# Title: Myth Busting – It’s a sign!

Duration: 37:27 minutes

Season 2, episode 5.

## Description:

**Jodie Greer, Founder of Be #PeopleSmart Ltd, speaks with Sophie Kang, Business Development Manager at Sign Solutions, to dispel 2 myths:**

1. **“Including sign language is just too complicated”**
2. **“Including BSL (British Sign Language) means including everyone”.**

## Myth Busting – It’s a sign transcript.

**Recorded message** [00:00:01]

Be #PeopleSmart. Enabling organisations and individuals to be disability inclusive and accessible.

**Jodie** [00:00:10]

Hello everyone, and welcome to this episode of the Be #PeopleSmart podcast. My name is Jodie Greer and again, for season two, we are talking about myth busting. And again, I have another wonderful guest speaker with us today, who I'm sure you're really going to enjoy listening to. So, Sophie Kang. I'll get you to introduce yourself, please.

**Sophie** [00:00:37]

Hello, and thank you, Jodie, for having me. I'm Sophie, I am Business Development Manager from a company called Sign Solutions. And we specialise in British Sign Language interpreting, and we provide all kinds of non-spoken communication support to the Deaf community.

**Jodie** [00:00:55]

Wonderful. Thank you. Before we sort of go into our myths and other things, just to elaborate as well Sophie, it's not just your job, is it? It is something you're passionate about.

**Sophie** [00:01:04]

Yes, definitely. To kind of give you a bit of background on me, I went, years ago now when I was back in school and you did two weeks’ worth of work experience, don't know if you can do that anymore, if they do that in schools anymore. But I went to Longwill School for the Deaf, which is based in Birmingham. And it was with loads of children who were Deaf or hard of hearing. And when I got there, I didn't know any kind of sign language. I didn't know how to communicate with any of these kids, and it really frustrated me. So, after my work experience was up, I went to do a BSL Level 1 at the Brasshouse in Birmingham. Loved it so much that I found out you could do a degree in British Sign Language and Deaf Studies. So, I went to the University of Central Lancashire, packed my bags, left my mum and dad, and did a course in, yeah, BSL and Deaf Studies. And here I am today.

**Jodie** [00:01:59]

First of all, that's brilliant. Secondly, I genuinely didn't know you could actually study it to that degree. And also, that's proper commitment.

**Sophie** [00:02:09]

Well, I've always had friends who are Deaf, and I think what sparked me wanting to be involved in the Deaf community was when I went to Longwill because it's just so frustrating not being able to communicate. And I felt like I was being left out. And it was something that I just really had a passion for learning, and then when I found out that I could do a degree in it I was, yes, very pleased.

**Jodie** [00:02:34]

Yeah, excellent. And just to also say, because I'm going to nip into our myths. But this is also more follow up, following, hopefully you've already listened and if you haven't listeners, then please do take a listen to the recent episode we did on, it could be a sign, or maybe not. Basically, talking about why captioning isn't a direct replacement for sign language. And also, we did talk about the fact that not all Deaf people sign. So today, to elaborate on that, the myths we are going to be busting are that, including sign language is it just too complicated. Sophie's going to prove me wrong! Well, that's my hope. And also including BSL, so British Sign Language, means we're including everyone. So, we'll come onto that as well. But first of all, Sophie, can we just touch on the piece about how complicated it actually is for people to have sign interpreters for their events.

**Sophie** [00:03:42]

I think you probably want to take the word complicated out of that, as it isn't complicated to have an interpreter in your event.

**Jodie** [00:03:51]

Exactly.

**Sophie** [00:03:52]

So hopefully that's busted the myth! We are an interpreting agency. So, we place interpreters into all kinds of bookings, whether it be, going, a Deaf person is going to a hospital appointment, or whether or not they're going to do a job interview, or if you have an event which is being held in person. And obviously in the past two years, everything has been online. We've been able to include interpreters onto any platform, video conferencing platform, of a client's choice. And it's really easy in just inviting them to the event, you click on a link if it's online, and then the interpreter pops up. There's obviously some housekeeping that might need to be done whilst in the event, prior to the event. These are things like making sure that you can pin the interpreter, so the Deaf person is able to see the interpreter clearly. The same for the interpreter, making sure that they have pinned the Deaf person. When you're sharing your screen, just allowing a couple of minutes for the interpreter and the Deaf participants to make sure that they can see each other. Kind of, I think, all video etiquette, it's not just for the Deaf community, of raising your hand when you want to speak, trying not to talk over one another. Just because that gets incredibly difficult for an interpreter to actually hear what's being said. But it's not complicated at all in terms of, there's agencies like us that can basically do all the work for you. You just need to tell us when and where you want us, and we'll get somebody in.

