



The Uniquely Abled Project

# Tips for Employers and Supervisors

## How to Support the Success of Uniquely Abled Employees

The Uniquely Abled Project™ is a non-profit organization that is creating inclusive vocational opportunities for youth with disabilities. We match their unique abilities to jobs in high demand. The UAP aims to shift the paradigm of “disabled” to “uniquely abled” by recognizing what these young people can do.

The Uniquely Abled Academy™ prepares math- and computer-savvy youth on the autism spectrum for careers in CNC (computer numerical control) manufacturing. The UAA provides customized training, placement, and job support to our students, at no cost to them.

The UAA program is a win-win solution for everyone involved: businesses needing skilled workers, uniquely abled individuals, and family members whose fondest wish is to see these young people shine through meaningful, paid work.

### SIX SIMPLE STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION



#### 1 USE VISUALS

Put things in writing, show diagrams, use checklists and videos.

**Reason Why** – An “eyes over ears” approach leverages visual strength and helps with consistent job performance.

#### 2 EXPLAIN STEP-BY-STEP

Tell why each step is important.

**Reason Why** – Improves understanding and motivation to follow procedures exactly.

#### 3 GIVE CLEAR, DIRECT INSTRUCTIONS

Use simple terms and plain language.

**Reason Why** – Improves understanding – employees will follow directions exactly.

#### 4 CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Make sure the person can explain in their own words.

**Reason Why** – Avoid wasting time doing something incorrectly.

#### 5 ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Encourage the employee to share more information.

**Reason Why** – Provides more information and builds back-and-forth communication.

#### 6 TAKE THE LEAD ON COMMUNICATION

Be the one who initiates.

**Reason Why** – Builds rapport, helps the employee become comfortable speaking up.

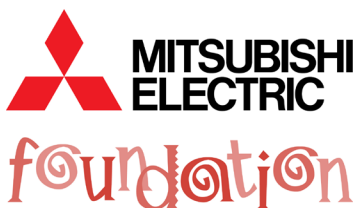
## HELP NEW EMPLOYEES BECOME PART OF THE TEAM



<b>1</b>	<b>GOAL</b> Keep Things Tuning Smoothly	<b>STRATEGY</b> Explain “how we do things here” and why. Go beyond a literal review of company policies.	<b>BENEFIT</b> Employee learns “insider information” that experienced employees know about routines.
<b>2</b>	<b>GOAL</b> Help New Workers Fit In	<b>STRATEGY</b> Define unwritten social rules and expectations as you would for someone from another culture.	<b>BENEFIT</b> Help new hires avoid mistakes, embarrassment, or rejection.
<b>3</b>	<b>GOAL</b> Improve Understanding	<b>STRATEGY</b> Avoid using idioms. If you use them, explain their meaning if needed.	<b>BENEFIT</b> Improve understanding and job performance.
<b>4</b>	<b>GOAL</b> Promote Flexibility	<b>STRATEGY</b> First focus on the rules, then focus on exceptions to the rules.	<b>BENEFIT</b> Help the employee learn to handle specific situations.
<b>5</b>	<b>GOAL</b> Build Positive Relationships	<b>STRATEGY</b> Involve peer mentors to provide guidance.	<b>BENEFIT</b> Gives mentors leadership opportunities; creates social connection.

### Teach Employees the Steps for Systematic Problem-Solving

1. Realize there’s a problem.
2. Identify what the problem is.
3. Plan how to fix it.
4. Carry out the plan.
5. Check if the plan worked.
6. If not, repeat the process OR get help from a manager.



Thank you to the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation (MEAF) for providing major funding to create innovative enhancements to the Uniquely Able Academy. MEAF is a non-profit foundation jointly funded by Mitsubishi Electric Corporation of Japan and its US affiliates, working to make changes for the better by empowering youth with disabilities to lead productive lives.

Thanks to Comerica Bank for helping sponsor the Time to Shine Employer Video and this Tip Sheet!

Written by Emily Iland, M.A. ©2021 The Uniquely Able Project. All rights reserved. Visit The Uniquely Able Project website: <https://uniquelyabledproject.org/>