

# Translation — Industry and Career Information

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“  
Rendition close enough to the original not to alter  
any of its meaning, full enough not to omit any  
detail, no matter how seemingly insignificant, and  
elegant enough to provide at least some of the  
stylistic character of the original text.”

Source: The Translator's Handbook

## Definition of Translation



# Translator Statistics

- 31% were born in the U.S.
- 31% are accredited by ATA
- 45% are full-time independent contractors
- 59% have master's degree or higher
- 23% have 0-5 years experience

# Types of Employers

- Law firms
- Corporations
- Federal, state, and local government
- Major organizations
- Publishers



# 10 Skills Needed by Professional Translators



# 10 Skills for Professional Translators

1. Have thorough knowledge of both source and target languages — vocabulary equivalent to university education
2. Be “at home” in both cultures
3. Keep up with growth and changes in languages and subject matters



# 10 Skills for Professional Translators

4. Translate from another language into your native language
5. Translate in more than one area of knowledge
6. Have facility for writing, quickly and accurately
7. Develop good speed

# 10 Skills for Professional Translators

8. Develop research skills and ability to acquire and use references
9. Use the latest technological developments
10. Realize certain languages are in high demand



# Freelance Translating



# Freelance Translating

## Pros

- lot of independence
- more money

## Cons

- developing and maintaining clientele
- maintaining steady work flow



# Being in Business for Yourself

- Résumé and cards
- Rate range and subject specialties
- Professional business materials
- Equipment, tools, and resources
- Recordkeeping and taxes, insurance
- Marketing and networking

# Translating for an Agency





# Translating for an Agency

## Pros

- They handle clients
- Steadier flow of work

## Cons

- Less independence
- Less money

# Understanding Agencies

- Processes
- Schedules
- Formatting
- Quality
- Communication
- Type of work



# Getting Started with an Agency

- Testing
- Confidentiality contract and independent contractor statement

# Getting Started with an Agency

- Translator instruction manual, instruction sheet, and templates
- “Beginner’s” rate
- Close review of first jobs



# Top 8 Traits of an Ideal Translator



# Top 8 Traits of an Ideal Translator

1. Be accessible — check fax, e-mail, and voice messages frequently
2. Say "no" when necessary — but be open to workable solutions



# Top 8 Traits of an Ideal Translator

3. Say "yes" to a nuisance job every now and then
4. Give advance notice of looming disaster and bring up problems

# Top 8 Traits of an Ideal Translator

5. Miss only one deadline per job
6. Keep up with the industry
7. Teach your client — if you find yourself mentally listing all the things you wish your client knew, go ahead and offer some education
8. Turn in jobs early!



# Common Misconceptions



# Common Misconceptions

- Anyone with two years of high school language, or who lived in another country for three years during early childhood, or who can type in a foreign language, can translate
- Translators can translate both ways just as easily



# Common Misconceptions

- A good translator doesn't need any reference literature
- A good translator gets it right the first time, without any editing or proofreading
- Translators will soon be replaced by computers

# Common Misconceptions

- A 100-page technical manual that took four months and three persons to write can be translated by one translator in two days
- Translating is just replacing each word in the source language with the same word in the target language
- Spanish is Spanish, all around the world



# Computer-Aided Translation (CAT)

- Translation memory or terminology management tools that aid the human translator in producing applicable kinds of work better, faster, cheaper, easier
- Required by some agencies and end-user clients

# Computer-Aided Translation

## Requisites

- electronic file
- consistently and well written
- sufficient length
- repetitive content and/or developed glossary OR job that will be updated



# American Translators Association

- More than 10,500 members in 100 countries
- Translators, interpreters, educators, and company owners
- Annual Conference of 1,500 to 1,800 attendees
- Certification Exam for Translators
- Online professional services directory