

THE GOOD MEETING

A good reception is often crucial for a person with deafblindness – and it is possible to do it in the right way, as long as you know what the right way is. Please feel free to use our simple advice!

1 Allow plenty of time for the meeting. With impaired vision and hearing, communication and information exchange are likely to take longer.



2 Wear one-coloured clothes of a colour that gives a clear contrast to your face and hands. It is easier to perceive speech and movement if the background and clothes contrast your skin tone.



3 Pick a conversation friendly location! Make sure the room has good lighting and acoustics. Turn down or remove disturbing background sounds. Ask where it is best that you sit considering the other person's vision and hearing. Reserve some time to find the right spot.



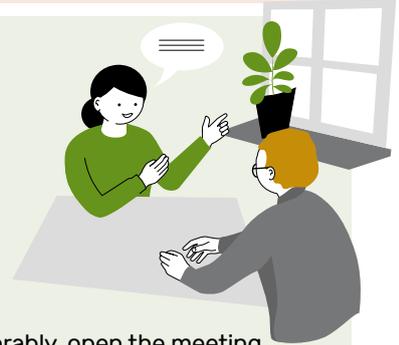
4 If an interpreter is present at the meeting, always speak directly to the person with deafblindness, not the interpreter. Let the person with deafblindness and the interpreter choose their seats first, then place yourself next to the interpreter, if possible.



5 Introduce yourself with your name or personal sign, and make contact, not only by saying "hello". A light pat on the upper arm works well. Agree on where your touch should best be placed henceforth. Repeat if you leave the room and when you come back.



6 Preferably, open the meeting by describing the room. During the meeting, put into words what can be perceived visually in the room, for example reactions, feelings, or what you are doing.



7 What are we talking about? Quick changes in topics can be hard to keep up with. Try to signal clearly when you are about to change the topic.



8 Keep in mind to articulate well and speak slowly. Both when using spoken and sign language. If the person does not understand you, try saying it using other words instead of repeating the same thing over and over.

9 Feel free to add touch to the verbal communication. You can, for example, confirm or show that you understand with a light pat on the arm. Agree on this first.



10 Take breaks during longer meetings. It is demanding to compensate for impaired vision and hearing.



11 On a walk, or if you move around the facilities, offer your arm for support, and let the person with deafblindness follow you.



12 If you are not sure how to act – just ask!