



## I-ACE facilitator guide

### I-ACE candidacy

- Ensure adequate cognitive skills in order to understand the concepts presented in I-ACE.
- Ensure adequate English language skills (including literacy). Alternatives include asking significant other to read/translate/interpret I-ACE and/or write down answers.
- Ensure adequate vision to read I-ACE and hand dexterity to write down answers. Alternatives include using technical aids, increasing font size, and asking significant other to read I-ACE and/or write down answers.

### To add to I-ACE

Write down the client's name and your name and contact details in the introduction section of I-ACE.

Discuss preferred contact frequency and method (phone call, email, fax, ...) with the client. Add this information in the introduction section of I-ACE.

Personalised rehabilitation goals should have been recorded with a tool such as the Client-Oriented Scale of Improvement (COSI). Add the personalised rehabilitation goals in Activity 2 of Module 1. Specify the agreed contact time and date in Activity 5 of Module 1.






### Contact post-Module 1

Ensure that all activities have been completed by asking the client to check that all activities have been ticked on page 1 of Module 1.

Discuss time required and involvement of significant other.

Offer to answer any questions.

Ask the client to read the rehabilitation goals listed in Activity 2 of Module 1. Write the goals in the left column of the following table.

Rehabilitation goal	Theme
1 <sup>st</sup> most important  ..... .....	
2 <sup>nd</sup> most important  ..... .....	
3 <sup>rd</sup> most important  ..... .....	
4 <sup>th</sup> most important  ..... .....	
5 <sup>th</sup> most important  ..... .....	

Classify each of the rehabilitation goals according to the following themes:

Theme	Core skill	I-ACE module
Communication in background noise	Requesting clarification	2
Communication around the house	Using communication strategies	3
Communication with difficult speakers	Using communication strategies	4
Television, radio, and telephone	Using hearing assistance technology	5
Meetings and other group functions	Using speechreading	6
Others	To be assessed on an individual basis	

The first five themes represent rehabilitation goals for which I-ACE modules are available to learn a relevant core skill. If a client's communication difficulties all fall under the same one or two themes, you may want to consider expanding the current I-ACE modules with further information. If a client's communication difficulties all fall under the "others" theme, you may wish to create extra I-ACE modules tailored to the rehabilitation goals.

Ask about "Activity 5. Feedback on Module 1". Write main points below and address any issues.

Feedback on Module 1	
What I liked about the module	How the module could be improved

Ask client about preferred contact date and time for Module 2. Explain to the client that the Module 2 will be sent shortly.

Print Module 2 and add contact date and time in Activity 7.

### **Contact post-Module 2**

Ensure that all activities have been completed by asking the client to check that all activities have been ticked on page 1 of Module 2.

Discuss time required and involvement of significant other.

Offer to answer any questions.

Ask about "Activity 7. Feedback on Module 2". Write main points below and address any issues.

Feedback on Module 2	
What I liked about the module	How the module could be improved

Ask client about preferred contact date and time for next module. Explain to the client that the module will be sent shortly.

After Module 2, the order of the modules can be altered. The modules 3 and 4 cover the same core skill and therefore should not both be sent to the same client. Print the next module (you might need to change the module number to reflect that is the third module received by the client) and add contact date and time in the last activity. After each module, contact the client at the agreed time, discuss time required and involvement of significant other, offer to answer any questions, ask about feedback, and agree on the next contact time.

For the last module sent, delete the last sentence ("The facilitator will post the next I-ACE module to you."). Add the final words of advice and the final feedback form to the last module. The COSI and the IOI-HA-AI are recommended outcome measures.

# I-ACE

## **Individualised Active Communication Education**



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND  
AUSTRALIA

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CREATE CHANGE



Your name:

.....

Welcome to the Individualised Active Communication Education program, or I-ACE for short. I-ACE is for hard-of-hearing people wanting to learn ways to better communicate in everyday life. It was created by researchers at the Communication Disability Centre at the University of Queensland.

If you have any questions, please contact your Hearing Care Professional via post, email or phone:

Name:.....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Phone:.....

Email:.....

After each module, your I-ACE facilitator will contact you according to the agreed time and date. The agreed time and date is included at the end of each module. You will be expected to have finished each module by the agreed time and date. Please contact your facilitator if you are behind schedule and require more time to finish a module.

When you are ready, start Module 1. And remember that if you have any questions or problems, please contact your facilitator.

# **MODULE 1**

## **INTRODUCTION TO I-ACE**





## MODULE 1 - INTRODUCTION TO I-ACE

The objectives of this module are:

- To introduce you to the background and aims of I-ACE.
- To explore the communication difficulties that you may experience in everyday life.
- To identify and prioritise your communication needs so that these can be the focus of the remaining 4 modules.

The activities of this module are:

☒ Tick  
when  
finished  
↓

Activity 1. Overview of I-ACE.....	Page 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 2. Your communication needs.....	Page 8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 3. The problem-solving method.....	Page14	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 4. Your personal chronicle of hearing loss..	Page 18	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 5. Feedback on Module 1.....	Page 28	<input type="checkbox"/>

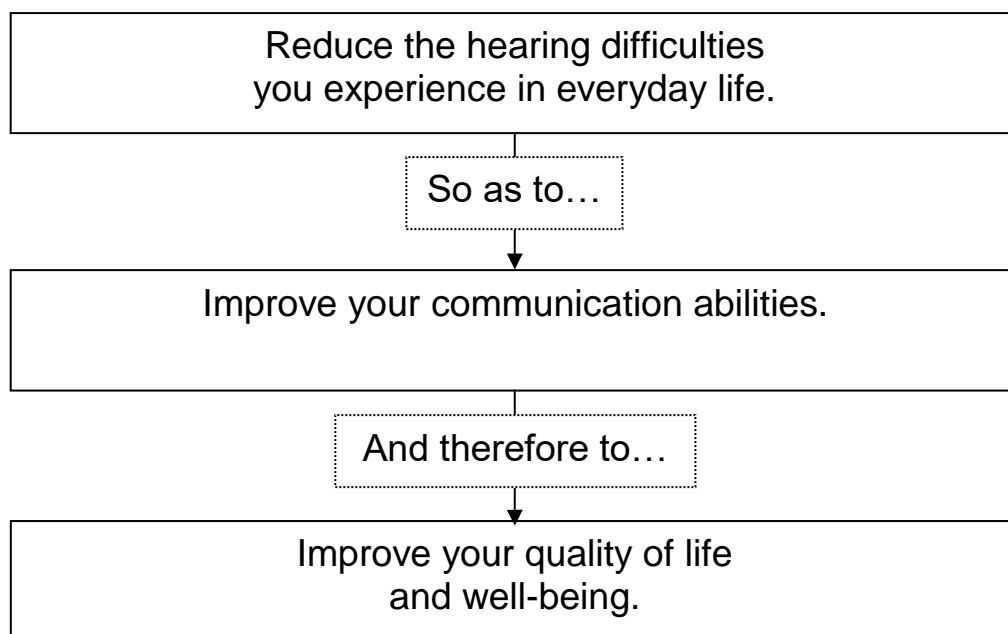
## ***Activity 1. Overview of I-ACE***

Here is a list of common questions and answers about I-ACE.

They will give you an overview of what the program is like.

Question: What is I-ACE?

Answer: I-ACE stands for Individualised Active Communication Education. It is a communication awareness and training program for people who are hard of hearing. It is based on a group program whose efficacy was scientifically proven. The aims of I-ACE are to:



Question: What do I need to know about I-ACE?

Answer:

- I-ACE is an individualised program for you to go through at home, at your own pace.
- The program has a facilitator whom you can contact at any time.
- The program has 5 modules and will cover the situations where you have trouble hearing.
- Family and friends are encouraged to be involved in the program.

Question: How will I complete I-ACE?

Answer: I-ACE has 5 modules. Each module should take you a total of 1-2 hours to complete. You can either go through a module in one sitting or you can break it down. Each module is divided into activities so you can do as many activities as you want at any time. Organise I-ACE around your schedule and preferences.

Question: What is a module like?

Answer: Each module has the same structure, with objectives, activities, information, and questions for you to read and think about. There is information about difficult communication activities

and possible solutions. Applying the information to your everyday life is an important part of I-ACE.

Question: Are there exams?

Answer: There are no exams. In I-ACE, you will often be asked questions about your experiences. You may not have thought about some of these things before, but that is ok. Take your time and answer to the best of your ability. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions.


Question: Is there homework?

Answer: You will be asked to try out the strategies discussed in I-ACE. You will also be encouraged to think about what you learnt in I-ACE. The more you make an effort to apply the content to your everyday activities, the more likely it is that you will notice an improvement in your communication ability. As they say, practice makes perfect!

Question: Do I need any special material?

Answer: When you sit down to go through I-ACE activities, you should not need any special materials. Your I-ACE folder contains all the written material you need. You will just need something to

write with (a pen or a pencil). Whenever you are expected to write something down, there will be a pencil symbol in a box for you to write in, like this one below.

 .....

Question: When and where is the best place to do I-ACE?

Answer: When going through I-ACE activities, try to find a quiet spot where you know you will be able to read and think uninterrupted.

Question: Do I work on I-ACE on my own?

Answer: You can work on I-ACE on your own. But it is highly recommended that you also ask someone close to you to go through I-ACE with you. Being hard-of-hearing creates difficulties for you as well as for the people around you. Therefore in I-ACE, you will often see the term “communication partners”. Communication partners are simply people you talk to regularly, for example your spouse, your close family members, your friends, or neighbours you are close to. If you want, try to involve your communication partners in I-ACE.

Question: How can I involve my communication partners in I-ACE?

Answer:

- You can talk about what you learn in I-ACE with your communication partners.
- If your most frequent communication partner (for example, your spouse) wants to, you can go through I-ACE modules together.
- Or if you prefer, you can go through the activities by yourself but summarise them afterwards to your communication partners.

Learning more about hearing loss can help your communication partners realise your hearing difficulties and learn tips to make it easier to communicate with you.

Question: What should I do with the I-ACE folder?

Answer: This folder now belongs to you and the information you write in it is yours as well. The facilitator from the Communication Disability Centre of the University of Queensland will not ask you to see your folder. The facilitator may ask you to share some of the answers you wrote in your folder. If you agree, your answers will

be kept confidential by the facilitator. If you want, you can also share your folder with your communication partners. Store your folder in a secure spot if you do not want others to read it.

Question: What do I do when I finish a module?

Answer: After each module the facilitator will contact you. This will allow you to ask any questions, give any feedback, and make sure you are getting the most out of I-ACE. The facilitator is highly interested in your questions, feedback, and progress.

**You have now finished Activity 1 of Module 1.** Each time you finish an activity, please go back to page 1 of the module and tick the box next to the activity you have just finished. ☒ This will allow you to keep track of the activities you have completed.









## ***Activity 2. Your communication needs***

Before looking at solutions, think about the situations where you have trouble hearing. Here are the communication difficulties you mentioned previously:

- .....  
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- .....  
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- .....  
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- .....  
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- .....  
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Are they still relevant to you? Copy the communication difficulties you are still experiencing in the following box.

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• 	.....
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• 	.....
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• 	.....
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• 	.....
	.....

Now try to think of more communication difficulties you are experiencing and add them to the list. For each of the difficulties, be as specific as possible. There is no limit as to how many difficulties you can list, but try to list at least 5 of them. You can discuss this with your communication partners as well. You may come up with a more extensive list of communication difficulties if you work together on the list of communication difficulties.

Here are a few examples of difficulties people who are hard-of-hearing sometimes mention:

- Cannot hear my friend at the restaurant when there is music in the background.
- Cannot understand my neighbour who has a soft voice.
- Cannot hear my lady friend when she comes around for a cuppa.
- Miss the doorbell when in the backroom.
- Not understand what is said at the monthly meeting even though a microphone and speakers are used.

Can you see yourself having some of these difficulties? Or perhaps reading these made you think of other difficulties you experience?

If so, go back to your list of communication difficulties and add any. Try to list a total of at least 5 difficulties. Sometimes thinking about what you did over the past 24 hours can trigger some ideas of situations where you typically have difficulties.

The communication difficulties experienced by hard-of-hearing people usually fall within 5 broad categories. The categories are:

- Communication in background noise
- Communication around the home
- Communication with difficult speakers
- Hearing the television, the radio, and the telephone
- Listening to public address systems

Reading these categories may have made you remember some other communication difficulties. If so, please add them to your list of communication difficulties.

Now go back again to your list of communications difficulties and prioritise the communication difficulties where you would most want your hearing to be improved in the box below. Everybody prioritises differently and that is fine. You could prioritise a communication difficulty because it happens very often.

Alternatively, you could prioritise a communication difficulty because it has important consequences for you and/or the people around you. In the box below, please prioritise the 5 communication difficulties you most want improved.

1<sup>st</sup> most important communication difficulty

 .....

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2<sup>nd</sup> most important communication difficulty

 .....

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3<sup>rd</sup> most important communication difficulty

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4<sup>th</sup> most important communication difficulty

 .....

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5<sup>th</sup> most important communication difficulty

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**You have now finished Activity 2 of Module 1.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

***Activity 3. The problem-solving method***

In the following modules, we will apply the “problem-solving method”. This is like a recipe that can be followed to help you solve your communication difficulties. Just like a recipe, the method has a series of steps you must follow. The steps are:

- What is the communication activity?
- What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?
- What are some possible solutions?
- What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?
- How can you test the solutions?

Here is an example of a communication difficulty that Margaret, a fictional person, is applying the problem-solving method to:

- What is the communication activity?
  - Margaret and her son David are involved in the communication activity. It happens every second Sunday when David visits Margaret for dinner. After the meal Margaret always finds that she has difficulty

hearing David while he is sitting at the kitchen table and Margaret is at the sink doing the washing up.

- What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?
  - David never had a very loud voice. For Margaret, the water running and the clatter of the dishes seem to be louder than David's voice.
- What are some possible solutions?
  - Margaret could ask David to sit at the kitchen bench rather than at the kitchen table. This way David's voice would be louder to Margaret's ears because David would be closer to her. (Or perhaps David would be even closer to Margaret if he was drying the dishes, which would definitely kill two birds with one stone for Margaret!)
  - Margaret could explain to David that she has trouble hearing in that situation and that it would help Margaret hear his funny stories if he could speak a bit louder and a bit slower.



- Margaret could put a rubber mat at the bottom of the sink, which would decrease the noise from the clatter of the dishes.
  - Margaret could sit at the kitchen table with David and leave the dishes for later.
- What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?
  - Are there chairs at the kitchen bench? Is David already aware of Margaret's hearing difficulties? If not, is Margaret comfortable discussing her hearing difficulties with David? Does Margaret mind leaving the dishes for later?
  - Margaret needs to be able to be assertive without being aggressive to improve the current situation. She also needs to be practical – for example, to go to the store and find a piece of rubber mat if she wants to put it at the bottom of the sink.

- How can you test the solutions?
  - Margaret needs to take the actions she decides on, try them out a couple of times and see if they work. We would expect these solutions to help Margaret hear David's funny stories. If Margaret still cannot hear David well, then she and David would have to consider further solutions.

As you can see, the steps of the problem-solving method help in finding ways to address communication difficulties. It is a proven method and, over the next modules, the method will be used in a range of communication difficulties you are experiencing.


**You have now finished Activity 3 of Module 1.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

#### ***Activity 4. Your personal chronicle of hearing loss***

The aim of the following activity is for you to document how hearing loss has affected you and how you have coped with it. The chronicle can be either a page or a book! You can write your chronicle by answering the questions written below and you can add extra pages if necessary. Take the time to think about your experiences. You can always come back to this activity and expand on it throughout the I-ACE program.

When did you first start noticing your hearing loss? What impact has it had on you over the years? What do your family and friends say about your hearing loss? How do you feel about your hearing loss?

Handwriting practice paper with a vertical margin line on the left and horizontal dotted lines for writing.




How well do you think you have coped with the changes associated with your hearing loss? How have you adapted to your hearing loss? Have you developed any tips over the years?



A large rectangular area with horizontal dotted lines for writing.

Describe a situation when you used a tip that worked.



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Describe a situation when you used a tip that did not work.



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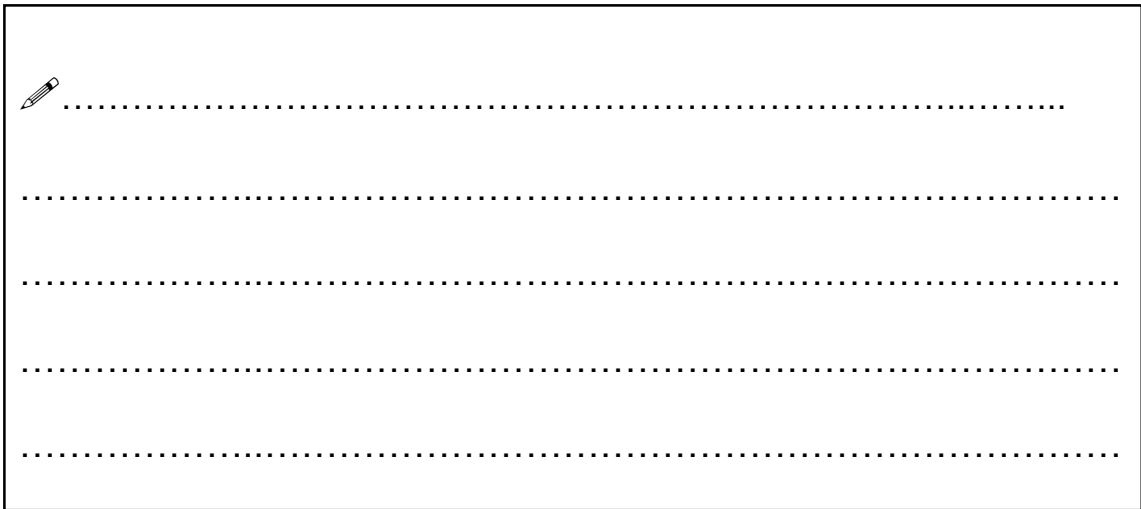
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If you had some advice for a person who also has a hearing loss,  
what would it be?



