

Synopsis of a presentation on Clear Speech by Mary Bauer, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, MN Department of Human Services at the December 21, 2019 HLAA-TC meeting.

Clear Speech:

- Is precise and fully formed.
- Is slightly slower.
- Is a little louder.
- Has a full range of intonation.
- Has stress on key words.
- Has pauses between key phrases.
- Avoids the use of contractions.

Condensed Version of ClearSpeech to Share with Communication Partner(s):

1. Say things as clearly as possible (without *exaaaggerrratingggg*).
2. Slow down a little bit (b-u-t n-o-t t-o-o m-u-c-h).
3. Talk a little bit louder (but **SHOUTING** won't help).
4. Pause a tad bit after phrases (so the brain can catchup).

Some Tips to Use with Friends and Family:

- Share some examples of what you've *thought* people have said to you
- Have some Mad Gab examples to share with them or better yet, play a game or two of Mad Gab!
- Explain the characteristics of Clear Speech.
- Download the "Communication is a Two-way Street" handout.
- Write a letter with communication tips that work for you.
- Come up with an agreed-upon, non-verbal way of reminding them to use Clear Speech.
- Try to thank them when they remember to use Clear Speech - "warm fuzzies" are always appreciated!

Remember: You won't be able to teach everyone you encounter on a daily basis the finer points of Clear Speech. But a simple request such as, "If you could speak just a bit slower, it would be so helpful," is usually all you need to get the person out of Conversational Speech mode and into Clear Speech mode. But remember - you will probably have to remind them of your request several times throughout the conversation. And that's alright!

Best Practices:

- Inform others that you have a hearing loss.
- Tell people how to best communicate with you but try not to overwhelm them.
- Be patient. (Clear Speech is probably not "natural" for them.)
- Stay positive and upbeat.
- Remember that most people are going to revert back to their normal, conversational speech.
- And the same is true with other behaviors you ask them to change (e.g. look at you while talking, turn off the radio when conversing, etc.).
- Please don't take it personally if they go back to their old habits within a few seconds or minutes (or forget the next time you talk).