

Included below is a list of valuable communication strategies to promote respectful and enjoyable interactions with the seniors you meet when volunteering with Cycling Without Age.

- In your initial encounter with a senior, take a few minutes to introduce yourself and give him/her the time to do the same. This interaction will give you a good sense of how to proceed from here.
- Position yourself so you are face-to-face with the senior. This allows for you both to read each other's facial expressions as well as to hear what is being said more easily. (Many of these initial meetings will take place, outside, in the presence of background noise).
- If the senior appears to have difficulty hearing, being face-to-face will also give him/her the opportunity to read your lips. Increasing the volume of your voice slightly can also facilitate the senior's ability to hear you – BUT not too much. Due to the nature of hearing loss in the majority of seniors, too much volume is uncomfortable and perceived as shouting.
- When you observe that the senior has communication challenges, also use "The Four Ss":
 - SHOW - include some gestures with your directions and any other information you provide e.g. show him/her where to sit and how to put on the seat belt, point out on a map which route you are going to take.
 - SAY LESS – use shorter phrases and link them with the gestures described above.
 - SLOW DOWN – speak more slowly so the senior has more time to process the information – but not too much. Keep your tone conversational and friendly.
 - STRESS – emphasize the key words so they stand out more clearly. e.g. "WAIT for ME to come and HELP".

Always give time for the senior to ask questions and make comments. Some seniors who are going for their first ride might also need some reassurance when uncertain of what to expect.

When people have a clear understanding of what is happening and feel respected and appreciated, their enjoyment of going on a trishaw ride with you will be memorable. Enjoy the ride!

Respectfully submitted by - Margie Smith
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