

Dictation Notes and Tips

The following ideas came from Adam Burnstone, the ASCC's IT Manager, and Terra Patrom, CRC, ASCC Executive Director. Initially, I told Terra, as my direct supervisor Diane was out, what I was working on. She got back to me with disappointment that I was not fast enough with dictation. Nothing more was said as I tried working this out based on a one minute for every four of dictation. Unfortunately, my trying was not good enough. I thought the director of the agency would come back after a time and let me know what all I could be doing and some tips. She did not, and it was something that showed up on a yearly eval. After this, I took some time and then tried the approach of going back to her and telling Terra that I just do not know what to do. I looked online and could not quite find anything. She responded that she was busy but forwarded the message about dictation to Adam. Adam had to look at several sources and compiled the below list. Try the tips to see if they work for you. Before working for the (AR Spinal Cord Commission (ASCC), no one ever talked to me about a one to four dictation rule. I knew about and did do work timely, but these notes help things go even smoother. First, find the notes of concern I sent, and then see the tips.... I am grateful to Terra and Adam for their helpful information.

**Virginia "Ginger" Robertson
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Quote from an E-mail sent to Terra and Adam, Referenced Above....

"I know some say you should do a 1 to 4 ratio rule for transcription. However, according to my research online, true all the time transcriptionist type over 60 plus words a minute, use transcription software, use a machine with a foot pedal, use speech to text software, and dictation software. It is also apparent from online searching that 15 to 20 minutes of audio takes about one hour, give or take such factors as how fast and how clear the dictation is. The times just given do not factor in your proofing time or other job issues that come up such as answering and routing calls. It is my thought that doing things right and getting all the needed information in a document is better than going super fast and leaving out needed information or failing to spell check before sending. You want to always work to better yourself in anything, but you also want your work to be right. What else can I do? If I listen and type all at the same time, I could miss something and have to relisten and retype. I don't type 80 words a minute. What are your tips? I know here dictation is how I have to do things for those that give me information. I know that every employment opportunity is different. However, for here, what else can I do on the 1 to 4 ratio?

Thanks."

Dictation Tips

When you say 15-20 minutes of audio takes about one hour, that accurately describes a ratio between 1 to 4 (15 minutes) and 1 to 3 (20 minutes). One to four is recognized as the industry standard across many companies. However, I believe you may be worrying too much over the 1 to 4 ratio as opposed to focusing on key ideas or tips that will assist you when transcribing

audio. Remember, focus more on the tips and not so much on the 1 to 4 ratio, as the ratio will fall in line. Here are some tips I believe will be beneficial:

- Listen to the whole audio file first. Doing so can provide context when you are listening and transcribing the audio into text.
- Listen and transcribe a full sentence at a time. Transcribing a few words at a time can result in more errors due to a loss of context.
- Yes, accuracy is more important than speed. This does not mean timeliness is not appreciated.
- Know the lingo. You should be familiar with a majority of the medical/industry terms case managers/counselors/other office staff will use in their dictation. You are bound to encounter new words, but a quick dictionary check or Google search can provide spelling and context.
- Use templates. This is something you already do. Many agencies/companies have forms for nearly every memo, letter, etc. that could require transcription. If an entity does not have special forms, this would be a good thing to address with management staff. Accessible Adobe PDF's can be created, which are fillable. Organizations dealing with accessibility can assist with this if an IT person is not familiar with making forms accessible. An IT person can contact such groups as the local rehabilitation service agencies.
- Adjust the speed of the audio. VLC can also slow down or speed up playback of audio. This can be useful if a person speaks too quickly or slowly to match your typing speed. VLC Media player is a free download open-source-software that works across multiple platforms, Windows, MAC etc. This software has audio and video functionality and is customizable. Here's a link..... <https://www.videolan.org/>
- You mentioned hardware such as a foot pedal. Foot pedals are generally used to save time by keeping your hands on the keyboard and off the mouse. Your hands never leave the keyboard in order to navigate the computer interface. This actually gives you a leg up on others who aren't familiar with screen readers.
- You also mentioned software such as speech to text and dictation. If these software packages were as robust and capable as we'd like them to be, they would replace the need for human transcription. They are really better suited to occasional use and in short bursts of text such as hands-free calling or texting.

