

Video Relay Service Industry Research, Training and Material Needs  
National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (2007).

In September, 2007, expert representatives from eight VRS provider companies convened to investigate various aspects of the Video Relay Service industry. One of the areas of focus included the research and materials needed. All expert representatives in attendance agreed that there was a severe lack of research and materials in the area of VRS interpreting. The following information highlights the specific research and materials generated by the expert representatives during this meeting.

Research specific to VRS interpreting should include information on the following:

- What is a “master” interpreter?
- How to get female interpreters to attend to needs of self
- Mental and physical health issues
- What are personality traits of VRS interpreter?
- What is the appropriate camera angle?
- What is the ideal work station? Keystroke conditions
- Attitude and job satisfaction
- Impact of technology on relationship with Deaf community

Training for VRS Interpreters should include information on the following:

- Preparation for intimate register, coarse language, and verbal abuse
- More real world experience
- Handling silence while on the phone
- Telephone discourse etiquette
- VRS mentoring practices
- Preparation for regional diversity, ethnic diversity, gender and age diversity
- Preparation for indirectness and/or politeness in English and ASL
- Mock experiences working in VRS while protecting consumers’ rights, utilizing VRS stations
- ASL standards in K-12 and IEP programs
- Internships in VRS and information on how to make that happen
- Shifting among roles, such as employee, interpreter, operator, etc.
- Further training for Certified Deaf Interpreters
- Training on Deaf/Hearing team interpreting specific to VRS

Training regarding VRS Consumers should include information on the following:

- Attitude differences between younger and older consumers

- The impact of technology on society as a whole and on the Deaf community in specific
- The impact of video interpreting on relationships between people in the Deaf community and interpreters
- Consumer education – who is responsible?
- Issues of familiarity between Deaf consumers and interpreters

Training for Consumers using VRS should include information on the following:

- Telephone etiquette when using VRS
- Working with Certified Deaf Interpreters on VRS calls
- Working with Deaf/Hearing teams on VRS calls

Materials specific to VRS interpreting should include information on the following:

- Diversity, including region, age, gender, ethnicity, register
- Better understanding of corporate culture
- Ergonomic considerations for comfort and safety, especially in the workplace
- Maintaining balance between demands of the work place and good health
- VRS scenarios from DO IT Center and CSD

Additional needs specific to VRS interpreting:

- Additional RID white papers
- Identifying and recruitment of the next generation of interpreters (Advertisements and PSAs to high school students)
- Additional support and education for interpreters of color