

Guidelines Toward Speaking Clearly

Developing a habit of speaking in a distinct and clear fashion has been shown to increase the amount of speech understood by those with hearing loss by as much as 15 to 25% -- even within a background of noise. With a bit of practice, *Clear Speech* can be produced by almost anyone and when used by family members of those with hearing loss can significantly reduce the frustrations that inherently follow misunderstandings.

What is *Clear Speech*?

Clear Speech is an accurate and precise production of each individual speech sound within every word. Care must be taken that word endings are not dropped or slurred and that a natural voice stress is retained. *Clear Speech* is produced at a level slightly louder than normal conversation, but is not shouted. *Clear Speech* is produced at a naturally slower rate that occurs automatically when you attempt to speak in a clear manner. It is not a deliberate attempt to slow the rate of your speech. *Clear Speech* is not produced in a halting or exaggerated fashion but rather maintains the normal cadence of spoken language. When using *Clear Speech* you should allow for natural pauses between all phrases and sentences.

Remember, when speaking in a *Clear Speech* mode you should speak as clearly and as precisely as you can. You should not consciously try to speak louder or more slowly, but rather should strive to produce each word as accurately as possible.

Compare Conversational Speech to *Clear Speech*:

She leffer the city onabus.

She left for the city on a bus.

Note in the first sentence that some of the consonants of speech are left out or blend in with adjacent words. The second sentence retains all of the sounds of speech naturally within the sentence. The pauses between phrases or concepts add further to comprehension of the message.

The kids'r sw im 'n in the pool

The kids are swimming in the pool.

Yerm other'l be back nextuesday.

Your mother will be back next Tuesday.

Jim 'll haftago to the den istom orrow .

Jim will have to go to the dentist tomorrow.

Be Patient:

Keep in mind that using *Clear Speech* is not the natural way you grew up speaking to others, nor is it the way you speak now or will continue to speak with most people in your life. You are going to forget to switch over to *Clear Speech* when speaking with the person in your life who has a hearing loss. But with time and daily practice you will find that you can switch with little conscious effort between your two modes of speech.

Remember:

Clear Speech is not meant to be a replacement for the Communication Guidelines you should follow when speaking to someone with hearing loss. Rather the *Clear Speech* mode should be a positive adjunct to your use of the Communication Guidelines.

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