

# Tips for Communicating with DeafBlind Individuals

# Using Speech

* Get an individual’s attention before speaking by saying their name and/or tapping them on the shoulder and waiting for them to visually or tactually locate you.
* Identify yourself before speaking.
* Do not shout.
* Speak clearly and in a normal tone of voice, not too fast or too slow.
* Look directly at the person and be on the same eye level if possible.
* Stand or sit with the light above or toward you, not behind you.
* Keep your hands away from your mouth when speaking.
* Don’t eat or chew gum while speaking.
* Eliminate background noise from radio, television, dishwasher, etc.
* Use a different phrase or word with the same meaning, if the individual is having difficulty understanding what is being said, do not keep repeating the same word.
* One person speaks at a time.
* If multiple people are speaking, identify yourself first before speaking and allow time for the individual to visually locate you if applicable.
* Stay in the same room while talking with the individual
* Inform the individual if the volume of their voice is too soft or too loud. (Signal: draw line up or down arm to indicate to lower/raise voice).
* Let the individual know if there is feedback from their hearing aid.