

Communication Partner Support Prompts for Word Retrieval

- **Ask yes/no questions:**
 - Is it something we eat? Is it a person?
- **Give limited choices:**
 - Do you want apple or banana? Is it a chair, bed, or table?
- **Encourage alternative communication:**
 - You can draw it if you want.
 - You can gesture to show me.
- **Support semantic access:**
 - I know the category, can you find it? / Do you know the category?
 - Do you know the first letter or sound?
- **Model and demonstrate:**
 - It's like this! (show gesture or point to example). Let me show you how to find it.
- **Ask one question at a time** – Avoid confusion and cognitive overload by waiting for a response before asking another question.
- **Pacing and patience:**
 - Give extra time, repeat prompts if needed, speak slowly.
- **Encourage multimodal communication:**
 - Communication is not just speech. We often communicate more through **non-verbal means** than speech, including:
 - Emotions and facial expressions
 - Body posture and gestures
 - Tone of voice
 - Eye gaze
 - Vocalizations, exclamations (Wow! Oh no!) or interjections (Eh? Uh-huh)
 - Pointing or gesturing
 - Accept and encourage **any form of communication** the user attempts.
- **AAC-specific support:**
 - Use the keyboard with word prediction both for comprehension and expression
 - Use **keywords** to communicate
 - Search for the word in the AAC system.
 - Add the word to the AAC system if missing.
- **Reinforce and encourage attempts:**
 - Praise all communication attempts.
 - Encourage multiple strategies (gesture, drawing, selecting, typing).

Remember: AAC helps the person **communicate independently** using specific messages (words and/or pictures) and supports language recovery after a stroke.

Fun Fact: Studies have shown that **over 70–90% of interpersonal communication related to feelings and attitudes is non-verbal**, including gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice. This highlights the importance of supporting **multimodal communication** when speech is impaired.