

Communication Tactics Tips

Speaker communication tactics tips to assist deaf/hard of hearing people

When someone speaks, clues are gained, not only from what is heard but also from what is seen. These clues complement and supplement each other, helping the hearing impaired person to piece together the conversation.

For the deaf/hard of hearing person, the visual clues of speech become very important. Simple actions on your part determine the ease with which these visual clues can be followed.

The following points will help :-

1. Keep your face visible and ensure it is well lit.
2. Avoid speaking from another room, or with your head in a cupboard.
3. Do not hide your lip movements behind your hands, a cigarette or a pipe.
4. Do not speak while looking into a newspaper or book.
5. Keep your head fairly still when speaking.
6. Attract the observer's attention before you start talking to them so that they can catch the beginning of what is said and not just the ending.
7. Do not shout, speak clearly and not too fast, shouting and over-mouthing will alter the lip pattern and speaking too slowly may destroy the natural rhythm of speech.
8. Try to make the subject of the conversation as clear as possible.
9. When you are speaking do not distract the observers attention with unnecessary hand movements.
10. If you are wearing sunglasses, remove them while speaking.
11. Repeat the sentence again if necessary and then perhaps rephrase what you want to say. You may not be aware of this but some words are more difficult to lip-read than others, for example, the month of 'March' is easier to lip-read than 'August'. In the word 'March' the shapes making the 'M' and 'ch' are visible on the lips, but the components in August are made inside the mouth so there is nothing to see.
12. Write down any important facts.
13. Be patient.
14. Remember... a hearing aid amplifies background noise as well as speech.