

WITHOUT WORDS

For Robert Davis, providing financial advice is handwork. A former securities specialist at Dresdner Bank, Davis lost his hearing through an illness. **Now he advises hearing-impaired clients in sign language.**



Robert Davis' world changed one day a few years back: it became quiet. Davis, from England, was a futures and options trader trained to send buy and sell orders halfway around the world and juggle two or three telephones at the same time. But one day he came down with an infection which was to eventually deprive him of his hearing. And that was it for the fast-paced securities business, transacted via telephone. During his stay at a therapy clinic however, he got an extraordinary idea: To become a financial adviser to the hearing-

impaired, using e-mail, texting, fax—and sign language in face-to-face meetings. His manager was all for the idea, together they outlined his new position. For nearly three years now he has been advising hearing-impaired individuals at the Dresdner Bank Königsallee office in Düsseldorf using sign language—which he maintains is not at all that difficult. On the contrary, many of the gestures are so self-evident that anyone can understand them immediately. To prove it, Davis demonstrated to 1585 six terms in German sign language.



BULL AND BEAR

Up or down, boom or crash? Any child can perform the signs for these two market animals: horns moving upward, paws moving downward.

OBAMA

A combination of name and nationality: the "O" is followed by a "B" turned inward, allowing the fingers to simultaneously symbolize the US flag.





MONEY

Hearing or deaf, quickly rubbing your thumb, index finger and middle finger together is understood by practically everyone the world over.



GLOBALIZATION

This gesture would have been known to Galileo as well: the world is round. Davis thus signs a ball and presses it together, expressing that the world is moving closer and closer together.



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Like every trader knows, you can make money if stocks are going up (sign one) or down (sign two) if you know how to go about it.



WALL STREET

Despite its being the most well-known financial center, there is no one specific sign for Wall Street—all you do is just sign "wall" and then "street".

Photos: Hartmut Bühler