

# Communication Tips for the Hearing Impaired

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Communications is a two-way street. Those with a hearing loss must make as much effort as those with good hearing.

## The Person Who Can Hear

Here are a few tips to follow to better communicate with your friends and family who have a hearing loss.

- Set your stage.
  - Face your friend or family member directly.
  - Avoid noisy backgrounds.
  - Get the attention of the person before speaking.
  - Ask how you can facilitate communication.
  
- Enhance Your Communication
  - Don't shout, or raise your voice.
  - Speak clearly and at a moderate pace.
  - Don't hide your mouth, chew food or gum, or smoke while talking.
  - Rephrase (use different words) if you are not understood.
  - Use facial expressions and gestures.
  - Give clues when changing subjects.

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- Establish empathy with the listener
  - Be patient if response seems low.
  - Stay positive and relaxed.
  - Talk to a hearing-impaired person, not about him or her.
  - Offer respect to help build confidence.

## The Person Who Can't Hear

Here are a few tips to follow to better communicate with your friends and family if you have a hearing loss.

- Set your stage
  - Face your audience directly.
  - Spotlight your face (no backlighting).
  - Avoid noisy backgrounds.
  - Get their attention before speaking.
  - Ask how you can facilitate communication.
- Participate in the Communication
  - Pay attention.

# Communication Tips for the Hearing Impaired

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- Concentrate on the speaker.
- Look for visual clues.
- Ask for written cues if needed.
- Don't interrupt. Let the conversation flow awhile to gain more meaning.
- Establish empathy with your audience
  - React. Let the speaker know how well he is doing.
  - Don't bluff. Admit it when you don't understand.
  - If you're too tired to concentrate, ask to continue the discussion later.