

The Sign Post

Newsletter for the Central California Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

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Partnership for Success in Educational Setting

April Davies, RID CI/CT, NAD IV



Working as an Educational interpreter, I come in contact with a range of teachers, students and administration, and with them they bring varying personalities, opinions and ways of doing things. When I enter a classroom in the beginning of the year, I recognize it is a coin toss as to how my working relationship will develop with the mainstream teachers, support staff and administrators, and ultimately the students.

With that in mind, the most important thing to remember is that I am part of an enormous team working for one outcome: educating Deaf students.

Without this philosophy of teamwork interpreters risk becoming islands unto themselves, which can cause a lack of engagement in the environment and ultimately a negative experience for all involved. If I just show up for school every morning, follow my schedule and do not engage in relationship with teachers and students, what is the message that I am sending to those involved? Possibly that I am not interested in the class, nor am I interested in the student's success in the class. For this reason I recognize just how crucial it is that I develop a positive and lasting rapport with all of the educational team.

When I approach a teacher for lesson plans or objectives for the day, my message should be "I want to be your partner in ensuring success for this student." There are many different ways in which this can be accomplished. Email

is a great means of communication with teachers because it allows them to respond at their convenience. Another option is to make an appointment with the teacher which accommodates his/her schedule. That may not be the most convenient for me when working with multiple teachers, however this accommodation is worthwhile to ensure I do my best for the student.

I like for the teacher to feel that I am an ally who is working with him/her. I have experienced being in a class where the teacher appeared to be all business and seems not to have the time nor desire to work with me. At first, this professional did not acknowledge my presence or the Deaf student in the class. I was a little taken back and had to analyze this teacher's personality to find the best way in which to connect with him. Instead of coming in right at the bell or leaving as soon as possible, I started approaching him during his downtime in class. I asked questions related not only to the lesson plans but also about the stories he shared with the students in class. I let him take the lead to establish a common ground within his comfort zone. These small steps on my part paid great dividends in the end, which benefited me as an interpreter and ultimately the student with whom we were working.

I love explaining my role as an interpreter to teachers and administrators. It is amazing to hear what other professionals THINK interpreters do. No, I am not the student's mom or aunt. Yes, the district pays me to do this. No, I do not know Spanish or Braille. No, I do not go to lunch with the student, and the list goes on. I then proceed to explain that I am a nationally certified interpreter and have been working with the Deaf community for many years. I want the conversation to be professional yet friendly enough that they feel comfortable asking questions. A team approach is crucial. If I go in with an attitude of superiority expecting to educate this hearing teacher about who I am and what I do and this is what must be done, I have already built a wall that will take

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**Honoring Tradition
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Celebrating Growth**

PO Box 588
Clovis, CA 93613-0588

ccrid@ccrid.org

www.ccrd.org

www.rid.org



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Leadership Meetings are open to all CCRID members. See the calendar at our website for date, time and place. Contact ccrid@ccrid.org with any questions regarding meetings.

The Sign Post is prepared quarterly. Please send ideas, items or information for announcements to newsletter editor Shannon M. Simonelli at ccrid@ccrid.org one month prior to publication date.

Continued: Partnership in the Educational Setting

most of the year to tear down. That is what I hope to avoid.

I am well aware that there are teachers who do not want interpreters in their room for one reason or another, but that is not about ME as an individual. It is not always easy, but as a professional, I must do my best not to let my feelings get in the way of the students education. Someone once told me to “kill with kindness” and to date, that typically works.

As interpreters, we tend to be the ones out on the front lines. We are the ones who the mainstream teachers, DHH teachers, administrators and students see and that can be a stressful experience. We are sounding boards, message carriers, and peace makers for students, teachers and administrators. We are sometimes pulled in many

directions, and it can be very emotionally, mentally and physically draining.

In these times of change we should remember that our field, however long we may have personally been interpreting, is still relatively new. We know exactly what our job description is, however the majority of those with whom we work are just starting to understand that we are professionals who are knowledgeable and skilled at what we do. We may have to state it again and again, but if we stay consistent and support each other we can develop the reputation we so desire as educational interpreters and better meet the needs of the students we serve. It is not a perfect science but with patience we can continue to develop successful partnerships with educators.



CHALLENGE



Idioms: How would you interpret these?

English idioms are ever present in the work we do. It is equally important to understand the meaning background behind an idiom as it is to be able to accurately convey them in ASL. As you read the idioms below, consider how you might interpret them and challenge yourself to express them in an conceptually accurate manner. *Excerpts from “The Dictionary of Clichés” by James Rogers.*

Pass the Buck. To shift responsibility by shifting it (or trying to shift it) to someone else. The buck was an object (perhaps a piece of buckshot) passed from one card player to another to signify the recipient was to be the next dealer. In *The Innocents at Home*

(1872) Mark Twain wrote: “Ante and pass the buck.” President Harry S. Truman kept on his desk a small sign that said, “The buck stops here.”

Laugh out of Court. Cover with scorn or ridicule; show that an argument is worthless. The phrase “out of court” as a means of saying someone’s arguments are too poor or trifling to claim serious consideration (as in a court of law) goes back at least to the early 19th century. Adding the thought that the claim is so ridiculous as to be laughable is much more recent. An early example is from the London *Observer* in 1928: “Both American and British opinion is laughing out of court those who monger their scares about the United States Navy.”

Pay Through the Nose. Be charged an exorbitant price. Why nose? One supposition is that this kind of paying is as irksome as a nosebleed. Another tale has it that the Danes levied a tax on the Irish in the 9th century, and that anyone who failed to pay it was punished by having his nose slit. In any event, we find Andrew Marvell writing in 1672 (in *The Rehearsal Transposed*): “Made them pay it most unconscionably and through the nose.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stepping Up

CCRID Members who have passed an interpreting assessment or certification test:

- Heather Ahern, NIC

Mano a Mano announces the launch of their new website: www.manoamano-unidos.org



All names included with expressed permission.

EVENTS

August

7, 2pm—4pm, Leadership Meeting; Suzanne Conway’s residence, Fresno
email crid@crid.org for directions

September

11, 2pm—4pm, Leadership Meeting; Suzanne Conway’s residence, Fresno
email crid@crid.org for directions
23, 6pm—9pm *Cromania*, Kick off performance and dinner, DHHSC, 5340 N. Fresno St, Fresno, CA

24, 9am—4pm *Creating Classifiers*, with Crom Saunders, DHHSC, 5340 N Fresno St, Fresno, CA

October

2, 2pm—4pm, Leadership Meeting; Suzanne Conway’s residence, Fresno
email crid@crid.org for directions

29, 9am—4pm *Shift Happens*, with David N. Evans, DHHSC, 5340 N. Fresno St, Fresno, CA

November

6, 2pm—4pm, Leadership Meeting; Suzanne Conway’s residence, Fresno
email crid@crid.org for directions

For details and event fliers go to the calendar listed at www.crid.org