Communication

IS A TWO WAY STREET



BETTER COMMUNICATION HABITS
A GUIDE FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

oticon
PEOPLE FIRST





Good communication builds

GOOD RELATIONSHIPS.





The sense of hearing is a vital link to the world–a source of pleasure, and information and connection to others.

When someone you know has a hearing loss you can help make things easier. Communication is a two way street.



Making Conversation Easier

Communication is the key to all human activities. It is necessary for learning, exchanging information, and generally taking care of each other. Advancements in hearing instrument technology have made a huge impact in the way people with hearing loss can function today. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that even the best technology does not eliminate the need for good communication skills.

If your friend or family member has a hearing loss, you can use supportive techniques that make it easier for them to follow a conversation. This booklet outlines a Clear Speech technique that is easily understood and which you can readily adopt into daily life. It also gives you some basic guidelines on how

syllables becomes more obvious. Combined with the fitting of quality hearing instruments, these changes are exactly what is needed for a person with hearing loss to improve their ability to follow a conversation.

Clear Speech is when the speaker attempts to express every word and sentence in a precise, accurate and fully formed manner.

Clear Speech is:

- Accurate and fully formed
- Naturally slower (This happens automatically when you attempt to be clearer)
- Naturally louder (Your voice raises automatically when you attempt to be clearer)
- Lively, with a full range of voice intonation (tone) and stress on key words
- Characterized by pauses between all phrases and sentences

Clear Speech is not a substitute for other well-known communication habits. You still need to reduce background noise, and avoid trying to communicate from a different room or with your back turned. You should also make sure that your face is well lit (avoid standing with your back to the light).



Instructions for Clear Speech

This section contains a series of exercises designed to take you to a point where you can confidently and spontaneously communicate in Clear Speech mode. Your hearing care professional has shown you the technique in his practice. Now take this booklet home and practice the exercises.

When practicing for Clear Speech, imagine you are speaking to your friend or relative with hearing loss. Speak as clearly and precisely as possible. Try to express each word as accurately as you can.



EXERCISE 1

Say the sentence:

"The ship left on a two week cruise"

This is the Target Sentence -the sounds we aim to produce.

In a normal conversational speaking voice, this sentence would probably sound more like this:

"The Shiplef ona twoweecruise"

Some of the vowels are missing, the "t" at the end of "left" disappeared, and the "k" of week became merged into the "c" of "cruise".

In a Clear Speech style, the sentence would be:

"The ship left__on a two__ week cruise"

The vowels sound the way they are supposed to, the "t" at the end of "left" has reappeared, and natural pauses are inserted after "left", "two" and "week".

EXERCISE 2

Target sentence:

"We were looking for a white truck to buy"

In conversation:

"We're lookin for a whitruck tabuy"

In Clear Speech:

"We were looking for a white truck to buy"

The underlined words are the key words that need to be stressed, after which you should insert natural pauses to emphasize the natural breaks in the sentence. You will also notice that no words are merged (e.g. we're) as in the conversational version. Nor are any words or sounds dropped.

EXERCISE 3

In the following sentences we have underlined key words and words that you need to emphasize. By emphasizing the key words and by breaking the sentence down into natural phrases, you are more able to produce each word completely. Each speech sound, especially the consonants, becomes very distinct.

Now say the sentences in Clear Speech. Be sure to express every sound.

"Who ate the last piece of cake?"

"Please send that letter in the mail."

"The rooster ran all over the barnyard."

"The dog was waiting in the car."

"The ballerina looked lovely in a pink and white outfit."

EXERCISE 4

Now you should underline key words, and break the following sentences into natural phrases. Then say them in Clear Speech.

"Ice cream was all over the child's face."

"We could see the snow capped peaks in the distance."

"The sun is just coming up behind the trees."

"Father used a ladder to get on the roof."

"We held a birthday party on a sunny day in the park."

"His castle sat high upon the wooded hill."

