Calling something a demand of your job means that it is a salient aspect of your work. It is a factor that rises to a level of significance that will, or should, impact the decision-making involved in your work.

Interpreting demands fall into four categories, from the broadest impactful elements to the most specific elements.

*Environmental demands* address broad aspects of the communication setting in which the interpreter is employed – a number of salient aspects of your work will be pre-defined by the work setting itself.

*Interpersonal demands* are what happens between the consumers you are working with, what happens between the consumers and the interpreter, or significant things that happen between any other people who are present in the environment as well, provided those interactions impact, or should impact, your interpreting work.

*Paralinguistic demands* can best be understood not as *what* is being said (or signed) but *how* it is being said (or signed).

*Intrapersonal demands* are best defined as that which is specific to the cognitive, physiological, and psychological experiences of the interpreter.

**EIPI CATEGORIES**

**Environmental Demands:**

* Where, who, why
* 4 subcategories
  + Goal of the environment
  + Terminology (specialized vocabulary)
  + Participants (personnel/clientele)
  + Physical surroundings
* The demands which are “in place” *before* people begin interacting with one another, or demands that emerge as a direct result of an environmental change (e.g., an air conditioner starts running, a new person enters the room).
* Take for example, a movie set. Before the director calls action the “frozen” movie set is like a photograph. As you observe the frozen movie set, you can gather information about the other subcategories of environmental demands.
* Examine the physical surroundings and consider which aspects are likely to affect your work.
  + Is it outdoors?
  + Are there many people? Is it crowded?
  + Is the lighting dim or bright?
* The interpreter can even gather information from the people who will be interacting with each other.
  + Physical characteristics
  + Implications of their dress
  + Posture
* All of these static observations provide the interpreter with a wealth of information relevant to preparing for and predicting the upcoming demands of the assignment.
* Once the movie director calls “action,” the demands will likely become a demand from one of the other three demand categories.
* Environmental demands lead to interpersonal demands and paralinguistic demands
* Goal of the environment:
  + When it comes to decision making and ethics, this subcategory is the most important of all environmental demands.
  + Most environments have been established to foster a particular goal.
  + We refer to this as the answer to the “why” question—why does this place exist?
  + Recognizing what the goal is, and using that information to guide your demand predictions skills and control decisions, is a crucial aspect of DC-S practice.
  + Ethical interpreting practice must be consistent with the goal of the environment. Interpreters should align themselves with the environment’s goal rather than the specific objectives of any particular party in that environment. This is an important step toward maintaining neutrality.
* Examples of goals of the environment:
  + Example: What is the goal of a psychiatric emergency room environment?
    - Assess and intervene as necessary regarding imminent patient safety concerns, in particular, suicide, homicide, or other serious risks to self or others
  + Example: What is the goal of a high school classroom?
    - Effective education at the secondary school level
  + Example: What is the goal of a hospital emergency room?
    - Triage, stabilize, discharge
  + Example: What is the goal of a company holiday party?
    - Network, socialize
  + Example: What is the goal of a Sunday church service?
    - Worship, inspire, comfort
  + Example: What is the goal of a funeral service?
    - Commemorate, grieve, support
  + Example: What is the goal of a college classroom?
    - Education
* Environmental Factors:
  + Lighting
  + Noise
  + Temperature
  + Physical distractions
  + Terminology
  + Personnel
  + Odors

**Interpersonal Demands:**

* Most complex category
* Relate to the “what” of situations
* Broad examples of interpersonal demands:
  + Power/authority dynamics
  + Communication style and goals
  + Communication objectives
  + Emotional tone or mood
  + Cultural dynamics
  + Thought worlds
  + Parties know each other?
  + Previous interaction
  + Role tension
  + Turn-taking
* Can be understood as comprising “what happens” between people in a situation
* A common mistake is to assume that interpersonal demands reflect conflicts or some other tension or problem occurring between people. While conflicts, tensions, etc., certainly are interpersonal demands, this demand category should be more broadly understood as encompassing participants’ *thought worlds*, *what happens* (the interaction, including interaction with the interpreter), and *what is said or signed*.
* The interpersonal category will be the one that encompasses the majority of your work as an interpreter.