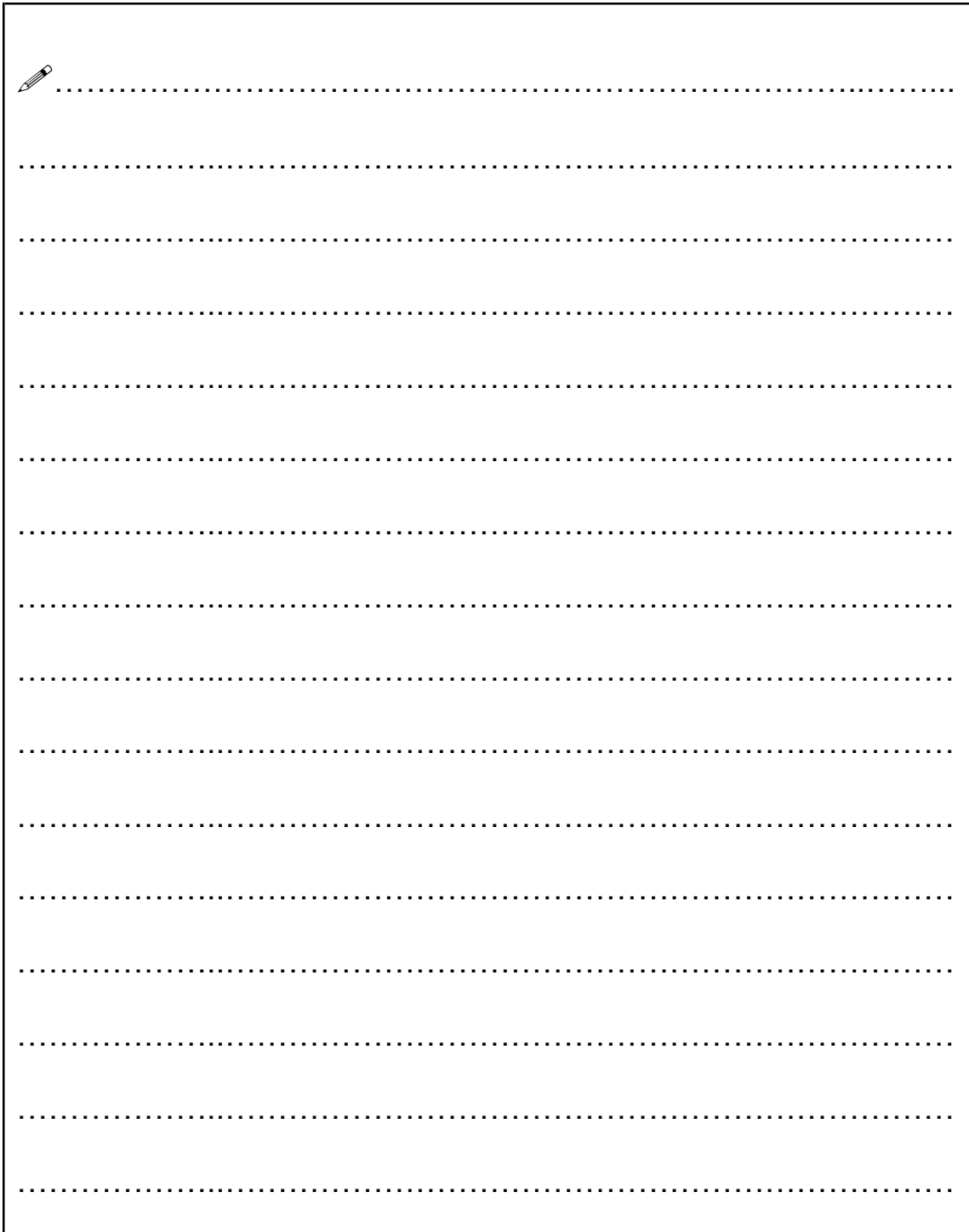
A rectangular box containing a small pencil icon at the top left and five horizontal dotted lines for writing.

### **For your communication partner**

The next section is for your most frequent communication partner (for example, your spouse). Ask your communication partner to write about how your hearing loss has affected him or her and how he or she has coped with it. This activity is an opportunity to discuss together the effect of the hearing loss on your life. This is obviously not meant to be a “blame game”. Each person should try to focus on his or her own experiences and generally use statements that start with “I”. For example, one could say “I notice when Bill misses hearing a joke in conversation and I feel sorry for him when that happens”. If you prefer not to ask a communication partner, skip this section and go directly to the end of Activity 4 of Module 1 on p.27.



When did you first start noticing your communication partner's hearing loss? What impact has it had on you over the years? How do you feel about your communication partner's hearing loss?




A large rectangular box with a black border, containing 18 horizontal dotted lines for writing. A small pencil icon is located at the top left of the box, pointing towards the first dotted line.

How well do you think you have coped with the changes associated with your communication partner's hearing loss? How have you adapted to his/her hearing loss? Have you developed any tips over the years?




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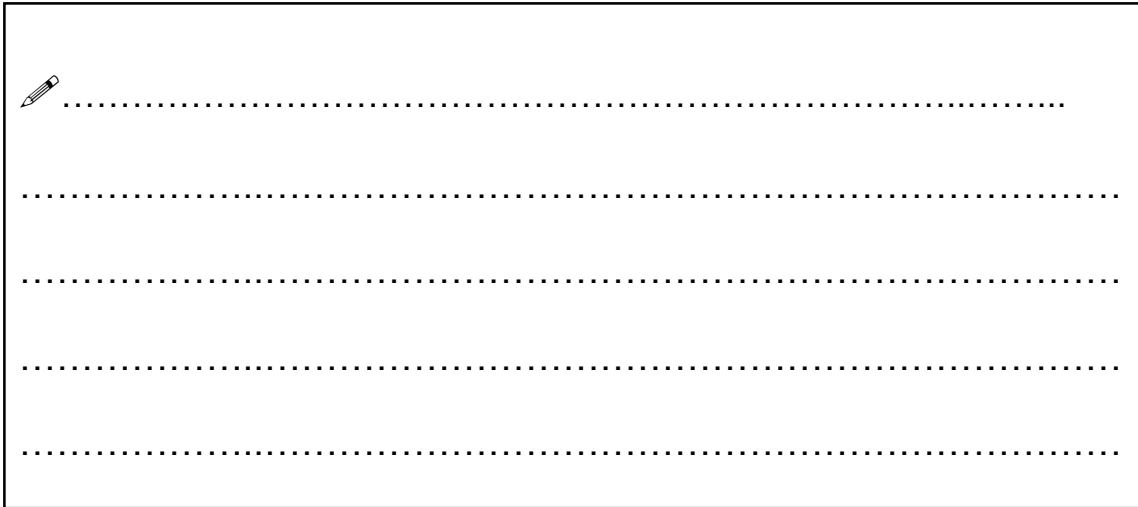
Describe a situation when you used a tip that worked.



Describe a situation where you used a tip that did not work.



If you had some advice for a person whose communication partner also has a hearing loss, what would it be?




**You have now finished Activity 4 of Module 1.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒


### ***Activity 5. Feedback on Module 1***

Please answer these 2 questions to help us improve I-ACE. Thank you for your help.

What did you like about the module?



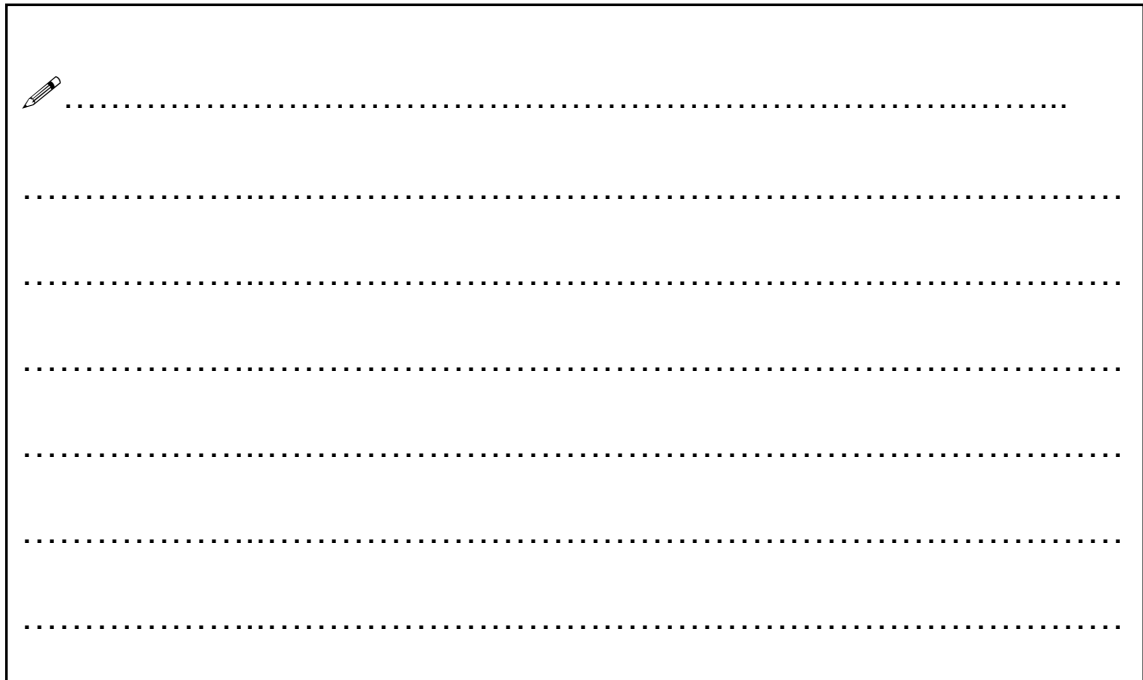
How could the module be improved?



**You have now finished Activity 5 of Module 1.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒



You can use the box below to write down a summary of what was discussed with the facilitator.



A large rectangular box with a solid black border, intended for writing a summary. It contains seven horizontal dotted lines. A small pencil icon is located at the beginning of the first dotted line.

The facilitator will then post the next I-ACE module to you.

# **MODULE 2**

## **COMMUNICATION IN BACKGROUND NOISE**





## MODULE 2 – COMMUNICATION IN BACKGROUND NOISE

The objectives of this module are:

- To work through the problem-solving method when the difficulty is communication in background noise.
- To identify and practise strategies for communication in background noise.
- To work through the problem-solving method with a situation unique to you.

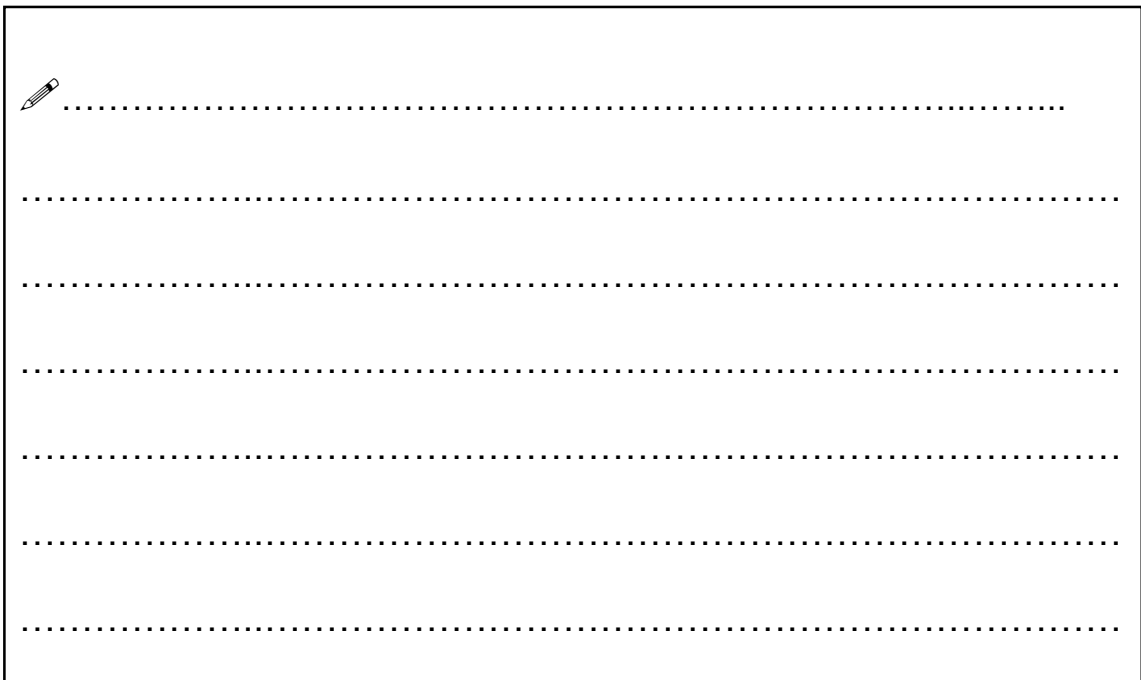
The activities of this module are:

☑ Tick  
when  
finished  
↓

Activity 1. Thinking back.....	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 2. Example of communication in background noise...	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 3. Difficult hearing situations .....	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 4. Communication in background noise strategies...	16	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 5. Strategies exercise.....	19	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 6. Your situation .....	27	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 7. Feedback on Module 2.....	31	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Activity 1. Thinking back...**

Think back to the last module. What were the communication difficulties you listed? What is the problem-solving method? Please write down the steps of the problem-solving method you remember.



A large rectangular box for writing, containing a pencil icon and several horizontal dotted lines for text entry.

The steps of the problem-solving method are:

- What is the communication activity?
- What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?
- What are some possible solutions?
- What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?
- How can you test the solutions?

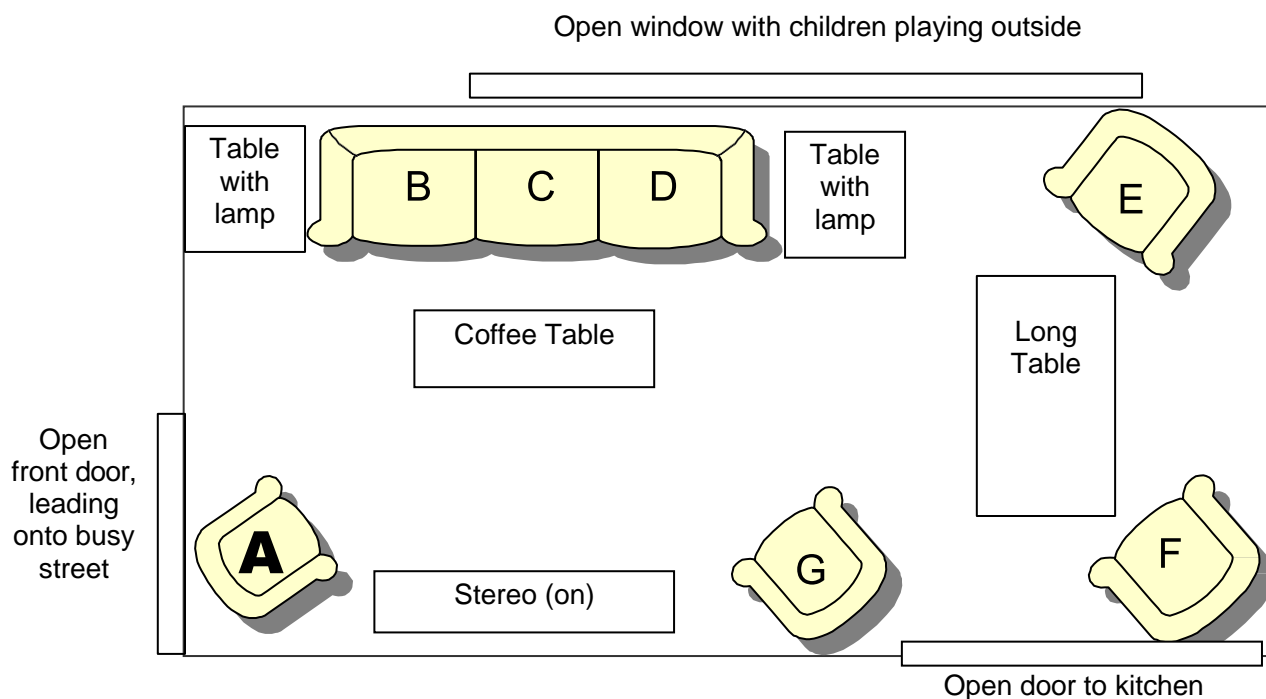
In this module the problem-solving method will be applied to communication in background noise.

In this module, you will notice that the word “strategy” is used often. In I-ACE, a strategy is like a “tip”. Some of the strategies may sound simple, but they often make a world of a difference. Try as many strategies as often as you can. This way, you will be able to find out which ones work for you.

**You have now finished Activity 1 of Module 2.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

## ***Activity 2. Example of communication in background noise***
















The following example was taken from a book written by American researchers. Have a look at the floor plan of a living room below. Each letter (from A to G) represents a seat. Imagine that you are in this living room.




*Adapted from Kaplan, Bally, & Garretson (1995)*

You are sitting in position A with a group of people at the home of one of your close friends. You are having difficulty hearing because of the amount of background noise in the room.

List the likely sources of background noise and what you could do about them:

Source of background noise	What can you do about this source of background noise?	Tick the actions you would prefer to take. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 .....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> .....</li> <li> .....</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 .....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> .....</li> <li> .....</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 .....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> .....</li> <li> .....</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 .....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> .....</li> <li> .....</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 .....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> .....</li> <li> .....</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Would your actions to reduce the background noise be different if this was the home of someone you did not know? If yes, why?




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Would your actions to reduce the background noise be different if this was your own home? If yes, why?




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After you take some action to reduce the background noise in the room, you try to have a conversation with the person in position G, but you still find this difficult. What could you do to improve the situation?




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Then you try to have a conversation with the person in position F, but you find this difficult. What could you do to improve the situation?




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Finally, you decide to change seats with someone else so that you can join in the group conversation better. Which seat would make it easiest for you to hear everyone? Why?




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.....

Instead of moving yourself to a different spot, you decide to move your seat to another position in the room so that you can join in the group conversation better. Where would you move your seat to and why?



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**You have now finished Activity 2 of Module 2.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

### ***Activity 3. Difficult hearing situations***

The following section is part of a book written by Norm Erber, a researcher from Melbourne. It provides information and strategies about background noise and other situations that are difficult for hard-of-hearing people. As you read this section, take the time to think of how you could use this information to help you.

#### **Noise**

The presence of noise, reverberation, or visible distractions is likely to reduce your ability to understand speech and conversations in everyday life. Everyone, even those with normal hearing, has difficulty conversing in noisy environments (for example, restaurants, in a car or bus, on a noisy street).

However the effects of background noise are much more noticeable when you have a hearing loss. This is why you may have considerable difficulty distinguishing words when there are other noises around. When you are in a noisy environment, you probably strain to hear. If you have good eyesight, watching the other person's gestures and mouth movements can help.

A common source of background noise in group gatherings is the people themselves. The accumulation of noise from every whisper, cough, body movement and creak of the chairs can create a considerable level of background noise. This type of background noise is difficult to control as you cannot simply insist that everybody stops moving!

Some strategies to help in this situation include:

- Move closer to your communication partner.
- Ask your communication partner to speak a little louder.
- Move the conversation somewhere quieter.

Other types of background noise are easier to control. For example, noise from the street or neighbours can be reduced by shutting windows and doors. Remember that even a small opening can let in a considerable amount of outside noise.

Noise from cooking, eating, serving food and washing dishes is another common source of difficulty for hard-of-hearing people. To reduce this noise you can use a plastic foam placemat on the table. The use of plastic plates, wooden utensils and a rubber mat

in the sink will also reduce the amount of kitchen noise when you are washing up.

In the home environment, noises from the radio, vacuum cleaner, or dishwasher can create communication difficulties. Other loud noises come from lawn mowers, power tools and hedge trimmers.

Some common solutions to reducing background noise in the home environment include:

- Attach rubber seals or plastic foam strips to reduce the leakage of sounds through windows and doors.
- Next time you renovate your house, request walls that transmit less sound (for example, specially designed gypsum plasterboard).
- Use double glazing in windows that face a noisy street.

Sometimes however the only way to communicate effectively in the presence of background noise is to find (or create) a quieter location away from the noise.

## **Reverberation**

Reverberation occurs when sounds reflect off hard surfaces such as walls, ceilings and floors. These echoes make everything sound blurred.

Common places in which reverberation occurs include:

- Kitchens
- Bathrooms, toilets
- Stairwells
- Shopping centres
- Pedestrian tunnels, train stations
- Stadiums and large halls (for example, churches)

These places are characterised by hard surfaces that absorb very little sound, such as tiles, plaster, metal, concrete, or glass.

