

Communication strategies

Set the stage for success

- Turn off background noise.
- Have good lighting.
- Gain the other person's attention before talking.
- Be face-to-face.

Helpful talking tips

- Pay attention to your communication partner.
- Check that they understand.
 - Watch their body language and facial expressions.
 - Ask them questions to confirm.

If the other person doesn't understand something, try one of these:

- Say it again a little louder.
- Point to the first letter of the word on an alphabet board and say it again.
- Write it down.
- Point to it, if you can see what you're talking about.
- Make a gesture to show what it is.
- Say it another way.
- Take a break.

Important conversations

- Save important conversations for when everyone involved feels rested and relaxed.
- Avoid having a serious conversation when anyone is tired, hungry, or feeling rushed.

Tip #1 for your family, friends, and medical professionals

- If you don't understand part of a message, don't say "What?".
- Saying "What?" forces the other person to repeat the entire message, which can be tiring and frustrating.
- Instead, repeat what you understood and ask them to fill in the blank(s).

Example

- Person A: Can you pick up some mshwrk?
- Spouse: Can I pick up some what?
- Person A: Milk.

Tip #2 for your family, friends, and medical professionals

Be respectful

- Ask permission before trying to guess what the other person is saying.
- Some people want to speak for themselves, while others don't mind if someone else shares some of the work of communicating.