



## Can Hearing Loss Cost You Thousands Of Dollars A Year?

(NAPSA)—When looking for a job, you need to do more than brush off your résumé and buy an interview suit. Good listening skills are crucial for any employee. Seventy-three percent of employers surveyed by ACT, a leading college and workforce planning organization, ranked listening among “extremely important” job skills. If you suffer from any hearing loss, the most important investment you may want to make is improving your communication skills.

“People with hearing loss find it difficult to get and keep a job,” said Chicago-based ear, nose and throat doctor Sreekant Cherukuri.

Whether because of ignorance, uncertainty, fear or malice, employers are often unwilling to hire people with hearing issues. Even failing to hear the occasional word on a job interview can lead the interviewer to think a potential hire is not up to the job. Many times, employers don’t even realize that potential hires have hearing loss. Rather, even slight hearing impairment can result in a candidate appearing uncommunicative, unfriendly or even unintelligent.

While it is illegal to discriminate against people with hearing issues, the reality is that such discrimination happens.

It’s also true that those who are employed may find it difficult to get promoted because of their impairment. The Better Hearing



**Hearing loss can be a liability when it comes to finding a better job.**

Institute confirmed the negative impact of hearing loss on job performance. People with untreated hearing loss lose as much as \$30,000 annually depending on their degree of hearing loss.

Few jobs provide accommodations to compensate for hearing loss, and in a difficult job market, employers see people who are ready to do the job as a better bet.

While it’s estimated that 36 million people in the U.S. need hearing aids, over 77 percent (28 million) are walking around without them. The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Association estimates that only one in five people who needs a hearing aid wears one.

One reason many people don’t get the help they need is the cost of hearing aids. That’s why Cherukuri decided to develop an

affordable hearing aid (The MDHearingAid®).

Many consumer electronics items, such as smartphones, digital cameras and DVD players, cost less than \$200, but the cost of a hearing aid (a much simpler device) can be prohibitive. Medicare and most insurance plans do not cover hearing aids and the average out-of-pocket cost is between \$1,500 and \$3,000 per year. For one of the most prevalent chronic health conditions reported by older adults, hearing aids are an unaffordable luxury for many.

“The components of a hearing aid are not any more expensive than an iPhone and a hearing aid can’t do what an iPhone does, but a hearing aid costs so much more,” said Cherukuri.

He was sure he could build a medical-grade hearing aid that was reasonably priced and effective for the most common types of hearing loss—and he was right, as his customers, such as nurses, teachers and truckers, have told him how important this investment has been for their careers.

The MDHearingAid® he invented costs less than \$200 per ear and provides a viable option to patients who cannot afford the high price of custom hearing aids. That’s a price range that many more people can afford to invest in their employment future.

For more information, visit [www.MDHearingAid.com](http://www.MDHearingAid.com).