



**GOLDEN RULES FOR  
COMMUNICATION WITH DEAF OR  
HARD OF HEARING PEOPLE**

Make sure you have the person's attention and that they are looking at you.  
Give a small wave or touch their shoulder/arm.

- Make sure that background noise is at a minimum.
- Make sure that there is sufficient light on your face. Light from behind casts the face into shadow and lip-reading will become very difficult.
- Look directly at the person and don't turn away whilst talking.
- Make sure that your face or mouth is not hidden behind a hand, pen, cigarette, beard, etc.
- Give the subject of the conversation first and avoid sudden changes of subject.
- Keep the normal rhythm of speech but be sure to enunciate the words clearly.
- Shouting or exaggerated lip movements really do not help.
- Use facial expression, body language and gesture but remember exaggerated mime will just make you both look silly.
- If a sentence is not understood don't just repeat yourself try to rephrase it.
- As a last measure you can always write it down.
- Always be patient and friendly, take the time to communicate.
- You may need to book a sign language interpreter, lip-speaker or note-taker to ensure effective communication.

Short courses are available to help improve your communication tactics & deaf awareness. If you would like to know more about these courses then please contact Deaf Direct.