

Does Your Transcriptionist Speak Your Language?



WORDS ARE WORDS

Finding a [professional transcription service](#) at the height of an imminent project deadline or budget crunch can be a daunting task. All of the websites start to look the same and say the same things when what you really want is to find a company that speaks your language. In particular, does the vendor understand your industry in enough depth that their transcriptionists can take your files and transcribe them with minimal need for education or clarification?

THE INSULAR BUBBLE

If you contract with a [transcription vendor](#) who takes the “words are words” perspective, you may be exposing your company to significant risk. The erratic nature of freelance income can force some vendors to follow the “jack-of-all-trades” approach in order to ensure a steady flow of work. Over time, work performed in specific industry sectors can suddenly entitle them to promote “expertise” in that industry in order to expand their client base. However, without real industry *experience*, the accuracy and quality of the work delivered may end up being much lower than you need for your transcriptions.

“I’M A QUICK LEARNER!”

Glossaries of acronyms and supporting documentation cannot make up for years of industry experience, no matter how much of a “quick learner” your prospective transcription vendor may be. He or she may be available to work on your project immediately and at a very attractive rate, but how much of that project timeline will be needed to get that vendor up to speed? Most professional transcription services will offer native language speakers who are familiar with regional dialects and accents, but for the highest quality business and [academic transcriptions](#), those transcriptionists need to have documented industry experience.

EXPERT OR “GO-TO” PERSON?

Most companies have employees who are recognized internally as having the most experience or expertise with a particular client, or industry sector. They may not have specific industry qualifications, but they have experience earned over years ‘in the trenches’ with clients and prospects. Transcription services often represent the same experience as industry expertise. Jane may be the company’s legal transcription expert based solely on being the person automatically assigned to legal clients. Tom may be the company’s [medical transcription](#) expert for the same reason.

Time served to work with specific industry clients is valuable, but it does not equate to industry expertise where that transcriptionist can document a career path in the field prior to switching careers to transcription. With hard industry expertise, there is no learning curve at your expense or dependence on a glossary of acronyms. The [transcriptionist](#) should speak your language and have the expertise and resources to address any questions or clarifications from your files without delaying the project timeline. So, the next time you are promised industry expertise, dig a little deeper and ask precisely what that means.