I hope you find these tips helpful going forward.

-Adam

More Tips for Transcribing and Dictating

3 TYPES OF TRANSCRIPTION: EDITED,

VERBATIM, AND INTELLIGENT



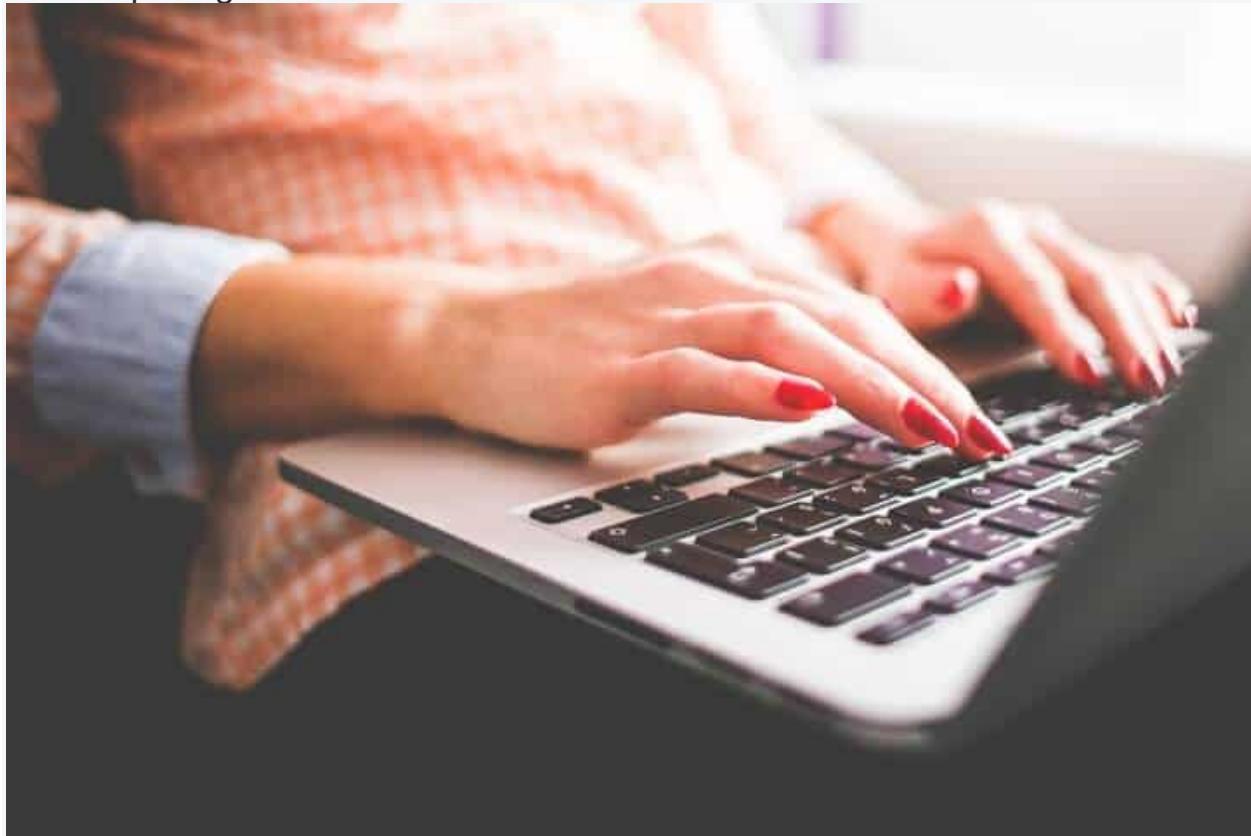
Transcription service is a useful tool that helps brands save time and money. By converting speech, audio and video files into a written or electronic text document, a business is able to pursue designated project timelines without delay and focus on its principal objectives.

Important meetings and discussions are recorded, thereby providing accurate accounts that can be used for sending client reports, delivering dependable customer assistance, as well as backtracking and implementing sales and marketing strategies.

When utilized as a mediator between customers and businesses, transcription allow brands to take a keener look into the dynamics of their audience's purchasing behavior.

