

5 Keys to an Accurate Transcript



ACCURACY IS EVERYTHING

If you review any number of websites or promotional material for professional transcription services, the most common element you will find is a commitment to accuracy. Some will be specific and promise greater than 99 percent, while others will hedge their bets and promise the “highest degree” of accuracy. This situation is partly a recognition of client expectation, but also an acknowledgment of the work being performed. A transcript is a representation of something else – typically a conversation, interview, or presentation – and to be of any real value as a representation, it has to be as accurate as possible. The factors that impact that accuracy come under the auspices of both the client making the recording and the vendor producing the transcript. Here are the top 5 keys to the delivery of an accurate transcript:

1. *Make the best quality recording possible.* Once the event is complete, there is only so much confirmation or verification that can be done afterward, so it makes sense to ensure that the equipment you use will give you the clearest recording of the conversation or presentation. Professional transcriptionists are highly

qualified and talented people, but if they can't hear, or worse still, discern what is being said, guessing is not an option.

2. *Review the file before soliciting quotations.* Knowing what you are working with can pre-empt requests for unattainable [levels of accuracy or quality](#). The idiom of making a silk purse out of a sow's ear can be applied here, and if you are working on tight turnaround time (TAT), there is no point in wasting precious time debating the quality of the source file.
3. *Set a realistic TAT.* Consider the old adage: "Do you want it done fast or do you want it done right?" Professional [transcription services](#) will most likely have sufficient capacity to deliver a fast TAT, but starting the conversation with "I need this yesterday!" may well have pricing implications if speed is the primary concern.
4. *Know what you want in advance.* Once your selected vendor has had a chance to review your source file, options become available. Clean transcripts, [verbatim transcripts](#), summary transcripts, and add-on services such as copyediting can all be delivered for the discerning client, but such options require discussion and formal agreement. Knowing what you want your end product to be will place everyone on the same page and allow the transcription service to get to work on delivering the highest quality and most accurate document possible.
5. *Select the right company for the job.* This may seem obvious, but if your content is industry-specific and dense with jargon and terminology, making your selection on the basis of price rather than industry experience will greatly reduce the likelihood of getting an accurate result. Medical, legal, insurance, and [academic transcriptions](#), to name a few, require specialist transcriptionists with industry experience. The cost for such expertise will be competitive, but it's unlikely to

be found at the low end of the pricing scale.

A [professional transcription service](#) is committed to the delivery of the highest quality product at competitive prices. Keeping these five keys in mind can help you to achieve that outcome quickly and efficiently.