Reverberation can be reduced by covering hard surfaces with soft porous materials that absorb sound such as:

- Cloth curtains over walls or windows
- Rubber mats or carpet on hard floors: this has 2 positive consequences. It will reduce the impact of noise from

footsteps and chairs and it will also reduce the reverberation of noises that strike the floors.

## **Distance**

Distance is a factor which can easily affect communication, even if the room is quiet and free of distractions. For example, a woman and her husband may be sitting next to one another in a quiet location. The husband is describing his plans for the day. He walks across the room several times to get the newspaper, pour a cup of coffee and get his glasses. Whenever he does this, his wife does not hear him and asks him to repeat what he has said. Why does the conversation break down so many times in this way? Well, whenever the husband walks across the room, he changes the distance between himself and his wife - from about 1 metre to perhaps 4 or 5 metres. This change in distance can significantly reduce the level of his voice as the sound spreads throughout the room.

The following strategies may be used when distance is an issue:

- Carefully articulate what is said.
- Use a remote microphone or a portable amplifier with a long cord and ear phones or a wireless system with a small transmitter held or worn by the communication partner.
- Raise the voice level. This is obviously not a long-term solution as shouting quickly becomes exhausting.

### **Visual distractions, illumination and glare**

Most people with hearing difficulties rely on lipreading and other visual clues like facial expressions to improve their understanding of conversations. Therefore, a person's visual orientation to their communication partners can be a major factor. For example, lipreading can be difficult if the person sits at a difficult viewing angle (for example, in a group at a large round table) or at a great distance from the speaker (for example, in a lecture hall).

Intense overhead lighting in a room where there is no other light source can produce dark shadows over a speaker's mouth. Bright sunlight through a window or from a light can be glaring and frustrating, especially if they appear behind or near the communication partner.

The following strategies may be used when lighting is a issue:

- Arrange furniture to maximise communication by positioning the person who does not have a hearing loss to face the light.
- Adapt window coverings (for example, curtains, blinds) to minimise glare.
- Eliminate reflecting objects such as mirrors, shiny table tops.
- Use diffuse room lighting - a softly lit room is better than a sharply lit room.

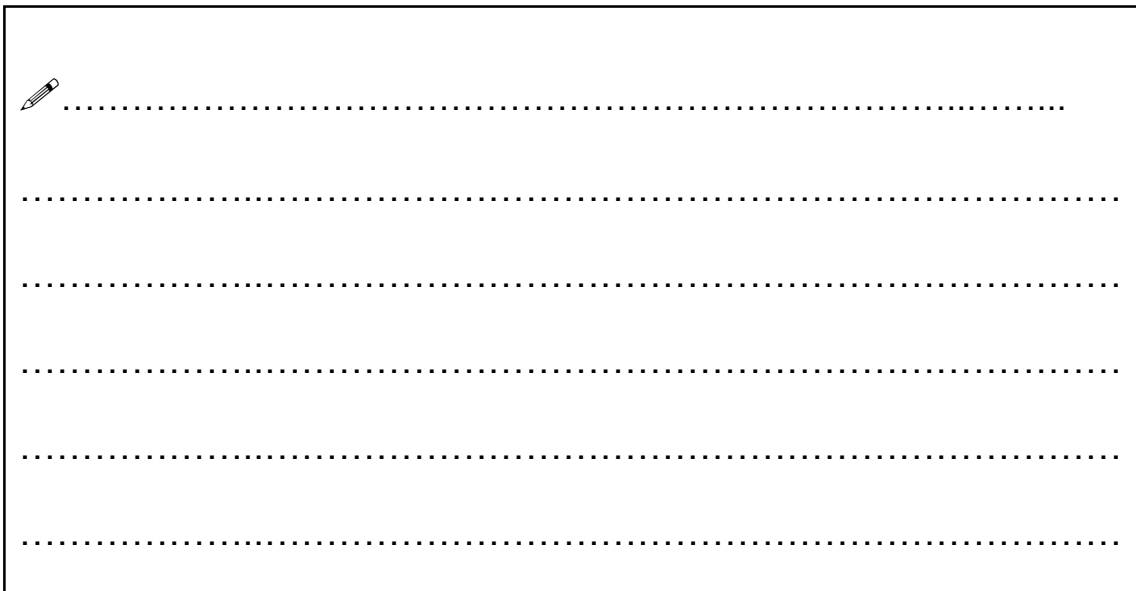
*Adapted from Erber (1996)*

**You have now finished Activity 3 of Module 2.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒



***Activity 4. Communication in background noise strategies***

Making modifications to the environment will optimise chances of communicating well. However, it will still happen sometimes that you will miss words here and there. This is called a communication breakdown. Think of ways to fix these communication breakdowns. Saying “What?” is one strategy to fix communication breakdowns. List other strategies to fix communication breakdowns.



A large rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing. Inside the box, on the left side, is a small icon of a pencil. To the right of the pencil icon are several horizontal dotted lines for writing. The first line starts at the pencil icon and extends across the width of the box. Below it are five more dotted lines, each also extending across the width of the box, providing a template for writing multiple lines of text.

There are many strategies you can use other than saying “What?”

Examples include:

- Ask your communication partner for a repetition. For example, you could say: “Could you please repeat that?”
- Rephrase the conversation while talking a little bit more slowly. For example, you could say: “Could you please say that again, but using different words and speaking a bit more slowly?”
- Tell your communication partner that you have some difficulty hearing and that you are not sure if you heard X or Y. For example, you could say: “Sorry, did you say that John is turning 50 or 60 this year?”

As you can see, the hard-of-hearing person is usually the one who has to ask for help and can throw in a little tip as well (for example, asking the person to speak more slowly). It can be daunting at first to tell someone what to do, especially if you do not know the person well. However, the trick is to be assertive without being impolite. Try it; you will be surprised to see how most people will be glad to learn about ways to communicate better with you.

Everybody needs to be reminded of strategies once in a while. Research has shown that it is one thing for people to say they will use strategies, but it is another thing for people to actually use strategies in everyday life. Practising strategies is the best way to end up using them in everyday life.

**You have now finished Activity 4 of Module 2.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

**Activity 5. Strategies exercise**

Hard-of-hearing people can obtain missed information without always saying “What?”. In the exercise below, the symbols XXX indicate words or phrases that you are unable to understand and the symbols ??? indicate words or phrases which you are unsure about. For each situation, circle the letter of the appropriate strategy. More than one strategy may be appropriate for each situation.

Situation 1. The receptionist at the medical centre tells you “Your appointment will be next Thursday at XXX in the afternoon.”

- A)** Ask the receptionist to say it again.
- B)** Confirm with the receptionist what you thought you heard.
- C)** Ask the receptionist to rephrase the information.
- D)** Ask the receptionist to spell the word.
- E)** Ask the receptionist to use gesture or mime.
- F)** Ask the receptionist for the key word.
- G)** Ask the receptionist to show you the number using digits.
- H)** Ask the receptionist to write the word.

Situation 2. The secretary at the telephone company tells you “Go to see Mrs XXX in Room 205 to help you with your telephone bill enquiry.”

- A)** Ask the secretary to say it again.
- B)** Confirm with the secretary what you thought you heard.
- C)** Ask the secretary to rephrase the information.
- D)** Ask the secretary to spell the name.
- E)** Ask the secretary to use gesture or mime.
- F)** Ask the secretary for the key word.
- G)** Ask the secretary to show you the number using digits.
- H)** Ask the secretary to write the name.

Situation 3. You have given the cashier at the movies the money for your ticket, but he does not give you your ticket. He says “XXX XXX XXX.”

- A)** Ask the cashier to say it again.
- B)** Confirm with the cashier what you thought you heard.
- C)** Ask the cashier to rephrase the information.
- D)** Ask the cashier to spell the phrase.
- E)** Ask the cashier to use gesture or mime.
- F)** Ask the cashier for the key word.
- G)** Ask the cashier to show you the number using digits.

**H)** Ask the cashier to write the phrase.

Situation 4. You have always taken the 9:15 train to the City. You want to be sure that the train will be leaving on time. When you ask, the ticket teller replies “Your train leaves at XXX.”

- A)** Ask the ticket teller to say it again.
- B)** Confirm with the ticket teller what you thought you heard.
- C)** Ask the ticket teller to rephrase the information.
- D)** Ask the ticket teller to spell the word.
- E)** Ask the ticket teller to use gesture or mime.
- F)** Ask the ticket teller for the key word.
- G)** Ask the ticket teller to show you the number using digits.
- H)** Ask the ticket teller to write the word.

Situation 5. You are reporting for an appointment in the City. The secretary says “See Mr. Kusovich (???) in Room 114.”

- A)** Ask the secretary to say it again.
- B)** Confirm with the secretary what you thought you heard.
- C)** Ask the secretary to rephrase the information.
- D)** Ask the secretary to spell the word.
- E)** Ask the secretary to use gesture or mime.
- F)** Ask the secretary for the key word.

**G)** Ask the secretary to show you the number using digits.

**H)** Ask the secretary to write the word.

Situation 6. You are in a shop and are asking the price of a gold chain. The shop assistant says “It normally costs \$60, but there is a XXX discount today.”

**A)** Ask the shop assistant to say it again.

**B)** Confirm with the shop assistant what you thought you heard.

**C)** Ask the shop assistant to rephrase the information.

**D)** Ask the shop assistant to spell the word.

**E)** Ask the shop assistant to use gesture or mime.

**F)** Ask the shop assistant for the key word.

**G)** Ask the shop assistant to show you the number using digits.

**H)** Ask the shop assistant to write the word.

Situation 7. You are standing on a street corner as a friend gives you directions to the nearest post office. A truck passes by. You hear your friend say “The post office XXX XXX XXX left at XXX.”

**A)** Ask your friend to say it again.

**B)** Confirm with your friend what you thought you heard.

- C)** Ask your friend to rephrase the information.
- D)** Ask your friend to spell the phrase.
- E)** Ask your friend to use gesture or mime.
- F)** Ask your friend for the key word.
- G)** Ask your friend to show you the number using digits.
- H)** Ask your friend to write the phrase.

**Situation 8.** You are looking at some shoes in a shop window trying to decide if you should try them on. Your friend says “Those shoes are really XXX.”

- A)** Ask your friend to say it again.
- B)** Confirm with your friend what you thought you heard.
- C)** Ask your friend to rephrase the information.
- D)** Ask your friend to spell the word.
- E)** Ask your friend to use gesture or mime.
- F)** Ask your friend for the key word.
- G)** Ask your friend to show you the number using digits.
- H)** Ask your friend to write the word.

**Situation 9.** You are visiting your friend. Your friend’s son says “I would like some XXXs.”

- A)** Ask your friend’s son to say it again.



- B)** Confirm with your friend's son what you thought you heard.
- C)** Ask your friend's son to rephrase the information.
- D)** Ask your friend's son to spell the word.
- E)** Ask your friend's son to use gesture or mime.
- F)** Ask your friend's son for the key word.
- G)** Ask your friend's son to show you the number using digits.
- H)** Ask your friend's son to write the word.

Situation 10. Your grandson is telling you about a fish he caught.

He tells you "It was bigger than a salami (???)."

- A)** Ask your grandson to say it again.
- B)** Confirm with your grandson what you thought you heard.
- C)** Ask your grandson to rephrase the information.
- D)** Ask your grandson to spell the word.
- E)** Ask your grandson to use gesture or mime.
- F)** Ask your grandson for the key word.
- G)** Ask your grandson to show you the number using digits.
- H)** Ask your grandson to write the word.

## Answers

The appropriate answers for this exercise are listed below. For most situations more than one strategy may work. If you selected at least one of the appropriate answers, please tick the box next to the answers. If you did not select at least one of the appropriate answers, please go back to the specific situation and read it again and review the appropriate answers. This will help you to understand what strategies work best for the different situations.

☒ For each situation, tick if you chose at least one of the appropriate answers.



Situation 1. Answer: A, D, G, or H ☐

Situation 2. Answer: A, D, or H ☐

Situation 3. Answer: A, C, E, or F ☐

Situation 4. Answer: A, F, G, or H ☐

Situation 5. Answer: A, B, or D ☐

Situation 6. Answer: A, C, G, or H ☐

Situation 7. Answer: A or E ☐

Situation 8. Answer: A, C, F, or H ☐

Situation 9. Answer: A, D, F, or H ☐

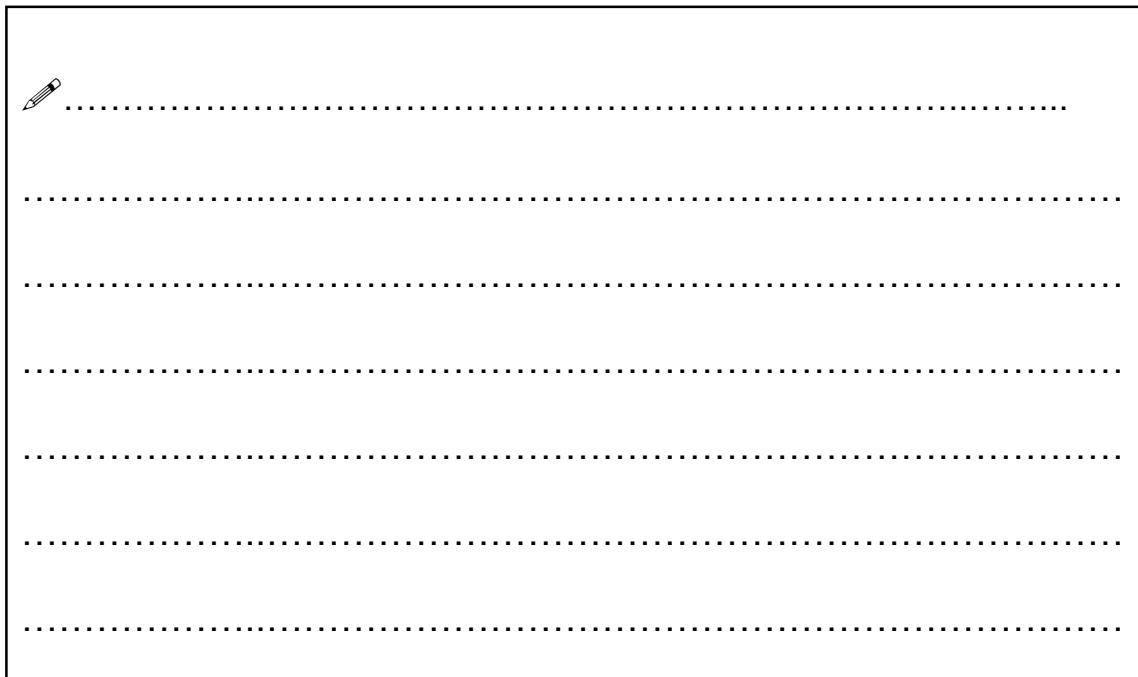
Situation 10. Answer: A, B, C, D, E, F, or H ☐

*Adapted from Kaplan, Bally, & Garretson (1995)*

**You have now finished Activity 5 of Module 2.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒


**Activity 6. Your situation**

You have just learnt how you can decrease the noise and use strategies to repair communication breakdowns. Now it is time for you to think about your own situation and times when you have difficulty hearing. What can you do in the noisy situations of your everyday life? In the box below, you can either draw a noisy situation which regularly presents you with communication difficulties or you can describe the situation by using words.



Now work through the problem-solving method by answering the following questions.

What is the communication activity?




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What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?

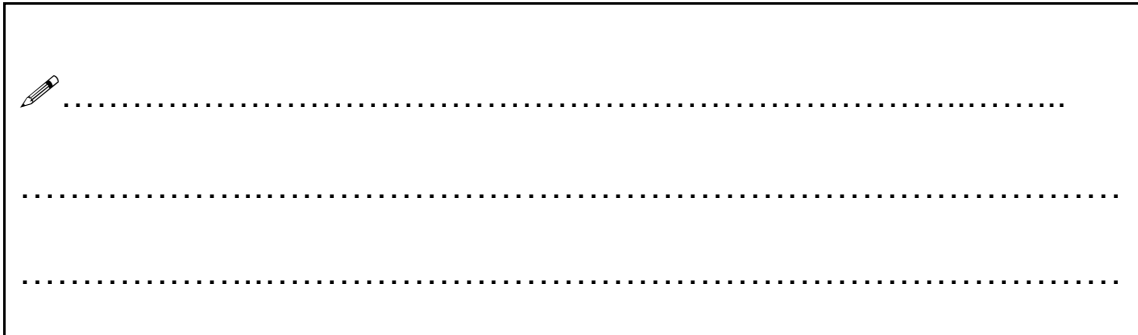


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Solutions derived from the problem-solving method will certainly improve your communication. However communication breakdowns will likely still occur once in a while. Consider other strategies for the situation you discussed.




This module focused on communication in background noise. It should have helped you identify sources of problems and find solutions to these problems. You should also be more familiar with some of the strategies you and your communication partners can use. Until the next module, pay attention to situations with background noise. Assess what is causing the problem. Think of strategies that could help and make sure you try out some of the strategies.

**You have now finished Activity 6 of Module 2.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒


### ***Activity 7. Feedback on Module 2***

Please answer these 2 questions to help us improve I-ACE. Thank you for your help.

What did you like about the module?



How could the module be improved?



**You have now finished Activity 7 of Module 2.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☐




## You have now finished Module 2.

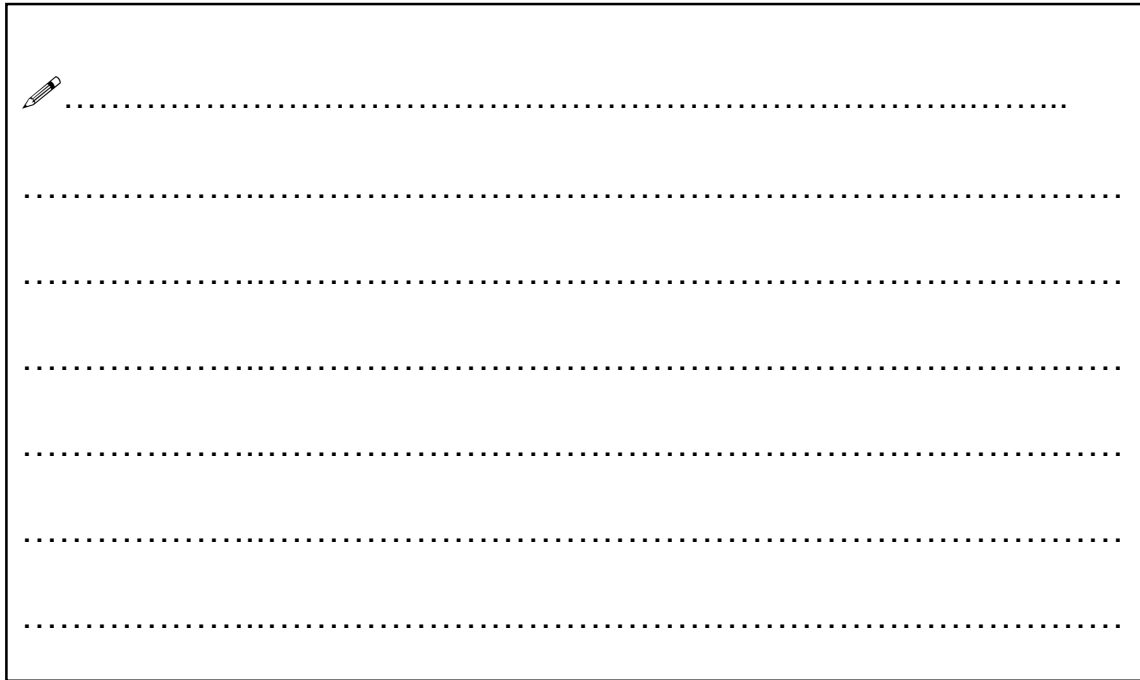
The facilitator will contact you on:

Day of the week	Date	Time of the day	Tick when done <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
.....	...../...../.....	AM / PM	<input type="checkbox"/>

This will be an opportunity for you to ask questions or share comments. You can use the box below to write down any ideas that you would like to discuss with the facilitator.

