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Texten motsvarar helt den engelska texten i den aktuella delen av programmet.

An interpreting agency of their own

Joshua Finkle and Irma Azrelyant live in New York. They're both deaf and they decided to open an interpreting agency. They will tell us what it was like to start the business.

We have three full time employees. Irma and I are deaf, plus we have Christine. She can hear. She started working here in September. We have agreements with over 100 interpreters. 10–15 deaf interpreters work for us, too.

We're listed in this book. It covers the entire U.S. Everyone has one – at home, libraries, hospitals. We're listed in the New York section. I had a big network of contacts before we opened the interpreting agency. We just needed to tell people that we had gotten started. We're in the Yellow Pages. We informed customers about our services and contacted around 500 people during our marketing work. We got off to a slow start during the first 2 months, with some phone calls but then things picked up and we got lots of work from hospitals, schools, courts and other places. Our network of 500 people suddenly grew to 2,000. That's not bad!

We keep statistics to see how we are doing. You have to market your business so customers can find you. We've done well. Now Christine can help us make phone calls and coordinate things. It's working out well. If we get fewer orders we'll need more marketing. Marketing is very important.

America has a lot of immigrants and many of them come to New York. You don't get far if you're deaf and can't use English sign language. You can get a job but then that's all you can

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do. Immigrants can learn English through their children and friends. But if they need an interpreter, they often prefer a deaf interpreter. The deaf interpreter's words may be easier to understand. I don't mean that hearing interpreters are bad, it depends on the situation. Deaf Americans want hearing interpreters since they speak the language. Around 10 % of all deaf immigrants want a deaf interpreter.

All deaf people can start their own business. You have to be persistent. You shouldn't be nervous, you should think: "I can do this." You need to be supportive. If two of you want to start a business, you need to talk it through and trust and respect each other. Then you can succeed, but if you can't cooperate, you will fail. This applies to anyone, whether you can hear or not. If you don't succeed the first time, you have to try again with something else. People often fail several times before they succeed with a business.