**Jodie** [00:05:26]

Wonderful, thank you. And just on that point about pinning or spotlighting the interpreter, because, and you can give us a little bit more on kind of rough timings, but I know certainly for longer events, you normally have more than one interpreter so that they can have a changeover. First of all, kind of what sort of length of time does that tend to be? But also, it's quite easy, isn't it, to then pin the alternative, I nearly said the replacement, the alternative interpreter?

**Sophie** [00:05:57]

Yes, so typically, any appointments or events that you're having an interpreter at, if it's over one hour is when you'll need to have a second interpreter. It kind of depends on the complexity, and what kind of event or meeting somebody is interpreting. But kind of the standard practice is that you'll have two interpreters for anything over 60 minutes. The interpreters tend to, they co-work with one another, so they will take it in turns. So, for the first 15 minutes, somebody might sign and voice over, and then swap again with the other interpreter. Or they might choose to, one person is voicing over, and one person is signing. It's completely up to the interpreter relationship and how they set things up before. I have to kind of emphasise the importance of preparation for interpreters before interpreting for events, because obviously, if it's a kind of a niche topic, they need to make sure that they have all the, kind of the lingo, and the, if you've got a presentation. Just so that they are fully prepared, and they can do the best job in interpreting for the Deaf participants.

**Jodie** [00:07:06]

Thank you. And for people who haven't really looked so much into interpreting, can you just give us a bit more information on, I mean, I call it fatigue, but the reason that you have the changeover.

**Sophie** [00:07:21]

Yeah, definitely. So, the process of becoming an interpreter is a long process in general. It takes up to seven years to become a qualified sign language interpreter, which I think a lot of people don't actually, are not aware of. And it's probably not something that you would know unless you went to university and studied. And there are, you do your three years at Uni and there are multiple different ways that you can then go on to gain your qualified NRCPD status. But it is a really challenging and demanding job, and it does take a lot of time to become an interpreter. And I think that is the reason why, it's kind of with any interpreting, really, it's the listening and being able to translate at the same time. And that is incredibly difficult, when it's something that, when I was learning at Uni, that I found really difficult to process. So that's why, and it is exhausting. That is the reason that you need to make sure that the interpreter is properly supported, and they have a co-worker with them if it's anything over 60 minutes.

**Jodie** [00:08:25]

I think that's going to be really helpful for some. And for some people who haven't listened to the previous episode yet, also just to elaborate on what Sophie was saying, it's also because there's sometimes an assumption, which was a myth we busted, that spoken English, for instance, and BSL are basically the same thing. But sign language, all sign language, has its own structure. It has its own grammar. So, it's very different, so it really is a case of someone listening to spoken English, and then it isn't just a direct translation into the relevant signs. It's a translation into another language. It's a translation into BSL. I've got to be honest. It would exhaust me even attempting it, I think, and I'm trying to learn sign. But it is tough. I mean, no wonder it takes so long.

**Sophie** [00:09:15]

I think the role of an interpreter is seen is very straightforward, because you are there just to facilitate communication between a Deaf person and a hearing person. But it's the complexities of what you're translating, and, you know, it is a degree level job that an interpreter is doing. So, it takes an enormous amount of qualifications to become an interpreter. So that is the reason why, it can be quite exhausting to be an interpreter.

**Jodie** [00:09:46]

Yeah, definitely. I just, I'm hoping obviously, this is giving people some food for thought. And getting to understand that the actual interpreting is complex itself. But for you to be able to achieve that, and for you to make your events more inclusive can actually be made really simple, because there's people like well, like Sophie. But there's organisations like Signed Solutions out there, who basically make it easy for you. So that, I mean, that in itself is massive. What's probably one of the biggest learnings you've had in your time at Signed Solutions, specifically Sophie?

