



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE
TO RUNNING SUCCESSFUL
EVENTS FOR DEAF PEOPLE
FOR HR PROFESSIONALS

BY TINA LANNIN

ABOUT THIS GUIDE



Welcome to our guide for human resource professionals and trainers. This foolproof guide aims to help you to make your workshops and courses more accessible to people with hearing loss and those with English as a second language in just a few quick and easy steps.

There are 360 million deaf people in the world - equivalent to 15% of adults. That's 1 in 6 of the population. 70 million of them use sign language. Far more -- 290 million -- use English as their first language.

Do you have deaf colleagues asking you for communication support in English? Perhaps they are frustrated with limited access to training courses, affecting their morale, confidence, ROI and ultimately your business turnover. Perhaps you're not sure what support to put in place for them, or how to meet your compliance guidelines. This guide will help to make this a pain-free process.

Do you lack time or resources to improve access issues and to find the best communication support solution? This guide will tell you what you need to know to help deaf delegates and those with English as a second language.

Are you worried that you might not have the expertise to meet a deaf person's requests for access needs? This guide will show you how to plan ahead of your event to help ensure you meet any communication needs.

121 Captions are captioning experts, providing services to blue chip companies including Barclays and Ernst & Young, and top universities such as University College London. Unlike other captioning companies who understand deafness from the outside in, our personal experience of hearing loss means we understand deafness from the inside out. We use this expertise to enhance our clients' captioning and training experiences, making them truly inclusive.

As Managing Director of 121 Captions I am deaf myself, so have the ability to advise from my own experience. I am also a fully qualified deaf awareness trainer with over ten years experience of delivering training courses. I am delighted to be able to share some of my expertise with you in this guide.

With warm regards,

Tina Lannin

Tina Lannin
Director, 121 Captions



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE FOR HR PROFESSIONALS



Running successful events, workshops and courses for deaf people, the ultimate guide for HR professionals:

- 🌀 The hidden cost of hearing impairment at work
- 🌀 The best ways to support your hearing impaired staff and delegates
- 🌀 Easy ways to create a great deaf-aware training environment
- 🌀 How to run events that hearing-challenged people love
- 🌀 The foolproof way to set up your venue for deaf delegates
- 🌀 How to guarantee you choose the right company to work with
- 🌀 Working with 121 Captions

1. THE HIDDEN COST OF HEARING IMPAIRMENT AT WORK



Let's talk deafness first.

How many deaf people are there? There are 360 million deaf people worldwide. This is one sixth of the world's population. 328 million (91%) are of working age.

80% of deaf people (that's 290 million of them) use a spoken language as their means of communication. That's why access to a written form of the spoken language is the most requested form of communication support.

There are also over 1 billion English learners who are hearing, but would still benefit from captioning support to understand what is being said.

Fewer deaf people obtain senior level roles which they are capable of fulfilling. The only thing stopping them is their hearing loss. Underemployment like this affects 40% of deaf adults, compared to 8% of hearing people and has an economic and financial impact on your organisation. Improving access to training, and increasing employer engagement and awareness of communication support needs, would help to decrease underemployment rates of deaf people.

Aside from the economic costs of underemployment, failing to offer communication support to deaf staff or customers can also incur costs associated with:

- losing and replacing good staff because they move to an employer offering better communications support
- failing to attract the best delegates to an event, workshop or training course
- someone deciding to challenge you under the equality legislation.

In some countries it's a legal and civil right to make your services accessible to disabled people.

What does being deaf mean?

Deafness can happen in all sorts of ways, including physical hearing loss, or cognitive loss, where someone can't make sense of what they hear even though they can apparently hear perfectly.

There are deaf people who can hear all the pitches, but a lower level of volume (conductive deafness) and those who have a varying loss of volume over different pitches (perceptive deafness). Perceptive deafness is the most common form of deafness- it happens as we get older. There is no cure, and (sadly!) you cannot stop the ageing process.

What causes deafness?

People can be born with deafness, can acquire it in childhood or at any time in adulthood. There are no barriers to when deafness can happen, sometimes it's genetic, sometimes it's a virus, sometimes it's an accident, or an unknown cause, sometimes it's just wear and tear. The older you are the more likely you are to have a hearing loss.

Why do some people who are deaf hear better than others?

How well deaf people can hear depends on a whole range of things, including how well their hearing aids work, what kind of deafness they have, when they lost their hearing, how well they can lipread, and what level of hearing they still have.

