Points for Good Communication

- Keep your face in ***good light*** and face the person who's deaf. A light source will cast a shadow on your face making lip-reading difficult.

- Keep your face ***clear*** at all times. Hands, cigarettes and untrimmed beards & moustaches also make lip-reading difficult.

- Speak clearly. ***Do not exaggerate*** your mouth movements and ***do not shout,*** this distorts your lip-patterns.

- Cut out as much ***background*** noise as possible, e.g. close windows, turn off TVs etc. Hearing aids pick up and amplify all sounds. Remember, 'visual noise' has to be considered as well!

- Use the most ***common form of words*** and do not change from one topic of conversation to another as this confuses a lip-reader.

- If you are not understood, try ***re-phrasing*** what you said or write it down.

- If another person joins the conversation, ***indicate*** to the deaf person who is now speaking.

- It may also be useful to use some ***gestures*** when explaining things. Remember, gestures and normal facial expressions form part of good communication.

Hearing Aids

Hearing aids come in many shapes and sizes (and colours!). The most common being the ***'behind-the-ear aid'***, others include body worn aids which can be kept in a shirt/jacket pocket, an in-the-ear aid which fits snugly into the outer part of the ear canal (becoming more common), hearing aids attached to spectacles, Radio aids etc.

Virtually all hearing aids (especially behind-the-ear aids) have 3 switches: **O** - off, **M** - microphone (on) and **T** - telecoil.

The T switch allows the user to use an ***Inductive Loop System,*** where only the sound from an external microphone is received by the hearing aid via magnetic signals transmitted through wires which can surround a table, room, theatre etc., thus, cutting out background noise etc.

Hearing Aids:

- ◊ enables **some** deaf people to understand speech more easily - either on its own or with a Loop system
- ◊ is a miniature **amplifying** system
- ◊ dose **not** restore 'normal' hearing
- ◊ benefits of hearing aids **depends** on the individual (i.e. type, degree of deafness)
- ◊ makes **all** sounds louder
- ◊ takes **time** to get used to
- ◊ are **not** suitable for all people
- ◊ some people have to **re-learn** sounds
- ◊ profoundly deaf people may derive **little** or **no** benefit from hearing aids.

Some people may find hearing aids unsightly and/or the 'dawning' of old-age.

Technology is advancing and there are many developments in the area of 'aids to hearing' including Cochlear Implants, Bone Anchored Hearing Aids and Middle Ear Implants.

A popular misconception is that an implant is a cure for deafness, this is not the case. A Cochlear Implant is a ***surgically implanted device*** which stimulates the nerve of hearing and is usually only offered to people who do not derive any benefit from conventional hearing aids.

Implants do not restore or 'give the gift of hearing', however, they do offer the chance to hear everyday sounds and sounds of speech, as with conventional aids, the sounds heard have to be learnt.

There are many examples of people's lives being transformed after being implanted and this can not be ignored or devalued. The use of implants on children who have never had any 'useful' hearing is a controversial subject in the Deaf Community.

Middle-ear Implants

Currently only available for adults this implant has an external audio processor held in place behind the ear and an internal floating mass transducer (FMT) fixed to the incus bone of the middle ear which transfers sound into an electrical signal which is picked up by the FMT and amplifies the sound by vibrations transferred to the middle ear bones. This is suitable for people who have a moderate to severe sensorineural hearing loss.

Technical Aids to Communication (TACs)

Technical Aids to Communication is the name used to describe the range of 'environmental' aids and equipment which deaf people might use for communication and access information and services:

Telephones -
- Amplified handset
- Textphone (Uniphone, Minicom etc.)
- Typetalk
- Videophones
- Faxes
- E-mail

Visual Indicators -
- Telephone
- Doorbell
- Smoke detector
- Alarm clock

Television -
- Listening aid: Loop
- Teletext Sub-titles (888)

(Plus pages Read Hear/Deaf View)
- Caption Reader

Loop & Infra-red systems -
- Theatres
- Cinemas
- Public Halls
- Places of worship
- Booking Offices

Personal Amplifiers

TACs can be obtained via Social Work Services (may be provided free of charge) or commercial suppliers/manufacturers such as; Sound Advantage (RNID), Sarabec etc.

Human Aids to Communication is a covering term to encapsulate all persons who carry out a function of:

- Sign Language Interpreter
- Lip-Speaker
- Speech to Text Reporter
- Note Taker
- Interpreter for People who are Deafblind
- Communicator Guide
- Communication Support Worker

Sign Language users -
would most likely use an interpreter and perhaps make use of note-taker & speech to text.

Deafened /Hard of Hearing people -
would most likely use lip-speakers, note-takers & speech to text.

A Communication Support Worker would be a person providing a mixture of the above and usually within an educational setting.

Human Aids to Communication can be used in virtually any situation, for example theatre, meetings, conferences, interviews, religious services, personal appointments (legal, medical, ...) etc.

In all situations the physical location of the HAC is important to ensure effective communication between the users (Deaf & Hearing people).

Human Aids to Communication

Who uses who and where:

Born or became deaf (partially/severe) Spoken/written main means to communication	Became deaf after acquiring spoken language Spoken/written main means to communication	Born or became Deaf in early childhood Sign Language main means to communication
Hard of Hearing ↓ ↘	**Deafened** ↙ ↓	**BSL Users** ↙ ↓
Lip-Speaker	**Note-Taker** **Speech-to-Text**	**BSL/English** **Sign Language Interpreter**
Repeats what is being said without voice (only lip movements), almost verbatim and with appropriate facial expressions and gestures	Writes or types (conventional or palantype keyboard) almost verbatim. Palantype operator – 200 wpm	Interprets from one language to the other (usually simultaneously) e.g. English to BSL BSL to English

Human aids to communication can opererate in virtually any situation that requires two-way communication: education, employment, medical situaltions, social gatherings, formal meetings/conferences, theatre .....