

# Don't Be Mad If I Don't Look: Interpreting for Hard of Hearing Students

Corey Axelrod, MBA

Quick, tense your shoulders.

Lift them an inch or two higher than normal.

Hold this tension for about 15 seconds, then let go.

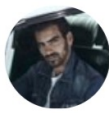
Tense your shoulders again.

This time, stick your head forward at an awkward angle and squint.

Do not stop until I tell you to stop.

Hearing loss has been characterized as  
an “invisible disability.”

Do you agree or disagree?



**Nyle DiMarco**  @NyleDiMarco · 20h

2020 election is just around the corner. A reminder to candidates: caption your political ads.

There's approx. 48 million people with hearing loss who wanna learn about your ideas and policies.

That's a heck of a lot of votes.

 42  3.2K  13K 



**Corey Axelrod**

@coreyaxelrod

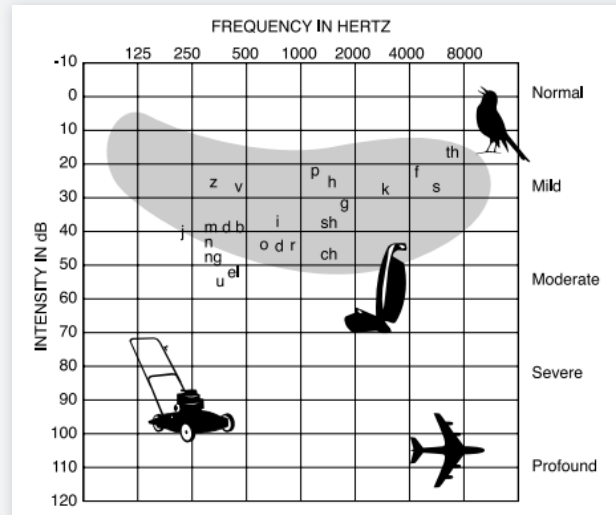
Replying to [@NyleDiMarco](#)

Nyle, why use the term, “hearing loss?” Many within the Deaf community, myself included, were born Deaf and never “lost anything.” Perhaps “Deaf & HoH” would be better language to use?

Can you visibly identify  
hard of hearing individuals?

# “Hard of Hearing” Defined

- ❑ Hearing levels range from mild to profound.
- ❑ May benefit from hearing aids or other assistive listening devices.



# What I Can and Can't Hear





Discuss what you think are the similarities and differences between Deaf and hard of hearing students.

Is there a hard of hearing culture?

## Is there a hard of hearing culture?

- ❑ No HHSL
- ❑ No HHPN
- ❑ Not always noticeable
- ❑ Numerous ASL and Deaf Studies classes nationwide

# Cultural Implications

- ❑ “Deaf”
  - ❑ Share ASL and culture-common values
- ❑ “deaf”
  - ❑ Physical hearing loss
  - ❑ Identify with the hearing world

# CONFIDENCE: deaf in a hearing world



# Where do hard of hearing individuals fit in?

- ❑ Hearing capabilities
- ❑ Community implications

What are your biggest fears/frustrations when working with a hard of hearing student?

What do you think are hard of hearing students'  
biggest fears/frustrations?



# Bungee Jumping in New Zealand





# Myths and Misunderstandings

- ❑ “What’s the big deal? You hear pretty well.”
- ❑ “You lip-read, right?”
- ❑ “You sign, you must want an interpreter.”
- ❑ “You don’t need accommodations...”
  - ❑ Your speech is clear, so you hear well;
  - ❑ You heard me fine in my office; and
  - ❑ You talked to me on the phone.”

# Primary Uses for an Interpreter

- ❑ Back-up support vs. primary mode
  - ❑ Difficult to watch/listen simultaneously
    - ❑ Processing two languages
    - ❑ Processing time
  - ❑ Limited/obstructed visibility (cannot lip-read)

# Common Interpreter Sayings

- ❑ “They don’t look at me!”
- ❑ “They speak for themselves.”

# Importance of Exact Vernacular

- ❑ Use exact terminology – don't 'dumb down.'
- ❑ Enunciate clearly

# Supporting Students' Distinct Needs

- ❑ Seek out cues
  - ❑ Verbal
  - ❑ Nonverbal
    - ❑ Eyes
    - ❑ Body Language
- ❑ Provide clarification/reinterpretation
  - ❑ Don't start from the beginning
- ❑ Empower students to express their needs
  - ❑ Seating preferences

# Initiate Dialogue

- ❑ Ask:
  - ❑ Would you rather speak for yourself or have me interpret?
  - ❑ What is it that you need the interpreter most for?
  - ❑ Where would you prefer I stand/sit?
- ❑ Don't ask:
  - ❑ Do I need to sign if you're not watching me?



“Words are powerful. It’s how you use them that impact your consumers.”

- Corey Axelrod





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