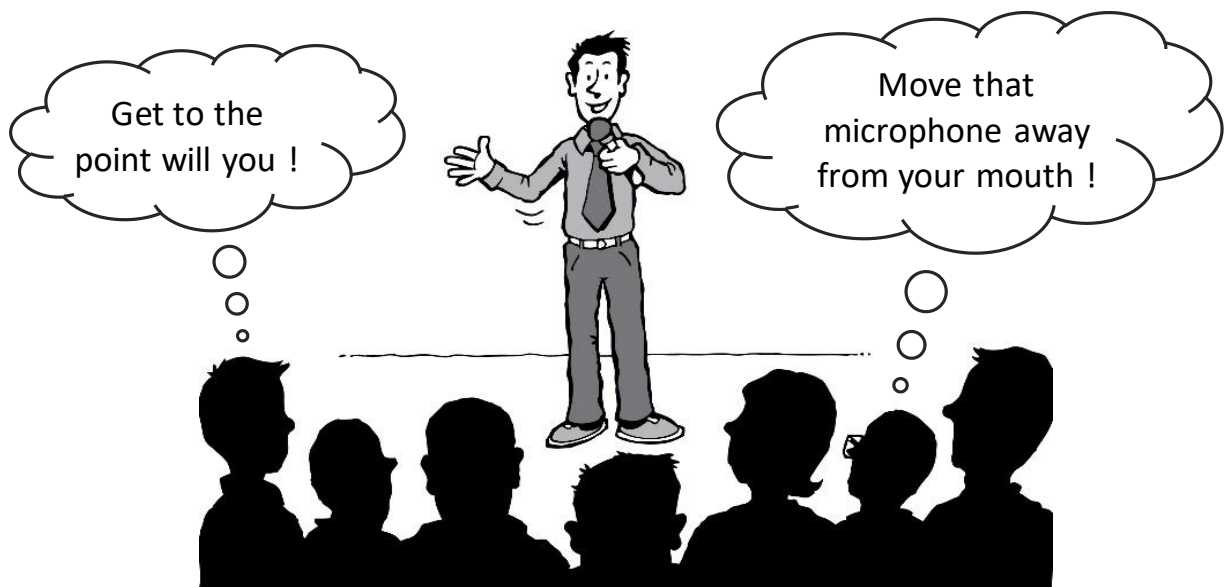


## *Helping people who are trying to lipread you*



When communicating with someone who is hard of hearing or profoundly deaf, there are many helpful things that you can do to make it easier and less tiring for them to lipread what you are saying. Words and letters can look alike, for example 'pose' and 'post', so they can easily go off on the wrong track. In fact, only around 40% of speech is lipreadable.

- Make sure, where possible, that the light is coming from behind the person who is trying to lipread you. They will strain to lipread you if the light is coming from behind you.
- Minimise background noise which can distort what they can hear.
- In a group, make sure that only one person is speaking at a time.
- Attract their attention before you start to speak.
- Start off by telling them the subject of the conversation. Don't ramble!
- Make sure they can see your face clearly. Don't look down or away as you speak, and don't rest your chin or cover your mouth in any way.
- Use everyday language rather than professional, technical or specialised terms.
- Break up complex messages into shorter sentences.
- Use whole sentences rather than single words in isolation.
- Speak with a normal rhythm, but slow down a little and speak up slightly.
- Speak clearly. Don't exaggerate, shout, laugh or mumble when you speak. Don't talk with food in your mouth. All of these will distort your lip patterns.
- Use natural body language. It's harder to read someone who has a 'poker' face. If possible, don't wear sunglasses.
- If they don't understand you, try repeating or rephrasing what you are saying, and if necessary write it down for them.