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You can use the following box to write down a summary of what was discussed with the facilitator.



A large rectangular box with a black border, containing seven horizontal dotted lines for writing. A small pencil icon is positioned at the start of the first dotted line.

The facilitator will then post the next I-ACE module to you.



# **MODULE 3**

## **COMMUNICATION AROUND THE HOUSE**



## MODULE 3 - COMMUNICATION AROUND THE HOUSE

The objectives of this module are:

- To work through the problem-solving method when the difficulty is communication around the house.
- To identify and practise strategies for communication around the house.
- To work through the problem-solving method with a situation unique to you.


The activities of this module are:

☒ Tick  
when  
finished  
↓

Activity 1. Thinking back.....	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 2. Examples of communication around the house .....	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 3. Communication around the house strategies .....	13	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 4. Communication strategies.....	16	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 5. Being assertive.....	19	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 6. Your situation .....	30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 7. Feedback on Module 3.....	34	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Activity 1. Thinking back...**

Think about the last few days. Have you been in situations where you had trouble hearing? What were they?




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What have you done about it?




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What strategies worked?




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What strategies did not work?



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If faced with the same situation again, what else could you do?




**You have now finished Activity 1 of Module 3.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

***Activity 2. Examples of communication around the house***


For each of the situations listed below, imagine that you are at home with one other person. For each situation, follow the steps of the problem-solving method.

Situation 1. You are sitting in the lounge room watching TV and you hear the other person say something from the next room. You do not know what they said.

What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?



What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?




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Situation 2. You are in the bedroom and you hear the other person speak from another room at the front of the house. You do not hear what they said.

What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?




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Situation 3. You start a conversation while sitting at the dining table, but then the other person gets up and starts doing other things in the room (for example, washing up, folding the newspaper) and tries to keep the conversation going. You cannot follow the conversation any more.

What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?




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Situation 4. You are sitting watching TV with the other person and they make comments about the program. You cannot hear the comments they make and when they speak you do not hear what is said on the TV.

What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?



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**You have now finished Activity 2 of Module 3.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

### ***Activity 3. Communication around the house strategies***

Why are some communication partners easier to understand than others? In other words, what makes a person easy to understand?




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Why are some environments easier to understand in than others?  
In other words, what makes an environment easier to understand in?



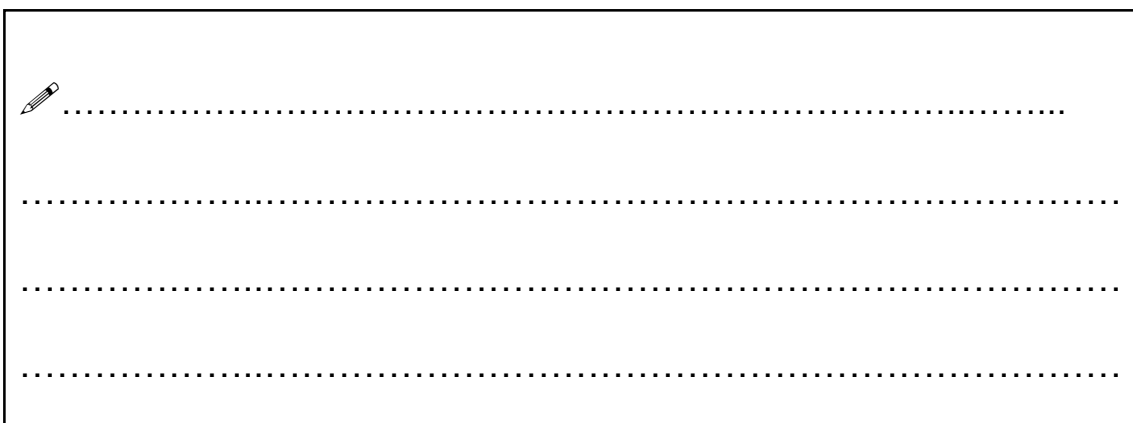
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How could you ask someone to speak more clearly to you?



Here are some examples:

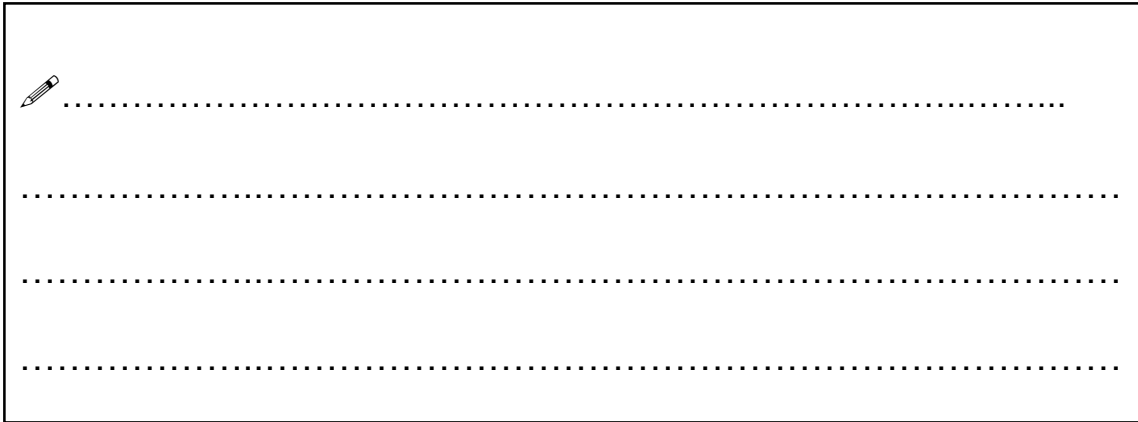
- Asking the person to speak more slowly.
- Asking the person to face you when they are speaking.
- Asking the person to speak louder.

Small changes in the way a person talks can make a big difference in the way you can understand the person. Asking a person to speak a little bit more slowly will usually result in the person speaking more clearly as well. The words will not sound as if they were running into one another as much.

Think of a situation where you have trouble hearing and where you could ask the person to speak a little bit more slowly. How could

you make the request in way that would be assertive yet polite?

Write the words you would use.



Most people find that something like “Sorry, I missed that. Could you please repeat while speaking a little bit slower?” works a treat. Some other people prefer something like “Sorry to interrupt, but my hearing is not so good. Could you speak a little bit slower? It will help me pick up the words you are saying.”

**You have now finished Activity 3 of Module 3.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

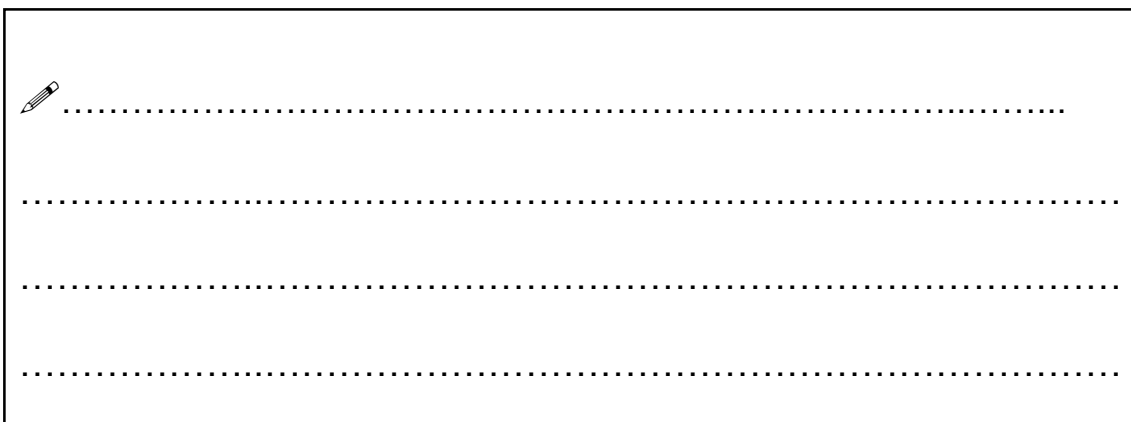
### ***Activity 4. Communication strategies***

The following section was written by Jeannette Wilson, Louise Hickson, and Linda Worrall, researchers at the University of Queensland. It describes communication strategies.

Communication strategies can help hard-of-hearing people overcome many of their hearing difficulties. Communication strategies fall into one of three categories:

- Anticipatory strategies: think in advance of the words that will most likely be used, ask for a meeting agenda prior to a meeting, ...
- Repair strategies: ask for a repeat (“What did you say?”), ask for a rephrase (“I missed a few words, could you please say it again using different words?”), ...
- Corrective strategies: ask to speak slower, ask to look at you, ...

Do you currently use any of these communication strategies? If so, which ones?



Interestingly, it appears that hard-of-hearing people tend to overestimate their use of communication strategies. A research study demonstrated that hard-of-hearing people typically mention using a variety of communication strategies. But when difficulties actually occur in real life situations, people tend to mainly ask for a repeat. Although there is nothing wrong with asking for a repeat, other communication strategies might be more useful in reducing hearing difficulties. One good example is disclosing your hearing difficulties and politely requesting a bit of help, for example by asking the other person to talk more slowly or by making sure you can see their face to allow lipreading.


Practising various communication strategies is the best way to improve your use of communication strategies in real life situations and therefore reduce your hearing difficulties. Remember, practice makes perfect!

*Adapted from Wilson, Hickson, & Worrall (1998)*


**You have now finished Activity 4 of Module 3.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

### ***Activity 5. Being assertive***

Have you ever talked about your hearing loss with your family, friends, or neighbours? List the people with whom you have talked about your hearing loss.



Have you ever suggested to people ways to make it easier to communicate with you? List a few situations where you did this.



The following section was written by Harriet Kaplan, Scott Bally, & Carol Garretson, researchers from America. It provides information about assertiveness.



The hard-of-hearing person wanting to use communication strategies successfully must be assertive. Being assertive means:

- Be willing to admit to a hearing problem.
- Be keen to explain the problem to other people.
- Be able to suggest ways to improve communication.

It is very common to want to “hide” a hearing loss from others. This possibly leads to difficulties in conversation when you misunderstand what is said. The person you are talking to, who is not aware of your hearing difficulties, may think that you are not interested, not paying attention, or not too intelligent.

One solution to this problem is to admit to the other person that you have hearing difficulties. As most people do not understand the difficulties associated with hearing loss, they think they have to shout. It is your responsibility therefore to tell your communication partner what he or she can do to improve the communication situation.

An example of explaining your difficulty to others is:

“I’m sorry, I didn’t understand what you said because of my hearing loss. It’d help if you could speak just a bit slower.”

Many hard-of-hearing people report difficulties understanding people who do not speak clearly. Examples of characteristics which make people difficult to understand include:

- People who speak quickly
- People who speak with reduced pronunciation
- People who speak too soft or too loud
- People with high-pitched voices, such as children
- People with accents
- People who make distracting gestures, limited facial expression or minimal mouth movements
- People with beards or moustaches that cover their lips
- People who speak with food in their mouth

Strategies for understanding difficult to understand speakers include:

## **Anticipatory strategies**

In order to anticipate possible sources of difficulty, it is important to identify potential difficulties in advance. Any time you go into a familiar situation where you know who will be speaking, you can think about this beforehand and anticipate the speaker characteristics that are likely to create difficulties. Once you have done this, you can plan strategies to minimise the difficulty.

It is always important to remember to explain the difficulty to the speaker. Tactfully inform him or her of what they can do to improve the communicative situation. Suggestions that may be useful in some situations include:

- If the speaker has a soft voice, a fast voice, or poor pronunciation, ask the person to speak a little more slowly. This will naturally result in words that are easier to understand.
- If the speaker consistently communicates with something in their mouth, ask him or her to remove the object before they speak. You want to be assertive when you do this, but not aggressive.

The more you get to know someone, the more you will become accustomed to the way they speak.

There are times when it is practical to avoid certain speakers. For example, at the pharmacy, if you are aware that one staff communicates better than others, try to approach the better communicator when possible.

People who shout or use exaggerated mouth movements are often trying to help. Most people do not realise that this distorts lip movements and the way words sound. If you know someone who does this, try to discuss tactfully with them how speaking more slowly would help you better.

### **Repair strategies**

As it is not always possible to predict communication difficulties, there are times when you need to use repair strategies during the conversation. Repair strategies include:

- Asking for repetition - this is the most frequently used repair strategy. It is a good idea to develop a few key phrases to

use when you need a repetition. For example, “Please forgive me, I may have misunderstood” or “I sometimes miss an important word or two. What did you say?”

It is fine to use this strategy but be aware of not over using it. It is a good idea to avoid constantly using phrases such as “What?” or “Huh?” when you require a repetition. Asking people to repeat more than once or tends to create frustrations and not have the desired effect.

If you have understood part of the conversation, it is good to ask for only the part you misunderstood to be repeated. For example, you could say “I’m sorry I didn’t catch where you said you went to on holidays?”

- Asking for rephrasing - sometimes repetition does not work and it is necessary to say to your communication partner “I don’t understand what you are saying. Can you please say it in a different way?” Another way to do this is to ask your partner to “tell me a little more about that.” This will often give you more information to figure out what has been said.

- Asking for clarification or confirmation - when you want to be sure that you understood correctly, you can confirm what you think the person said by saying “I think you said .....” or “Did you say .....”?
- Asking for key words - another communication strategy includes asking the speaker to tell you the most important words, or key words, in the conversation.
- Asking for spelling - if you experience difficulty understanding a key word, or a name, another strategy is to ask the person to spell the word.
- Asking for written information - if you are in a situation that requires the exact information, you can ask your communication partner to write down the information.

### **Coping in a group situation**

In addition to coping with poor speaker characteristics, the group situation brings with it a number of special communication difficulties. People tend to speak over one another. There is often some background noise. Because there is more than one speaker

involved, conversation often jumps quickly from one person to the next. Topics tend to change quickly in group situations.

Strategies to use during group situations include:

- Arrange seating at a table by sitting at the head or foot of the table. This position allows the best view of others in the room. In a living room situation, it is best to sit on a moveable chair rather than on a sofa to improve lipreading.
- At a formal group gathering, such as a meeting, it is helpful to review the discussion in advance by asking for the agenda, minutes of the previous meeting, or notes ahead of time.
- Plan in advance for someone to act as your “cuer” to tell you when the topic has changed and what the new topic is.
- If you join a group conversation after it has begun, you could ask “What are we talking about?” to learn the topic of conversation.

- If you are familiar with the group of people, perhaps you could ask members of the group to signal by raising a finger before they speak. This will make it easier to follow changing speakers.

## **Communication strategies**

There are a number of general strategies that make listening easier:

- Ask communication partners to speak in adequate lighting and to face the listener.
- Ask partners to speak clearly and naturally but not to shout or exaggerate articulatory movements.
- If someone is speaking far away, move closer.
- If one side of your hearing is better than the other, keep your good ear facing the speaker.
- Arrive early to meetings so you can sit closer to the speaker.

In summary, many different communication strategies have been discussed here and you may feel comfortable using some, but not others. Feel free to experiment with the strategies discussed here

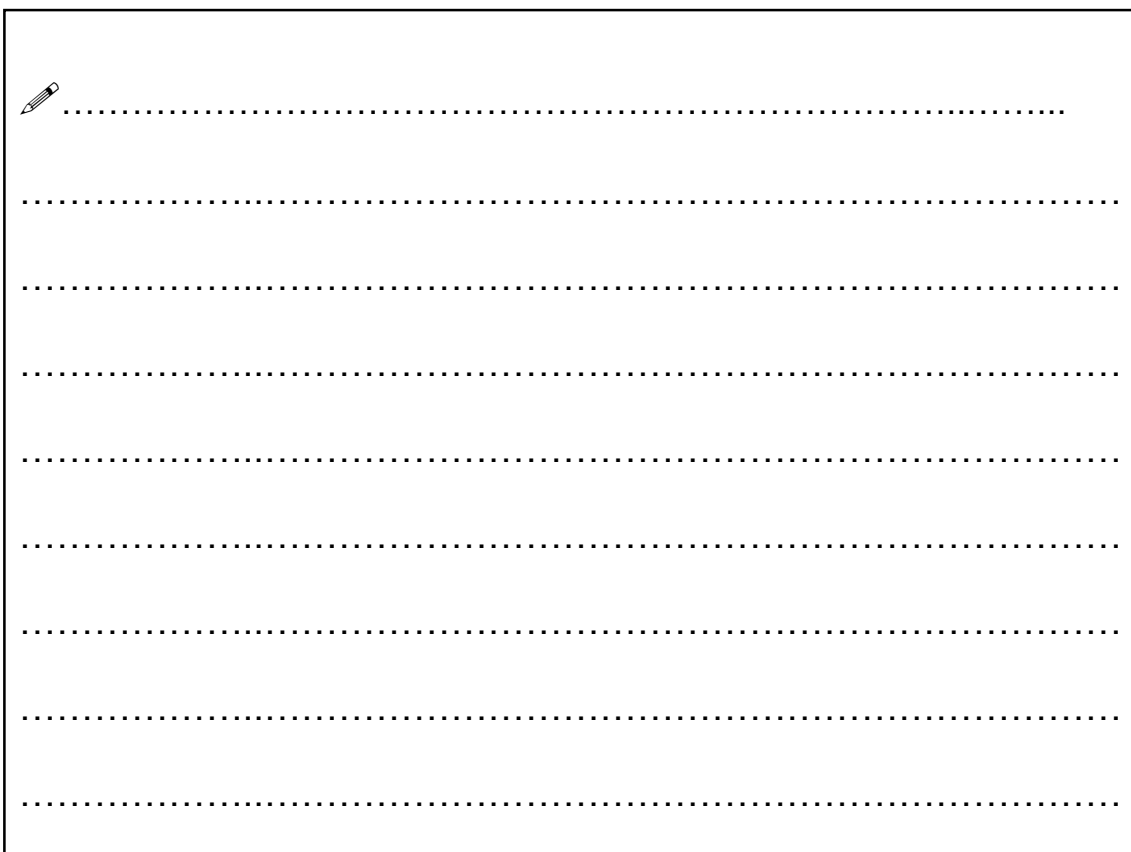


and any others that you find helpful for your situation. Regardless of which strategies you use however, the following points are important to remember:

- Be honest and upfront about your hearing difficulties.
- Be assertive, but not aggressive, when asking for help from your communication partner.
- Focus on how you can keep the communication flowing.

