



Chaffey College

Disability Programs & Services

Basic Etiquette: Working with People with Speech Impairments

Some disabilities may affect the ability to speak. The following suggestions will assist classified staff and faculty in working with a student/pier who may have a speech impairment.

1. Take your time, relax, and listen.
 - a. With a little time and patience, you can comfortably converse with a person who has a communication disability.
 - b. Don't try to rush the conversation or second-guess what a person has to say.
 - c. Plan for a conversation with a person with impaired speech to take longer.
2. It's okay to say, I don't understand.
3. Request and provide feedback. If necessary, repeat your understanding of the message in order to clarify or confirm what the person said.
4. Do not pretend you understand what is being said if you do not. Instead, repeat what you have understood and allow the person to respond. The response will clue you in and guide your understanding.
5. Do not interrupt a person with a speech impairment. Be patient and wait for the person to finish, rather than correcting or speaking for the person.
6. If necessary, ask short questions that can be answered with a few words, a nod, or a shake of the head.
7. Face the individual and maintain eye contact. Give the conversation your full attention.
8. If the individual is accompanied by another individual, do not address questions, comments, or concerns to the companion.
9. Do not assume that a person with a speech impairment is incapable of understanding you.
10. Some people with speech impairments have difficulty with inflections. Do not make assumptions based on facial expressions or vocal inflections unless you know the individual very well.
11. Do not play with or try to use someone's communication device. Such aids are considered an extension of an individual's personal space and should be respected as such.
12. If you are having trouble communicating, ask if an individual can write the message or use a computer or TTY.

Available Technology to Assist with Communicating

DPS has the following devices available for departments to loan on an annual basis for use in their given areas.

[UBiDuo product demo video](#)

The UbiDuo communication device is a preferred solution for effective communication between staff and students who may have a speech or hearing impairment. Please contact Jason Schneck (Alt Media Tech Specialist) at 909-652-6393 or Jason.schneck@chaffey.edu to request a demo and loaner UbiDuo communication system.