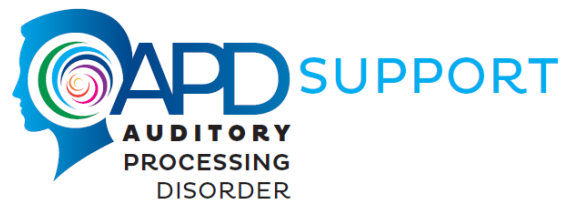


Dear Employer,

Thank you for your time to read this letter. Your employee is being investigated for a hearing problem that can affect job performance if it isn't understood.



Auditory processing disorder (APD) is a difficulty understanding what is heard. People who have these difficulties often have normal hearing sensitivity, however their brain struggles to interpret, organise, and remember what is said especially in background noise.

Here is a list of things that can help both of you overcome difficulties associated with APD:

1. Use brief instructions with slow and clear speech.
2. Use nonverbal cues to help him understand what you are saying.
3. If you are unsure if they understand what you are saying, give him the opportunity to ask questions or ask him if he needs further clarification.
4. If further clarification is needed, please try to find a different way to phrase what you have to say.
5. Be aware of background noise. They will have a harder time hearing and understanding you if there are other things going on. If the point is important, it may be best to talk to them in a quiet place.
6. When they fail to comply with instructions, please assume that it is most likely a failure to understand the instructions as opposed to wilful lack of compliance. You may want to ask how they understood your instructions to understand where a communication breakdown may have occurred.
7. Please show them examples of the "finished product" if there is a new task for them to do. They may be able to understand what you would like to have him do if there is a sample to learn from.
8. When a person with APD is first learning new tasks, they can be nervous that they will misunderstand the instructions. If there is a specific sequence you would like them to do, you may want to write a specific list of steps or allow them to take notes during instruction.
9. Get their attention before speaking to them. Call their name and wait for a response or touch their shoulder if possible/necessary.
10. There may be times they may not understand what you've said and may be reticent to ask you to repeat yourself for fear that they will be considered rude or not paying attention. Try to be aware of cues they might give you of not understanding like looking away or looking blankly. These signs can be confused with apathy, but listening is an exhausting exercise for them nearly like you may feel after a day of listening to a foreign language.
11. Near the end of the day this individual may have more difficulty retaining what you have to teach them compared to when they are fresh. In order to get the most out of training, plan training in short segments at the beginning of the shift and slowly build understanding.

Auditory processing difficulties are unrelated to intelligence. Highly intelligent people can have APD. This person suffers from an unseen problem and will benefit greatly from your support and guidance. People with APD struggle to feel successful at new tasks. If you see them doing something correctly please tell them this, they often respond very well to positive reinforcement as their self-talk can be very negative.

The greatest factor in success for a person with auditory processing disorder is the attitude and understanding of their employers and family; having a supportive employer can be a life changing experience for these individuals.

There are several books on this subject, if you are interested in learning more. One I would suggest is *When the Brain Can't Hear* by Dr. Terri Bellis.

Thank you for supporting this incredible person.

Angela Alexander

Doctor of Audiology

www.APDsupport.com