

An anecdotal study was developed at NTID/RIT to examine the career mobility experiences of deaf professionals in educational and social service settings who hold managerial and supervisory responsibilities. The study strived to identify the challenges that deaf professionals face in regard to career mobility and opportunities, including networking, communication issues, attitudinal and access barriers, the impact of current technologies and cultural issues.

Interviews were held with 11 deaf professionals in supervisory and managerial positions via taped videophone sessions (in American Sign Language) of approximately 50 - 60 minutes in length. The subjects represented government agencies, educational programs, independent living agencies, and employment agencies. The videotapes were voice-interpreted and recorded on tape by a certified sign language interpreter, and then transcribed into script for data analysis.

The study found that while the majority of participants had a high level of satisfaction with their career mobility experiences, they felt their deafness has significantly impacted their career choices and paths, both positively and negatively. They also had developed creative strategies for networking and success in the workplace, and readily shared their stories, including suggestions and advice for future deaf professionals.