2. THE BEST WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR HEARING IMPAIRED STAFF & DELEGATES



There are a number of ways in which to support a deaf member of staff or delegate at your event.

Communication support can be anything from an aid to help them hear better (but not necessarily clearer!) to someone relaying the conversation in a manner that the deaf person or language learner can understand.

Funding may be available from Access to Work to pay for communication support in the UK.

Some options for communication support are:

1. Use sign language.

Suitable for a deaf person who knows a sign language. But the majority of deaf people don't. Sign languages are different, just like spoken languages. They are known as BSL (British Sign Language), ASL (American Sign Language), Auslan (Australian Sign Language) etc. Sign language interpretation can take place face-to-face and can also be relayed over the internet.

2. Use an oral interpreter or lipspeaker who repeats what speakers are saying with clear, lipreadable lip patterns.

Suitable for a deaf person with high lipreading skills, often only the case after years of practice. Lipspeakers repeat what the speaker is saying with clear lipreadable lip patterns and a clear voice. Helpful because there is only one person for the deaf person to lipread.

3. Use a phonetic keyboard to 'play' the conversation on to a screen that the deaf person or language learner can read.

Known as Speech to Text Reporters (STTR), stenographers, steno captioners, palantypists, real-time captioners, or Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) Providers. The system is fast enough to be able to relay speech at up to 300 words per minute. A transcript is available immediately afterwards.

4. Use a QWERTY or adapted keyboard to type the conversation onto a screen.

An Electronic Notetaker generates a summary of what is being said. A velotypist generates near-verbatim text on a specially adapted keyboard. A transcript is available afterwards.

5. Read captions sent over the internet to any device.

This is remote live captioning. A captioner, velotypist or notetaker will write into an online stream which the deaf person accesses with a PC, laptop, smartphone, or tablet. An unlimited number of people can join the captions stream. A transcript is available immediately afterwards. Live captions can also be streamed on top of PowerPoint slides or video.



Who is live captioning for?

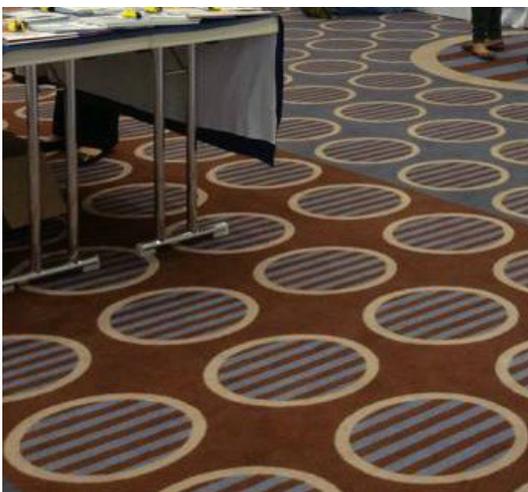
- Deaf people who have previously been hearing, or prefer to use hearing technology (cochlear implant and / or hearing aids).
- Deafblind people. Deafblindness isn't complete hearing and sight loss.
- People with acquired communication disabilities: for example, dementia, stroke, brain injury, dyslexia, learning difficulties. It helps dyslexia if you have captions too, and also helps with taking notes.
- People who would benefit from being able to change font size, colour, and speed. If using a braille reader, you can adjust speed – verbatim is too fast for a versabaille.
- People who benefit from both listening and reading as their learning style.
- People who use English as a second language, and non-native language speakers.
- Managers, trainers and organisers who use caption transcripts as a self-evaluation tool.

3. EASY WAYS TO CREATE A GREAT DEAF AWARE TRAINING ENVIRONMENT



Select the right venue

- Make sure you have adequate lighting. Ensure speakers don't stand with their back to a window.
- Keep background noise to a minimum. Are your windows and doors open, is there traffic or other distracting noise outside? Carpets are better than hard floors as they absorb sound and stop it bouncing around the room.
- Try to keep patterns and distractions to a minimum. This includes jazzy flooring and textiles in the room.



Loud carpets are distracting



Standing by windows is difficult for lipreaders

Make communication easier

- Give a copy of handouts at the start of a workshop.
- Ask people to speak one at a time.
- Be prepared to repeat, rephrase or write it down.
- Do clarify if you feel a misunderstanding has taken place.
- Don't shout, it won't make you any clearer.
- Be expressive. Use gesture, body language, facial expressions.
- Gain the attention of the deaf person before speaking. How do you get their attention when they can't hear you?
 - Walk into their line of sight.
 - Tap them gently on their shoulder or arm.
 - Call them by name, they may hear something or lipread you.



