there anyone else you would like to shout-out this week?