

Hearing Tactics

What you can do to help change your environment to assist your hearing loss.

- Explain that you have a hearing loss. Do not pretend that you have understood, as this could cause the speaker to come to the wrong conclusions.
- Ask people to get your attention first as it is easier to hear when facing the speaker.
- Ask people to speak clearly and not to shout.
- Reduce background noise if possible or move from it.
- Sit with the light behind you so that it is on the speaker's face. Use face to face communication, gestures and paper/pencil if necessary.
- Avoid sitting at any distance from the speaker. Clarity of speech reduces considerably over distance. At home ask members of the family not to speak from another room.
- Wear your hearing aid whenever possible.
- Use the 'T' position on your hearing aid if there is a loop system.
- How do you ask for a repeat - 'What?' or 'stop mumbling'! Try things like "I missed the last part of the sentence" or "I'm interested in what you are saying but I need to see your lips..."
- Do you ask useful questions? Did you say "does this plane goes to Auckland"? Is better than "Where does this plane go"?
- Sometimes if you wait awhile, the confused jumble of a conversation becomes clear. Sometimes we can tune into conversation by observation. About 70% of our communication is non-verbal
- Place a greater emphasis on those things you can still do with little or no difficulty. Develop and improve your powers of observation and memory. Eg. we see the approaching car since we can't hear its engine, we notice guests heading for the dining room even though we didn't hear the hostess announce dinner over the noise.
- You can't hear everything, no one can. Many people, when they discover they have a loss, become sensitive to the things they can't hear.
- Make positive efforts to keep abreast of events so that you can lead some topics of conversation. Introducing your own topic into the conversation will make it easier to contribute.
- If hobbies and committees are becoming difficult to enjoy or to cope with, try new activities that are one to one.

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