

hello

مرحبا

# How to Use an Interpreter

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*A guide to help you use an interpreter effectively by Voices in Refuge*

## 1 Speak Directly to the Client

Maintain **eye contact** with your client as you would with someone who speaks the same language as you.

Remember your **gestures** and **body language** are constantly conveying a message to the client.



## 2 Explain Yourself

Explain any **idioms**, **acronyms**, **technical language** and **cultural references**.

Do not expect the interpreter to provide explanations, even cultural ones.

An interpreter is not an advocate or a witness to a culture they may or may not share.



## 3 Interpreter is Neutral

Do not ask the interpreter for their opinion or include them directly in the conversation.

They are there to enable the conversation but are not part of the discourse.



## 4 Use Short Sentences

Speak in **short, simple, sentences** to allow the interpreter to easily understand and convey the meaning of your message.

**Pause** regularly to allow them to interpret everything you are saying accurately.



## 5 One at a Time

Take turns speaking.

**Wait** for the interpreter to convey the **full message** before you reply to avoid missing key details.



## 6 Be Patient

Interpreting takes time!

Even short sentences can take a long time to interpret in order to retain the original meaning.



## 7 One Conversation

Everyone party to the conversation has the right to understand everything which is being said.

Therefore, avoid having side conversations whilst someone else is speaking.



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# Using an Interpreter in a Group

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Working with interpreters in group settings can be challenging. Follow these guidelines to make sure everyone understands each other.

## 1 Discuss Session with Interpreter in Advance

Try to meet with your interpreter in **advance**. Give them any materials you may be using as far in advance as possible.

Discuss how the session will work and when you'll be expecting feedback



## 2 Allow More Time than you Think

Remember the interpreter needs **time** to accurately impart your message!

Plan to talk for **half** the time you would normally to allow everything you say to be repeated in another language.



## 3 Multi-Language Limit

Interpreting with **more than 2 languages** in the room is extremely difficult and often leads to **confusion**.

If it's essential, rules 1-2 take on even more importance.



## 4 Allocate Time for Q & A

It's **vital** there are **times set aside for questions & answers**. The interpreter cannot act as a facilitator and is only there to enable conversation between the group and you.

If you need to walk around the group, always do so yourself and have the interpreter accompany you.



## 5 Normal Rules Apply

Remember to follow all normal rules of interpreting (see *How to Use an Interpreter Guide*).

A group setting is more likely to lead to confusion and misunderstandings so it's important to stick to the rules.

