

TIPS TO WORK EFFECTIVELY

with remote & on-site interpreters

1 **Plan ahead**

Schedule interpreting services at least a week in advance if possible. When you plan ahead, you increase your options of having the most qualified interpreter available at the time and location you want. This also provides the interpreter the time needed to brush up on your industry and company specific vocabulary to be used at your meeting.

2 **Preparation is Key**

Please provide reference material on the topic of your meeting so interpreters can better prepare for your meeting. Examples: PowerPoint slides, agenda, speakers' bios and notes, websites with relevant vocabulary or info about your topic, etc. Interpreters are at their best when they are prepared. They need the time and tools to research the key terminology that you will discuss.

3 **Speak directly to your client**

You and your client can communicate directly with each other as if the interpreter were not there. The interpreter will relay the information and communicate the client's response directly back to you. In other words, don't say "tell her this," or "please ask him that." The discussion is between you and your client. The interpreter is just there to act as a conduit between you. Also, speak naturally (not louder) and at your normal pace (not slower)

4 **Avoid jargon or technical terms**

To help your client and interpreter better understand you, don't use industry jargon, slang, acronyms, or coded language only known by a few people. Likewise, avoid colloquialisms and idioms, like "feeling blue." Try to remember that sayings like this may not be common in every culture and may not translate well in other languages.

5 **Plan to give a speech / Reading scripts**

Though we may not notice it, we often talk more quickly when reading a script. When reading a script, prepared text, or a disclosure, please slow down to give the interpreter a chance to keep up with your pace.

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6 **Everything you say will be interpreted**

Keep private conversations with your colleagues to a minimum. Any conversation and/or comment the interpreter hears will be interpreted. This includes "thinking out loud" conversations with oneself when for example a speaker/host runs into some technical issues with Zoom or preferred video conference platform.

7 **Culture**

Professional interpreters are familiar with the culture and customs of the limited English proficient speaker. During the interpretation session, the interpreter might identify and point out a cultural issue of which you may not be aware of. Also, if the interpreter feels that a particular question is culturally inappropriate, he or she may ask you to rephrase it.

8 **Try and avoid humour**

Most interpreters will agree that jokes do not translate well. If you are giving a speech and plan to start it off with a joke, it is advisable to consult the interpreter first to see if they think it will work. Jokes often don't translate across cultures and sometimes do the opposite.

9 **Do not rush**

The job of interpreting is mentally exhausting and taxing. An interpreter who rushes is more likely to become stressed, so the quality of the translation may suffer. To alleviate the pressure as much as possible, speak slowly and clearly.

10 **Decide on a secret signal to use with your interpreter**

It is worth agreeing with your interpreter on some kind of sign, signal, or gesture so they will let you know if you are going too fast, even if it isn't an elaborate secret signal. As soon as you see your interpreter giving you the signal, slow down. This will give them time to catch up and keep up with your speech.

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11 **Video Conferencing**

Provide meeting links, meeting ID codes, and passwords to interpreters in advance. Meeting moderator should familiarize self with how to incorporate an interpreter into your chosen video conferencing platform. Each platform works differently. Also discuss with how to handle audience questions and break-out rooms with your interpreting team. The technology often doesn't work as we expect.

12 **Times**

Clearly define the start and end times for your meetings and don't forget to consider the time zones of your participants. Ask everyone to join the meeting about 15 minutes early, to work out any last-minute technology challenges, so you can start on time. This would allow you to make sure that the interpreter(s) is ready to go and that all attendees who require interpreters are able to hear them clearly.

13 **Recording**

If you are considering recording the meeting, make sure you let attendees and interpreters know you are doing so in advance.

14 **Breaks**

Provide breaks. A good rule of thumb is a five-minute break for a 60-minute meeting and a 15-minute break for a 90-minute meeting.

15 **Always thank the interpreters**

You should publicly thank your interpreters at the end of your presentation. Their work is hard and mentally draining. They'll appreciate a thank you at the end. Also, you never know if you'll end up working with them again in the near future.