

Top tips for communicating with a colleague who is deaf or hard of hearing

Top tips for line managers and staff

1. **Context** is really important. If you want to tell us something, start the conversation by explaining what you want to talk about first.
2. If you want us to do something, it can be helpful to **clarify action points** at the end of the conversation to check everyone understands. Even better, dropping us a very brief email afterwards.
3. Some people use speech, some BSL (sign-language), others lip read. All of us are different. Ask the person what is their **preferred communication method** and find a way that works.
4. Try not to ask us things in corridors. It is much easier if **meetings take place in quiet areas** where we can see/hear you clearly without distraction.
5. Don't be put off talking to us because you are worried we won't understand each other. **Give it a go**. We will really appreciate you trying.

Top tips for deaf and hard-of-hearing colleagues

1. A smooth start relies on **open and honest communication** before you begin.
2. Getting **adjustments in place as early as possible** will help you to hit the ground running.
3. No one will understand you and the **support you need** more than you.
4. It's OK to say, "I can't access this"; to **be bold and decisive about the support that you need** to be your best; to not take no for an answer; and, above all, to be open with people.
5. **Explain what your preferred communication method is** and help others by making it quite clear what they can do to support you and communicate with you more effectively. They are likely far more apprehensive about getting it wrong than you may be.