

ICLife: Tools for inclusion

How to make life on a campus for higher education more inclusive.

Tips for communication



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1. Check beforehand, which are possibilities concerning special needs and communication for IDD-student (e.g. need of support. Alternative and Augmentative Communication AAC -methods, oral and written communication).
2. Speak slowly
3. Use as few words as possible
4. Choose common language. This means that you avoid jargon or academic language.
 - use plain language in teaching, tutoring and written teaching material
 - consider the special needs in teaching situations (support, reading and writing, visual and hearing impairment, different ways to communicate - braille, pictures, interpretation etc)
 - check the possibility to use interpreter services, if needed
5. Insert pauses between your sentences or spoken messages.
6. Keep your message short, structured and simple.
7. Avoid using abstract nouns and concepts.
8. Avoid using subordinated clauses and subordinating conjunctions. Most of the times these are unnecessary and may blur the message.
9. Address one topic at the time.
10. Explain things step by step.
11. Ask one question at the time.
12. Ask questions with one subject at the time.
13. Sometimes the person with an intellectual disability will need time to process the message. Pay attention that IDD-students need support and space to express her/his own opinions (e.g. create sensitive and secure situation so that IDD-people can share their personal experiences and opinions)
14. Wait a few seconds for the person with an intellectual disability to respond - based on experience and common sense: wait longer for response than you are used to.
15. In case you are not sure whether the person with an intellectual disability has understood what is being said, ask him/her to repeat or explain it to you (vice versa).
16. Use visualizations (photo's drawings) to support your message or explanation.
17. Use examples that connect to personal life experiences of the person with an intellectual disability.
18. In case you have a meeting with a person with an intellectual disability, always clarify the purpose of it.
19. You can also ask the person with an intellectual disability what the purpose is or should be of the meeting.
20. In case you have a meeting with a person with an intellectual disability, indicate which topics will be addressed. You can also ask the person with an intellectual disability what topics should be addressed