

Tips for Talking with People Who Are Hearing-impaired

1. Face the hearing-impaired person directly and on the same level whenever possible.
2. See that the light is shining on the speaker's face, not in the eyes of the hearing-impaired person.
3. Be aware of the possible distortion of sound for the hard-of-hearing person. He or she may hear you, but still have difficulty understanding some words.
4. Do not talk from another room. If you must, make sure the person knows you are talking to him or her and tell the person what room you are in.
5. Speak in a normal fashion without shouting, or elaborately mouthing words. Words spoken a bit more slowly at a normal pace, tend to be more clear than those that are shouted and exaggerated.
6. Keep your hands away from your face while talking. If you are eating, chewing, smoking, etc. while talking, your speech will be more difficult to understand.
7. If a person has difficulty understanding some particular phrase or word, try to word it a different way instead of saying the same thing over and over.
8. If you are giving specific information, such as time or place, be sure it is repeated back to you. Many numbers and words sound alike.
9. Avoid sudden changes of topic. If the subject changes, say something like, "We are talking about _____ now."
10. The hard-of-hearing person may be very sensitive to loud sounds, even though the individual does not hear soft noises. This reduced tolerance for loud sound is a frequent occurrence in impaired hearing.

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