

Speaking to Someone with Hearing Loss

Here are some tips to help facilitate conversations and include someone with hearing loss.

Keep your mouth uncovered to assist with speech reading.



Be in the same room and establish eye contact with your listener.

Write down specific information like addresses, or ask the person to repeat it back to you for confirmation.

Address your listener by name to attract their attention.

Sit or stand close enough to the person with hearing loss to help them to both maintain eye contact and speech read.

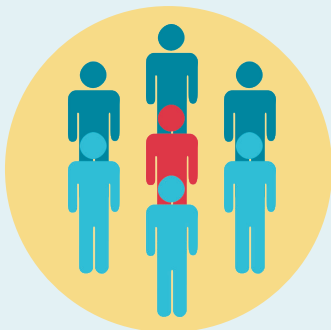
If your listener favors one ear over another, take note and speak more toward their preferred side.



Watch for cues--if the listener seems lost or confused, tactfully ask them if they understood you.

Practice patience with your listener, as conversations can require more focus.

Wait your turn in group settings to prevent confusion.



Ask the listener what they need.

Do not ignore someone with hearing loss as if they aren't there. Speak directly to that person and be mindful of their needs.

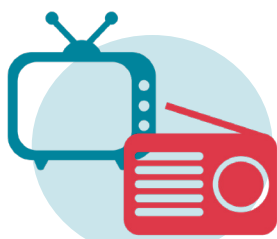
Limit distractions during conversation by eliminating extraneous noises like music or television.

Self Advocating with Hearing Loss

Here are some tips to help facilitate conversations in any environment in order to accommodate hearing loss.

If you are comfortable, be up front about your hearing loss. Do not be embarrassed or afraid to make your needs known.

Limit distractions during conversation by eliminating extraneous noises like music or television.

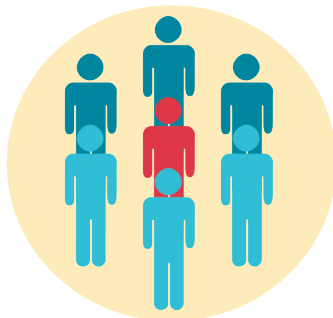


Sit or stand close enough to face the speaker directly, to allow for eye contact and speech reading.



Hold your conversation in a location with good lighting so that you are able to read facial cues and observe body language.

When in group settings, position yourself to have visual access to most of the group.



If you are not sure what was said, repeat it back or ask the speaker to confirm. Do not pretend to understand if you don't, as it can cause further confusion. The speaker will be happy to make sure everything is clear.



Remember that physical symptoms can affect communication. If you are feeling anxious or tired, ask to continue the conversation at a later date.

When joining a group conversation, ask for the topic to aid with contextual clues.

Keep a sense of humor and try not to be too hard on yourself. Communicating with hearing loss requires a great deal of concentration and patience. It's okay to take a break and regroup.



If you are comfortable, enlist an ally in group settings to help confirm what was said after the conversation.