

Samond: A common misconception for the use of a Deaf Interpreter is that they are called in to “save” the situation. What we need to remember is that Deaf and hearing interpreters work together as a team. Each brings their own skill set to the assignment. Each of them is involved 100% of the time. What we need to remember is that deaf and hearing interpreters work together as a team. Each brings their own life experience to the assignment. This way the interpreting situation will be smooth and effective.

Angie: They work together, much like tandem cyclists. If tandem cyclists are on separate bikes, they are no longer a team. They must work together. This includes meeting before the assignment and doing preparation work.

Samond: The Deaf and hearing interpreter team need to meet before an assignment starts and discuss what things might come up during the assignment. Some things to consider are past experiences of each that may be of help to the current situation. Use this time before the assignment to discuss what may come up during the assignment.

Angie: D-H Teams also need to think about how to introduce the interpreters. For example, think about who leads that introduction and what does that look/sound like? Sometime the hearing interpreter are responsible to “take care of” the hearing clients. They will explain what the process may look like. Likewise, the Deaf interpreter will explain what the process looks like to the Deaf client. Sometimes they do this individually, and sometimes they will approach the work together. What are some of your thoughts about these two approaches?

Samond: The team also needs to think about logistics. For example, where to set up will the interpreters. Will the interpreters be standing or sitting and where? What are each interpreters’ responsibilities? How do we feed each other? Whose responsibility is it to manage the situation?

Angie: Now that you are ready to go into the assignment, how do you monitor each other in the moment. How do you communicate and support each other in the moment? How do you give feedback in the moment? How do you fill in missed information? What does this process look like?

The last thing to think about is, once the assignment is over, discuss what you learned from that situation and how you can improve for next time.