

Effective Communication Techniques: Tips for Establishing Effective Communication with Hard of Hearing

Things to know:

Number one rule to remember: hearing aids amplify all sounds, and may not improve an individual's ability to understand everything that is spoken.

- ◆ Environmental Considerations: avoid bright light in the background, avoid visually distracting backgrounds and areas with excessive noise.
- ◆ Wait until the individual makes eye contact with you before speaking.
- ◆ Face-to-Face communication with nothing covering the mouth or in the mouth is helpful for comprehending speech.
- ◆ Speak at a normal pace and volume, and do not exaggerate mouth movements.
- ◆ It often helpful to be expressive and use gestures, because the individual may use visual cues to enhance understanding.
- ◆ Choose a different word or way of saying something if not understood.
For example: acronyms, words formed from initial letters may be unfamiliar and more challenging to understand.
- ◆ During group meetings practice inclusion, by:
 - Discreetly check in with the individual who uses a hearing aid to confirm that they have adequate access to what is being shared with the group.
 - Establish protocol for turn-taking behaviors with the group as follows:
 - Participants should wait to be called upon before speaking, and state their name.
 - Only one person speaks at a time.
 - The person who is speaking should stand in a location that is readily visible to the audience; e.g., in front of the room.
- ◆ Instead of auditory alert systems, rely on visual alert systems.
- ◆ Consider providing Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services to ensure effective communication during large group meetings/trainings.
- ◆ Only captioned media should be used for employee-related communications.

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