Transcribing also enhances adaptability of businesses through enabling a smoother process of determining which ideas and information can still be rehashed or enhanced into a method of branding and reaching out to customers.

Transcription goes hand-in-hand with translation services



(Image courtesy of pxhere.com)

Transcription services is modified depending on the language where it is being used. Phrases, sentences, and even fillers do not necessarily contain universal meaning in all languages.

An American **slang word or phrase** may have a different or more complicated variation in Spanish or Arabic. Culture also plays a big role in the language of several countries.

That being said, businesses with target audiences located across the globe should make it a point to hire transcribers with profound knowledge and understanding of the languages or countries covered by the brand's services. In this manner, the quality and significance of the transcription in a business' overall operations is preserved and reflected.

There are three basic types of transcriptions that every business owner needs to know the practice of transcribing for brands has evolved overtime. The result is the development of more specified variations and a wider coverage of transcription services.

In fact, [the rise of video content in digital marketing](#) is now driving brands to seek the advantages of using transcription for videos.

For businesses that are new to the world of transcription for brands, there are three fundamental forms of transcribing, and these are edited, verbatim, and intelligent.

1. Edited Transcription

An edited transcription is a form of transcribing that focuses on delivering quality documents. It involves the omission of some sentences or phrases that are deemed unnecessary, excessive or are grammatically incorrect.

Regardless of the words or sentences omitted, the essence and whole idea of the text is still maintained.

The practice of edited transcription is best used for content that business owners wish to have translated in a particular foreign language, or published as a book or printed material.

More often than not, this type of transcribing utilizes a more formal type of writing.

The readability of the document is prioritized as well, to make it more appealing and relevant to whoever the brand wishes to target with the document being transcribed.

The use of edited transcription is often present in conferences, seminars and speeches.

2. Intelligent Transcription

Accuracy is a crucial factor in intelligent transcriptions. Compared to edited transcription, intelligent transcription focuses on light editing of the audio or video file.

By ‘light editing’, this means that fillers expressed by the speaker, such as ‘ums’, ‘om’s, ‘err’, along with pauses in between discussions, repetitions, and expressions of acknowledgement and deep thought such as ‘okay’, ‘got it’, ‘hmm’, and ‘I wonder’ are omitted from the transcribed document.

Additional irrelevant details eliminated include stutters and stammers, slangs, non-standard language (gonna, ain’t, ‘cause), and any form or detail depicting disruptions in speech, such as coughing and throat clearing.

The main point is to eliminate phrases that are irrelevant to the conversation or discussion's main subject.



(Image courtesy of pxhere.com)

Truth be told, omitting fillers and unnecessary fragments of the recording being transcribed is only scratching the surface.

The crucial factor in intelligent transcription is the ability to determine the gist of the message and preserve it in the transcribed document, even after the emotional component of the original file is excluded.

As such, the final products of intelligent transcriptions are expected to have substance, while accurately representing the tone and essence of the original content.

Intelligent or smart transcription is most commonly used in medical fields and business communications.

3. Verbatim Transcription

Verbatim transcription captures both the verbal and non-verbal components of the discussion being transcribed. This means that fillers, slangs, stammers, and all the details omitted in intelligent transcription is retained.

Given that the bulk of information needed to be put in writing in verbatim transcription is heavier, this makes the task more complicated and difficult than it seems.

Aside from the essence of the message, every factor recorded in the audio or video, from the shifts in breathing, emotion and tone, to the interruptions in speech and background noise are factored in in the final written output.

The employment of verbatim transcription means to literally transcribe the contents of an audio or video recording. It serves as a reliable and vital tool for research, especially for new projects or campaigns that a brand wishes to implement.

It is also an important factor in court hearings, police investigations, and job interviews. Each variation of transcription services has its own purposes. For businesses, transcribed audios and videos are helpful in market research, publishing documents, as well as in regulating and reviewing important discussions related to the enhancement of the services being offered.

By keeping records of how and what a target audience has to say about a product or promotion, business owners will have a better idea of how they can pitch their products and advertising strategies better to their customers.

In the same manner, transcription promotes better coordination among CEOs, managers, and members of a company's different departments because of how it provides accurate references to meetings and discussions.