**Sophie** [00:10:24]

I just think that all Deaf people are different. There is not one way to communicate with Deaf people. And I know, from your previous podcasts, you've discussed about how they're, not all Deaf people sign. And I think that's something that as a society, we all need to consider, just because somebody is Deaf, it doesn't mean that they've got one way of communicating. When my colleague and myself give our Deaf awareness presentation, we like to discuss the difference between big D and little D deaf. Unless you're kind of involved within the Deaf community, you might not have an understanding of deafness being a cultural identity, and the lower-case d deaf being something that you identify as a medical model of deafness, somebody who might have gone deaf later on in life or doesn't identify themselves as a big D Deaf person. So, I think yeah, that's probably the one thing that I've learned. It's just there's so many different ways for people to communicate. And the most important thing to do is to just ask the person what their preferred method of communication is. And I think a lot of people can get scared that they are asking the wrong thing. But I can assure you people would rather just, rather than having you assume, is to ask them directly.

**Jodie** [00:11:46]

Yeah, no, definitely. I think that's a massive thing. And to be honest, that's a big thing with disability inclusion in general. You know, you can't assume what somebody needs. It is important that you ask. You can do that respectfully, of course, but it is important that you actually communicate with someone. So, on communication, I just want to jump a bit into the second myth, which is about including BSL means we're including everyone. Because I know, of course, that's your intention at Signed Solutions, using BSL to include everyone. But the reason that's a myth for today, and I know obviously Sophie, you and I have caught up, so that that makes sense to you as well. But the reason I've been saying this today is because I see an awful lot of events that are marketed as global events for a global audience. And then to make sure they're inclusive, they've ever got a BSL or an ASL American sign language interpreter ready to go, they'll be pinned. But of course, there are so many sign languages around the world that, what about everybody else?

**Sophie** [00:12:50]

So, I did a little bit of research before today, just to kind of have a look at how many sign languages there are across the world. And as you say, there isn't just one that is universal. Which is a common question, really. It's a misconception of the Deaf community that everybody could understand the same sign language. But, I mean, it's not a stupid question, but it would be like saying, well, everybody can just speak English. It's not just one language in the whole world, is there? Sign language takes many forms, and there are 300 different types of sign languages across the world, and they vary from nation to nation. They even vary in terms of regional accents, as we do. You're from the South. I'm from the Midlands. It's the same for Deaf people in sign language. There are many different ways, for example, that you can sign people. How I sign people in Birmingham is very different to how somebody might sign people in Manchester. Yeah, so it's not just one language for everybody, there is a different sign language. And, as I say, there's over 300 that are, there is no consensus that says how many there are in the world, but I think roughly around 300 different sign languages.

**Jodie** [00:14:05]

I think that's really going to open people's eyes, because I genuinely think people have got good intention when they have this ready-made inclusive event. But, yeah, I don't think they realise that actually, they're saying, well, you're included if you're from this [inaudible], but everybody else, you might need to sort yourself out. But coming back to the dialect thing, because I'll be honest, I learned a lot from you previously on this, and I'm fascinated because there's far more than I realised. Like the variations are huge. I'm pretty sure we're gonna have a lot of listeners who also had no idea that this occurs. So specifically on that point, when it comes to the Deaf community, if you're doing BSL interpreting, of course I'm guessing -- well, I say, of course, but I'm guessing, the interpreter will use their own dialect. Is that understood then? Like so if it's a BSL interpreter, will everyone understand what they're saying, depending on where they're from in the UK for instance?

**Sophie** [00:15:07]

Yes, so most, as we touched on before obviously, how long it takes to become an interpreter is over a seven-year period, and then you have experience afterwards. And I mean, you probably, in every aspect of your life, you learn things from experience, don't you? But most professional sign language interpreters have the skills and the knowledge to understand and translate subtle differences in sign language. And again, if somebody signed something that you might not be, you will be unsure as to what they mean, which I've been before, when people, for example when you sign toilet, there's about 10 different signs for the sign toilet. It's just asking the person, what does that mean? And then they'll explain to you, Oh, it's our regional sign for a toilet. So, yeah, I think with working in different areas and with different people, and I think that video interpreting means that you can be an interpreter that's, you know, based in the Midlands but then talking to somebody who is Deaf in Cornwall, kind of gives you a lot more experience and understanding, and pick up different signs that are in different areas of the country.

