

Hiring/Managing Deaf and Hard of Hearing People

- **NTID Center on Employment (NCE)**

<http://www.ntid.rit.edu/nce>

- **Job Accommodation Network**

<http://askjan.org/Erguide/>

- **Federal Communications Commission**

<http://www.fcc.gov/guides/video-relay-services>

Communication Best Practices

- When setting up an interview, ask the candidate how he or she will prefer to communicate during the interview.
- If requested, provide an interpreter for the interview.
- Be aware that the candidate may speak for himself or herself, or the interpreter may voice what the candidate signs.
- Make eye contact with the candidate.
- Address your questions directly to the candidate, not the interpreter.
- Encourage the Deaf/Hard of Hearing individual to let you know if your communication is unclear and be comfortable rephrasing if necessary.
- In meetings, watch for signals that Deaf/Hard of Hearing employees wish to contribute.
- Ask the Deaf/Hard of Hearing employee how they prefer you get their attention (tapping shoulder, waving, etc.)
- Be sure to include Deaf/Hard of Hearing employees in conversations, work break activities and social events.
- Ensure that one person speaks at a time in group settings.
- Do not talk with your back to the audience while writing on a blackboard.
- Have minutes or notes taken, transcribed, and disseminated for future reference.
- Incorporate visual aids, demonstrations, flip charts, written agendas, and handouts in presentations.

Be Visually Accessible

- Support visual access: good lighting, maintain eye contact, etc.
- For an interview it is a best practice to provide a written copy of the interview questions, an itinerary of the interview day, and company literature.
- Be aware that the interpreter will likely sit next to the interviewer so the candidate/employee can easily see both individuals.
- Provide name tags, including job titles, for everyone on the first day.
- Provide an organizational chart for new employees.
- Hand out benefits information in advance for new hires to read before attending a benefits meeting.
- Use captioned films or videotapes.
- Provide an outline of training sessions.
- Encourage Deaf/Hard of Hearing employees determine the best seating arrangement to see the speaker and interpreter for groups of various sizes.
- Visually indicate who is speaking next during group discussions or meetings.
- Install flashing lights that work in conjunction with emergency auditory alarms.
- Install flashing lights that work in conjunction with incoming telephone calls and doorbells/buzzers.
- Consider the layout of the room (i.e. circular seating) in order to provide the best possible visual access to everyone who might be speaking.

General Suggestions

- Walk through emergency evacuation routes/rally locations during the new employee's orientation.
- Use a buddy system to alert Deaf/Hard of Hearing employees to emergency situations that are announced via intercom.
- Use texting, e-mail or pagers to contact Deaf/Hard of Hearing employees in the event of an emergency.
- Inform everyone (front desk receptionist, security officers, janitorial staff, parking attendants, etc.) that there is a candidate/employee who is Deaf/Hard of Hearing on site.
- Ask all candidates to demonstrate their skills during the interview by operating a piece of equipment or software application, etc. Do not single out any one individual.