

Key Points to remember for transcription jobs

If you want to do transcription jobs, use these key points to help you be the best at the job.

1. Misheard words:

Listen to the audio closely to ensure you are hearing words correctly and that your sentences actually make sense.

If the sentence does not read correctly or does not make sense then listen again for any misheard words.

A good tool to use is [DFX Audio Enhancer](#).

This can help with the volume on some files, also if you're serious about doing transcription work it's always best to invest in a really good pair of noise cancelling headphones.

Too many [?] or [inaudible] could cause your customer to think you're not serious.

2. Starting and ending files with ellipses, dashes or any other punctuation:

Normally your file will start with either the name of a person giving an interview or

Interviewer:

You will never or very rarely start a file with ellipses, dashes or any other punctuation.

3. Inserting speaker ID:

Follow the guidelines of your customer.

Some customers will give you the names of the people in the audio, if not, it is safe most of the time to go with interviewer, interviewee, or speaker 1, speaker 2, etc or woman 1, woman 2, man 1 or man2.

4. Tags:

Use the following tags to describe situations:

[silence], [laughter], [chuckles], [music], [inaudible], [applause], [foreign], [crosstalk], [?].

Never capitalize a tag. All tags go within the sentence and within the punctuation of that sentence.

The [silence] tag goes on a line alone.

The [music] and [applause] tags go outside of the punctuation.

5. Filler words:

In a clean verbatim file **do not** use filler words. Some examples of filler words can be; Yeah, Oh, You know, Like, Okay, Uh, Um.

6. Clean verbatim versus full verbatim:

Always be sure you are checking the file to find out what the requirements are for that particular file.

There might be several different styles that your clients require and you will find this information from your client.

If your client don't want Um and Ah's on a clean verbatim file you must be sure you know this and leave them out in your transcription.

7. Numbers:

All numbers ten and below are to be written out. Percentages are to be done as %. Money should be written as \$40 or \$40 million. It is fine to start a sentence with a number if it is above ten. The main thing is to keep the number consistent throughout the sentence. Fractions are to be written as three-fifths, time should be written as 8:30 AM or 8:30.

8. False starts and punctuation:

A false start is where a speaker starts a sentence but corrects the thought very quickly and moves on. Generally, false starts involve just a few words and can safely be omitted.

Example: The speaker says - **I stayed I went to the park.**

You would type - I went to the park. **I stayed** would be a false start and can safely be left out.

You can also omit **Yeah** and **Okay** replies from other speakers when it is not a response to a direct question.

In a clean verbatim files you are always to transcribe the words the speakers say, even if the speaker has poor grammar and cannot put together a sentence correctly. Some exceptions to this would be the words, **wanna, gonna, kinda** would written properly in a clean verbatim file as - **want to, going to, kind of**, only in a full verbatim file would you write them as they are spoken. So please **DO NOT write wanna, gonna, kinda in a clean verbatim file.**

In clean verbatim files you **are not** to expand out contractions, if the speaker says **it's** you **DO NOT** expand this out. If the speaker says **they're** you **DO NOT** expand it out.

The word **Okay** **IS NOT** written, as **OK**.

The word **because** **SHOULD NOT** be written as **'cause** and should always be written out.

All right for **alright**, **A lot** for **alot**.

The use of ellipses and dashes can be very confusing at times, but if you follow this simple rule you will have no problems. Double dashes are used for when a speaker changes thought in mid-sentence or has been interrupted by another speaker.

Tom and I were going to the--

Did Jerry go with you?

--game on Monday.

Please notice how the double dashes are used to continue the interrupted sentence from the first speaker. You would not capitalize the continued sentence unless it was a proper noun.

Jerry decided that he was-- he went to the pool instead.

Notice how after the double dashes you would not space before but use one space after and never capitalize the next word after the double dash unless it is a proper noun.

Ellipses are used when a speaker trails off.

Did you see when...? [The speaker stops speaking and pauses giving the other person a chance to reply]. Do not over use ellipses during transcription. Try to use them sparingly and most times the double dash is needed because it is a change of thought.

Quotes: Use double quotes. Quotes are only used for actual quotes and nothing else. Punctuation goes within the quotes.

Names of books et criteria need to be capitalized.

9. Software

It is next to impossible to try to transcribe without software.

Mainly because, although I believe you can type fast, it is impossible to type at the same speed people speak and you are going to need to pause the audio every so now and then. Doing it with your mouse wastes you time and time is money.

The best and cheapest transcription software you can try is [Express scribe](#).

You don't have to buy a footpedal yet with express scribe because you can use the keyboard shortcuts of which the most important ones are:

F4 – pause

F9 – play normal speed

F11 – play slow speed

F7 – rewind

Those are the ones I use the most ;-)

Try it out for free first to see if it will work for you, download it at the following link: [Express scribe](#).

10. The best of luck

Transcribing is hard work but you can make money doing it.

I wish you the best of luck and if you have any queries, please contact me:

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If I take a few days to replay, sorry for that, as you should know, I'm busy transcribing and did not get a chance to read my emails yet.

Success Online Site

Tired of other
people juggling
with your
money?



To your success online

- Linda