**Jodie** [00:16:12]

Yeah, it genuinely fascinates me. I really do need to learn more, but I certainly need to have something, some more practice time to make sure that it sinks in. Just on the point of, obviously, the variations, but between the different sign languages as well. I might have told you this story before, Sophie, but I'm going to tell it again because of listeners. A wonderful lady was telling me a story of going to America. And she got to the States for a convention on sign language and she's a BSL user. And she walked into this large convention space and immediately said in BSL, Good morning. And everyone started staring at her and there was some giggles and things, and she couldn't understand why. So, she said, good morning, again. And someone came over and actually verbally said to her, oh, you're British, aren't you? And she said, yes, why is that? And I said, because, good morning, in BSL is ten breasts in ASL. And of course, they laughed and stuff. But she just went on autopilot, walked in, and, you know, said, Hi. But it just goes to show, not only the mad variation, like how different it is, but hopefully that sort of then resonates. But also, your message could be so different.

**Sophie** [00:17:33]

Definitely. And the thing is that there are signs, there is an international sign language, and there are signs that are recognised internationally. And I've been away, when I went when I was at university, we did a trip to Italy, to a Deaf school there, and we had a couple of Deaf students on my course, and they were able to communicate with other Italian Deaf people, even though their language is BSL, just because there are some signs that are recognised. Which amazed me because obviously I couldn't go to France and pick up anything that the French were saying. But yeah, there are certain signs that are recognised internationally by Deaf people. But it is important to understand that there are very different signs. And I think because of how big America is and how kind of inclusive ASL is, it's seen as kind of the big one. And as you said, oh, it's alright putting an ASL interpreter, but if they need British Sign Language somebody might not understand. Because ASL is so different to BSL, everything is on the one hand, whereas with BSL it's on two. So yeah, it's quite, it's really fascinating, really. And how the language has changed, as has spoken language, over so many years.

**Jodie** [00:18:48]

Yeah, I think that's the other thing as well because you don't really think about, you know, like new words getting added. And I mean, is there slang in sign language?

**Sophie** [00:18:57]

Oh, yeah, definitely. It's a lot to do, sign language is a lot to do with your face and your body. And they call it Sign Space. And again, that is incorporated within different regions, obviously. And that's how you can pick up where somebody is from, based on their, kind of their body language. So, yeah, there is sign, there is some, obviously we're on a podcast so I can't show you. But there are different, different ways. For example, my friend a couple of years ago, told me how to, if you saw a man who was very attractive, how you can sign that they are very good looking, and it's not kind of like the PC way that you do it. So, there are a lot of different, different, different sign languages. And it's exactly the same as spoken, spoken languages. We have slang, BSL users or Deaf people across the world also do.

**Jodie** [00:19:50]

How do they capture that? Because even, I mean we do have, you know, urban dictionaries. And we have actual slang terms that end up in the Oxford Dictionary. How do they capture the, you know, the new language, if you like, the new words, or the new signs?

**Sophie** [00:20:06]

I think, I mean, I can't speak on other sign languages, but on British Sign Language. Obviously the Deaf community is quite a small community, and kind of, you know, everybody knows somebody, who knows somebody, kind of thing. And if you're, for example, like my colleague Adam, he's from a long line of Deaf people, he's got a big Deaf family. So, most people amongst the Deaf community know who Adam is. And I think that's how things are kind of created and spread around, is that you might see, a couple of weeks ago I saw the sign for Uber, and I'd never seen how, I never knew how to sign Uber. And then obviously, I'm showing people and then other people show people, and then, and I imagine that's how it works amongst the Deaf community. And also creating new signs as just, as new words come out, obviously for, in the in the age of social media, there's got to be a sign for TikTok or Instagram or Twitter, that kind of thing. So yeah.

**Jodie** [00:20:55]

Yeah, because you'd have to say, you know, he created a tweet. That's a whole other thing as well, right?

**Sophie** [00:21:00]

Yes. Yeah, yeah.

