

Jessica Harris Interpreting Services, Inc.

Providing Quality & Professional Sign Language Interpreting Services to Florida since 2004.

Interpreting Information

What Interpreting is...

- The interpreter's job is to facilitate communication. The interpreter uses American Sign Language and spoken English to bridge this communication gap. Information the interpreter hears is conveyed to the Deaf person. Information the Deaf person expresses is conveyed to other people present. The interpreter must present that message in a way that captures the intent and emotion of the person giving the message. Just because an individual possess the ability to communicate in sign does not qualify a person to interpret.
- Qualified interpreters typically study about two to five years just in the study of American Sign Language and Deaf Culture. Then they move on for two to five more years to complete interpreter training. This all leads to skill building to pass certification tests. All Certified professionals must fulfill their required annual continuing education to enhance their interpreting skills.
- Interpreting is one part of providing accessibility. There are many other considerations to be made, such as: arranging for one message at a time, wait time, line of sight, adequate lighting, and consideration of each consumer's individual needs.

What Interpreting IS NOT...

- Professional boundaries must be clearly defined in order for the interpreter to function appropriately.
- The interpreter's responsibility is to bridge communication gaps through use of American Sign Language, spoken English, cultural mediation, and knowledge about accessibility. The interpreter is not an advisor.

Helpful Tips

- When you are working with an interpreter, please speak at a normal rate. If the interpreter needs you to clarify or repeat any information, he or she may ask you questions. Speak directly to the Deaf client and speak in first person. Avoid such phrases as "Tell her" and "Explain to him. Be aware that the interpreter will try to position her/himself next to you, so that the Deaf client may benefit from your non-verbal/non-manual cues.

Ethics of Interpreting

- Professional interpreters have a strict Code of Professional Conduct www.RID.org
- All interpreted information is confidential.
- The interpreter cannot interfere, advise, or interject personal opinions into interpreted situations.

Preparation

- Interpreters must clearly understand what they are hearing and seeing in order to accurately interpret information. Working with the interpreter to prepare will help the consumer to benefit from a deeply processed interpretation. Summaries of upcoming discussions, key vocabulary, videos, and special events can give the interpreter the necessary background knowledge to interpret new facts and concepts to the Deaf consumer. Also resting periodically allows the interpreter to perform better and to avoid cumulative motion injuries.

Frasu, Amy. "Working with an ASL-English Interpreter & Providing Visual Accessibility for Deaf Consumers." Deaf Linx. <<http://www.deaflinx.com/Interpreting/consumers.html>>. 15 October 2009.

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