Communicating with the Deaf and Hearing Impaired

ENVIRONMENT

**DON’T**
- Don’t stand in front of a bright light source that obscures your facial features.
- Don’t position yourself near noisy areas with loud music or crowds.
- Don’t walk in front of the individual.
- Don’t select a location or seat for the individual.

**DO**
- Do position yourself so your facial expressions are easy to see.
- Pick a quiet spot and relocate if necessary.
- When walking, stay close by, either shoulder-to-shoulder or a step behind.
- When entering a room let the person choose a seat or location first.

SELF-MANAGEMENT

**DON’T**
- Don’t look away or multi-task.
- Don’t exaggerate your expressions, cover your mouth, or speak too rapidly.
- Don’t abruptly start a conversation or switch topics.
- Don’t assume all hearing impairments are the same.

**DO**
- Maintain eye contact and avoid distractions.
- Speak clearly and articulate distinctly.
- State the topic of discussion before you begin.
- Ask for the preferred method of communication.

MANAGING THE CONVERSATION

**DON’T**
- Engage in side conversations and talking over people.
- Don’t begin the conversation if the individual is distracted.
- Don’t make assumptions about what the person understood.
- Don’t rely on only one method of message communication.

**DO**
- In a group, make sure only one person is speaking at a time.
- Do get the person’s attention by waving a hand, or using a light touch on the shoulder or arm.
- Periodically pause to check for understanding.
- Utilize text or email messaging when not face-to-face.

RESOURCES

Office of Disability Services
camercenter.miami.edu

Emergency and non-emergency phone number for the deaf and hearing impaired: (305) 284-6666

April 2019

@LifeAt_TheU
@LifeAtTheU

@LifeAtTheU