

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES CHECKLIST

○ **Universal Communication Strategies for all listeners**

- Maintain eye contact
- Seek out listening situations where the noise is minimal
- Anticipate the topics of conversation before you arrive at the event or gathering
- Maintain a distance between yourself and the talker(s) of about 6 feet
- Keep the talkers of interest in front of you whenever possible
- Keep the primary source of noise behind you whenever possible
- Ask about assistive listening devices (loops) in areas of public listening
- If you wear hearing aids, be sure they are properly working and in your ears!
- Watch for your weekly “cut to the chase” communication tip in your e-mail box.

○ If you **under-estimate** your hearing ability, you might be at-risk for becoming overly dependent on others when trying to communicate, especially in challenging (noisy) listening situations. Over time, this may lead to withdrawing from the conversation or even fear of certain places where listening may be difficult. Try doing the following to improve your communication ability:

- Build your self-confidence in your communication by completing Tracking exercises at home with a partner (5-10 minutes per day, 3-5 days per week - see your personal coach for details)
- Don't be afraid to guess at what others say (people with normal hearing also guess in noisy places more than you may think)
- Relax – it's ok to miss some words or ask others to repeat
- Relaxation exercises (see your personal coach for details)

○ If you **over-estimate** your hearing ability, you are at-risk for appearing as though you are faking it (hearing better than you really are). This behavior may be perceived by others as unintelligent or even arrogant. Try doing the following to improve your communication ability:

- Build your assertiveness skills by completing Clear Speech exercises at home (see your personal coach for details)
- Use “I” statements: “I can (hear, understand, lipread) you better if....”
- Ask for clarification