

How to Train Effectively as an Interpreter

The success and efficiency of a good interpreter lies in how correctly and quickly he has interpreted the message, lecture or speech of a speaker from source language to target language, remaining as near as possible to the meaning and contents of originality without deviating from the original text of the speech. Here is how to train effectively.

- 1. Understand that interpreting is all about accuracy.** What is being presented in the target language must preserve the exact meaning and tone of what is uttered in the source language, whether done simultaneously or consecutively.
- 2. Recognize what is expected of you as an interpreter.** All interpreters find this profession demanding and challenging. When an interpreter is working, he or she cannot afford to have a bad day. One bad interpreter can ruin a conference.
- 3. Have the right skills.** Strong research and analytical skills, mental dexterity, and an exceptional memory are important for a good and efficient interpreter. A good interpreter needs a good short-term memory to retain what he or she has just heard and good long-term memory to put the information into context. Ability to concentrate is a factor as is the ability to analyze and process what is heard.
- 4. Be persistent.** A strong base is required to be a good and efficient interpreter. So many aspirants join this race, but very few make it to the top. The main aspect that differentiates is Training, effort, intelligence, presence of mind and some of your own inner latent talents and initiatives.
- 5. Train well.** Training is a very crucial stage in the career of any interpreter. An interpreter aspiring for a good career in this field has to reap the benefits of training through others' experience. The basics should be very solid and strong. This is a big side of the effort. The other side of the coin is type and level of training imparted to the trainee.
- 6. Stay on top of your languages.** Human language is a fluid entity---languages and dialects constantly evolve and change. If you miss a nuance or meaning, you risk mistranslation. Maintain your language

skills by traveling, watching films, news, and television, listening to music, reading novels, newspapers, and comic strips, etc.

7. Make note of the following:

- Interpretation should always be in a target language. A person feels very comfortable in his own mother tongue or that language where he has got good command over it. A trainee should understand what is being said in the training and he should also express his thoughts during discussions. Grasping the content is much easier in target language. Since his birth, a person speaks and writes and expresses in target language—be it in Hindi or Urdu or Spanish or French, all of a sudden, he lands up in training conducted in English, as a source language. He will be totally uncomfortable and uneasy. The basic purpose of training is defeated.
- Interpretation through target language helps in better understanding of the subject by the trainees in much less time. The participation of trainees, as well as persons who are conducting the training, is at the maximum. The result is much better and good.
- Interpretation in target language helps trainees to understand difficult words, contexts, cultures etc. of other people and countries in a better and long lasting manner. They can add their own contents to the inputs of the training.
- Certain professional subjects require in-depth knowledge. Thorough and sound knowledge helps the interpreters to build their own vocabulary and a better understanding of the subject. This becomes a solid base for the interpreter in the future days. This is only possible when training is imparted in the target language.
- The trainee is in a better position to contribute his inputs in his own language after hearing in his own language.
- By imparting training in the target language, a trainee is able to understand and achieves knowledge of higher levels of other countries of various subjects for which he will do interpreting at a future date