The inclusion of transcription, either as a tool or as a service offered to a brand's clientele entails a desire to boost flexibility, efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Thus, when employed carefully and strategically, it could also aid in a business' growth and expansion in the long run.

<https://newmediaservices.com.au/types-of-transcription/>

Beginner Transcriber Guide and Quick Tips

Posted on April 20, 2017 by Becca Thomas

If you are new to transcription, consider this your quick start guide. You'll find a few tips in this concise guide to get you off on the right foot for your transcription career.

Right Software and Equipment

To start, you need the right kind of equipment to get your work done. There are various free and paid software out there. Do your research and find what works for you. You also want to experiment with shortcuts and foot pedals. Find what is suitable for you and your needs.

Instructions and Research

Make sure you read any instructions that the customer has sent with their file. Follow formatting instructions and if you have any questions, don't be afraid to ask. It's easier

to set up things before starting than to have to reformat a document after you've already typed it up. If there are terms you aren't sure how to spell or don't fully understand, don't be afraid to Google the information to make sure you have the correct spelling.

Sample the Audio

You'll want to check the audio out before you start working. Make sure that the audio is consistent throughout and that there are no audio problems. Pick the easiest file for you to transcribe. If there are any issues, contact someone for help.

Take it in Small Sections

It may take more time, but when you are starting out, this helps in ensuring that you don't miss words or type incorrect words. Doing this helps to make it easy for you to remember what was said. Once you are done with your transcription, always review your work.

Comfort is Key

You want to set up your work area to suit your needs. Find the right chair for you and make sure you have enough space to do your work. Make any necessary changes. This is your space so make it conducive to your work.

Guidelines – Never violate these rules

- If you come across a file with no audio, report it. Raw transcripts should only contain the audio; time-codes, headers/footers, speaker tracking, etcetera are not needed.
- Nothing should be omitted from the audio, unless specified.
- If there are any inaudible sections, they should be marked with _____.
- Simply label laughter as [laughter] or [chuckle].
- Unfinished sentences or pauses mid-sentence should be noted with ellipsis(...).
- Words such as wanna, gonna, kinda or contractions should not be expanded.
- With the exception of measurements, numbers one to nine should be transcribed in letters.
- There should be no more than 2 mistakes for every 10 comprehensible words spoken.
- Start a new paragraph with each new speaker and they should be separated with an empty line.
- Fillers (you know, like, etc.) and Utterances (Uh, Um, etc.) should be omitted unless it's strict verbatim.

Suggestion styles:

- Spelled-out names should be capitalized and spaced with hyphens.
- Spell out etcetera (not etc.)
- It's i.e. and not ie.

- It's e.g. and not eg.
- Alright and all right are both acceptable.
- Statements can start with And.

Performance

You are graded on a 5-point scale: A+/Excellent = 5, D/Poor = 1. The minimum average for a transcription grade is 3.15.

<https://scribie.com/blog/2017/04/beginner-transcriber-guide-and-quick-tips/>

10 Tips For Awesome Transcription

- by [Tracey D'Aviero](#)
- [9 Comments](#)

When you start out as a Virtual Assistant, one of the easiest services to offer is transcription.

It takes very little setup and it is an in-demand service. But is it really that easy to do? Not really.



It's important to note that transcription is a specialty; **it is not as simple as just typing.**

There are many types of audio files that you can transcribe, but the three main categories for transcription generally fall into general, legal and medical.

For the purposes of Internet marketing and social media, my clients mainly require general transcription, also known as business transcription. This can mean transcribing a conference call, a teleseminar, a webinar, a podcast, or any other type of digital audio.

Transcribed documents are great because they can be used or **repurposed in a variety of ways:** as workbooks or ebooks, blog posts or articles, and they can be used as giveaway products or paid products.

So in Internet marketing, we need transcription! I started out doing a lot of transcription, but now I don't have as much time so I outsource that kind of work wherever possible. It can be very hard to find a reliable and reasonable transcriptionist. (The great ones can be either too busy or priced out of my clients' budgets).