**Paralinguistic Demands:**

* Demands that arise from how utterances (speech or signs) are manifest.
* When the “raw material” of language presents a challenge for the interpreter to “grasp,” that probably constitutes a paralinguistic demand.
  + The term “grasp” is used purposefully. Simply not comprehending a word or phrase (e.g., because it involves specialized vocabulary) does not indicate a paralinguistic demand. That is more likely an environmental demand.
  + Paralinguistic demands present a more basic challenge to comprehension.
  + A paralinguistic demand often will stimulate a “Huh…what did you say?” type of feeling for the interpreter rather than a “What does that mean?” feeling.
* Common types of paralinguistic demands:
  + Physical limitations
  + Cognitive limitations
  + Physical positioning
  + Idiosyncratic sign/speech
  + Volume
  + Pace
  + Accents
* Physical limitations:
  + Example: Deaf person has missing teeth, has broken arm, or hearing person has a stutter
* Cognitive limitations:
  + Example: Deaf or hearing person is developmentally disabled, aphasic, or intoxicated
* Physical positioning:
  + Example: Deaf person is lying down; hearing person is facing the whiteboard
* Idiosyncrasies of signing/speaking:
  + Example: Deaf person signs with pinky finger up; hearing person sounds very nasal
* Volume:
  + Example: Soft or loud
* Pace:
  + Example: Slow or rapid
* Accents:
  + Example: Southern U.S., Boston, Indian, British
* Two most common problems in understanding this demand category:
  + Improperly labeling specialized terminology as a paralinguistic demand
  + Distinguishing between paralinguistic demands and interpersonal demands
* Remember, specialized terminology virtually always belongs in the environmental demand category. The work environment generally dictates the types of things that are talked about there, including specialized vocabulary that may be used.
  + Technical vocabulary or terminology always should be identified as belonging to the environmental demand category
* However, there are situations where a certain aspect of how terminology is used can properly be understood as a paralinguistic demand. These situations involve specialized vocabulary that is uttered as “common parlance.”
  + For example, when people are well-acquainted with a technical term or acronym – something they use regularly in their work – they might say the term in an overly casual or rapid way, not being careful to enunciate or sign the term clearly. When the interpreter cannot “grasp” the utterance sufficiently, in order to fingerspell it to the deaf person (who may be equally familiar with the term) or repeat it in order to ask for clarification of its meaning (these are examples of control options) the *usage* of the specialized terminology has presented a paralinguistic demand.
* When terminology is correctly heard/seen, it is an environmental demand, even if that terminology is not understood by the interpreter.
* When articulation problems impede the interpreter’s access to (grasping of) the terminology, it may be a paralinguistic demand.
* Another common challenge, one involving distinguishing paralinguistic from interpersonal demands, is the phenomenon of *deixis*.
  + Deictic forms of speech identify things, places, or time by using words such as *here, this, that, then,* etc.
  + Usage of such terms can be an interpreting challenge when the topic being referred to is unclear or requires specific repetition in the translation
  + Demands emanating from deixis are interpersonal demands

**Intrapersonal Demands:**

* Controls and intrapersonal demands can get confused because they both have to do with the interpreter and in some cases, what is going on inside their head.
* Jobs may require that the interpreter tolerate certain unpleasant experiences, such as physical, psychological, or even philosophical stresses.
* Because of this unique relationship between intrapersonal demands and controls (they both involve the interpreter), it is often the case that the very controls the interpreter brings (or does not bring) can *create* intrapersonal demands.
  + For example, imagine an interpreting assignment where the topic is something the interpreter knows a great deal about. While this knowledge and experience may serve the interpreter well in responding to the assignment’s environmental and interpersonal demands, these same controls may lead the interpreter to harbor strong opinions about the unfolding discussion and what occurs between the parties involved in this topic or situation that the interpreter knows so well. They will likely create intrapersonal demands.
* Another common source of intrapersonal demands is when an interpreter does not bring sufficient controls to feel comfortable and competent in an assignment.
* Whether an intrapersonal demand is the result of insufficient controls, disagreement about the topic or situation at hand, frustration with consumers, or fatigue or hunger, recognizing these responses as intrapersonal demands is the first and most critical step in constraining them and not allowing them to (further) impede an interpreter’s work.
  + The interpreter should deal with the demands in the moment, if they can, by merely identifying them as intrapersonal demands, followed by positive self-talk is very effective. However, if this does not resolve the matter, try to put the intrapersonal demand aside until the assignment is concluded and deal with it another time and/or with other people, such as a supervisor, mentor, or support network.
* Recognizing and dealing with intrapersonal demands is the interpreter’s ultimate goal in maintaining neutrality.
* Intrapersonal Factors:
  + Anger/frustration (from things outside interpreting assignment)
  + Biases you must suppress
  + Not being with it
  + Personal reactions and emotions to the situation (is it about a rape case and you were raped, or something bad happens to a kid and you have a kid)
  + Safety concerns
  + Liability concerns