



Offering Keys to Communication

VDDHH

Virginia Department for the Deaf
and Hard of Hearing

and

Founding Member of the Statewide
InterAgency Team for Deaf and
Hard of Hearing Services

Introduction and welcome

How many of you clearly understood what I just “said”?

¡Buenas tardes!

Mi nombre es Gary Talley, y esta noche estoy aquí para hablar con usted sobre el acceso de comunicación para sordos y personas con problemas de audición.

Imagínese en una situación - como se ha producido -, pero donde es necesario comprender con claridad lo que se dice a usted, pero usted no puede!

Esta es la situación que enfrentan todos los días, donde la comunicación apropiada y accesible o de alojamiento no se ofrecen a personas sordas o con dificultades auditivas

Buon pomeriggio!

Il mio nome è Gary Talley, e questa sera sono qui per parlarvi di accesso di comunicazione per non udenti e non udenti individui.

Immaginatevi in una situazione - come hai appena vissuto - ma se avete bisogno di capire chiaramente ciò che è stato detto voi, ma non si può!

Questa è la situazione di fronte tutti i giorni, in cui la comunicazione adeguati e accessibili o alloggi non siano forniti al sordi e persone con problemi di udito

God ettermiddag

Mitt navn er Gary Talley, og denne kvelden jeg er her for å snakke med deg om kommunikasjon tilgang for døve og hardt av hørselen individer.

Forestill deg selv i en situasjon-som nå – hvor du trenger å forstå tydelig hva som blir sagt til deg, men du kan ikke!

Dette er situasjonen møter hver dag i lege kontorer der riktig og tilgjengelig kommunikasjon eller Overnattingssteder ikke oppgis til døve og hardt av hørselen individer

Good afternoon!

My name is Gary Talley, and this afternoon I am here to talk to you about communication access for deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

Imagine yourself in a situation – like you just experienced – but where you need to clearly understand what is being said to you, but you can't!

This is the situation faced everyday, where appropriate and accessible communication or accommodations are not provided to deaf and hard of hearing individuals

COMMUNICATION

is the single most important skill we can possess. It's the way we make a "connection" to those around us.

Approximately 93% of all communication is non-verbal...

But, the 7% that IS verbal – the words we use - is so important.

There are no accurate numbers of deaf in the United States. Estimates vary from 4 million up to 21 million, depending upon how one defines “deaf”, and IF the individual defines himself/herself as deaf.

But, the numbers don't really matter.

What DOES matter is how we perceive and treat the INDIVIDUAL who cannot hear – the one right in front of us.

I am not here today as a representative of the “deaf community”, as I am neither appointed nor elected to do so.’

I am here today to share with you my own perspective – both personal and as a professional.

DEFINITIONS

Deaf

Late Deafened

Hard of Hearing

DeafBlind

Deaf means the inability to hear and understand normal conversation. It does not necessarily mean total lack of sound.

Those considered to be **Late-deafened** lost their hearing after age 19.

Many of these individuals have understandable speech, but they are deaf, and cannot hear YOU.

HARD of HEARING means the individual has difficulty understanding normal conversation and other sounds.

DeafBlind is a unique situation, combining the inability to understand normal conversation AND have limited-to-no vision.

The most important point I wish to make today is that these are **INDIVIDUALS** with some level of hearing loss.

Everyone's loss is different, and the ways and means they adapt are somewhat unique to each individual.

Some individuals use sign language, and it can either be American Sign Language (ASL), Signed English, or perhaps, a signed foreign language.

There are over 100 different sign languages in use worldwide.

Deaf vs deaf

Big “D” Deaf usually means born deaf, attending a residential school, and using ASL as their primary means of communication. Often referred to as “culturally Deaf”.

deaf (little “d”) usually refers to late-deafened or those raised oral. They often have good English skills, and may or may not sign.

3 of 4 deaf adults is late-deafened.

Deaf / deaf...

may or may not sign.

may or may not have clear speech.

may or may not have good English skills.

miss out on many / most / all environmental sounds.

With the U.S. preparing to celebrate 20 years of the ADA, it is still a struggle for many deaf / hard of hearing individuals to be provided interpreters or some type of assistive listening device in most places.

VDDHH was recently approached by a deaf individual who had been refused an interpreter by a physician. He called an attorney to initiate a lawsuit, and requested an interpreter for that meeting.

The attorney told the client that he would need to provide his own interpreter.

What does it really mean to be deaf or hard of hearing?

What do YOU think it means?

I think one of the biggest differences between hearing and deaf / hard of hearing is “cultural” experience.

Being late-deafened, I grew up hearing...watching television and listening to music, participating in sports, going to the movies...

Good things...bad things...naughty and nice things... typical of many American youth.

As a kid, I attended Dinwiddie Schools.

Had I grown up deaf in a residential school, my culture would be somewhat different. No TV and no music.

My English would likely not be as good.

I likely would not be as close to my brothers and sister— being raised apart.

College? Perhaps?

Military service? Absolutely not.

One shared characteristic that I have learned is that, being deaf, I am pre-judged.

I give people my phone number (VP), but they don't call because they don't understand how to use it, or they are "uncomfortable" with the interpreter, yet the lack communication is – somehow – my fault.

The language of the Deaf

American Sign Language

History...

The American Asylum, At Hartford, For The Education And Instruction Of The Deaf And Dumb

Opened in 1817

Now know as the American School for
the Deaf

Some **general** characteristics of ASL

Time signed first (General to Specific)

Topic - Comment

No articles (a - an - the)

Fingerspelling

Facial expressions

(Most) Interrogatives come last

ASL is not, and was never intended to be, a WRITTEN language.

ASL is a “real” language, with its own structure and syntax and rules.

It is NOT a universal language, meaning there are regional variations, just like English.

Technology is changing the language,
requiring more and more “English”.

TTY's (since the late 1960's)

Text messengers

Captioning

Computers and Email

Unfortunately, the lack of adequate English instruction for deaf students is counter-productive to learning the kind of proper English needed for resumes, cover letters, and other business correspondence.

As you may imagine, teaching English in a language that is NOT English is going to be somewhat problematic.

How do we overcome the language barrier?

First, ASK the individual what is his or her preferred mode of communication.

For formal meetings and training sessions, an interpreter or CART (or other means of captioning) is highly recommended.

For informal communication, speech-reading may be acceptable for some.

Video Remote Interpreting may be a viable option.

For clearer communication:

Face the individual directly

Do not be “backlit” with bright light

Don't be in front of a bright
window or lamp

Speak clearly but don't over-enunciate

Use simpler words – such as “teach” rather than “educate” or “lie”, rather than “prevaricate”; Not because the deaf individual is not intelligent, but because multi-syllable words are harder to “read”.

Be sure your facial expressions match your words. We cannot hear your tone of voice.

Avoid sarcasm – unless you know the individual well and are CERTAIN you will be understood.

Be inclusive, always!

Don't tell the individual "Oh, never mind. It's not important."

What we hear is "I'M not important"

Again, be inclusive. It is important to **EVERYONE** to feel like they belong.

Even if you are not certain you can communicate, **TRY**. You will be surprised at how well you are able to be understood if you make a real effort.

QUESTIONS??????

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