

Communication tips

for speaking to someone with hearing loss

Find a place to talk that has good lighting and is away from noise and distractions.

Ensure you are facing and have the full attention of the person you want to speak to so they can read your body language and lips.

If you are unsure, ask what the best way of communicating is.

Don't stand in front of bright light, as this makes lip-reading difficult.

Don't lean towards the person and speak in one ear as this makes lip-reading impossible.

Don't shout. Instead, speak clearly.

Use normal lip movements, facial expressions and gestures.

Make sure what you are saying is understood.

Use plain language and get to the point. Don't waffle.

Speak more slowly if necessary.

Keep what you are saying on topic and make it clear when you are changing topic.

If you are asked to repeat what you have said, never say 'it doesn't matter' - instead, repeat what you have said or say it in a different way.

Don't single the person out. If you are talking to one person with hearing loss and one without, focus on both of them but ensure the one with hearing loss can read your lips.

Respect a person's boundaries and dignity - e.g. don't tap them on the shoulder or start waving at them to get their attention. Stand and face them and wait for them to acknowledge you.

Be patient and considerate - living with a hearing loss can be really hard.

Engage with any required assistive technology - e.g. use the microphone of a personal listener or loop system.