EXERCISE 5

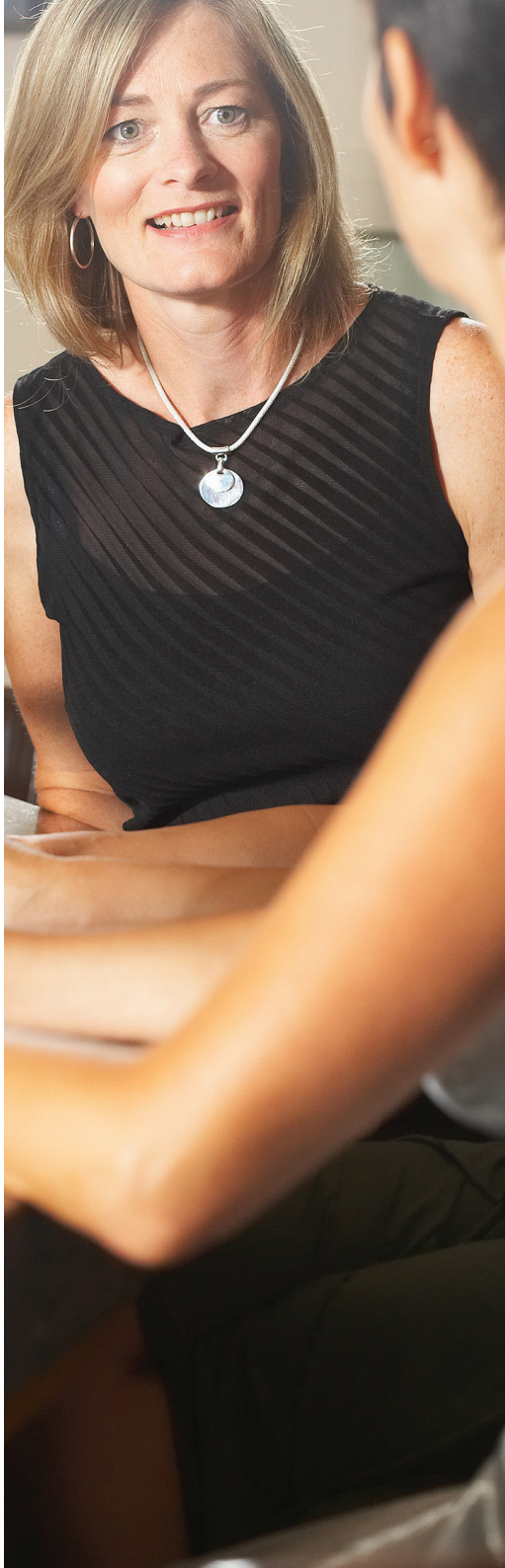
Talk to your hearing-impaired relative about the following topics for two or three minutes. Remember to concentrate on pronouncing every sound in every word clearly and naturally. Do not exaggerate. Do not rush. Use lively inflection. Keep in mind that you want every single part of your message to be understood.

- Give directions to the local library
- Describe how to make a pot of tea
- Describe the last family holiday
- Describe the different towns or homes in which you have lived

Each time, ask the other person whether all the speech was clear and easy to understand. Also ask whether your voice sounded natural.

It is easy to remember to use Clear Speech when repeating sentences in these exercise. It is more difficult to remember to do it when you are having a conversation. However, in order for Clear Speech to become automatic in conversation with the hearing-impaired individual, it is important to practice Clear Speech when you are speaking to everyone.

Remember, Clear Speech requires concentration and effort. Being able to switch automatically to Clear Speech mode requires daily practice until it becomes second nature.



Talk Face-to-Face

There are a number of ways to make communication easier:

- Face the person you are talking to. Don't try to converse from a different room or with your back turned. It is easier to hear what people say when you can see what they are saying. Visual clues like facial expressions and lip movements help listeners better understand your words.
- Stand or sit where your face is well lit. This makes it easier to see your facial expressions and your mouth movements as you speak.
- Try not to talk while chewing or eating. It makes it harder to understand what you are saying, and almost impossible for others to see your mouth and face as you speak.
- Do not talk while reading the newspaper, or lean your cheek on your hand while talking, as this will also make speech-reading difficult for others.

Speak at a Natural Pace

- You don't need to shout. It is perfectly fine to speak at a normal conversational volume when talking with someone who wears hearing instruments. Most instruments are programmed to amplify a normal level of speech, so if you shout, it may be too loud or sound distorted to the listener.
- Try not to talk too fast. Speak naturally, but try to pronounce your words more clearly. This will naturally slow your speech, but be careful not to overdo it.
- If you are having trouble being understood, try rephrasing your sentence rather than just repeating yourself.
- When you are in a group, take turns at talking, and try not to interrupt each other. If the conversation changes suddenly, try to inform the person with the hearing loss; knowing the subject of the conversation makes it much easier to follow and participate.

Try to Reduce Background Noise

For someone who has a hearing loss, the most difficult listening environment is background noise. Voices are difficult to hear because they are in competition with all the other noise. The following are some suggestions that may help:

- Try to eliminate background noise when having a conversation. Turn off the television and close any open windows to reduce any noise from traffic.
- Move closer to your listener so your voice is louder than the background noise. This will also make your face and lips more visible.
- Alternatively, try to find somewhere quieter to talk.

Remember:

- Do what you can to make speech-reading possible
- Talk face-to-face
- Speak at a natural pace
- Learn the Clear Speech technique
- Try to eliminate background noise

Information at a click!

For more information on hearing and hearing loss please visit our Internet site: **www.oticonusa.com.**



People First

People First is our promise:
to empower people
to communicate freely,
interact naturally and
participate actively

TO SCHEDULE A HEARING APPOINTMENT CONTACT:

15500-2068/02.11