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## **HOW BEST TO DEAL WITH TRANSLATION PROJECTS**

Running a translation project smoothly in a friendly and supportive atmosphere is a major concern of mine. To this end I have compiled a few considerations which I hope will help you and me to avoid misunderstandings in managing the project right from the outset.

### PLANNING OF RESOURCES AND TIME

When starting your project make sure that you allow enough time for the translation and check whether the translator will be available when needed. The more time a translator has to do the translation, the higher the quality she can achieve. There may be other members of your staff who need to be informed that the text is planned to be translated when finalized (e.g. the author and administrative staff).

Sometimes your project may be completed in stages and parts of the text may be forwarded to the translator before it is finalized. In such a case please keep in mind that revising a draft is time-consuming work involving the risk that errors may occur. Unless all modified words and passages are marked clearly and systematically, it is often difficult for the translator to incorporate the modifications into the translation accurately and efficiently. The author of the text should be advised accordingly. You may wish to modify the translation after having checked the final version. Therefore the time frame should be flexible enough to allow for a revision. Please also keep in mind that all changes regarding deadline or volume of the text need to be communicated to all persons involved in the process.

### PURPOSE OF THE TRANSLATION AND TARGET AUDIENCE

For what purpose do you intend to use the translation? Is it going to print or is it for internal purposes only? Or is it presented orally as a lecture? Is it a highly technical text only intended for a professional readership? Or is it meant for readers who are not familiar with the subject area? Please let me know how you wish to use the translation so that I can use the style which best suits your purposes.

### REFERENCE MATERIAL

Enterprises may use their own company-specific terms and phrases or prefer certain ways of presentation. In order to enable me to act just like a member of your team, I would need reference material which will give me an impression of your enterprise and the way you work. If possible, please provide me with e.g. brochures, glossaries and company style guides. Furthermore, I would prefer editable documents in which I can easily replace the text with the translated version, thus keeping the same layout as the original. In addition, I would not need to retype any figures where errors occur easily. If you need correspondence with your clients to be translated, your client's inquiry would come in

handy and would ensure that the same terms and expressions are used in your reply to your client.

### FORMAT

Please let me know in which format you wish to receive the translation. If you do not make any format specifications, I will send you the translation by email. You would then be able to process the text and file it electronically. Please let me have the email address of the person who is to receive the final translation so that I can be sure to have met the deadline when sending the translation to this person.

### ONGOING ASSIGNMENT

In the consulting business there are often smaller inquiries and replies going back and forth between the consultant and the client. Not everyone who is an expert in the subject area is also fluent in English or German or has the time necessary to word a highly technical message properly in the foreign language. For short texts needed on the same or on the next day I can offer you a less formal and more flexible manner of handling your translation needs. When returning the translation I would advise you of the time and costs I have incurred to enable you to process the information promptly in your systems, but would send an invoice e.g. only once a month.

### COSTS OF THE TRANSLATION

When planning your project or when making an offer for your services to a client be sure to include the costs of translation. If the translation costs are charged to the client, there is no problem. But if the translation is meant to form part of your project as a whole, it is essential that you take account of the translation costs in the same way as you take account of the costs incurred by your in-house staff as otherwise this would most likely affect your profit margin.

### CONTACT PERSONS

Please name a contact person with whom I can clarify any organisational matters and, if possible, the author of the text so that I can discuss with him or her any queries I may have regarding the contents and the meaning of the text.

### SHOULD YOU RATHER EMPLOY A NATIVE SPEAKER?

The opinion of one of the translators' associations in Germany (Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer e.V. (BDÜ)) in this matter can be found at [www.bdue.de/fuer-auftraggeber/faq](http://www.bdue.de/fuer-auftraggeber/faq)). I have translated a relevant passage for you:

*As a rule of thumb: texts such as fiction or advertisements where nuances are crucial should rather be translated by native speakers. For translating technical texts such as e.g. operating manuals, on the other hand, the translator's mother tongue is less important. On the contrary, the source language being the translator's mother tongue may come rather as an advantage because he or she is particularly able to comprehend the nuances of the contents and then transfer them into the other language.*