



How Executive Functioning Coaching Prepares Students for College

Melissa Knight, MA, PCC, BCC Director of Academic Coaching at Lynn University

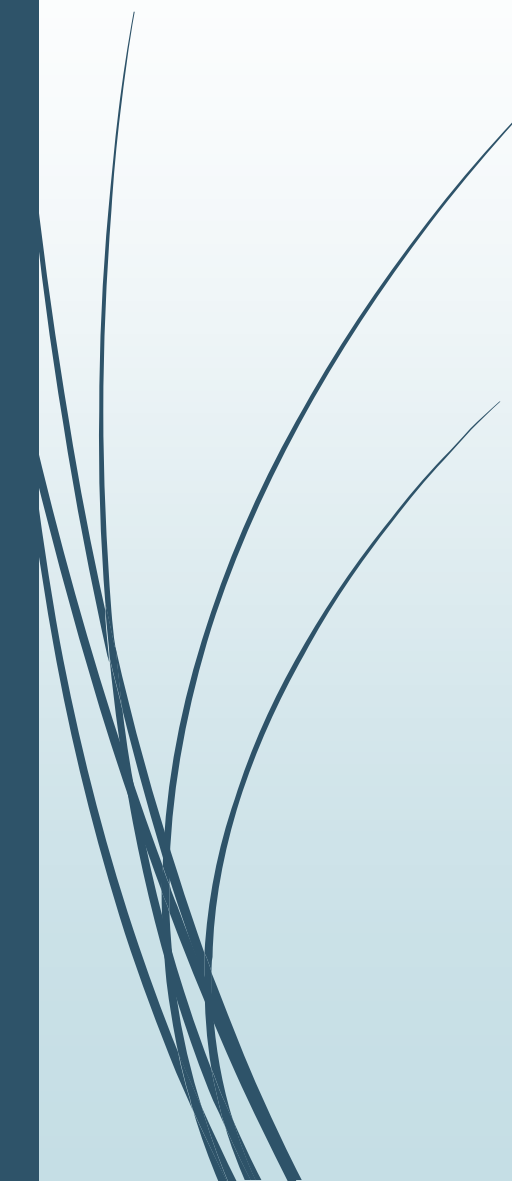
mknight@lynn.edu

casccoaching.com

561-237-7012



Today's Focus

- ▶ What is Executive Functioning (EF) Coaching
 - ▶ EF skills necessary for college
 - ▶ Recognize the difference between enabling and empowering
 - ▶ Strategies
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What is Coaching?

- ▶ As defined by the ICF

“Partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential”.

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What is Coaching

Academic coaching

- “A relationship that merges the potential for growth of the individual with the skills of the coach; as a result, the individual achieves more than he or she could have on his or her own” (Quinn, 11, 2000)

Executive Function Coaching

- “Coaches provide students with education on ADHD and brain functioning, facilitate brainstorming, and explore strategies that fit within an individual’s learning style” (Goudreau & Knight, 6, 2015)

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Why Are Executive Functions So Important?

- ▶ EFs are the foundation for an expansive variety of life skills, competencies, and behaviors.
- ▶ Influences children and adolescents ability to plan and act accordingly to be good students and friends.
- ▶ “Considered to be the common denominator for both learning and social interaction.” (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2011,pg. 5)



Executive Function skill set desired for college

- Goal directed behavior
- Flexibility
- Emotional Regulation
- Task Initiation
- Sustained Attention
- Time Management
- Organization
- Planning
- Prioritizing
- Metacognition

Peg Dawson, EdD and Richard Guare,
PhD

Observations of First Semester Freshmen

- Either extremely organized or not organized at all
- Low motivation
 - Hesitant to explore new strategies
 - Resistant to doing homework without a tutor
- Poor follow through
- Poor metacognition
- Poor self-advocacy

