

Deaf and hard-of-hearing audiences rely on visual communication. In preparing presentations for visually dependent audiences, special needs should be recognized and addressed. An optimal situation would include careful consideration of factors such as appropriate use of available technology, working effectively with sign language interpreters, proper pacing of the presentation for visual reception, and room set up for visual clarity.

### **General Tips for Presenting to Deaf Audiences**

1. Speak at a reasonable pace.
2. Do not speak while looking down at a laptop computer, overhead projector or other presentation equipment.
3. Allow time to read projected images or handouts. Deaf participants' attention is either on what they've been asked to read or on the interpreter, but cannot be on both.
4. When demonstrating a process, describe each step before taking it. Pause between description and action. If necessary, point.
5. Allow full participation of deaf participants by:
  - clearly identifying who is speaking in group discussions by having individuals raise their hands before commenting.
  - repeating questions and statements before giving a response or asking others to respond.
  - allowing time for deaf participants to ask or answer questions.
  - sharing jokes and aside statements with all participants.

### **Tips for Working Effectively with Sign Language Interpreters**

1. Do not stand or walk in front of the interpreter.
2. The interpreter will be a few sentences behind the speaker, so allow time for the interpreter to finish concepts, questions, jokes, etc. and for deaf participants to obtain all the information and to ask questions.

### **Room Set-up Tips**

The Symposium organizers will configure all concurrent sessions according to these guidelines.

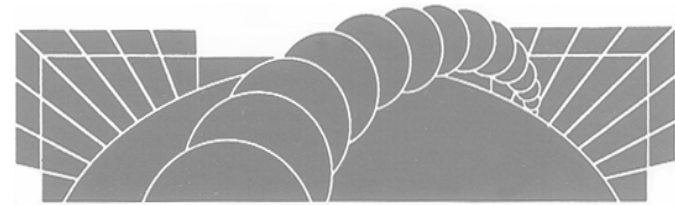
1. Lighting should illuminate the presenter's face and the interpreter, with no glare from behind.
2. The sight line between the presenter/interpreter and deaf participants should be unobstructed.
3. When possible, a circular or semicircular seating arrangement should be used for small groups or tiered seating for large audiences.
4. During a full group discussion, use brightest lighting.

### **Tips for Multimedia Presentations (PowerPoint and Projected Paper Documents)**

1. Use font size of at least 18 to 24 points for small group presentations (such as in concurrent meeting rooms).
2. Use font size of at least 32 points for large group presentations (such as in the Panara Theatre).
3. Sans serif fonts, such as Arial, **Comic Sans**, or Helvetica, are easy to read. Serif fonts, such as Palatino or Times Roman, can be used for headings, call-outs, or one or two word captions.
4. Use highly contrasting colors between text and background to facilitate reading ease.
5. Use a light background with dark text for overhead displays; a dark background with light text for computer displays.
6. Use only one chart or graph per slide.
7. Keep graphics simple.
8. Design to-be-projected materials in "landscape" orientation. This best fits the aspect ratio of a document camera and other projection equipment.
9. Light yellow background with black type reduces glare and increases contrast and is easier to read by people who are visually impaired.
10. Include clear captions for all tables, graphs, and other visuals.
11. All videotapes shown during presentation should be captioned.
12. When using a document camera such as a visualizer to enlarge text during a presentation, be careful that full lines will be displayed for the audience. You may want to arrange your display into two columns.

### **Tips for Presenting with the Microphones, PA System, and Assistive Listening Devices (ALD)**

1. Position the microphone 3 to 5 inches from your mouth and speak in a normal voice.
2. Before beginning your presentation, check with audience members to see that the ALD system is working. A technician will be available if problems are encountered. Problems can also be reported to the Media Services Window (LBJ-2525; x5-6425).
3. Avoid incidental contact (i.e. jewelry) with the microphone.
4. Since ALD users may not have access to questions raised by those without the microphone, be sure to repeat questions and comments raised by members of the audience.



# Presenter Guidelines

**Instructional Technology and  
Education of the Deaf**

Supporting Learners, K – College  
An International Symposium  
**June 23-27, 2003**

National Technical Institute for the Deaf  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
Rochester, NY  
<http://www.rit.edu/~techsym>

