Seminar Description

Title: Assumptions and Expectations Concerning People Who Are Deaf

Presenter: Patricia Mudgett-DeCaro, Consultant  
NTID Office of the Dean  
National Technical Institute for the Deaf  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
E-mail: padnod@rit.edu

Description:
In this workshop we will address the issues of expectations and assumptions surrounding the abilities of a person who is deaf, and how these influence the achievements of those persons following the outline below:

1. Introduction to how deaf person’s aspirations and achievements can be influenced by family, teacher, and deaf community’s expectations of what they can achieve.

2. Results of research regarding attitudes toward occupations for people who are deaf in Sweden today.

3. Accommodations that are successful in ‘improbable jobs” – such as telephone line tester- that is, how do deaf persons successfully perform jobs which would seem to be impossible for them to do?

Learning Outcomes:

1. List one or two ideas from the workshop and the examples given which surprised them, or cause them to think/rethink previous assumptions or expectations as they apply to their country.

2. Identify one or two specific, personal goals for affecting a change in their own classroom, college, or university, and write some preliminary thoughts about what steps might be taken.

3. As a group, discuss one occupation which is widely considered to be inappropriate for deaf persons in their country, and brainstorm ways in which “can’t” might be changed to “can with accommodation”.

Plan:

Introduction:
1. One deaf family – brief background of a large, genetically deaf family and their accomplishments. (PowerPoint)

Barriers and limits: What a deaf person “can’t” do.
1. Attitudinal/Environmental Barriers
   a. Definitions of barriers
   b. Importance of attitudes
2. Patti Lago-Avery’s Story
3. Activity – Identifying Attitudinal and Environmental Barriers
4. The Swedish Study PowerPoint
   a. Study in 1999 based upon earlier questionnaire developed by J. DeCaro in 1982, used in England and modified for other countries. 1999 Fulbright scholarship with Pat as co-researcher, to Sweden.
   b. Slides of study, activity, and results
   c. Safety not an issue in Sweden
   d. Follow-up interviews: safety/rules, communication with deaf only, not an issue of ability.

Accommodations:
1. Examples of accommodations in specific areas of work or class (Telephone installer, AT&T special phones, slower class pace, etc.), which help both deaf and hearing students to improve their education or work.
2. Educational strategies: AAS/AOS, transition programs, BS with support services, improvement for deaf students helped all students
3. Employer contacts and support, as well as “practice” interviews

Activity:
1. Working in the same group, begin to brainstorm accommodations that might make access and success possible for the job the group selected.
   a. Create a preliminary list of strategies
   b. Share your thoughts with the group

Evaluation and closure:
 a. Fill out provided evaluation form.
 b. Envelope Activity

Presentation Materials:
1. Patti Lago-Avery’s Story
2. Attitudinal and Environmental Barriers for persons who are deaf (Summary of Chapter entitled “Considerations in the acquisition of employment”)
3. John Reid and Pam Linza Interview Excerpts.
4. **David Mudgett Story**

5. **Assumptions and Expectations** (PowerPoint) (PDF)
   - Handouts from PowerPoint (PDF)
   - **(The Frog Story – video clip)** (Plays on CD version of resources)
     Requires RealOne Player. Video does not contain any audio.

**Resources:**