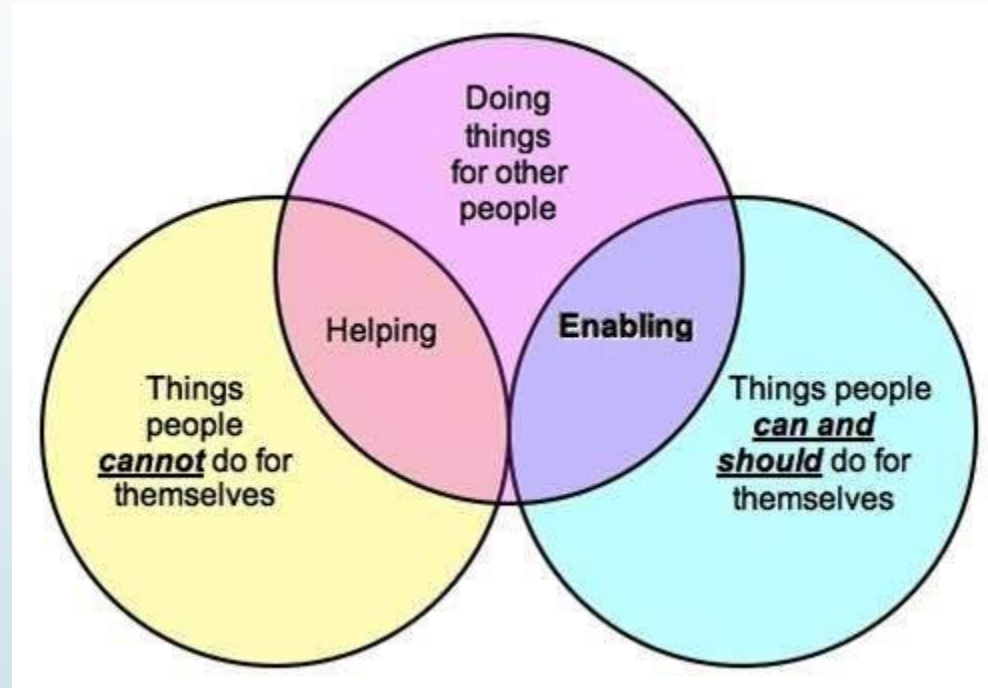




Enabling

“Some men have thousands of reasons why they cannot do what they want to, when all they need is one reason why they can”
— Martha Graham

Enabling or Empowering



What does it look like?

Enabling

- ▶ Telling how
- ▶ Developing a plan for

Empowering

- ▶ Questioning how
- ▶ Developing a plan with

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Using an Executive Function Coach

- ▶ How does a executive function coach help?
 - ▶ The coaching process helps support the development of executive functioning
 - ▶ Be the frontal lobe
 - ▶ Comes from a non judgmental place
- ▶ Work with the parents to put systems in place to help empower the student
 - ▶ Reduces anxiety for both the student and parent



Planning and Goal Setting



- ▶ As defined by the ICF – “Ability to develop and maintain an effective coaching plan with the client.”
 - ▶ The importance of the student creating their own plans, agenda and goals
 - ▶ Creating a plan with the parents
 - ▶ Expectations of both the coach and the parents during the process
 - ▶ This is not about the parents being involved in the coaching session but how they can support the clients goals created during the session.
 - ▶ What to do if the parents have different goals from the student for the coaching session?

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Managing Progress and Accountability

- As defined by the ICF – “Ability to hold attention on what is important for the client, and to leave responsibility with the client to take action.”
 - Help the parents understand why this is so important for their adolescents to experience before going off to college
 - “Clearly requests of the client actions that will move the client forward towards his/her stated goals.”
 - “Is able to move back and forth between the big picture of where the client is heading, setting a context for what is being discussed and where the client wishes to go.”
 - “Promotes client’s self-discipline and holds the client accountable for what they say they are going to do, for the results of an intended action, or for a specific plan with related time frames.”

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Awareness

- ▶ Pointing out habits, trends and thought patterns
- ▶ Developing specific and measurable goals
- ▶ Remind students to “set” their intentions at the start of the semester
 - ▶ Prime our perceptual system by what we pay conscious attention to.
 - ▶ Repetition of this movement can result in hardwiring

* Rock & Page, PhD., (2009)

Strategies

- ▶ Begin with a Check-list to increase awareness
- ▶ Help them create goals
 - ▶ Create long term and short term goals
 - ▶ Have them identify action steps to achieve goals
 - ▶ Have them create a system to monitor progress
 - ▶ How to handle slow progress or failure



Strategies

- ▶ Increase their responsibilities
 - ▶ Responsibility for creating an AM and PM routine
 - ▶ Cooking and laundry
 - ▶ Start them making their own appointments – tutoring
 - ▶ Create own system for being organized
 - ▶ Appointments/schedule
 - ▶ Homework
 - ▶ Medication



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Strategies

- ▶ Increase responsibilities continued
 - ▶ Being in charge of getting ready to leave for college
 - ▶ Have them checking all email and sharing important information
 - ▶ Have them making a list of what will be needed
 - ▶ Dorm room, school supplies, personal items
 - ▶ Have them in contact with **their** academic advisor and scheduling classes
 - ▶ Ask them about **their** schedule
 - ▶ Allow for consequences - PROGRESS NOT PERFECTION

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Highlights

- ▶ Start using an EF coach in HS
- ▶ An EF coach allows parents to take a step back while also learning strategies to support confidence building
- ▶ How to be intentional with your actions



Questions



References

- ▶ Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2011). Building the Brains “Air Traffic Control” System: Ho Early Experiences Shape the Development of Executive Function : Working Paper No. 11. <http://www.developingchildharvard.edu>
- ▶ Dawson, P., & Guare, R. (2009). *Smart but Scattered*. New York: Guilford Press.
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- ▶ International Coach Federation, (2016). Core Competencies. <http://coachfederation.org/credential/landing.cfm?ItemNumber=2206&navItemNumber=576>
- ▶ Rock, David & Page, Linda, Ph.D. Coaching with the Brain in Mind. Hoboken, N.J., John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2009.