

Pardon?

Guidelines to help communication with the deaf

- ❖ Be patient and understanding. Don't show frustration if you have to repeat yourself because this will not help
- ❖ Ask how best to attract their attention so you don't startle them (eg flick a light switch, stamp on the floor, throw something, prod them with a stick 😊) Be discrete
- ❖ Make sure you walk into their line of vision so they will know to look at you
- ❖ Position yourself in front of them so they can watch while you speak and get extra help from reading your lips and your body language
- ❖ Speak normally, clearly and don't mumble so they can understand you
- ❖ Speak a little slower, but definitely do not over emphasise words because this makes lip reading harder
- ❖ If someone hasn't understood you after a couple of times, rephrase your comments using different words so they can understand your meaning
- ❖ Don't cover your mouth, look or walk away while you speak because they can't read your lips plus sound goes in another direction making it harder for them to hear anything
- ❖ Don't call out from another room because deaf people often can't tell where the sound is coming from
- ❖ Don't speak while there is competing noise (eg other people are talking, or television or music is on)
- ❖ Write notes, memos or email to confirm specific instructions
- ❖ Encourage the deaf person to confirm specific instructions in writing to demonstrate they have understood the requirement
- ❖ Learn a little bit of sign language. It's fun and your deaf colleagues will appreciate your thoughtfulness. You can even use it across a crowded room and other people may not know what you've said. There are many sites on the internet where you can pick up a few signs.
- ❖ Help out your colleague if others are talking. Find out if they heard and understood everything and help them if they didn't

**Above all, remember
deaf does not equal stupid.**