**Jodie** [00:21:02]

This, yeah, I could go on for far too long. This is just, I love all this sort of stuff. So obviously you've talked about how long it takes for someone to even qualify as a sign interpreter. But I know from our previous discussions that certainly, Signed Solutions, you don't take people even when they're freshly qualified, do you?

**Sophie** [00:21:25]

We have a video interpreting service called Interpreters Live, and it enables communication between Deaf and hearing persons, whether it be in person, or Deaf people accessing services remotely, at home. To work on our video service, you have to have three years post qualification experience, simply because we support so many different organisations. Whether it be from Mental Health Trusts all the way to Virgin Media. So obviously, you need to have a certain level of experience to work on the service just because of the variety of calls that we get through.

**Jodie** [00:22:09]

So, people can have confidence, of course, in the quality that they're getting.

**Sophie** [00:22:12]

Yes, definitely. Yeah.

**Jodie** [00:22:14]

Excellent. So, just thinking about your own work in this space, or just experiences outside even, what's your biggest personal achievement? What are you most proud of?

**Sophie** [00:22:26]

Outside of work or inside of work, or?

**Jodie** [00:22:29]

Either, you can have one of each if you want.

**Sophie** [00:22:32]

Personally, my biggest achievement was buying my first property, probably about four years ago now. Feels like it was like yesterday. I think professionally, the job that I do, I love talking to people. And I love giving people support and advice, because you don't know what you don't know, at the end of the day. And I think the world of inclusion and accessibility and equality is so big, that it can be quite overwhelming. And a kind of a big achievement for me is that I'm able to support companies in their processes, and their policies, and help them to become more, have more understanding of the Deaf community. And just kind of in general really, it's given me, I've met so many great people, including yourself, as part of my role and that I talk to on a daily basis, which kind of, it gives, sometimes when the world can be a bit overwhelming and there's lots of things going on, it kind of does give you hope that we can become a more inclusive society.

**Jodie** [00:23:39]

That's wonderful. And I have to say, it's so nice to meet someone who's just as passionate about, you know, making real inclusion happen, and I absolutely reciprocate. And there's a reason you was asked to take part. It's always nice to chat to you. But that, yeah, I mean, that is massive. But also, I think, what is really important, it can be absolutely daunting for organisations and professionals in the, you know, diversity, equity, and inclusion space, who want to get it right, to just feel like they're on their own. And I think organisations like Be #PeopleSmart of course, certainly like Signed Solutions, we're there. You know, there is support and there is advice and key experience out there, that people can call on.

**Sophie** [00:24:22]

Definitely. I think that's the biggest thing, really, is that people, you're expected to know kind of everything. When you don't need to know everything. There are specialists in the field that are there to support you. And working kind of within this industry it's important to have allies that you can kind of go to for support and ask questions, and that kind of thing. Because it just, it kind of, that is what inclusion is, isn't it really? It's bringing people together and everybody having an understanding of the different complexities of life, and different walks that people have gone through, and that kind of thing.

**Jodie** [00:24:58]

No, definitely. So, my magic question, I'm leading in here, that I like to ask all of our guests is, if you had a magic wand, Harry Potter style, and could change one thing to make the world more inclusive or accessible, what would it be?

**Sophie** [00:25:20]

I would like to have a better, everybody to have a better understanding of and exposure to disability. If I had a magic wand, I think I would change people's perceptions on what it means to be Deaf or Disabled, and that Deaf people shouldn't have to adapt to a hearing world. Disabled people shouldn't have to adapt to an able-bodied world. Or, you know, what we view as normal. We should be making ourselves, and learning, and being more inclusive, and creating a more inclusive society for everybody. Expecting people from different walks of life to adapt to what we see as the norm. So that would be my if I had a magic wand.

**Jodie** [00:26:08]

Love that. And I mean, let's be honest, there's no such thing as normal. I'd be so offended if somebody told me I was normal. So, I really, I really do like that. But I also think it comes back to the whole, you know, there's no diversity without disability. And diverse thought is so important for every business. You know, if we didn't have different thoughts, if we didn't have, jumping into a slightly different area but, you know, if we didn't have neurodiverse thinking, people who overcome adversity as part of their day-to-day existence, coping mechanisms, etcetera. Yeah, we just, we wouldn't achieve so much innovation. It wouldn't be such a, you know, moving world.

