
TIPS FOR WORKING WITH INTERPRETERS

1. BEFORE THE EVENT

- ☐ Plan accordingly –
 - When you are working with an interpreter, the conversation can often take twice as long as compare with one in English. Many concepts you express have no equivalent in other languages. An interpreter may have to describe or paraphrase many terms you use. Interpreters will often use more words to interpret what the original speaker says, simply because of the grammar of syntax of the target language.
- ☐ Brief the interpreter –
 - Introduce yourself briefly (have your name written where interpreter and parent can see it)
 - Identify the name of your program or subject you teach to the interpreter
 - Make interpreter aware of any information regarding the meeting which could affect interpreter's ability to effectively provide service
 - If available, provide the interpreter with a copy of any documents to be discussed. This will allow the interpreter to scan the information before the meeting and identify any unfamiliar terms.

2. DURING THE EVENT

- ☐ Speak directly to the parent as if the interpreter were not there- interpreter will relay information and then communicate the parent's response directly back to you.
- ☐ Everything will be interpreted- avoid side conversations. Whatever the interpreter hears will be interpreted.
- ☐ If you feel that the interpreter has not interpreted everything - ask the interpreter to do so.
- ☐ Pause –
 - after expressing each complete thought to allow interpreter to interpret
 - Segments- speak in one sentence or two short ones at a time. Avoid breaking up a thought. Your interpreter is trying to understand the meaning of what you are saying, so express the whole thought if possible.
 - Clarifications- if something is unclear, or if the interpreter is given a long statement, the interpreter will ask you for a complete or partial repetition of what was said, or to clarify what the statement meant.
 - when school bells, sirens, announcements or other distracting noises sound
- ☐ Interpreter may signal if you need to pause.
- ☐ Avoid interrupting the interpreter while he/she is interpreting.
- ☐ Speak naturally - no need to speak louder.
- ☐ Ask if the parent understands- in some cultures a person may say "yes" as you explain something, not meaning they understand, but rather they want you to keep talking because they are trying to follow the conversation.
- ☐ Avoid the use of jargon or acronyms- clarify unique vocabulary, and provide examples if they are needed to explain a term.
- ☐ Do not ask the interpreter for their opinion- the interpreter's job is to convey the meaning, and under no circumstances may he or she allow personal opinion to color the interpretation.
- ☐ Interpreter may identify and clarify a cultural issue they may not think you are aware of.