*Adapted from Kaplan, Bally, & Garretson (1995)*

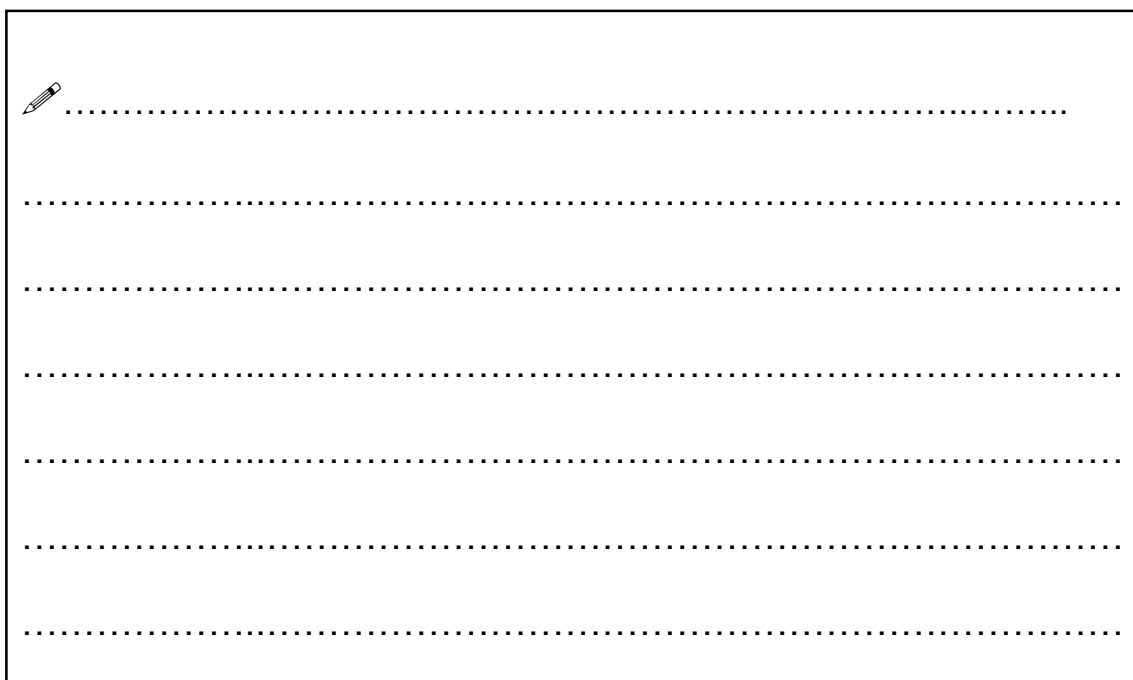
The last section provided a lot of information. Think of one piece of advice you just read that you could use. Give an example of a situation where you could use that piece of advice.



**You have now finished Activity 5 of Module 3.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

**Activity 6. Your situation**


Now it is time for you to think about your own situation and times when you have difficulty hearing. What can you do in the difficult situations of your everyday life? In the box below, you can either draw a situation at home which regularly presents you with communication difficulties or you can describe the situation by using words.



A large rectangular box for drawing or writing. It contains a small pencil icon at the top left and several horizontal dotted lines for writing.

Now work through the problem-solving method by answering the following questions.

What is the communication activity?




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What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?

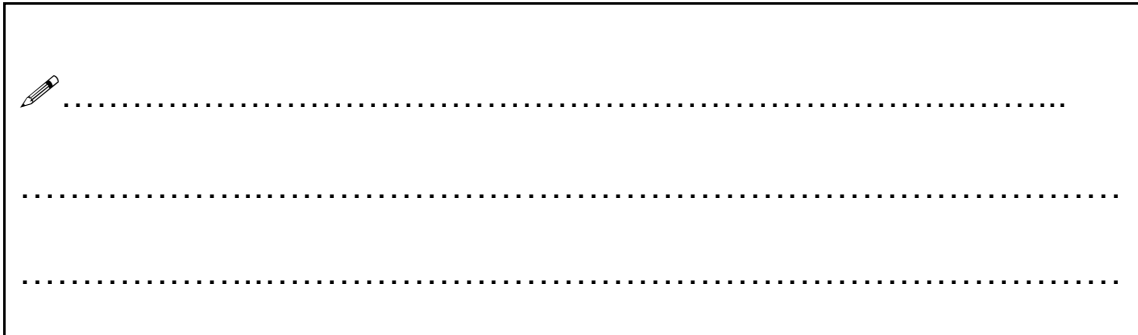


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Solutions derived from the problem-solving method will certainly improve your communication. However communication breakdowns will likely still occur once in a while. Consider repair strategies for the situation you discussed.




This module focused on communication around the house. It should have helped you identify sources of problems and find solutions to these problems. You should also be more familiar with some of the strategies you and your communication partners can use. Until the next module, pay attention to situations around the house. Assess what is causing the problem. Think of strategies that could help and make sure you try out some of the strategies.

**You have now finished Activity 6 of Module 3.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

### ***Activity 7. Feedback on Module 3***

Please answer these 2 questions to help us improve I-ACE. Thank you for your help.


What did you like about the module?

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How could the module be improved?

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**You have now finished Activity 7 of Module 3.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

**You have now finished Module 3.**

The facilitator will contact you on:

Day of the week	Date	Time of the day	Tick when done <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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This will be an opportunity for you to ask questions or share comments. You can use the box below to write down any ideas that you would like to discuss with the facilitator.

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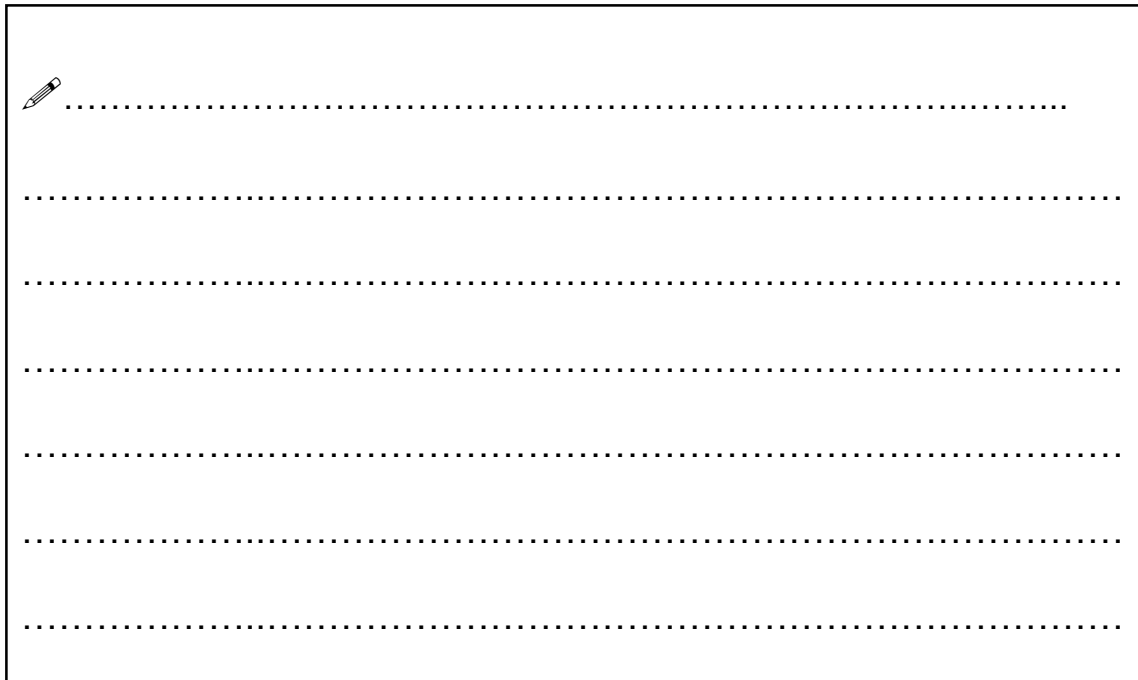
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The facilitator will then post the next I-ACE module to you.

# **MODULE 4**

## **COMMUNICATION WITH DIFFICULT SPEAKERS**



## MODULE 4 - COMMUNICATION

### WITH DIFFICULT SPEAKERS

The objectives of this module are:

- To work through the problem-solving method when the difficulty is communication with difficult speakers.
- To identify and practice strategies for communication with difficult speakers.
- To work through the problem-solving method with a situation unique to you.


The activities of this module are:

☒ Tick  
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 finished  
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Activity 1. Thinking back .....	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 2. Example of communication with difficult speakers .....	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 3. Communication with difficult speakers strategies ....	16	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 4. Communication strategies .....	19	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 5. Being assertive .....	22	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 6. Your situation .....	33	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 7. Feedback on Module 4 .....	37	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Activity 1. Thinking back...**

Think about the last few days. Have you been in situations where you had trouble hearing? What were the situations?




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What have you done about it?




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What strategies worked?




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What strategies did not work?




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If faced with the same situation again, what else could you do?



**You have now finished Activity 1 of Module 4.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

**Activity 2. Example of communication with difficult speakers**

Do you use communication strategies? For each question, select the answer that best reflects the way you would react. Just circle the letter next to your answer. You can select more than one answer per question.

**Situation 1. You are talking to a new neighbour, who has a strong accent. As a result you do not clearly understand what the neighbour said. What do you do?**

- A) Ask the neighbour to repeat what he or she said
- B) Ask the neighbour to speak more slowly
- C) Ask the neighbour to say it another way
- D) Pretend to understand what the neighbour said
- E) Tell the neighbour you are busy and have to go

**Situation 2. You are sitting at the back of a car and the driver speaks to you. You cannot see the driver's face. As a result you do not clearly understand what the driver said. What do you do?**

- A) Ask the driver to repeat what he or she said
- B) Ask the driver to speak more loudly



- C) Ask the driver to say it another way
- D) Pretend to understand what the driver said
- E) Ignore what the driver said

**Situation 3. You are at the dentist. The dentist asks you a question while wearing a facemask. As a result you do not clearly understand the dentist's question. What do you do?**

- A) Guess the dentist's question and answer accordingly
- B) Explain your hearing problem to the dentist
- C) Ask the dentist to repeat his or her question
- D) Ignore the dentist's question
- E) Politely ask the dentist to remove his or her mask while talking to you

**Situation 4. You are speaking to a young girl who is telling you about her day at the zoo. Excited, the girl is constantly moving and is not speaking clearly. As a result you do not clearly understand what she says. What do you do?**

- A) Ask the girl to look up when speaking to you
- B) Ask the girl to repeat what she said
- C) Guess what the girl said
- D) Ask the girl to take her time when talking to you

E) Say “That’s good” and let the girl continue her story

**Situation 5. You are at a cocktail party and decide to join a small group chatting. After a few seconds you realise you cannot pick up enough words to know what the topic of conversation is. Therefore you cannot take part in the conversation. What do you do?**

- A) Ask the group members to repeat what they said
- B) Ask the group members to speak more loudly
- C) Guess what the group members said
- D) Ask one group member to tell you what the topic of conversation is
- E) Walk away from the group

## **Answers**

The appropriate answers for this exercise are listed in order of priority, starting with the most important first. For most situations more than one strategy may work. If you selected at least one of the appropriate answers, please tick the box next to the answers. If you did not select at least one of the appropriate answers, please go back to the specific situation and read it again and review the

appropriate answers. This will help you to understand what strategies work best for the different situations.

☒ For each situation, tick if you chose at least one of the appropriate answers.



Situation 1. Answer: B, C, or A ☐

Situation 2. Answer: C, B., or A ☐

Situation 3. Answer: E, B, or C ☐

Situation 4. Answer: D, A, or B ☐


Situation 5. Answer: D, B, or A ☐

*Adapted from Hickson, Worrall, & Scarinci (2007)*

Again, read each of the situations below. This time, follow the steps of the problem-solving method.

Situation 6. You are having dinner at a friend's house and a lot of people are talking at once. A person tries to talk to you from the other end of the long table. All you hear is a mumble.

What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?




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Situation 7. You regularly meet up with this person at the post office and she always stops for a chat. You struggle to understand her because she has a soft voice and speaks very quickly.

What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?




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Situation 8. You ask a teenage boy at the shops for some information about something you want to buy. He mumbles something back at you while turning his head and pointing down one of the aisles in the shop. You do not know what he said.

What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?



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Situation 9. You find one member of your family much harder to understand than anyone else. He has a beard and always sounds like he is mumbling into it.



What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?

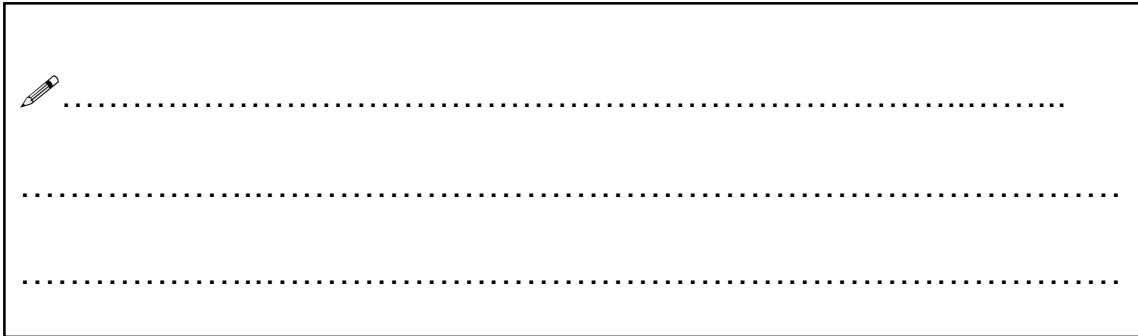


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How can you test the solutions?



**You have now finished Activity 2 of Module 4.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

**Activity 3. Communication with difficult speakers strategies**

Why are some communication partners easier to understand than others? In other words, what makes a person easy to understand?




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Why are some environments easier to understand in than others?  
In other words, what makes an environment easier to understand in?

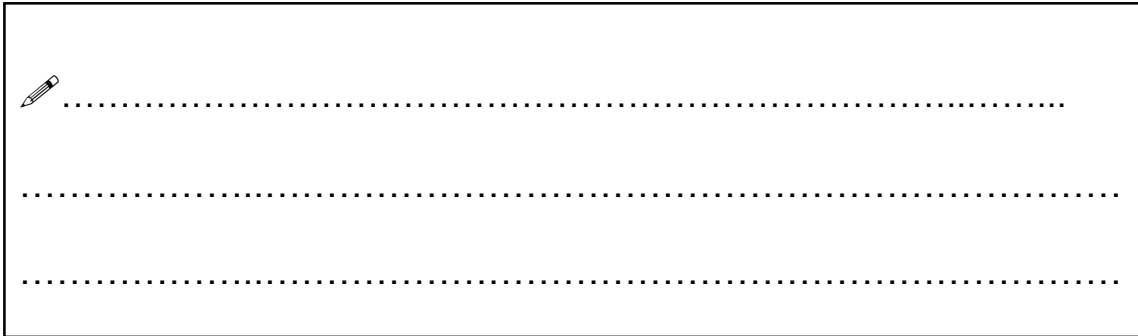


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How could you ask someone to speak more clearly to you?

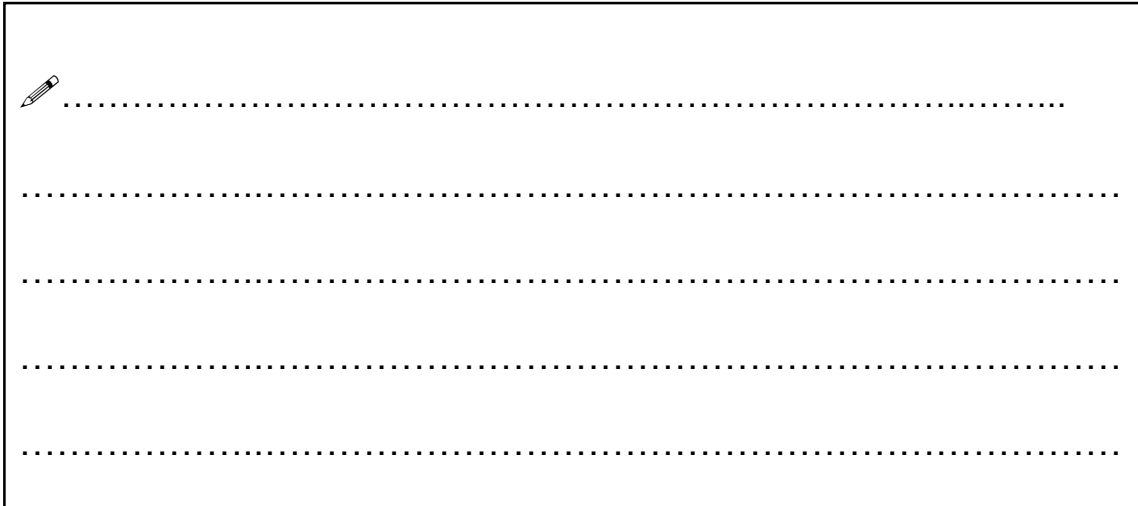


Here are some examples:

- Asking the person to speak more slowly.
- Asking the person to face you when they are speaking.
- Asking the person to speak louder.

Small changes in the way one person talks can make a big difference in the way you can understand this person. Asking a person to speak a little bit more slowly will usually result in the person speaking more clearly as well. The words will not sound as much as if they were running into one another as much.

Think of a situation where you have trouble hearing and where you could ask the person to speak a little bit more slowly. How could you make the request in way that would be assertive yet polite?

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Most people find that something like “Sorry, I missed that. Could you please repeat while speaking a little bit slower?” works a treat. Some other people prefer something like “Sorry to interrupt, but my hearing is not so good. Could you speak a little bit slower? I will help me pick up the words you are saying.”

**You have now finished Activity 3 of Module 4.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

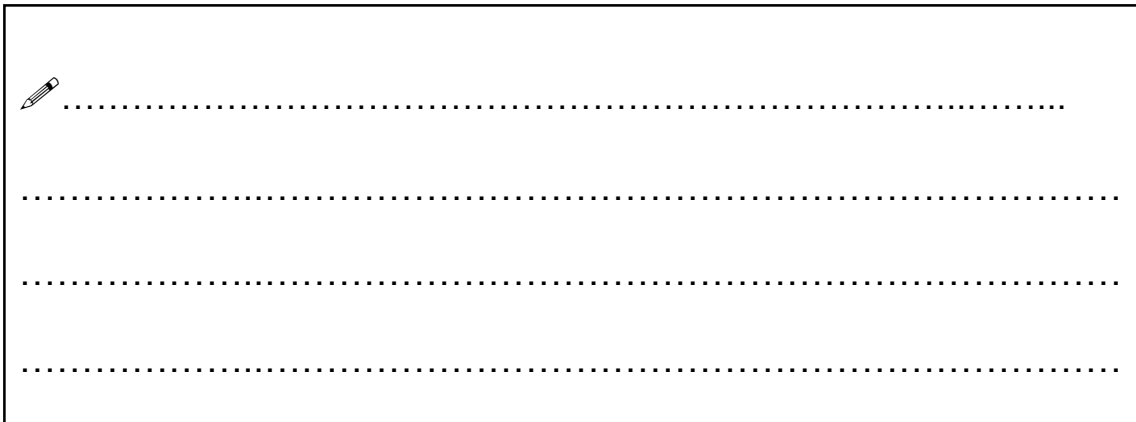
### ***Activity 4. Communication strategies***

The following section was written by Jeannette Wilson, Louise Hickson, and Linda Worrall, researchers at the University of Queensland. It describes communication strategies.

