

SCHOOL CONDUCTS SENSITIZATION OF STAFF ON SERVICE PROVISION TO PERSONS WITH HEARING DISABILITIES

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School of Business members of staff being shown how to use sign language.

On Wednesday 18th February 2014, the [University](#) launched a sensitization programme to School of Business staff on service provision to persons with hearing disabilities.

Sign language expert, Dr. Jefwa Mweri, explained to the staff that deafness is an invisible disability unlike blindness which is visible. He further enlightened the staff that Kenya's sign language is not universal; each country has its own independent sign language. The fact that the deaf cannot speak is not a sign that they lack a language, they do. They have a sign language,' said Dr. Mweri.

The staff members were informed of the challenges faced by the deaf for example, in events and places where bells are used like the church and other social places. They were also informed on how to deal with the deaf customers especially those who offer services in the front office.

The language expert revealed that deaf people make the best drivers and even parents. 'Deaf people can do anything, except those things that involve sound; they are as normal as everyone else. It is hence not good to stereotype against the deaf person,' he added.

The Director of the School of Sign Language, Prof. Okoth Okombo, challenged the staff to stop referring to the deaf as the handicapped. He explained that it is not the disability that handicaps; it is the insensitivity of the people who live around the disabled.

Having worked with people with disabilities over a long period of time, Prof. Okombo realized that we underutilize our potential. He amusingly narrated how he came to discover that one of his students, who didn't have fingers, could write better than many who have 10 fingers. He reiterated what Dr. Mweri earlier said that people with disabilities have different capabilities. 'A person without a hand is not disabled, the ability goes elsewhere. Being blind is not disability, the seeing ability goes elsewhere,' he said.

He urged the staff not to concentrate on their disabilities, but on their abilities. He further expressed his gratitude to the university which has been very considerate to the deaf and enabled them receive abundant support from the management.