REMEMBER

Every deaf person is different, with different communication needs. Don't assume you know - ask them what works best for them, or speak to 121 Captions for expert advice.

4. HOW TO RUN EVENTS THAT HEARING-CHALLENGED PEOPLE LOVE

The importance of good acoustics for captioning

- Your internet connection for the audio should be hardwired / cable, not Wi-Fi.
- Choose the best quality microphones and think about their proximity to the speaker. Could the speaker wear a lapel microphone?

Preparation and teamwork

- Preparation materials are of immense help to any captioner and sign language interpreter. These include an agenda, attendee names, PowerPoint slides and handouts. Forward these well in advance so they have time to prepare.
- Teamwork is vital. Keep the booking agency updated with any changes to the agenda and prep materials. During a remote live captioning session, keep your captioner updated, for example, if the meeting is going to start late or your lecturer is late.
- Are you technology-confident for remote live captioning? Do you understand how to use internet connections, VOIP, and the captioning platform? Make friends with your IT support team.

Consider everyone in the communication triangle

- **The deaf person.** Check with them that their communication support is working smoothly. Can they see the interpreter or captions screen clearly? Do they have a copy of handouts?
- **The hearing person.** Not all captioners have experience with deaf voices. Deaf people want to be 'heard' when they speak. 121 captioners have over 20 years international experience with deaf voices so they'll be able to caption their speech to help understanding for everyone.
- **The communication support.** Remember to speak one at a time. Speak up and speak clearly. This is particularly important in remote live captioning, as your captioner is listening to you through a small microphone. They may not hear a quiet person who is situated across the room. Do not turn away or walk away from the microphone when speaking.

5. THE FOOLPROOF WAY TO SET UP YOUR VENUE FOR DEAF DELEGATES



How will your remote live captioning work?

Imagine sitting at a conference, meeting, or lecture with your laptop, tablet or smartphone. A microphone picks up the speech and relays it to your captioner, who types it word-for-word using a phonetic keyboard. The live captions appear on your screen.

121 live captioning is the fastest and most accurate you will find, streaming up to 300 words per minute and appearing in just 1 second to whichever device you are using to view them.

121's captioning platform is the only one that allows live captions to stream on top of your PowerPoint slides or YouTube video, so only one screen is needed.

We use human captioners as they provide a more accurate live captioning service than automatic speech recognition technology.

What do you need for remote live captioning?

AUDIO: A laptop needs to be hardwired to the internet, with an external microphone. For small meetings, you may find an Apple device on its own to be sufficient, without an additional microphone. You can use VOIP such as Skype. Alternatively, you can set up a teleconference call and your captioner will dial in.

CAPTIONS: These can be read from any device connected to the internet – laptop, smartphone, tablet, or Google Glass. This device can be hardwired or on Wi-Fi, 3G or 4G. There is no limit to the number of devices or people who can use the captions. We can also give you the html code to add the captions stream to your website.

What do you need for onsite live captioning?

The captioner who is booked to attend your event will bring their own captioning machine and laptop for the deaf person to read the captions from. Please provide a comfortable chair, a table, and easy access to a power socket. If you wish, you can provide a projector and large screen to connect to the captioner's laptop for a larger audience.



TIP

Have the contact details of the IT technician handy, in case you have any internet issues during remote live captioning or problems with connecting equipment.

6. HOW TO GUARANTEE YOU CHOOSE THE RIGHT COMPANY TO WORK WITH



Checklist

If you are going to use communication support for your deaf colleagues, clients, stakeholders or students, here is what you should be looking for.

- **Make sure the person you are booking is adequately qualified and registered.**

Check their registration status (NRCPD, NCRA, JDT). You need to do this for your own peace of mind and the peace of mind of your colleague or client. You must make sure that the communication professional has proved they are capable of working to the skill level you have booked them for. Relaying communication to deaf people is a skill that can take up to five years to gain, so don't simply take someone's word they can do it – ask for credentials and testimonials/references.

A qualified and registered communication professional is bound by a code of conduct and professional practice that includes confidentiality and impartiality. Another reason for ensuring you are booking a qualified and registered communication professional.