Communication strategies can help hard-of-hearing people overcome many of their hearing difficulties. Communication strategies fall into one of three categories:

- Anticipatory strategies: think in advance of the words that will most likely be used, ask for a meeting agenda prior to a meeting, ...
- Repair strategies: ask for a repeat ("What did you say?"), ask for a rephrase ("I missed a few words, could you please say it again using different words?"), ...
- Corrective strategies: ask to speak slower, ask to look at you, ...

Do you currently use any of these communication strategies? If so, which ones?

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Interestingly, it appears that hard-of-hearing people tend to overestimate their use of communication strategies. A research study demonstrated that hard-of-hearing people typically mention using a variety of communication strategies. But when difficulties actually occur in real life situations, people tend to mainly ask for a repeat. Although there is nothing wrong with asking for a repeat, other communication strategies might be more useful in reducing hearing difficulties. One good example is disclosing your hearing difficulties and politely requesting a bit of help, for example by asking the other person to talk more slowly or by making sure you can see their face to allow lipreading.

Practising various communication strategies is the best way to improve your use of communication strategies in real life situations and therefore reduce your hearing difficulties. Remember, practice makes perfect!


*Adapted from Wilson, Hickson, & Worrall (1998)*

**You have now finished Activity 4 of Module 4.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒




### ***Activity 5. Being assertive***

Have you ever talked about your hearing loss with your family, friends, or neighbours? List the people with whom you have talked about your hearing loss.



Have you ever suggested to people ways to make it easier to communicate with you? List a few situations where you did this.



The following section was written by Harriet Kaplan, Scott Bally, & Carol Garretson, researchers from America. It provides information about assertiveness.

The hard-of-hearing person wanting to use communication strategies successfully must be assertive. Being assertive means:

- Be willing to admit to a hearing problem.
- Be keen to explain the problem to other people.
- Be able to suggest ways to improve communication.

It is very common to want to “hide” a hearing loss from others. This possibly leads to difficulties in conversation when you misunderstand what is said. The person you are talking to, who is not aware of your hearing difficulties, may think that you are not interested, not paying attention, or not too intelligent.

One solution to this problem is to admit to the other person that you have hearing difficulties. As most people do not understand the difficulties associated with hearing loss, they think they have to shout. It is your responsibility therefore to tell your communication partner what he or she can do to improve the communication situation.

An example of explaining your difficulty to others is:

“I’m sorry, I didn’t understand what you said because of my hearing loss. It’d help if you could speak just a bit slower.”

Many hard-of-hearing people report difficulties understanding people who do not speak clearly. Examples of characteristics which make people difficult to understand include:

- People who speak quickly
- People who speak with reduced pronunciation
- People who speak too soft or too loud
- People with high-pitched voices, such as children
- People with accents
- People who make distracting gestures, limited facial expression or minimal mouth movements
- People with beards or moustaches that cover their lips
- People who speak with food in their mouth

Strategies for understanding difficult to understand speakers include:

## **Anticipatory strategies**

In order to anticipate possible sources of difficulty, it is important to identify potential difficulties in advance. Any time you go into a familiar situation where you know who will be speaking, you can think about this beforehand and anticipate the speaker characteristics that are likely to create difficulties. Once you have done this, you can plan strategies to minimise the difficulty.

It is always important to remember to explain the difficulty to the speaker. Tactfully inform him or her of what they can do to improve the communicative situation. Suggestions that may be useful in some situations include:

- If the speaker has a soft voice, a fast voice, or poor pronunciation, ask the person to speak a little more slowly. This will naturally result in words that are easier to understand.
- If the speaker consistently communicates with something in their mouth, ask him or her to remove the object before they speak. You want to be assertive when you do this, but not aggressive.

The more you get to know someone, the more you will become accustomed to the way they speak.

There are times when it is practical to avoid certain speakers. For example, at the pharmacy, if you are aware that one staff communicates better than others, try to approach the better communicator when possible.

People who shout or use exaggerated mouth movements are often trying to help. Most people do not realise that this distorts lip movements and the way words sound. If you know someone who does this, try to discuss tactfully with them how speaking more slowly would help you better.

### **Repair strategies**

As it is not always possible to predict communication difficulties, there are times when you need to use repair strategies during the conversation. Repair strategies include:

- Asking for repetition - this is the most frequently used repair strategy. It is a good idea to develop a few key phrases to

use when you need a repetition. For example, “Please forgive me, I may have misunderstood” or “I sometimes miss an important word or two. What did you say?”

It is fine to use this strategy but be aware of not over using it. It is a good idea to avoid constantly using phrases such as “What?” or “Huh?” when you require a repetition. Asking people to repeat more than once or tends to create frustrations and not have the desired effect.

If you have understood part of the conversation, it is good to ask for only the part you misunderstood to be repeated. For example, you could say “I’m sorry I didn’t catch where you said you went to on holidays?”

- Asking for rephrasing - sometimes repetition does not work and it is necessary to say to your communication partner “I don’t understand what you are saying. Can you please say it in a different way?” Another way to do this is to ask your partner to “tell me a little more about that.” This will often give you more information to figure out what has been said.

- Asking for clarification or confirmation - when you want to be sure that you understood correctly, you can confirm what you think the person said by saying “I think you said .....” or “Did you say .....”?
- Asking for key words - another communication strategy includes asking the speaker to tell you the most important words, or key words, in the conversation.
- Asking for spelling - if you experience difficulty understanding a key word, or a name, another strategy is to ask the person to spell the word.
- Asking for written information - if you are in a situation that requires the exact information, you can ask your communication partner to write down the information.

### **Coping in a group situation**

In addition to coping with poor speaker characteristics, the group situation brings with it a number of special communication difficulties. People tend to speak over one another. There is often some background noise. Because there is more than one speaker

involved, conversation often jumps quickly from one person to the next. Topics tend to change quickly in group situations.

Strategies to use during group situations include:

- Arrange seating at a table by sitting at the head or foot of the table. This position allows the best view of others in the room. In a living room situation, it is best to sit on a moveable chair rather than on a sofa to improve lipreading.
- At a formal group gathering, such as a meeting, it is helpful to review the discussion in advance by asking for the agenda, minutes of the previous meeting, or notes ahead of time.
- Plan in advance for someone to act as your “cuer” to tell you when the topic has changed and what the new topic is.
- If you join a group conversation after it has begun, you could ask “What are we talking about?” to learn the topic of conversation.



- If you are familiar with the group of people, perhaps you could ask members of the group to signal by raising a finger before they speak. This will make it easier to follow changing speakers.

## **Communication strategies**

There are a number of general strategies that make listening easier:

- Ask communication partners to speak in adequate lighting and to face the listener.
- Ask partners to speak clearly and naturally but not to shout or exaggerate articulatory movements.
- If someone is speaking far away, move closer.
- If one side of your hearing is better than the other, keep your good ear facing the speaker.
- Arrive early to meetings so you can sit closer to the speaker.

In summary, many different communication strategies have been discussed here and you may feel comfortable using some, but not others. Feel free to experiment with the strategies discussed here

and any others that you find helpful for your situation. Regardless of which strategies you use however, the following points are important to remember:

- Be honest and upfront about your hearing difficulties.
- Be assertive, but not aggressive, when asking for help from your communication partner.
- Focus on how you can keep the communication flowing.

*Adapted from Kaplan, Bally, & Garretson (1995)*

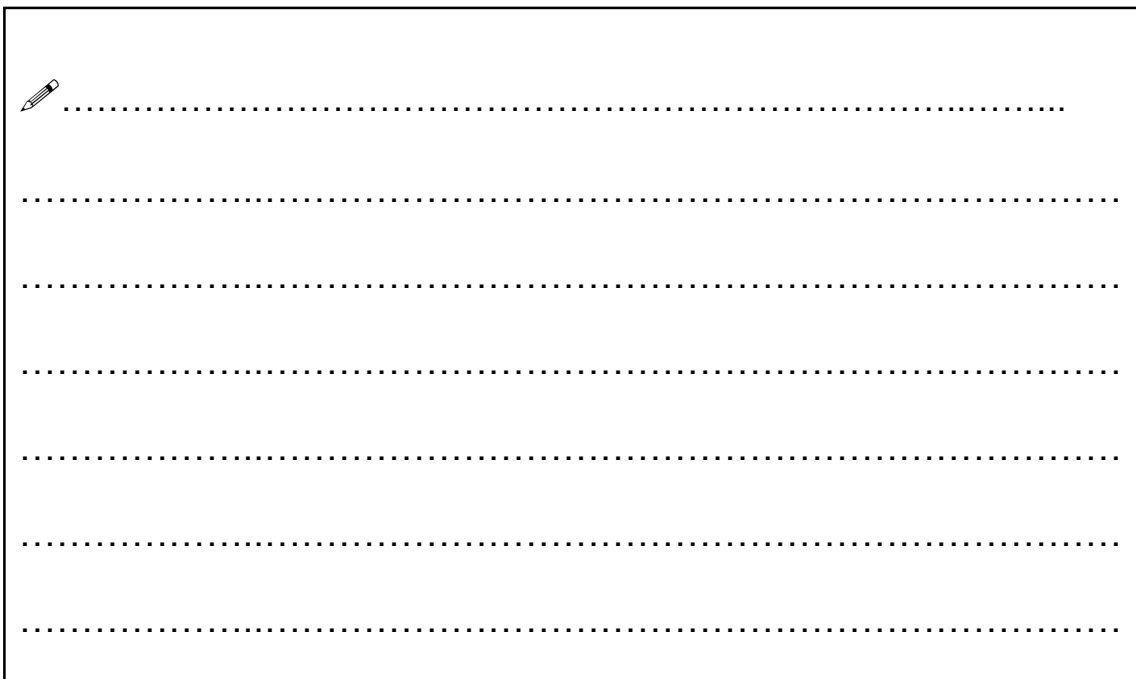
The last section provided a lot of information. Think of one piece of advice you just read that you could use. Give an example of a situation where you could use that piece of advice.




**You have now finished Activity 5 of Module 4.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

**Activity 6. Your situation**

Now it is time for you to think about your own situation and times when you have difficulty hearing. What can you do in the situations with difficult speakers of your everyday life? In the box below, you can either draw a situation with difficult speakers which regularly presents you with communication difficulties or you can describe the situation by using words.



Now work through the problem-solving method by answering the following questions. What is the communication activity?




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What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?

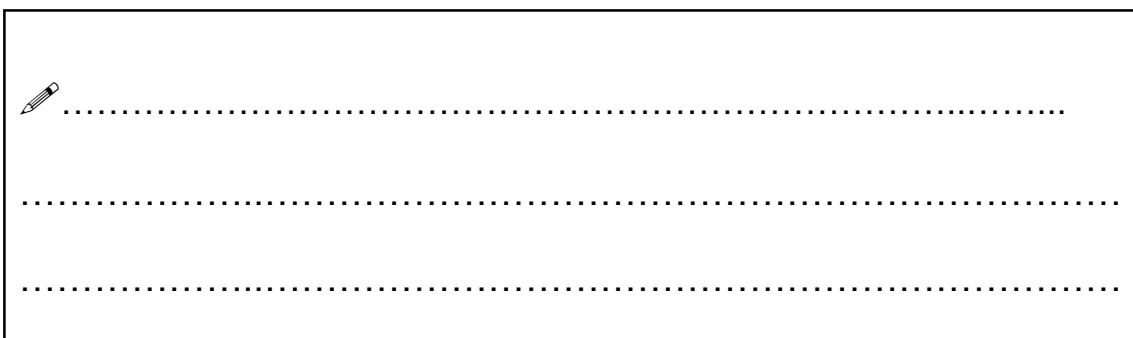


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Solutions derived from the problem-solving method will certainly improve your communication. However communication breakdowns will likely still occur once in a while. Consider repair strategies for the situation you discussed.




This module focused on communication with difficult speakers. It should have helped you identify sources of problems and find solutions to these problems. You should also be more familiar with some of the strategies you and your communication partners can use. Until the next module, pay attention to situations with difficult speakers. Assess what is causing the problem. Think of strategies that could help and make sure you try out some of the strategies.

**You have now finished Activity 6 of Module 4.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒


### ***Activity 7. Feedback on Module 4***

Please answer these 2 questions to help us improve I-ACE. Thank you for your help.

What did you like about the module?



How could the module be improved?



**You have now finished Activity 7 of Module 4.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒




## You have now finished Module 4.

The facilitator will contact you on:

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This will be an opportunity for you to ask questions or share comments. You can use the box below to write down any ideas that you would like to discuss with the facilitator.



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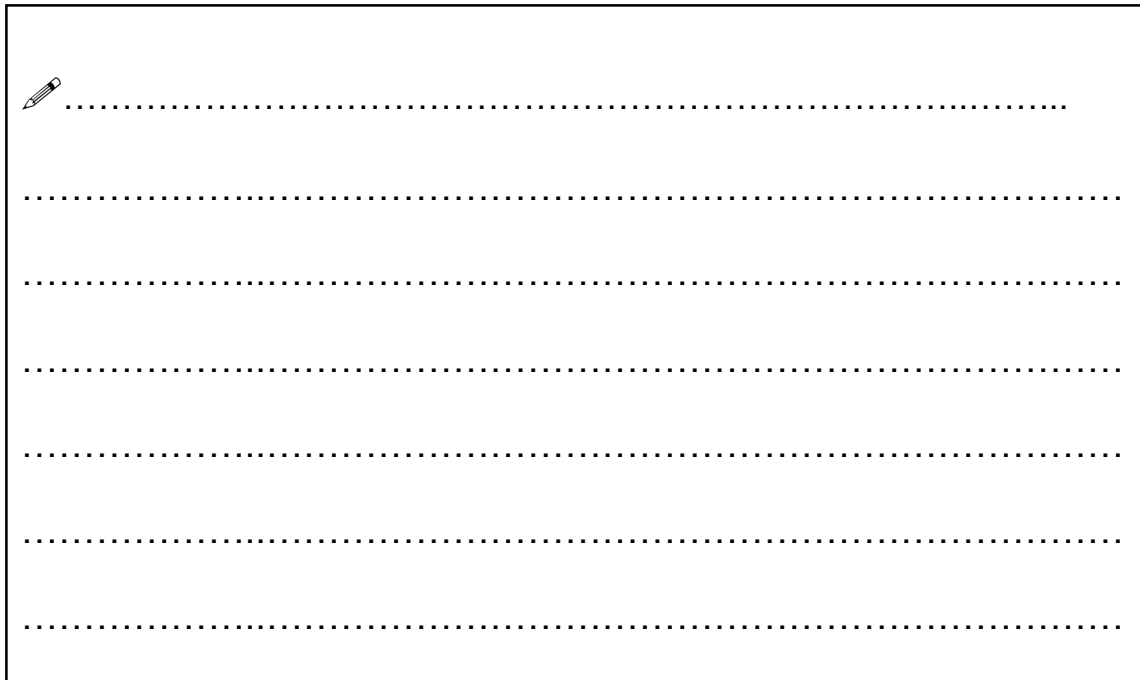
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You can use the following box to write down a summary of what was discussed with the facilitator.



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The facilitator will then post the next I-ACE module to you.

# **MODULE 5**

## **TELEVISION, RADIO, AND TELEPHONE**



## MODULE 5 – TELEVISION, RADIO, AND TELEPHONE

The objectives of this module are:


- To work through the problem-solving method when the problem is television, radio, and telephone.
- To learn about hearing assistance technology and know where to access it.
- To work through the problem-solving method with a situation unique to you.

The activities of this module are:

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Activity 1. Thinking back.....	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 2. Examples with television, radio, and telephone .....	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 3. Hearing assistance technologies.....	14 <input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 4. Hearing assistance technologies resources .....	18 <input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 5. Working around the telephone .....	21 <input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 6. Your situation .....	24 <input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 7. Feedback on Module 5.....	29 <input type="checkbox"/>

**Activity 1. Thinking back...**

Think about the last few days. Have you been in situations where you had trouble hearing? What were they?




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What have you done about it?




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What strategies worked?




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What strategies did not work?




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If faced with the same situation again, what else could you do?

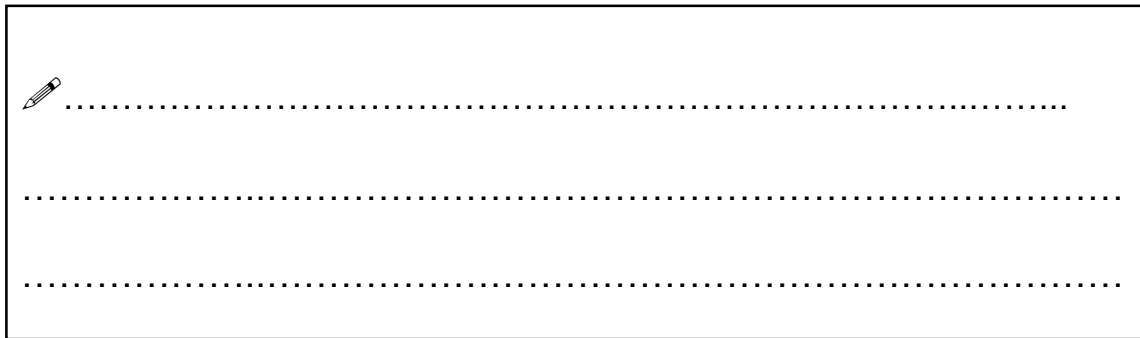


**You have now finished Activity 1 of Module 5.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒



***Activity 2. Examples with television, radio, and telephone***

List other sounds, apart from the voices of people near you, that present you with difficulties at times.




Below are some examples that people have mentioned before:

- Television
- Radio
- Telephone ringing
- Person talking on the phone

If these examples apply to you or make you think of other difficulties you face, please add these to the box above.

Now think of ways to improve your hearing of the sounds you listed. What can you or your communication partner do?



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Read the following situations.

Situation 1. You are sitting watching TV with another person and they make comments about the program. You cannot hear the comments they make and when they speak you do not hear what is said on the TV.

What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?




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Situation 2. You are sitting in the lounge room watching TV and another person is in the kitchen preparing dinner and talking on the phone. Because of the amount of noise coming from the kitchen you cannot hear what is being said on the TV.

What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?




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Situation 3. You answer the phone and you hear the other person talking on the other end of the phone. You missed their name when they introduced themselves and now they are talking but you do not know what they are saying.

What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?




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Situation 4. You enjoy going to the theatre but you have noticed that you are beginning to have difficulty understanding what is being said on stage.

What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?



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**You have now finished Activity 2 of Module 5.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

### ***Activity 3. Hearing assistance technologies***

The following section was written by Cynthia Compton, a researcher from America who specialises in hearing assistance technologies (HATs). HATs are pieces of equipment designed to help people who are hard-of-hearing. HATs can be classified into three categories:

1. Systems to assist with face-to face communication and with the reception of broadcast media (for example, the television and the radio)
2. Systems to assist with the telephone
3. Systems to assist with the awareness and identification of environmental sounds and situations

#### **1. Systems to assist with face-to-face communication and the reception of broadcast media (for example, the television and the radio)**

Poor listening environments are annoying to most of us, but the effect they have on hard-of-hearing people is much more severe. Hearing aids amplify not only desired sounds but also noise. In

contrast, HATs are designed to reduce the effects of distance, background noise, and reverberation.

HATs pick up the desired sound and send it directly to the listener's ear minus the negative effects of distance, background noise, or poor room acoustics. There are a number of different types of systems. Which system is best depends on the situation in which it is to be used as well as many other factors such as personal preference, costs, maintenance and security requirements, interference and available technical expertise and service. There are 2 types: hardwire systems and wireless systems.

