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Preparing students for the "real world"

by Iva D'Lema - Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 02:35 PM

I am interpreting for an 19-year-old Deaf student at an off-site career center. Last week, class started and the student did not show. I waited for over an hour and finally left. Then I called an hour later to learn he had just shown up so I drove back for the last bit of class. I want to be fair ~ hearing students can show up late. But I also think it is time for the student to get ready for the real world! What should I do?

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Re: Preparing students for the "real world"

by Edna K. Schnell - Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 02:37 PM

Work with the teacher to find out general classroom expectations and discuss solutions together. The teacher's rules and consequences for all students should also apply to the Deaf student. This may also be a basis for expectations for the Deaf student. For example, if the rule is that students who are more than 20 minutes late receive a 0 for the day, that might also be an appropriate time frame for when the interpreter will leave.

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Re: Preparing students for the "real world"

by Iva D'Lema - Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 02:39 PM

But what if the student shows up after I've already left?! 🤔

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Re: Preparing students for the "real world"

by [Sara Paullin Casto](#) - Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 02:47 PM

Does the student have a pager? If so, maybe the student could text you. I gave my personal cell phone number to an older student in a similar situation before so they could text me if they weren't going to show up. That way I didn't drive across the county to the class for nothing. The student never abused this. Do you feel comfortable sharing your number with this student?

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Re: Preparing students for the "real world"

by [Edna K. Schnell](#) - Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 02:50 PM

You could also see if the teacher is willing to contact you if the student shows up after you've already left. That way you wouldn't have to share your personal cell phone number with the student if you weren't comfortable.

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Re: Preparing students for the "real world"

by [Margaret Murphy](#) - Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 02:54 PM

Maybe the student needs a dose of reality. You could explain the policies of community interpreting agencies. It seems time for the student to learn about and adjust to community expectations. Maybe you could even given the student the written policies of local agencies.

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Re: Preparing students for the "real world"

by [Edna K. Schnell](#) - Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 03:05 PM

That's a great idea, but I'm not sure if it is really the interpreter's role to do that.

Like any concern with a student, this problem is the responsibility of the whole educational team to solve. Maybe someone in the transition office could talk to the student or one of their teachers. Maybe the student could talk to someone at a local interpreting referral agency directly. If this is a big problem, the team might even want to address this under an IEP goal like "work readiness skills."

If it were me, I'd at least want to touch base with a teacher or administrator on the student's IEP team before I did this.

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Re: Preparing students for the "real world"

by [Sara Paullin Casto](#) - Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 03:16 PM

You may also want to talk to your supervisor about their expectations. If another interpreter is absent or there is a class that sometimes needs a team interpreter, you might be needed somewhere else. When I've coordinated interpreters, I always appreciated being told if there was a cancellation just in case an interpreter was needed somewhere else.

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Re: Preparing students for the "real world"

by [Iva D'Lema](#) - Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 03:26 PM

These are all great ideas! It is so wonderful to get to pick all of your brains!!! 😊

I was also thinking that I need to sit down and discuss this with the student. Maybe if I ask the student for their ideas they will be more willing to really make a change. At least this was often true with my own teenagers! 😊

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