

# Life Hacks for a Neuro-Inclusive World: Mastering the "Brain CEO"

## Materials Needed

- Digital or physical notebook/journal
- Colored pens or highlighters
- A timer (phone timer or kitchen timer)
- "The Brain CEO" Worksheet (can be hand-drawn: a simple 3-column table)
- Access to one "busy" room in the house or building (like the kitchen or a workshop)

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, Wyatt will be able to:

- **Identify** three core Executive Functioning skills and how they impact daily tasks.
- **Analyze** a physical environment for "Sensory Triggers" and "Sensory Glimmers."
- **Design** a customized "Life Hack Blueprint" for a specific daily living challenge.

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## 1. Introduction: The Mental Browser Tabs (10 Minutes)

### The Hook

Imagine your brain is a high-end computer. Most of the time, it's fast and powerful. But sometimes, you have 50 browser tabs open at once, three of them are playing music you can't find, the "Update Required" notification won't go away, and the mouse is lagging. This is a great way to describe **Cognitive Load**—the amount of mental effort being used in your working memory.

### The Objective

Today, we aren't just talking about autism; we are talking about *brain engineering*. We're going to look at how the "CEO of your brain" (Executive Function) handles daily life and how to build a world that works for your specific operating system.

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## 2. Body: The "I Do, We Do, You Do" Model (40 Minutes)

### I Do: Understanding the Brain CEO (Direct Instruction)

In the neurodiversity world, we often talk about **Executive Function (EF)**. Think of EF as the CEO of a company. The CEO doesn't do all the work; they organize it. The three big jobs of the Brain CEO are:

- **Inhibition:** The "Stop" button. Choosing not to do one thing so you can focus on another.
- **Working Memory:** The "Sticky Note." Holding information in your head while you use it.
- **Task Shifting:** The "Gear Shift." Moving from one activity (like gaming) to another (like chores)

without the engine stalling.

*Real-World Context:* If your Brain CEO is struggling, a simple task like "clean your room" feels like "climb Mount Everest" because there are too many steps to organize at once.

## We Do: The Morning Mission (Guided Practice)

Let's look at a common daily living task: **Getting out the door by 8:00 AM.** Together, we will identify the "Friction Points."

- **Step 1:** List the steps (Wake up, dressed, breakfast, teeth, bag packed).
- **Step 2:** Identify the "Sensory Speedbumps." (Example: The texture of the toothbrush is annoying, or the kitchen light is too bright in the morning).
- **Step 3:** Brainstorm a "Hack." (Example: Set out clothes the night before to save "CEO Energy" or use a dim lamp in the kitchen instead of the big light).

## You Do: The Sensory Audit & Life Hack Blueprint (Independent Practice)

Now it's your turn, Wyatt. You are going to be a "Sensory Detective."

1. **The Sensory Audit:** Go into the kitchen or your workspace. Spend 3 minutes in silence.
  - Find 2 **Triggers** (things that drain your energy, like a humming fridge or a cluttered counter).
  - Find 2 **Glimmers** (things that make you feel calm, like a specific color, a soft chair, or a window view).
2. **The Blueprint:** Pick one daily task that feels "heavy" (e.g., doing laundry, making a sandwich, finishing a specific school subject). Create a 3-step "Hack" for it using these rules:
  - **Externalize it:** Don't keep it in your head. (Use a checklist or a photo of what "done" looks like).
  - **Reduce Friction:** Change one sensory thing to make it easier.
  - **Reward the CEO:** Pick a "micro-reward" for when that task is done.

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## 3. Conclusion: The User Manual (10 Minutes)

### Summary & Recap

Today we learned that being neurodivergent often means having a high-powered brain with a CEO that sometimes gets overwhelmed by too many "open tabs." We explored how sensory environments can either drain our battery or charge it.

### Learner Reflection

Answer these three questions out loud or in your notes:

1. What is one thing about your "Brain CEO" that you think is actually a superpower?
2. What is the most annoying "Sensory Trigger" you found today?
3. How will your "Life Hack Blueprint" change how you do that task tomorrow?

## Success Criteria

Criteria	Target
<b>Terminology</b>	Can explain "Executive Function" in your own words.
<b>Environmental Awareness</b>	Identified at least 2 triggers and 2 glimmers in a real room.
<b>Application</b>	Created a practical, 3-step plan for a real-life daily task.

## Differentiation Options

- **For Advanced Learners:** Research "Body Doubling" or "Time Blindness" and incorporate these concepts into the Life Hack Blueprint.
- **For Kinesthetic Learners:** Instead of writing the Blueprint, physically rearrange your workspace or "station" to match your sensory needs during the lesson.
- **Digital Option:** Use a task-management app (like Trello or Notion) to build the Life Hack Blueprint digitally with images and icons.