### 1.1 Hardwire systems

Hardwire systems mean that there is a lead between the listener and the sound source. The sound source – for example, a person talking, the television, a radio - may be picked up via a microphone. For electronic sound sources, an electrical plug/jack connection can also be used. The signal is then delivered to the listener's ears via earphones or to a personal hearing aid. Separation from the sound source is limited by the length of the cord.

## 1.2 Wireless systems

Wireless systems consist of a transmitter that sends some type of radio signal to a receiver, avoiding the need for a cord between the sound source and the listener. Although more expensive than hardwired systems, wireless systems are great when mobility and versatility are required. Wireless systems can also be used successfully at home, in the car, in the office, at service counters and in other situations involving small-group, on-to-one, or listening-alone situations (for example, TV, radio).

## **2. Systems to assist with the telephone**

The voice of the person at the other end can be made louder and easier to hear for the hard-of-hearing person. This can be done through a special telephone with a built-in volume control or through an attachment to a standard phone.

The telephone signal can also be turned into a visual signal if necessary. For example, messages can be sent and received as written text using a telephone typewriter.

### **3. Systems to assist with the awareness and identification of environmental sounds and situations**

Many auditory signals can be amplified or transformed into visual or tactile signals for hard-of-hearing people. Common signals that can be modified are the telephone ring, the doorbell ring, the fire alarm, the wake-up alarm, and a baby's cry. For example, if you cannot hear the telephone ring, the system can make a light flash instead to let you know the phone is ringing. If you cannot hear the alarm clock, the system can make your pillow vibrate to wake you up.

*Adapted from Compton (1993)*

**You have now finished Activity 3 of Module 5.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

### ***Activity 4. Hearing assistance technologies resources***

Hearing assistance technologies (HATs) may help you with listening for other signals such as the television, the radio, and the telephone. Where can you obtain information about hearing assistance technologies?

- From an Audiologist
- From the Australian Communication Exchange, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to empowering those who are Deaf or have hearing, speech, or communication impairment, to obtain access to the telephone and other telecommunication networks. You can call them on 1800 555 630 or write to Brisbane Head Office PO Box 473, Stones Corner, QLD 4120. Web address: <http://www.aceinfo.net.au>  
Email: [feedback@aceinfo.net.au](mailto:feedback@aceinfo.net.au)
- From Better Hearing Australia (BHA), a self-help organisation for people with hearing difficulties, their families, parents and friends. They provide information, advice and

hands-on experience on a range of hearing assistance technologies. BHA also offer a range of educational courses on hearing impairment management, lipreading and signed English. You can call the Brisbane branch on (07) 3844 5065  
Website: <http://www.betterhearingaustralia.org.au>

Email of the Brisbane Branch: [info@bhabrisbane.org.au](mailto:info@bhabrisbane.org.au)

- From Telstra's Disability Services, which offers Telstra's Disability Equipment Program and other products and services for people with a disability. You can call them on 1800 068 424.

Website: <https://www.telstra.com.au/aboutus/community-environment/community-programs/disability/disability-equipment-program>

They can send you out the form necessary for a special telephone.

- For the Centre for Inclusive Design (formerly Media Access Australia). Contact to find out information on captioning services for cinemas, theatre, television, and DVDs. You can call them on (02) 9212 6242 or write to them: Suite 47, 104 Bathurst Street Sydney, NSW 2000. Website: <http://www.mediaaccess.org.au> Email: [info@cfid.org.au](mailto:info@cfid.org.au)

**You have now finished Activity 4 of Module 5.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒



### ***Activity 5. Working around the telephone***

The following section was written by Bunty Levene and Val Tait, hearing therapists from the UK.

#### **The telephone**

Nearly everyone knows that the telephone was invented by Alexander Graham Bell. What some people do not know is that both Bell's mother and his wife were hard-of-hearing. Although Bell invented the telephone, he really wanted to find some device that would make life easier for hard-of-hearing people. Ironically, he invented something that caused them more communication problems – not fewer!

The most important thing to remember about the telephone is that it is usually not necessary to use it. The telephone is a useful way to communicate, but it is not the only way. If possible you could use:

- Fax
- Email
- Letter
- Text messaging using a mobile phone

Here are some suggestions for when you use the telephone.

- Make sure you have a telephone model that suits your hearing.
- Ask people you know to always say their name before starting a telephone conversation. Knowing who is at the other end straight away will make it easier.
- Use your better ear. Even a slight difference in hearing can make a great improvement on the telephone.
- Repeat back any important information (for example, times, dates, places, names, and figures) to check that you have heard correctly.
- Ask people to spell words that are difficult to hear. You can also ask people to spell words using the “A for Alpha” method. You can use the phonetic alphabet with for example “Our head office is on Vista Street, and that’s V for Victor, I for India, S for Sierra, T for Tango, and A for Alpha.”

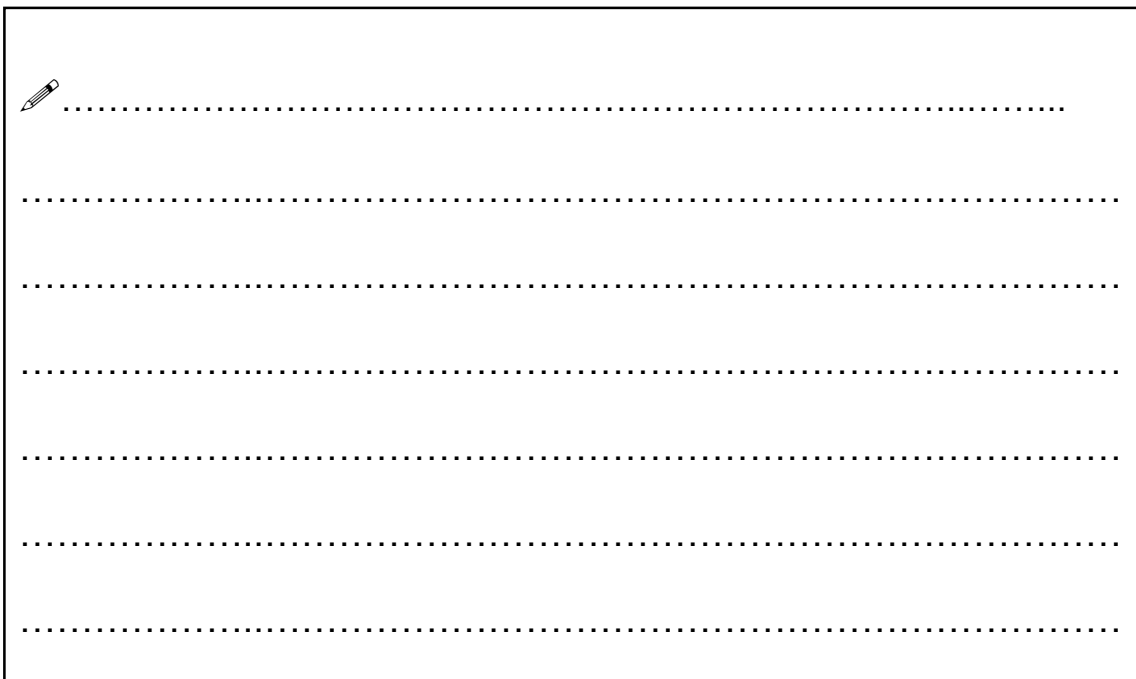
- Ask people to put things in writing. This is always a sensible option especially when transacting business, whether you are hard-of-hearing or not. For example, you could say: “I would be happy to consider your new offer for my car insurance, but could you please put all the details in a letter? I would like to have everything on file.”

*Adapted from Levene & Tait (2005)*


**You have now finished Activity 5 of Module 5.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

**Activity 6. Your situation**

Now it is time for you to think about your own situation and times when you have difficulty hearing other signals. What can you do in your everyday life? In the box below, you can either draw a noisy situation which regularly presents you with communication difficulties or you can describe the situation by using words.



Now work through the problem-solving method by answering the following questions. What is the communication activity?




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What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?

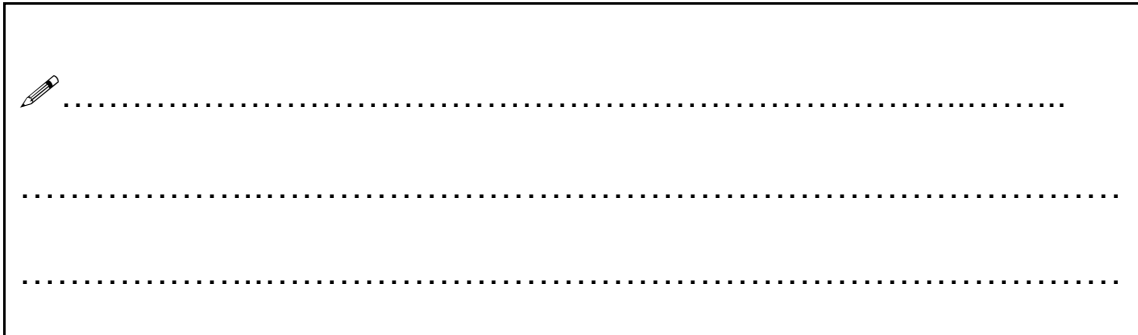


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Solutions derived from the problem-solving method will certainly improve your communication. However communication breakdowns will likely still occur once in a while. Consider repair strategies for the situation you discussed.



This module focused on other signals such as the television, the radio, and the telephone. It should have helped you identify sources of problems and find solutions to these problems. You should also be more familiar with some of the strategies you and your communication partners can use. Until the next module, pay attention to situations with other signals such as the television, the radio, and the telephone. Assess what is causing the problem. Think of strategies that could help and make sure you try out some of the strategies.


**You have now finished Activity 6 of Module 5.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒




### ***Activity 7. Feedback on Module 5***

Please answer these 2 questions to help us improve I-ACE. Thank you for your help.

What did you like about the module?



How could the module be improved?




**You have now finished Activity 7 of Module 5.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

## You have now finished Module 5.

The facilitator will contact you on:

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This will be an opportunity for you to ask questions or share comments. You can use the box below to write down any ideas that you would like to discuss with the facilitator.



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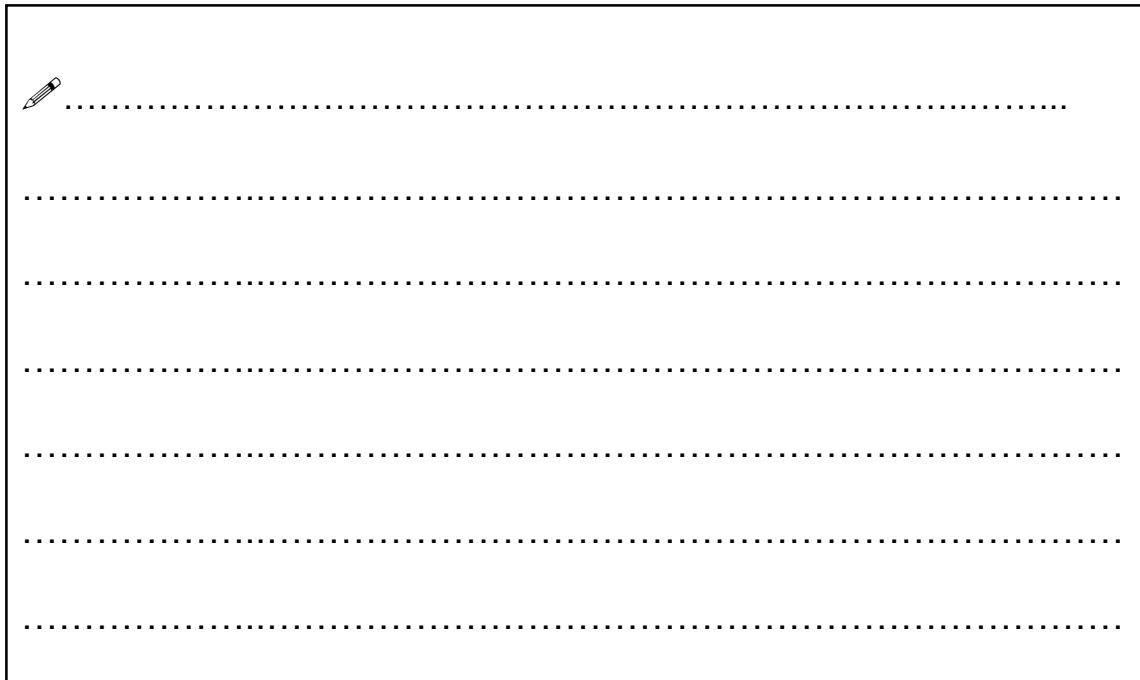
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You can use the following box to write down a summary of what was discussed with the facilitator.



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The facilitator will then post the next I-ACE module to you.



## **MODULE 6**

# **MEETINGS AND OTHER GROUP FUNCTIONS**



## MODULE 6 – MEETINGS AND OTHER GROUP FUNCTIONS

The objectives of this module are:

- To work through the problem-solving method when the difficulty is meetings and other group functions.
- To identify and practise strategies for meetings and other group functions.
- To work through the problem-solving method with a situation unique to you.


The activities of this module are:

☑ Tick  
when  
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Activity 1. Thinking back.....	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 2. Example of meetings and other group functions....	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 3. Internal and external control for concentration.....	7	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 4. Lipreading and speechreading .....	11	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 5. Speechreading exercise.....	19	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 6. Your situation .....	27	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity 7. Feedback on Module 6.....	31	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Activity 1. Thinking back...**

Think about the last few days. Have you been in situations where you had trouble hearing? What were they?




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What have you done about it?



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What strategies worked?




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What strategies did not work?




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If faced with the same situation again, what else could you do?



**You have now finished Activity 1 of Module 6.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

***Activity 2. Example of meetings and other group functions***

What difficulties have you experienced in meetings and other group functions?




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What difficulties have you experienced in meetings and other group functions where a microphone and speakers are used?



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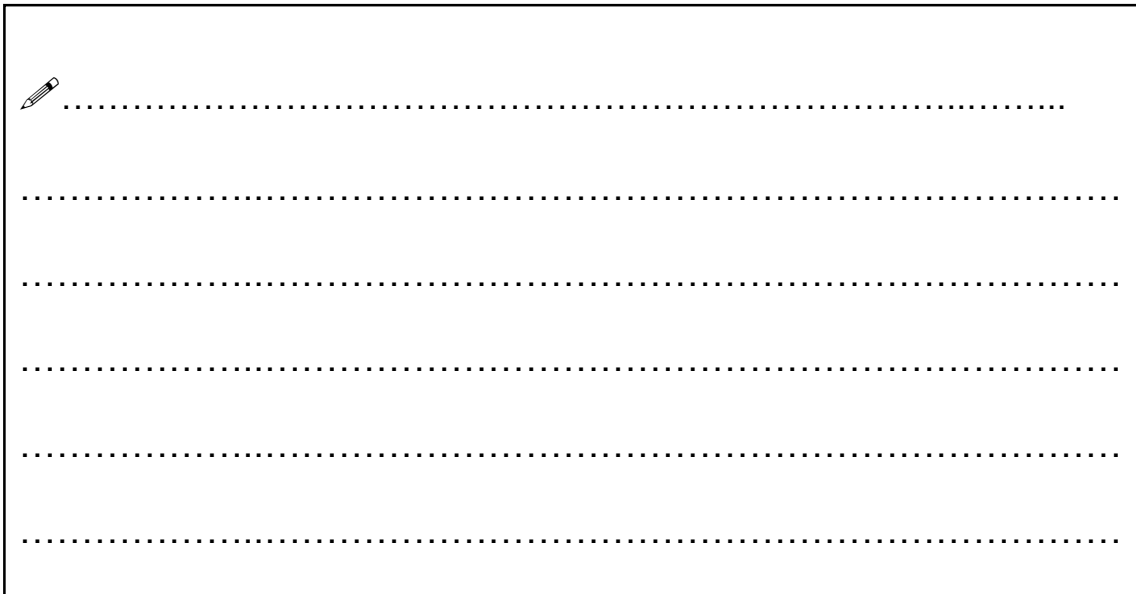
Whether a microphone and speakers are used can make a big difference. Other factors such as the size and type of room, your

position in the room, and the number of people attending are important. Sometimes you can also move closer to where the sound is coming from (the person talking or the speakers if a microphone is used). Sometimes you can move close enough to the person speaking so that you can lipread. If you are sitting at the front, you are also less likely to be bothered by other noises. An example of that would be at a town hall meeting, where sitting at the front usually facilitates understanding. Concentration usually also plays a big part in hearing what is said in meetings and other group functions.

**You have now finished Activity 2 of Module 6.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

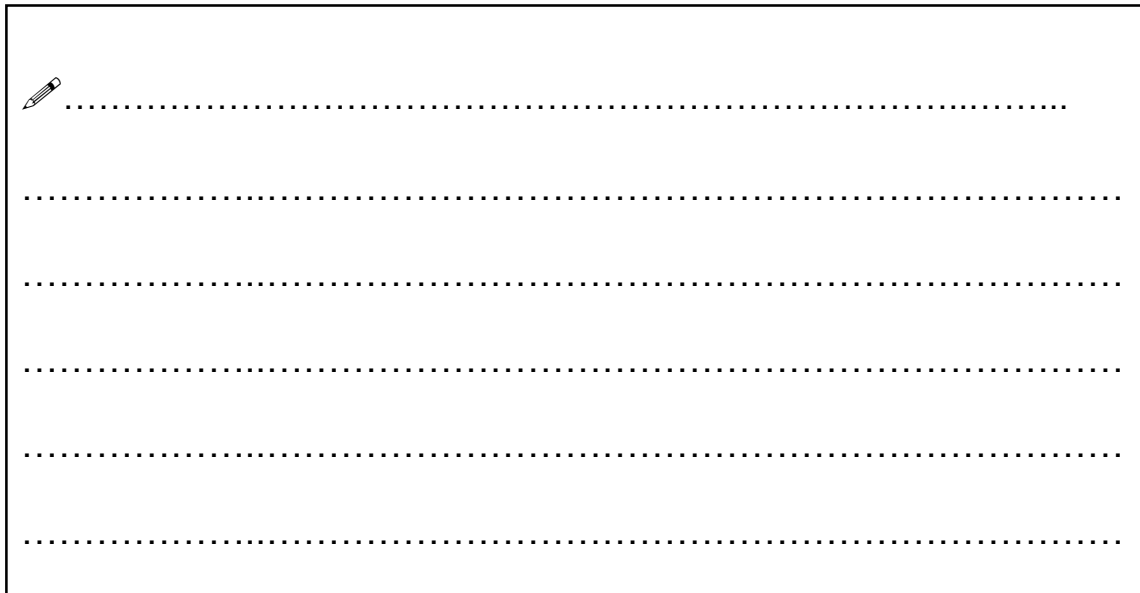
***Activity 3. Internal and external control for concentration***

According to you, what is the difference between hearing and understanding?

A rectangular box containing a small pencil icon at the top left and six horizontal dotted lines for writing.

Take the example of while you sleep. You can usually hear things while sleeping, for example you might hear the rain on the roof. But you need to be awake to understand, for example to make sense of a person talking to you. Concentration is required for understanding.

When is it important for you to concentrate to make sure you understand what is being said? How can you concentrate when you have to?




