

PROSPECTIVE MEMORY (ADMINISTRATOR)

Worksheet



RETTORE
REMEMBER TO REMEMBER



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(ADMINISTRATOR)

Note for the administrator

Everyday life places a variety of demands on people, conditioned by the fulfilment of diverse, complex tasks. These demands include the ability to anticipate, plan, coordinate, and implement solutions at an appropriate time in the future, usually in the face of other ongoing activities. This process is referred to as prospective memory. Stable performance of prospective memory affects the effective orientation in everyday life and the independence of the individual. Conversely, difficulties with prospective memory can lead to problems in social functioning, education and employment, etc.

The process of applying prospective memory is accomplished in four stages: 1) forming and encoding an intention; 2) postponing the intention while engaged in another ongoing task; 3) inhibiting and switching from the ongoing task to resuming the intention at a planned time in the future; and 4) final execution of the intention.

A number of factors influence the level of cognitive difficulty of tasks. These include the direction of attention, the subjectively perceived importance of the prospective task, and a range of individual differences in, for example, executive function, social cognition, and other domains.

In general, prospective tasks are divided into two categories according to the type of cue when the intention is to be recalled and executed, i.e., either at a specific time (time-based prospective memory) or at a specific event (event-based prospective memory). Time-based cues are thought to be the most cognitively demanding for individuals, given that in the absence of an external cue or stimulus, one must rely solely on internal processes and must regularly keep track of time, which requires the constant engagement of executive control.

In terms of improving performance in prospective memory and reducing everyday difficulties, it is suggested that training in stimulus retrieval in working memory could benefit not only children with specific learning disabilities, or ASD, but essentially everyone.

The principle of the task

In the presented prospective tasks, background tasks and prospective tasks are combined. The principle is based on the assumption that frontally mediated processes (executive control) affect prospective memory performance more strongly than temporally mediated processes (retrospective memory). Thus, cognitive components other than prospective memory itself are selected as background tasks. Therefore, tasks to train attention, working memory, set-shifting, etc., primarily from the worksheet tasks for Executive Function training, are included in the training.

During training, the administrator assigns background tasks and monitors the progress of the Prospective Memory Training task. If the client does not remember what to do next, the administrator offers partial clues. At the beginning of each task, the client is given the Map and reads the assignment that applies to that task. The administrator continuously checks that the client has understood everything and answers any questions.

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Education for the client

Our daily lives are full of challenges and diverse tasks. Part of these tasks is the ability to plan activities and also to remember to do them at the right time in the future. In everyday life, we so often forget to for example do schoolwork for the second day of school because soccer practice runs late in the afternoon. Or our parents schedule an unexpected obligation that takes our minds off of an originally planned activity. But these lapses in prospective memory can also have more serious consequences, such as forgetting to take regular medication or forgetting to turn off the iron or other electrical appliance. Good prospective memory performance is therefore essential for everyday life, whereas serious prospective memory problems could lead to problems in future independent living or even employment.

Tools required

- Client worksheet
- Administrator worksheet
- Stationery

Cognitive skills practised

Prospective memory, comprehension, long-term memory, short-term memory, working memory, planning, set-shifting, visuo-spatial orientation

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