- **Ensure you give as much preparation material as you can to the communication professional.**

The preparation material will allow them to prepare their dictionaries (captioners) or translation strategies (sign language interpreters) prior to the conversation. For a lip speaker, ensure you give the deaf person some time with the lip speaker prior to the conversation to “tune in” to the typical lip shapes of the lip speaker.

The preparation material includes information relating to the topic of the conversation, agenda, handouts, PowerPoint slides, minutes, names of speakers and any acronyms that might be used.

- **Book your communication support well in advance.**

Onsite support will typically need at least 1 month’s notice. There is a shortage of communication professionals, especially those who support deaf people who use English rather than BSL. Remote support can be booked with just a few days’ notice.

- **Check cancellation fees.**

Onsite support will usually have a two weeks cancellation policy where you have to pay a cancellation fee within two weeks of your meeting date. Be aware that for long meetings of over an hour or more, you might be asked to book two communication professionals, with the added challenge of finding two available on the same day and time.

Remote support will usually have a 24-hour cancellation policy, and only one communication support professional is needed.



121 Captions: your guarantee of quality

Quality matters to us.

If you're not happy with our services, we offer a no quibble 100% money back guarantee.

7. USING 121 CAPTIONS

Here's why organisations choose to use our captioning services rather than any other company:

I use 121 Captions' speech to text captioning service and it has been invaluable in helping me. It complements and confirms what I'm hearing so that I get the full picture.

Senior Tax Manager, Ernst & Young LLP

Remote live captioning is a brilliant invention! In the past I used to sit in workshops completely lost and having no idea what is going on. Now I know at the same time as everyone else what has been said and what has been decided, instead of waiting for this information. Nowadays I feel more a part of the team, and I think my colleagues are happier as well knowing that I don't feel excluded anymore.

Library Information Assistant, University of Westminster

Having been at a crossroad of deciding between a role that suits my hearing or one I'm passionate about, I chose not to limit myself. I took the leap and found a great Agile company. But the challenge certainly didn't end there. Missing out details when lipreading started to have an impact on my functioning in this fast changing IT world. Using 121 Captions enabled me to overcome this. They understand the flexibility you need as a consultant and customise their service together with you.

Scrum Master, Unboxed Consulting

I am totally deaf, having lost my hearing suddenly, over 40 years ago. My work often involves group meetings and training sessions, and I have always struggled with these, as I cannot follow what is being said, especially if the speaker is not facing me directly. Although I have used electronic note taking support in the past, I have been using 121 Captions' remote live captioning service for the past year or so. This has proved to be a great improvement, negating the need, and expense, for an onsite communicator. I cannot recommend the service from 121 Captions highly enough.

The Police Rehabilitation Centre

I've had severe to profound hearing loss since birth. I think being deaf can really restrict your employment and career prospects, especially in fields where information is passed around verbally. The Access to Work scheme has been great. It funded all the support I needed, and made it easier for the company too, as they wouldn't have had a clue what to provide. Captioning is vital for me as it enables me to do my job effectively. Having 121 Captions' remote service allows me to access the support in a more flexible manner and not worry that it won't be available when I really need it. I think that remote captioning is transforming access for deaf people.

Assistive Technology practitioner for social care support provider, Optalis

ADDITIONAL ACCESS SERVICES WE OFFER

As well as captioning for your events, we can also work with you to improve the accessibility in the rest of your organization:

- Our trainers can guide you on communicating with deaf clients and making your business more deaf aware, more accessible, more compliant with equality legislation, and more user-friendly.
- Our disability consultants can advise you on making your business accessible to disabled people, recruiting and retaining talented disabled employees, and ensuring you comply with disability laws.
- We offer access audits for your premises to ensure they are fully accessible.



Our HushPanels reduce environmental noise by 40%



Training courses make your business more accessible



121 TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY

If you would like to learn more about managing communication with deaf people, we provide expert training and consultancy services to meet your needs. Contact us at bookings@121captions.com



Your feedback matters. Our focus is on being effective (doing the right things) and being efficient (doing things right).

We are always happy to talk, to advise, to give guidance. We go the extra mile to make sure a deaf person's needs are met.

All our communication support professionals are professionally accredited by internationally accepted agencies and quality standards. We listen to feedback from our deaf clients and from the deaf community. We also vet communication support professionals ourselves and if they pass our inspection, we award them the coveted 121 Quality Assured badge.

**REQUEST
A QUOTE**

We offer a free demonstration of live remote captioning, click on the Demo button below to send us a request.

**BOOK
A DEMO**

How to contact us

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