There are 2 ways to make sure you concentrate when you have to:

- Internal control: You can think about when you have to concentrate and plan for it. For example, if you know you are going to an important meeting in the evening, you can relax during the day to make sure you will be able to concentrate during the meeting in the evening.
- External control: You can ask someone to help you remember when you have to concentrate. For example, if you are at a fundraising event and the announcer says that

the draw of the winning ticket number will happen shortly, a person with you could remind you that this is when you need to concentrate to make sure you do not miss the number.

Some people prefer internal control, some people prefer external control, and some people prefer a mixture of both. What about you? Describe a situation of your daily life where you could use internal control in a meeting or other group function.




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Describe a situation of your daily life where you could use external control in a meeting or other group function.



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**You have now finished Activity 3 of Module 6.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒



### ***Activity 4. Lipreading and speechreading***

The following section was written by Harriet Kaplan, Scott Bally, & Carol Garretson, American researchers. It is part of a book devoted to lipreading.

Most people are aware of the word “lipreading”, but scientists use the word “speechreading” as one can understand speech by observing movements of the lips, but also:

- Tongue and jaw
- Gestures and body language
- Facial expressions
- Clues from the situation
- Knowledge about the language.

Speechreading is “the ability to understand a speaker’s thoughts by watching the movements of the face and body and by using information provided by the situation and the language.”

## **Components of speechreading**

### 1. Movements of the lips, tongue, and jaw

Words are made out of sounds. One's lips, tongue, and jaw move to make the different sounds. For example, pay attention to how your mouth moves differently when you say the word "fall" and when you say the word "ball".

### 2. Gestures and body language

Gestures include not only movements of the hands and arms, but also movements of the head or other body parts. Most gestures are used to complement words (for example, hand movements to emphasise a point). Some other examples of the way gestures can replace words include:

- A nod of the head can mean "yes" or "I agree"
- A beckoning movement of the hands or fingers can mean "come here"

Body language is another form of gesture, referring to how people sit, stand, or move. One can sometimes identify a person's mood by their body position or movement. For example, a tired, unhappy, or bored person may slump their shoulders, a sad person may

lower their head, or a happy person may hold their head high and stand upright.

### 3. Facial expressions

Facial expressions are a normal part of communication and help when you are trying to speechread. For example, a person with a smiling face indicates happiness, a person with raised eyebrows may indicate questioning, and a person with a puzzled facial expression may indicate a lack of understanding.

### 4. Clues from the situation

Things to watch for when speechreading include the place and the people conversing. This can help you predict the type of language being used and even the topic of conversation. For example, conversations occurring in a bank, a restaurant, a classroom and a doctor's office vary greatly.

### 5. Linguistic factors

There are many clues to understanding language based on the structure of the language. For example, consider the sentence "It was nice meeting you". You may understand the sentence based on the way it looked on the lips, the way it sounded, or its context.

This illustrates the redundancy of language. Language redundancy enables you to understand even when you miss parts of the words.

Some rules to remember when speechreading are:

- There are 38 sounds in the English language. English words can only contain these sounds.
- Sounds can only have certain combinations. For example, the sounds p and r can be combined (for example, in pretty), but other combinations such as s and r or g and t are not possible.
- Prefixes and suffixes (beginnings and ends of words) can be combined with words only in certain ways.
- Words can be combined into sentences only in certain ways. For example, in the English language, the subject often comes first, followed by the verb, and then the object. For example, “He is going to the store” is possible but “Going is to the store he” is not.
- The way people say words affects the meaning. People often emphasise certain words and vary their inflection. Pauses can change a sentence’s meaning and an inflection at the end of a sentence can indicate a question.

## **Relationship between speechreading and hearing**

Everyone, including those with normal hearing, relies on speechreading at certain times. For example, we all watch the person talking closely when in a noisy environment. Most hard-of-hearing people communicate best with a combination of speechreading and hearing.

## **What makes a good speechreader?**

Although most people can improve their speechreading skills through learning, some people are naturally good speechreaders. These people are usually good at taking the limited information from the lips, tongue, and jaw and fill in the gaps using other information to understand. They can also be good at identifying each sound before making up the words and then the sentences.

Other factors which influence a person's speechreading skills include:

- The amount of training. Most people believe that the more training a person receives, the more their speechreading skills will improve. Constant practice is important to maintain skills.

- Language comprehension. A good understanding of the language is essential to good speechreading because so much of speechreading involves the use of context.
- Emotional factors. Successful speechreaders are often highly motivated and are self-confident.
- Visual skills. Good speechreaders must be visually alert and attentive to their communication partners for long periods of time.

Contrary to popular belief, the length of time a person has had a hearing loss does not influence their speechreading skills. That is, a person who has had a hearing loss for a long time is not necessarily a better speechreader than a person with a recent hearing loss. Similarly, the degree of hearing loss does not influence a person's speechreading skills.

In short, speechreading involves not only observation of the lips but also some interpretation of the thoughts of the person talking. Speechreading is an important addition to hearing, although it is not a substitute for it. Many of the sounds in the English language which are difficult to hear are relatively easy to see and sounds which are difficult to see are relatively easy to hear. Therefore,



**You have now finished Activity 4 of Module 6.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒



### ***Activity 5. Speechreading exercise***

For this exercise, you will need someone to help you. You will give your helper a list of 20 sentences. The list of sentences is on the next page, so do not look at the next page, just hand them over to your helper.

For each sentence, you will write down the last word you hear. You do not need to write the whole sentence, just the last word. For example, if the sentence is “The boy was stung by a wasp”, you would write down “wasp”. This word is easy to guess because the rest of the sentence gives you clues. However, sometimes it is difficult to guess the word. For example, if the sentence is “The girl will consider the hill”, you would write down “hill”. This word is not as easy to guess. If you are not sure of a word please make a guess.

## **Speechreading exercise**

Please read the first 10 sentences without showing your face to the person. To do so, stand behind the person so that he or she cannot see your face. Read the first 10 sentences, one at the time. Give enough time between each sentence for the person to write the last word of each sentence. If the person asks you to, please repeat the sentence.

Sentence 1. THE WATCHDOG GAVE A WARNING GROWL.

Sentence 2. SHE MADE THE BED WITH CLEAN SHEETS.

Sentence 3. THE OLD MAN DISCUSSED THE DIVE.

Sentence 4. BOB HEARD PAUL CALLED ABOUT THE STRIPS.

Sentence 5. I SHOULD HAVE CONSIDERED THE MAP.

Sentence 6. THE OLD TRAIN WAS POWERED BY STEAM.

Sentence 7. HE CAUGHT THE FISH IN HIS NET.

Sentence 8. MISS BROWN SHOULDN'T DISCUSS THE SAND.

Sentence 9. CLOSE THE WINDOW TO STOP THE DRAUGHT.

Sentence 10. MY TV HAS A TWELVE-INCH SCREEN.

Now stand in front of the person and read the next 10 sentences so that the person can see your face as well as hear the sentences. Try to read the sentence in your head and then repeat it to the person while looking at him or her. Encourage the person to look at you while you say the sentence. Give enough time between each sentence for the person to write the last word of each sentence. If the person asks you to, please repeat the sentence.

Sentence 11. THEY MIGHT HAVE CONSIDERED THE HIVE.

Sentence 12. DAVID HAS DISCUSSED THE DENT.

Sentence 13. THE SANDLE HAS A BROKEN STRAP.

Sentence 14. THE BOAT SAILED ALONG THE COAST.

Sentence 15. CROCODILES LIVE IN MUDDY SWAMPS.

Sentence 16. HE CAN'T CONSIDER THE CRIB.











Sentence 17. THE FARMER HARVESTED HIS CROP.

Sentence 18. ALL THE FLOWERS WERE IN BLOOM.











Sentence 19. I AM THINKING ABOUT THE KNIFE.

Sentence 20. DAVID DOES NOT DISCUSS THE HUG.

For the first 10 sentences, have your helper read them to you while standing behind you so you cannot see your helper's face. Write down the last word of each sentence.

Sentence 1, last word:  .....	Sentence 2, last word:  .....
Sentence 3, last word:  .....	Sentence 4, last word:  .....
Sentence 5, last word:  .....	Sentence 6, last word:  .....
Sentence 7, last word:  .....	Sentence 8, last word:  .....
Sentence 9, last word:  .....	Sentence 10, last word:  .....

For the last 10 sentences, have your helper read them to you while standing in front of you so you can see your helper's face. Again, write down the last word of each sentence.

Sentence 11, last word:  .....	Sentence 12, last word:  .....
Sentence 13, last word:  .....	Sentence 14, last word:  .....
Sentence 15, last word:  .....	Sentence 16, last word:  .....
Sentence 17, last word:  .....	Sentence 18, last word:  .....
Sentence 19, last word:  .....	Sentence 20, last word:  .....

Compare your results with the sentence sheet. How did you go with the first 10 sentences? Write how many last words you identified correctly in the box below. This is your score out of 10.

Score for sentences 1-10:

 ..... / 10

How did you go with the last 10 sentences? Write how many last words you identified correctly in the box below. This is your score out of 10.

Score for sentences 11-20:

 ..... / 10

Almost everyone obtain a higher score when they can see the person's face. In other words, most people obtain a higher score for the sentences 11-20 than for the sentences 1-10. When you could not see the person's face, what sort of sounds did you miss? It is common to miss sounds like "sss", "fff", and "ththth", like in the difference between "sin", "fin", and "thin". However if you look at a person saying these words, the person's mouth shape is different

from one word to the other. If you want, you can try repeating the words “sin”, “fin”, and “thin” in front of a mirror. Do you notice how your mouth, lips, and tongue actually look different for each of these words?

People who use speechreading simply use these differences to complement their hearing. Speechreading is something we all do. Even people with normal hearing look at people when they mishear words, for example when in a noisy pub. Try to remember to look at the person talking to you. You will be surprised at the difference it can make.

You can practice speechreading by looking at a television program with the volume very low or with the volume off (“mute”). It is best to try that during the news, when you know you can clearly see the face of the announcer. You can also enrol in specific speechreading classes. Better Hearing Australia is one of the non- for-profit organisations running speechreading classes.

You probably also noticed that the sentences that made sense were easier. Knowing the topic of conversation is very important, as it allows you to use the context to fill in any missing gaps. Think

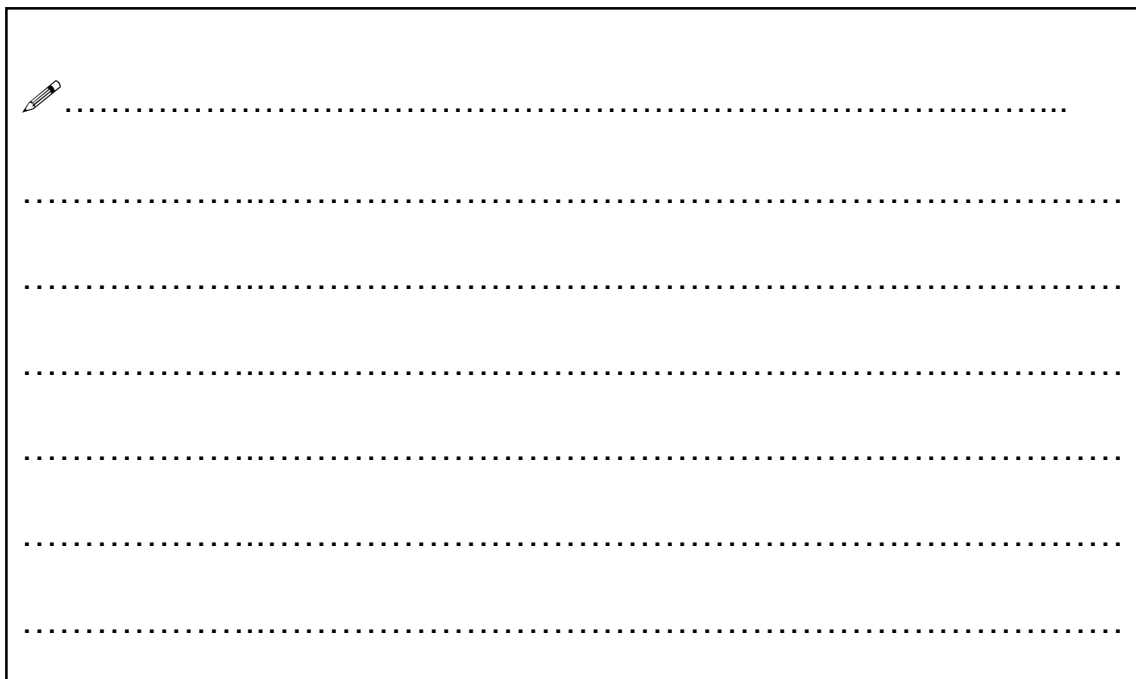
again of the example of the similar words “sin”, “fin”, and “thin”. If someone is talking to you about a shark and says “You should have seen its fin!”, even if you mishear the last word of the sentence, you can use the context to figure out that the person is indeed talking about the shark’s fin. Saying “You should have seen its sin!” or “You should have seen its thin!” when talking about a shark just does not make sense.

**You have now finished Activity 5 of Module 6.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒



**Activity 6. Your situation**


You have just learnt how you can improve your hearing in meetings and other group functions. Now it is time for you to think about your own situation and times when you have difficulty hearing. What can you do in the meetings and other group functions of your everyday life? In the box below, you can either draw a meeting situation which regularly presents you with communication difficulties or you can describe the situation by using words.



A large rectangular box for drawing or writing. It contains a small pencil icon at the top left and several horizontal dotted lines for writing.

Now work through the problem-solving method by answering the following questions.

What is the communication activity? Please describe in terms of who is involved, when it happens, where it happens and why it is a difficult situation for you.




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What are the sources of difficulty in the activity?




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What are some possible solutions?




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What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?




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How can you test the solutions?

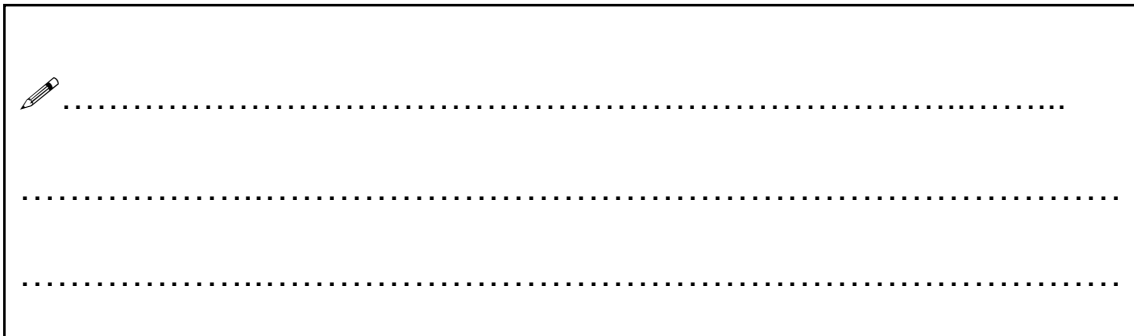


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Solutions derived from the problem-solving method will certainly improve your communication. However communication breakdowns will likely still occur once in a while. Consider other strategies for the situation you discussed.




This module focused on meetings and other group functions. It should have helped you identify sources of problems and find solutions to these problems. You should also be more familiar with some of the strategies you and your communication partners can use. Until the next module, pay attention to situations with meetings and other group functions. Assess what is causing the problem. Think of strategies that could help and make sure you try out some of the strategies.

**You have now finished Activity 6 of Module 6.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒


### ***Activity 7. Feedback on Module 6***

Please answer these 2 questions to help us improve I-ACE. Thank you for your help.

What did you like about the module?



How could the module be improved?




**You have now finished Activity 7 of Module 6.** Please go back to page 1 of this module and tick the box next to the activity. ☒

**You have now finished Module 6.**

The facilitator will contact you on:

Day of the week	Date	Time of the day	Tick when done <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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This will be an opportunity for you to ask questions or share comments. You can use the box below to write down any ideas that you would like to discuss with the facilitator.

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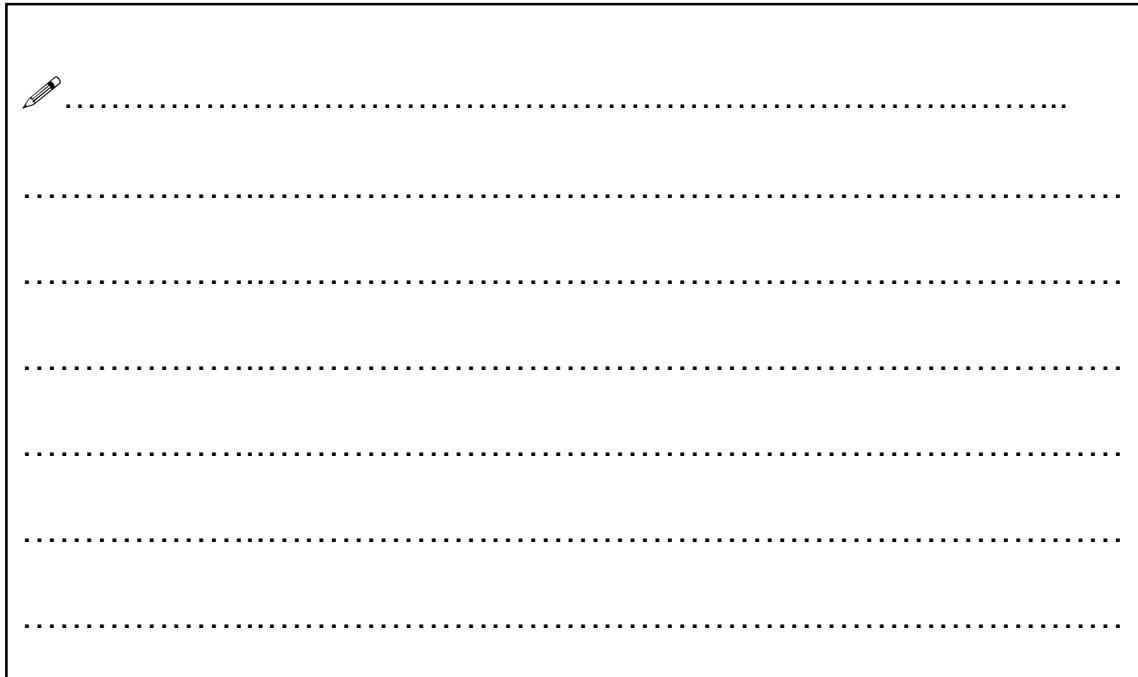
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You can use the following box to write down a summary of what was discussed with the facilitator.



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The facilitator will then post the next I-ACE module to you.

## **I-ACE FINAL WORDS OF ADVICE**

Over the past 5 modules you have learnt strategies to reduce your hearing difficulties in everyday life. In the future, when you come across a situation in which you have trouble hearing, think about the problem-solving method.

### **REMEMBER TO ASK YOURSELF ...**

- What is the communication situation?
- What are the sources of difficulty?
- What are some possible solutions? You might want to look back at your I-ACE folder for that.
- What information and practical skills are necessary to apply the solutions?
- How can you test the solutions?


Now go ahead and try out your solutions and do not give up! If something does not work for you, try something else.





## ***FINAL FEEDBACK ON I-ACE***

What did you like about I-ACE?



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How could I-ACE be improved?



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What actions have you taken as a result of completing I-ACE?



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Do you have any further comments?



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