**Sophie** [00:26:48]

And I think as well, it's the perspective that other people bring, that you might not have considered, I might not have considered before. Because I can't speak on behalf of somebody who is deaf, who is blind, who is neurodiverse. But they bring something different to the table than what you and I may bring. And I think that's really important.

**Jodie** [00:27:08]

No, absolutely, completely resonate with that. And I'm hoping that our listeners will as well, and it will give people food for thought again. So, what would you love for people to take away from this episode, particularly anything that can help them make improvements today?

**Sophie** [00:27:24]

I would ask people to think about what you, after this, listening to this podcast, what you are doing to kind of involve yourself in the Deaf community? Do you know much about the Deaf community, whether it be personally or in your professional life? How deaf aware are you? If you were to meet somebody Deaf, how would you communicate with that person? How would you, you know, no matter which kind of setting that you're in. If it's professionally, if you have Deaf employees. Or if you're looking to become a more inclusive employer or best support, you want to take on more Deaf people. Is your recruitment process accessible? Are your employees Deaf aware? Is that person going to be able to have just as good of an experience as somebody who is hearing applying for a job? And also, for organisations, are your communications accessible for Deaf people? Can Deaf people contact you in their first language of sign languages? We've touched on before, BSL isn't English, and it's very different to English. So, having a video service where people are able to ring in using their first language, does your organisation have that, are your Deaf employees able to communicate that way? I just kind of, just some questions really to consider, and how you can improve accessibility in general for the Deaf community.

**Jodie** [00:28:55]

Yeah, absolutely, certainly couldn't have said that better myself. So, thank you very much. I'm hoping that that is going to be, you know, how people can move forward. Just before we go to some sort of closing points, I just wanted to touch on, you did mention it earlier, and you can tell me if I get the terminology wrong actually, but I wanted to touch on how interpreting works the other way around, with regards to kind of voice interpreting. Because this is something a lot of people never come across, because they often only see sign interpreters on events where it's quite one way. Because it's something that you can visibly see. Where, of course, if someone uses sign as the primary or maybe only language, they then rely on an interpreter to effectively be their voice in conversation. So, I just wanted to touch on that a little bit, because I know people get really surprised, for instance, someone identifies as male, maybe that's their guest. And then there's a female voice that speaks on their behalf.

**Sophie** [00:29:56]

Yeah. I think something that I, just I was talking a couple of weeks ago to somebody, and they said to me, oh, but an interpreter, it was a Deaf person. The interpreter is actually there for a hearing person. They're not there for a Deaf person. It's just so that they, so that a hearing person can understand me. And I was like, I've never thought about that before, because we think we need an interpreter for the Deaf person, when actually the interpreter is for us, because we can't understand sign language. Just kind of went on a bit of a tangent there. Video interpreting is, there are spoken language agencies that you can use phone, telephone interpreting for. Video interpreting is exactly the same.

To kind of just explain to you how it works, it's called video relay service. So, it's whereby a sign language user is at home, and they need to contact an organisation, through a remote sign language interpreter. You click on a link, which can be on an organisation's website. This opens up a remote sign language interpreter, and the sign language interpreter makes the onward audio call, to whoever the Deaf person is wanting to speak to. So, for example, Virgin Media is one of the Interpreters Live clients. So, they click on the link on Virgin Media Website, it goes through to an interpreter, the interpreter makes the onward audio call. The guys at the Contact Centre answer the phone as if they were answering to a hearing person, it's just being facilitated through the sign language interpreter. So typically, somebody who works in the Interpreters Live Service will say, I'm calling on behalf of Joe Bloggs on the Interpreters Live Service, and then they will then speak in first person as the Deaf person. So, the Deaf person will be signing to the interpreter on video. And then the interpreter would just be voicing over to the contact centre colleague.