Here are ten tips that will help you perfect your skills if you are interested in offering transcription as one of your services:

1. **You need to be a fast and accurate typist.** Slow typing speed will just not cut it, and having to make endless corrections will make the job take so long that you will waste your time and lose money.
2. **You need to have clear and accurate hearing skills.** You must be able to hear and understand what is being said on the audio so you can type it. Good headphones or earphones are essential to make sure that you can hear what is being said, especially if there is more than one speaker, if there is an accent, or if there is background noise.
3. **Be willing to do Internet research to find correct spelling** and other relevant information about the audios you are transcribing. By taking the time to get the names of the speakers and the programs they are talking about, it sets you above the rest in terms of professionalism.
4. **Get transcription software to do the job.** There are many free and paid software versions available via an Internet search. I love [Express Scribe](#). You should have experience using the software so that you can either operate it using keyboard shortcuts or a foot pedal. Some people swear by foot pedals and laptops, others use desktops and keyboard shortcut keys. Whatever you use, make sure it is suitable for you.
5. **Control your accuracy.** Only type as fast as you can type *accurately*. It will save you proofreading time later if you don't have to correct a lot of spelling and grammar errors. You should also have good spelling and grammar skills. If you do not, be sure to have someone else proofread your transcript before sending it to the client.
6. **You should know your client's format.** Ask your client ahead of time how they want the document formatted. It is much easier to type in a standard format than it is to try to format a large document afterwards.
7. **Be sure you have a comfortable work station.** I sit on an exercise ball to sit on when I do my transcription. It keeps me upright and active, and there is nothing impeding my elbows or arms so I can type for longer periods of time before tiring. I can also type much faster on the ball than I do in my office chair.

8. Charge by the audio hour. Clients want to know how much something is going to cost them when they send it to you. They don't want to expect to pay you for 3 hours of work, only to have you say it took 8 hours to do the transcript for whatever reason. Figure out how many hours it takes you to do one hour of audio and then use that as your base audio hour rate. Your clients will be much more willing to sign on the dotted line when there is a firm fee (45 minute audio x your audio hour rate = their fee).

9. When you receive the audio from the client, listen to it to assess the sound quality. Listen at various intervals to be sure the the sound quality is consistent throughout. Report back to the client that you have checked the audio quality and let them know whether you think it is good or bad. If it is good, confirm the rate you quoted them. If it is bad, either try to get a better version from them, or revise your price.

10. Enjoy it! If you don't enjoy doing transcription, it can be very difficult work. If you take regular breaks, you will be able to get more done in a fresh state. I typically do 15 audio minutes at a time, and then I take a break for a while. Then when I go back to start again, I am fresh and fast!

So there you have it. Ten great tips to help you get set up to provide transcription services. Remember too, that it does take a lot of practice, but when you set yourself up for success from the start, you will be able to build up your speed with practice.

You can build a great reputation by paying attention to these details, and that means repeat business and referrals!

Want to become a better transcriptionist? Take my 5 day free e-course to practice and hone your skills!

<http://www.yourvamentor.com/blog/2010/05/10-tips-for-awesome-transcription/>

Dictating of Files and Information

The following are good skills when dictating a document.

- Use good quality devices and software.
- Speak very clearly, and spell difficult names and terms.
- Try hard to dictate in a quiet place.
- Do not use a lot of filler words or take long pauses to think about what you want to say.
- Give all necessary details, but also keep the dictation on point and two the point. A memo should not take 30 minutes to dictate, more like two to three minutes with a max of seven minutes if much detail is required to make a case for an issue.
- A good person dictating a transcription will place commas and other punctuation where it is needed and spell difficult or unusual words. They will also indicate a paragraph

change or indicate a new section of a document, such as with an intake and telling the transcriber to go to the "Medical Justification section" or the Summary section".

- Be accessible to your transcriber in case they have questions. The sooner they get any questions answered, the sooner the transcriber can get the document back to the one needing it.
- Realize that if there are multiple people speaking on a dictation, it will take the transcriber longer to complete the assignment. If a recording is two hours, it may take up to eight hours to complete it.

(Note these tips came from various research online and experiences I, Ginger, have encountered in transcribing dictations from others.)

The afore information will be a great help to you. Do seek assistance from mentors, supervisors, IT staff, seminars, online tools and more. Make notes of what you find.