



Practical Communication

Face and head movements

- Keep your expression calm and encouraging.
- Nod appropriately and positively.
- Smile.

Hand and arm movements

- Use hand movements gently for emphasis.
- Use appropriate touch to help the resident focus.

Speech rate and tone

- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Use short sentences.
- Ask one question at a time.
- Be patient.

Eye Contact

- Make eye contact with the other person when speaking or listening unless they appear uncomfortable.
- Move eyes spontaneously and naturally.

Body Position

- Make sure you have the person's attention.
- Gently approach the person from the front and move to the person's side.
- Place yourself on the same level with the other person as much as possible.
- Position yourself close enough to be seen and heard clearly.

Adapted with permission from Teri, L., Huda, P., Gibbons, L., Young, H., & van Leynseele, J. (2005). STAR: A dementia-specific training program for staff in assisted living residences. Gerontologist, 45, 686-693.