

*Sample layperson's description*

**Project Title:** Age Differences in Planning Abilities: Younger Adults and Older Adults

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I received my Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Wisconsin in 1971 and was an assistant professor at the University of Iowa from 1970-1973. I came to the University of Florida in 1973, progressed up through the ranks here, was tenured in 1977 and awarded professorship in 1988. I was awarded fellow status in the American Psychological Association, division 6 (developmental psychology) in 1986, and fellow status in the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1987.



The major research focus in my laboratory is on the developmental changes across the entire age span in neuropsychology generally and executive functioning specifically. Executive functioning encompasses thinking processes such as planning, problem solving, strategy use, and task switching. These cognitive functions are extremely important for normal functioning in adults. They have a very interesting developmental trajectory, with children and older adults having trouble with these abilities. I am interested in learning about this change across development by looking at what areas of the brain handle these executive functions and how that correlates to changes across development. Currently my laboratory includes four graduate students and 10-15 undergraduate research assistants.

The research that I would like to conduct at Oak Hammock examines strategy use in older adults and the specific brain areas related to strategy. I would like to explore the use of strategy during a planning task. Participants will be asked to play a difficult cognitive task on their first visit, while brain activity is recorded. On their second visit the researchers will instruct the participant on a strategy on how to improve their performance on the task. The participants will complete the task again while brain activity is recorded. I will be looking at the differences in performance on the task after