

Basic Communication Tips

There are simple things you can do to hear better with or without hearing aids. Communication is a two-way street. Here are tips for the person who hears well, and for the person who has the hearing loss:

Tips for Hearing Person to Communicate with Person who has a Hearing Loss

Set Your Stage

- Face person directly (never talk from another room, or face away from listener).
- Spotlight your face (no backlighting).
- Avoid noisy backgrounds noisy (TV, radio, busy street noise or humming air conditioner).
- Get attention first (lightly touch or move in front of the person).
- Ask how you can facilitate communication (ask the person with hearing loss what helps them).
- When audio and acoustics are poor, emphasize the visual.

Get the Point Across

- Don't shout.
- Speak clearly, at moderate pace, not over-emphasizing words.
- Don't hide your mouth, chew food, gum, or smoke while talking.
- Re-phrase if you are not understood.
- Use facial expressions, gestures.
- Give clues when changing subjects or say "new subject."

Establish Empathy with Your Audience

- Be patient if response seems slow.
- Talk to a hard of hearing person, not about him or her to another person.
- Show respect to help build confidence and have a constructive conversation.
- Maintain a sense of humor, stay positive and relaxed.

Tips for the Person with Hearing Loss to Communicate with Hearing People

Set Your Stage

- Tell others how best to talk to you.
- Pick your best spot (light, quiet area, close to speaker).
- Anticipate difficult situations, plan how to minimize them.

Do Your Part

- Pay attention.
- Concentrate on speaker.
- Look for visual clues.
- Ask for written cues if needed.
- Don't interrupt. Let conversation flow to fill in the blanks and gain more meaning.
- Maintain a sense of humor, stay positive and relaxed.

Establish Empathy with Audience

- React. Let the speaker know how well he or she is conveying the information.
- Don't bluff. Admit it when you don't understand.
- If too tired to concentrate, ask for discussion later.
- Thank the speaker for trying