



# HEARING MATTERS AUSTRALIA

*Support from real life experience*

Ground Floor, Suite 600, The Australian Hearing Hub  
16 University Ave, Macquarie University NSW 2109

Phone: (02) 9878 089

Email: [admin@hearingmattersaustralia.org](mailto:admin@hearingmattersaustralia.org)

Website: [www.hearingmattersaustralia.org](http://www.hearingmattersaustralia.org)

## Information Sheets

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## Information Sheet Number 15

### **HELPFUL HINTS FOR BETTER COMMUNICATION WITH THOSE WHO HAVE HEARING LOSS.**

#### **GET THEIR ATTENTION**

- If it is dark, turn on the light
- Always face the hearing impaired person
- Put yourself on equal level as the hearing impaired person – standing/sitting
- Don't speak to a hearing impaired person behind their back
- Don't turn your face away when speaking
- Don't speak from another room
- If appropriate, gently touch the hearing impaired person before you speak
- Ask the hearing impaired person what is the best way to get their attention

#### **SPEAK CLEARLY BUT NORMALLY**

- Don't shout
- Maybe speak a little slower but don't exaggerate
- Let the hearing impaired person see your lips – don't chew food/gum or smoke while speaking

- Don't put your hand or anything else over your mouth while speaking. If you wear a moustache or beard, keep it trimmed around your lips.

### **SPOTLIGHT YOUR FACE**

- Face a window or lamp to let the best light shine on your face to help the hearing impaired person see your mouth and expression as you speak
- Remember that in the dark, a hearing impaired person finds it almost impossible to hear- e.g. in a car at night or in the bedroom in the dark.

### **AVOID NOISY BACKGROUNDS**

Before you speak to a hearing impaired person:

- Turn down the TV or Radio
- Turn off the vacuum cleaner or other equipment (electric jug, etc.)
- Move away from a noisy fan or air-conditioner
- Move away from an noisy machinery
- Move away from loud music in a shopping centre
- Don't try to talk above loud traffic noise
- Remember, if there is too much going on at once, the hearing impaired person will find it very difficult to hear or understand what you say
- Always remember it is harder for a hearing impaired person to hear when there is other noise

### **GET TO THE POINT**

Say the main thing as soon as possible without preliminary description. If a hearing impaired person doesn't understand you, find another way to say the same thing.

E.g. "What will the weather be tomorrow?" could be rephrased to "Will it be sunny tomorrow?"

### **POINTS TO REMEMBER**

- Hearing impaired people do not hear as well when they are tired or sick or have been involved in long conversational sessions.
- Check that what you said to the hearing impaired person was heard correctly
- Use facial expressions or gestures when talking to a hearing impaired person
- Encourage the hearing impaired person to build up their self-confidence
- Try to keep patient and relaxed yourself