

**APPENDIX 11**



**Tips for Communicating Through an Interpreter**

## TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING THROUGH AN INTERPRETER

When working with an interpreter:

- Schedule additional time for all telephone calls or meetings - or - alternately, plan to limit your agenda to what can reasonably be accomplished in the time available. Three-way communications through an interpreter generally take more time than direct communication between service provider and client.
- Be prepared to direct the telephone call or meeting. The interpreter's role is to interpret what is said, impartially, accurately and completely ~ not to manage, chair or facilitate the meeting.
- Allow time at the beginning of any interaction or meeting for introductions and for a brief review of the interpreter's role and responsibilities.
- Arrange seating to ensure that you maintain eye contact with the client.
- Speak directly to the client, not to the interpreter.
- Speak at normal speed, in a normal tone of voice unless circumstances dictate otherwise.
- Allow pauses at regular intervals for the interpreter to deliver the interpretation.
- Be supportive if the interpreter interrupts to seek clarification or request additional time.
- Avoid double negatives, idioms, jargon, slang and acronyms.
- Do not engage in "side conversations" with the interpreter. If you must clarify something or speak directly with the interpreter for any reason, be sure to tell the client what you are doing.
- If you require sight translation of a document, remain in the room with the client while the interpreter delivers the oral translation.
- Allow the interpreter time to review any documents requiring sight translation before reading aloud.
- Interpreters do NOT provide written translation of documents.

*Source: Across Languages*