



## WHAT MAKES A REALLY SKILFUL TRANSLATION?

Have you ever wondered what goes into a *really* skilful – and accurate translation? Have you ever listened to the nuances of an inspiring speech, or remember being captivated by a piece of graphic, descriptive writing? How could you communicate with the same conviction and accuracy across a language barrier and to a different culture altogether?

More likely, you've simply needed to reproduce a business document clearly and concisely for a client or associate overseas. If so, how will you guarantee they fully understand the contents - and can you be sure of an appropriate response – when your reader is in Beijing, and speaks Mandarin, or an Afrikaans speaker in Johannesburg?

So, we thought we would let you in on a few secrets. These secrets could enable you to become a top translation company – if you want to, that is. It's quite simple really. Here's how to do it.

### First - find the right translator for each and every job

You will need a translator that ...

- Is a full member of a professional translation body
- Possesses a recognised degree in translation
- Has at least five years translation experience
- Has a working knowledge of the client's industry. They will probably have relevant professional qualifications too, giving them an understanding of technical jargon – and the right place to use it (or not as the case may be!)
- Is a resident, or has lived in the country where your document originates, and so understands the day to day use of language
- *And* lives or has lived in the country for which your document is intended to be read - so you're ensured a translation that does more than just replace one word with another

### Now - what about software compatibility

We're assuming you will be able to accept documents in any software format. For instance, is your client a Mac user, or do they favour PC's? And which of the dozens of packages produced by software houses like Microsoft, Lotus or Corel will the original be written in. Powerpoint, maybe? Or could it be Freelance Graphics? If you don't have these readily available – you'll need them sooner or later, as not everybody works in the ubiquitous Word.

### While guaranteeing accuracy and quality at every stage

Your chosen translator then gets to work, painstakingly working through the document,

- Converting words to words
- Phrases to phrases
- Sentences to sentences
- Paragraphs to paragraphs

All these are constantly checked as the task proceeds, at the same time ensuring...

- The author's writing style is maintained
- The correct technical vocabulary is used from an appropriate range of words to suit the reader's intellectual

comprehension\*

- The document can be read with ease
- The content is true to the original Grammar and syntax rules are correctly applied

\*Winston Churchill, one of the world's greatest orators was a pass-master at this. It has been said that he would adapt the vocabulary he used in his speeches and books – carefully selecting words from his vast English vocabulary to suit his readers and listeners.

### You're not through with quality yet!

Far from it! You will now need *another*, similarly trained translator – to carry out the next set of quality checks, for spelling, content and grammar. Yet again the document will receive a scrupulous examination; working through - you've guessed it ...

- Word by word
- Phrase by phrase
- Sentence by sentence
- Paragraph by paragraph

Once more they will ensure that the article is true to the writer's characteristic approach, while carefully maintaining your client's preferred house style.

### Finally – another quality check!

Before the finished article goes out the door, one final check is still needed, to ensure overall readability – after all, if it doesn't make sense to the reader, what good is it to you!

### To be back on your client's desk – on time of course

And naturally, you do have to do all this to a strict deadline – your client's. They're the king. Invariably timescales are tight, and sometimes downright unrealistic! Could you do all this within 48 hours? This is the average time it takes us to complete translations of up to 2000 words for our clients. For larger assignments – a technical manual for instance – not surprisingly it does take longer. Nevertheless, whatever the deadline - in 99.6% of cases we deliver on time, even allowing for unforeseen complications!

### But there is another way!

Of course, you probably don't want to become a top translation company. You'll be very happy in your existing business – and no doubt very good at it too. You'll probably just want a skilful translation that lives up to your own high standards of quality. So then, whether your business is manufacturing meatballs, or designing distribution centres - if all you need are terms & conditions translated for your German agent, or to launch an e-commerce website for Brazil – why not call **Thames Translations on 08700 111130?** Or simply visit our website at [www.thames-translations.com](http://www.thames-translations.com) for your free on-line quotation to get meticulous accuracy – any language – any software format – every time.

A simpler solution to a complex task.  
We think you'll agree!