

A SIGN OF RESPECT: Strategies for Successful Deaf /Hearing Interactions DEMO PART 2

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WATCH: DEMO Choice Point 2 - When you are the only hearing person

Video: Tom Holcomb, a white man wearing a light blue shirt and gray tie appears on the right side of the screen. An image in the upper left hand corner depicts a table at a restaurant. In the foreground is an open menu, and there are three white people seated at the table. A man with dark hair and a dark gray shirt - the server - is standing at the table holding a pen and notepad.

TOM (signing with voiceover): The next scene takes place in a restaurant where Amy is with her new romantic interest, who is Deaf.

Video: As Tom continues, the image on the left changes to a close-up still image of two people: on the left, a white man with red hair and beard, and on the left Amy with a blue top. Both are smiling and looking off camera to their left. The image changes to another view of the restaurant table, showing the server from a side angle in the foreground. Amy and her boyfriend are seated at the table looking up at him.

TOM (continuing): She is seated at a table with several other Deaf individuals at lunch time. As the only hearing person, she encounters some awkward situations. Let's watch and see what happens.

Video: Tom fades out and the image fades up on the restaurant. A man in a green shirt is seated at the table on the left, with Amy sitting next to him on the right. A man in a gray shirt - the server - approaches the table and begins speaking to them. The man and Amy look up at him as he speaks.

SERVER (speaking with open captions on screen): Hey, how's it goin? My name is Mitchell and I'll be your server for today. We have two daily specials: the first one is a chicken mole and the second one is a seafood enchilada.

Video: The scene freezes and moves to the left side and Tom fades in on the right side.

TOM (signing with voiceover): Yes, it is often a challenging situation for hearing signers to be the only hearing person in a group of Deaf people, trying to figure out the best role for themselves and how to handle a situation such as this restaurant scene with Amy. What do you think Amy should do?

Video: Tom fades to black and the letter A appears in the middle of the screen. Then the image fades up on the restaurant. A man in a green shirt is seated at the table on the left, with Amy sitting next to him on the right. A man in a gray shirt - the server - is standing at the table speaking to them. The man next to Amy is looking down and Amy looks up at the server as he speaks.

SERVER (speaking with open captions on screen): So, my name is Mitchell and I'll be your server for today...

AMY (interrupting, speaking with minimal signing at the same time, with open captions on screen): Would you please slow down? Sorry...sorry I'm going to interpret.

Video: Amy begins interpreting as he speaks.

SERVER (speaking with open captions on screen): Oh, sure...so we have two daily specials: the first one is a chicken mole and the second one is a seafood enchilada.

Video: Amy is interpreting fairly confidently. For “seafood” she just signs “food,” then stops with a puzzled expression and looks to her left.

AMY(signing with voiceover): What's the sign for enchilada?

Video: We see the hands of the person on her left sign “enchilada”, then Amy makes the sign and looks back at the server.

The screen fades to black and the letter B appears in the middle. Then the image fades up on the restaurant. A man in a green shirt is seated at the table on the left, with Amy sitting next to him on the right. A man in a gray shirt - the server - is standing at the table speaking to them. The man next to Amy is looking down and Amy looks up at the server as he speaks.

SERVER (speaking with open captions on screen): So, my name is Mitchell and I'll be your server for today. We have two daily specials: the first one is a chicken mole...

Video: Amy keeps her head down and looks at her menu as the server speaks. The man in a green shirt touches the server's arm and points in a circle to the people at the table and makes the sign for “Deaf.” He points to the server's pen and notepad and makes the gesture for writing. The server nods and begins writing a note, and the man signs “Thank you.”

The screen fades to black and the letter C appears in the middle. Then the image fades up on the restaurant. A man in a green shirt is seated at the table on the left, with Amy sitting next to him on the right. A man in a gray shirt - the server - is standing at the table speaking to them. The man next to Amy is looking down and Amy looks up at the server as he speaks.

SERVER (speaking with open captions on screen): So, my name is Mitchell and I'll be your server for today. So, we have two daily specials...

Video: As the server continues, Amy looks around at the people at the table.

AMY (signing with voiceover): Do you want me to interpret?

Video: The image fades to black, then Tom appears in the center over a black background.

TOM: Now go ahead and pick A, B, or C and then we'll see what Deaf people have to say about each choice.

Video: Tom fades out and the Choice Point 2 menu screen appears with still images of the three answer choices A, B and C.

A: Start interpreting right away

B: Pretend to be Deaf

C: Ask first before interpreting

The instructions are to select the image to choose that answer and get feedback on the answer. There is a button on the bottom left to replay the choices and a button on the bottom right to replay the entire scene.

After watching the feedback on the choice, a menu appears with instructions to select the Menu button to view the feedback for all the choices, then use the navigator button on the right side of the program screen to view the readings and exercises for the scene.

Select Choice A:

TOM (signing with voiceover): Out of 100 people in the survey, 35% of respondents indicated that they would prefer that the hearing person begin interpreting right away. This is especially true if the server starts to verbally describe the specials of the day. Interpreting is usually not necessary if there are no daily specials and the server just comes to take orders. Besides, Deaf people frequent restaurants all the time and do just fine without hearing people. It's the extra information that needs interpreting.

Select Choice B:

TOM (signing with voiceover): 15% of the respondents felt it would be best for the hearing signer to behave as if she is Deaf and order from the menu just like the Deaf people in the group. One reason is for the sake of equality with other people at the table. Another reason is to prevent the server from relying exclusively on the hearing person to handle all the communication, and instead force the server to attend to each patron equally. Equality is the most important consideration.

Select Choice C:

TOM (signing with voiceover): Slightly more than 50% of the 100 participants in the survey responded that the hearing signer should check with the Deaf people at the table to see what they prefer. Basically, always let the Deaf people decide how situations like this should be handled. Actually, some Deaf people really enjoy having an interpreter and appreciate the ability to converse with the server not only about daily specials, but about other questions as well such as their favorite item on the dessert menu. This kind of interaction is often not part of the Deaf experience. The bottom line is to check with your fellow Deaf diners to determine the best course of action.