



Improving Rural Interpreter Skills

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Module 12: Working in Teams



Module content developed by Betty Colonomos & Kelly Decker
[ASL lecture](#) by Chris McQuaid and Stephanie Clark

Module Overview & Objectives

Overview: This module will explore the roles, responsibilities, and challenges in working assignments as a member of a team. We will explore factors that go beyond the “on/off” and 20/20 minutes as deciding factors and unpack the various ways that team members are engaged with, and take accountability for, the target message and the effectiveness of the assignment.

Learning Outcomes and Objectives

Upon Completion of this module participants will be able to:

1. Identify at least five areas to consider when working in teams
2. Describe one’s own need for support and manner of delivery
3. Explain why teams are needed for certain assignments less than two hours
4. Identify areas of confidence and challenges as a member of a team

Pre-Test

NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this pre-test

1. Team members, when not producing the target message:

- A. are off until their next “on” segment
- B. are responsible for the message too
- C. should write notes about what they are seeing

2. A team interpreter is responsible for:

- A. working to support the other interpreters’ process
- B. staying engaged with the needs of the setting
- C. the equivalency of the message
- D. all of the above

3. When working in teams:

- A. adhere to strictly switching every 20 minutes to reduce mental fatigue
- B. Deaf interpreters and Coda/hearing interpreters have very separate roles
- C. interpreters are flexible to the needs of the setting and its participants



Why teams?

Working in teams offers benefits to many work assignments beyond providing a break in the cognitive load while interpreting. Having more than one person responsible for the linguistic, cultural, and processing decisions allows for a broader range of resources and perspectives. This endeavor requires that team members are able to talk about the work, understand their own needs from team members, and to work collaboratively to create an equivalent target message.

Focus on Function

When working in interpreting teams of Deaf, Coda, and hearing colleagues, the focus of the work requires consideration of the skill set of each member of the team. This includes participants' language, formative experiences and culture. Leveraging a team's strengths delivers the greatest accuracy and representation in the interpreted message.

Functions of the team to consider:

- Spoken language speaker has direct access to any source spoken language, team supports in the spoken language, and access to written sources (CART, captions, documents, etc.)
- Signed language user has direct access to the source signed language, team supports in sign language, and access to written sources (CART, captions, documents, etc.)

GoReact: Interpreting teams and function of the job



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

[Watch this video from Stephanie Clark](#) where she challenges us to not focus solely on whether an interpreter is Coda, Deaf, or hearing, but what is the function of the team in a particular setting, what are the requirements of the job, and how do we create shared space. Through that lens, we can determine who might be the best fit for the assignment.

Original post directions:

In GoReact create an original post sharing your thoughts about focusing on the function team versus the auditory status of the interpreter *and* answer the following questions:

- What is the practice in your area? How do you/other interpreters and/or agencies in your area make decisions about the composition of the interpreting team?
- How should we frame these discussions with our colleagues when considering the composition of the interpreting team? What has worked/hasn't worked for you?

Response post:

React to the post of one of your colleagues by asking clarifying questions, seeking additional information, or expressing an idea that encourages critical thinking and moves the conversation forward.

GoReact: Pre-teaming discussion, part I



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

You are asked to work with a team for a 1-hour Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) monthly staff meeting with the department manager and 10 employees, two of them Deaf. You are contacted by the other interpreter the day before to discuss this assignment.

Original post directions:

- What would you like to work out/discuss? Explain at least three items.
- How would you want your team to support you?

Response post directions:

React to the post of one of your colleagues by asking clarifying questions, seeking additional information, or expressing an idea that encourages critical thinking and moves the conversation forward.

GoReact: Pre-teaming discussion, part II



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

You will work in a team of four interpreters (two Deaf and two hearing/Coda) in a team for an all-day conference focused on healthcare equity. There will be four presentations (1.5 hrs each). Two of them will be led by deaf presenters. You will meet with the whole team a week before the conference.

Original post directions:

Create an original GoReact submission considering the scenario above during the team meeting described:

- What things do you need to decide?
- What do you need from the conference coordinators?
- How can team members support each other?

Response post directions:

React to the post of one of your colleagues by asking clarifying questions, seeking additional information, or expressing an idea that encourages critical thinking and moves the conversation forward.

References

Hardesty, S., Decker, K., Williamson, A., & West Oyedele, E. (2022). *Cultivating legal interpreters from minority backgrounds: Project summary, content guidance and materials presented*. University of Northern Colorado: Project CLIMB. Retrieved from

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Project CLIMB. (2019, February 20). *Consecutive interpreting: discuss the interpreting team and function of the job* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/nvMvJCozVEY>

Project CLIMB. (2021, November 30). *Shifting perspectives: focus on FUNCTION* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/mnpP8DSp_qY

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Additional Resource

In the [Open Process Interpreting Model: The Power of Language](#) at StreetLeverage – Live (2018) Stephanie Clark shares her perspective on power-sharing with the Open Process Interpreting Model and describes how we can make more conscious, insightful choices with deaf consumers as equal contributors to the interpreting process.

Post-Test

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