

Ten suggestions on ways to help your co-worker or student with Auditory Processing Disorder during Zoom meetings



It is easy to forget that not everyone finds video conference calls a natural way to meet during these times. There are some basic things you can do to help your colleague or student with APD get the most out of teleconferences.

1. If you are not talking, mute your mic! Be aware of the background noise you might be contributing to the meeting. Are you coughing? Is your child screaming in the background? Solve this issue by taping the microphone icon in the bottom left corner of the screen. If you are the host of the meeting, make sure to “mute” the participants in case you notice that someone is unaware of the noise in their environment.
2. Make sure that lighting is bright in your room. If possible, sit facing a window allowing natural light stream in to highlight your face to give the person more audiovisual redundancy.
3. Only speak one at a time. Try not to talk over others, even if you’re trying to show agreement.
4. Provide a written plan for the meeting before it commences. Guide the meeting, so it’s obvious which agenda item you are covering at each moment.
5. Use the “private chat” box to the individual themselves to clarify things that have been covered and to make sure they are coping well in the meeting.
6. Don’t put the person on the spot to answer questions unless you’ve given them a heads up through the private chat box first.
7. Follow up the meetings with basic notes and transcripts, if possible.
8. Allow the employee to record the call (or record it for them) to review later.
9. Make sure your room has excellent acoustics. If you happen to live in a large home with hard surfaces, realize that this may sound echoey on the other end. Pick a smaller room with soft furnishings, carpet, and curtains for maximal effect.
10. Limit the length of meetings to cover what needs to be discussed. Please try not to let people go too off-topic as this may drain the mental energy of your co-worker with APD.

Thanks for considering these things. Don’t hesitate to talk to the person directly, to come up with other ways to help them get the most from your interactions.

This list was compiled by Dr. Angela Loucks-Alexander, Audiologist of APDsupport.com