Also works reverse ways. So, if somebody at a contact centre is wanting to contact a Deaf customer or client back, they can call through, as you would do to a hearing person, and through to a remote sign language interpreter as an audio call, and then it goes through as a video call to a Deaf person. So, it's really easy. It's not as complicated as it sounds. I think one thing to consider is that, if you're speaking to somebody through a sign language interpreter, to not say, tell him I said this, or, you know, can he do this? Just speak to them as you were normally speaking to somebody on the phone. And part of setting up as a client of our video service is that you get an etiquette guide and have an understanding of how to communicate with a Deaf person. Because I appreciate some people might never have used a sign language interpreter before. And it can be quite off putting when if the person's name is Joe Bloggs. But then it's Sophie Kang who's interpreting, you think, oh, wait, is it not a woman? No, it's a man. It's just you're hearing it through a woman's voice.

**Jodie** [00:32:48]

Thank you for that. One, I just wanted people to have a bit more understanding of that in general, so that it's not a surprise when they do come across it. But also, I mean, call centres are a really good example. But I'm also thinking around things like recruitment processes, and how invaluable that will be, to make sure you can actually have inclusive recruitment.

**Sophie** [00:33:08]

Definitely, and I would encourage recruitment companies and companies to consider, how are your recruitment processes accessible for sign language users? Because if British Sign Language is a first language of a Deaf person, but you're, the job description that you have is in English and you're wanting a CV, or an application form, how is that person able to fill out, to the best of their ability, if their first language is sign language. So, consider how you can make your job descriptions more accessible. Do you want them translated into BSL? Would you give the person the option to have a video CV to upload, so that they can actually give their full selves to a job? Just because it's quite, I talked to so many different organisations about making themselves accessible, and unless you think about, I mean, the barriers for the Deaf community are huge anyway. But when you think about applying for a job, there's even more barriers. So where do you begin, as a Deaf person who you're applying, you don't have the barrier of, you know, making sure there's an interpreter. You can't even, it's not an accessible job description, and you can't understand it in your first language. So, I would encourage people to consider how you can make your recruitment process better from the beginning of that candidate's journey.

**Jodie** [00:34:36]

Thank you. That is all such, you know, really brilliant advice. But it's just, it's just so realistic, you know, it's absolutely stuff that people can achieve. Now they understand that there is support out there. So, on that support piece, how can people find you, and where can they find more information on Signed Solutions? Of course, I can share links when we share the episode out, but where do they go?

**Sophie** [00:35:01]

We've got loads of information on our website, which is Signed Solutions.uk.com. We also have our Interpreters Live website, which is there for companies, for the Deaf community, for people who might be looking to get access to work support through us. Loads of information. As I say, I like to describe Signed Solutions as a one stop shop for all Deaf services. So, we don't only just focus on sign language, we do other non-spoken communication support. So, if you're looking for sign supported English or Deaf Blind interpreters, we're just kind of the one stop shop for everything. So, yeah, if you check out our website or contact me, we're always posting stuff on social media. We have an event. I'm not sure the date that this podcast will be released, Jodie, but we do have an event that's coming up, on Deaf Awareness Week, that we'd like to invite everyone to sign up, just to get an insight into the Deaf world and how to become more deaf aware.

**Jodie** [00:36:03]

Is that going to be recorded for people to catch up?

**Sophie** [00:36:05]

Yes, it will be.

**Jodie** [00:36:07]

Excellent. So, all I really wanted to say now, Sophie, because, I mean, I always learn something new, every single time we speak. And when I say something, probably a handful of things. I've been making notes while we've been having the conversation again today. But I just wanted to say a big thank you, for your time, but also just for being a kind of font of knowledge that can help so many other people.

**Sophie** [00:36:31]

Thank you. Well, I'm learning every day. So, listen, there's probably loads more for me to learn, but thank you, I really appreciate it. And I've really, it's my first podcast, and it has been a very pleasant experience.

**Jodie** [00:36:43]

Well, I hope to hear you on many more because, honestly, you've got so much valuable stuff to share. So yeah, keep sharing. I want to keep learning from you. So, a big thank you to Sophie. And, of course, a big thank you to all of you for listening today. And I really hope that you take loads away, that you can make changes from today. And certainly, you know, from this perspective, for the Deaf community, we will see a lot more inclusion going on within your organisations. Thank you very much.

**Recorded message [00:37:10]**

Thank you for listening to this podcast. And we really hope you enjoyed it. We'd love to hear your feedback. So please do get in touch. And don't forget to subscribe, so you don't miss out on the other wonderful guest speakers we have lined up.