

Communication Strategies

- 1. DISTANCE** – Move closer to the speaker, both in one-on-one and group/audience situations.
- 2. THE BETTER EAR** - If you hear better in one ear, or if you wear only one hearing aid, position your better/aided ear toward the speaker. When several people are talking, direct your better/ aided ear to the speaker of the greatest interest.
- 3. NOISE** - Keep away from noise sources as much as possible when trying to listen. Noise sources include fans, vents, motors, open windows, TVs, radios, dishwashers, etc. If noises can't be avoided, reduce them as much as possible. Turn down the TV or radio before engaging in conversation. The quieter the environment, the better the communication. Place the noise in front of you when possible. Standing with your back to a wall will be helpful in noise.
- 4. WATCH FACES** - Arrange your position so you can see the speaker's face and so the light is on the speaker's face rather than in your eyes.
- 5. TELL PEOPLE ABOUT YOUR HEARING LOSS** - If they know about the loss and the limitations of your hearing aid(s), they may be asked reasonably to speak more slowly and distinctly or to provide necessary repetition.
- 6. CONTEXT** - Use your knowledge of language and situation to help you deduce what is being said without having to hear every word and sound. Focus on the main ideas and concepts rather than isolated words.
- 7. REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS** - Know the limits of what you can hear in situations normally encountered. You must work harder than a normal hearing listener to take part in conversation. When you are tired or ill, you will not perform as well as when you are well rested.
- 8. RELAX** - You communicate better when you are not tense.
- 9. DON'T SHOUT** - This distorts your voice. Face the listener and talk in a normal voice, at close range.
- 10. INCREASE AUDITORY ATTENTION** – We can consciously increase our attention to the speaker. This requires focus. A person with hearing impairment already must work harder to take part in a conversation as effectively as a normal hearing person. Not surprisingly, he or she often will not hear as well as usual when tired or ill.