



● Practical tool:

Translation checklist

As you prepare to use the services of a translator, review this checklist to help you make the experience as effective and cost efficient as possible. This checklist is not exhaustive and every item may not apply to your situation. Consider some of these suggestions to guide you in the process (some of the material has been adapted from the website of the *Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec* www.ottiaq.org).

What a translator might ask you:

- What is the document about? For example, is your document: technical or legal in nature, is it for promotional use (a brochure, website material) is it an internal communication (a company manual, committee minutes)?
- How long is your document? (try to have the number of pages and words available)
- Is this a document that is being revised? (In other words, is there an original version therefore requiring only certain parts to be reviewed and translated?)
- Is there any background information available? (e.g. a glossary of terms that are specific to your organization, were references made to any other works when preparing this document?)
- Is the author of the document available for questions?
- When do you need the document?
- Can the document be provided in electronic format?

What you might ask a translator:

- What experience do you have in the subject matter? (e.g. has the translator done work of a similar nature, are there references available)
- How do you bill and what is your rate? (e.g. by the word, by the hour)
- What other services are included in the translation? (e.g. proof-reading, document formatting, how do you deal with last minute revisions?)
- In what format do you require the document? (e.g. electronic format)

Cost considerations

- When employing the services of a translator, you may wish to request a contract. It is important to outline the rates, services provided, a deadline for the translation, any other special considerations that you may have. You may view several “sample” contracts by visiting the following sites. These contracts were created by the respective provincial associations and are provided here as reference tools.

Sample Contract - Association of Translators and Interpreters of Nova Scotia
www.atins.org/english/downloads/contract/Sample_Contract.pdf

Model Translation Contract - Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario
www.atio.on.ca/info/contract.html

- Plan in advance for your translation. Give as much notice as possible when having a document translated. This allows for important revision time and for any “unforeseen glitches” during the process. Avoid last minute requests for translations as you might incur increased costs for the urgency.
- Ideally, all documents should be produced in both languages simultaneously, but depending on the document’s size, distribution (internal and external) and purpose (to support decision-making or for information purposes only) several other options are available. For example, you could:
 - Translate the document at a later date
 - Draft the documents in parallel in the two languages to avoid the need for translation
 - Summarize the contents of the document in the other language

- Someone within your organization should review the translation. This process helps to ensure that the translator, who is not a part of your organization’s culture, has captured the essence of your document.
- Consider the number and length of the documents to be translated. Remember that the documents still have to be printed and distributed.
- You may wish to contact a local school of translation. There may be students who are available to do small translations as part of their study program. You may visit the following websites to locate a school of translation near you to inquire about this possibility:

Canadian Association of Schools of Translation – Member Programs
www.uottawa.ca/associations/acet/prog_membr.htm

Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
Field of Study: Language Interpretation and Translation
<http://oraweb.uacc.ca/>