

Recording Tips from A and P Transcription Services

When recording for an interview, meeting, lecture, conference call, or other event, with the intention of having it transcribed later, there are a few things you can do to help us in being able to provide you with 100% accuracy. We realize it may not be possible to follow all these suggestions, just taking into account some of them will still help to ensure a better transcript.

Basic Recording Tips:

Before you start the event, performing a sound check is very helpful. While performing a sound check, speak at the distance from the microphone that you will be at for the entire recording. Make sure to have each person speak into the microphone from the distance that they will be, as well, to ensure that they are able to be heard and understood clearly during the meeting or interview.

- Try to minimize background noise as much as humanly possible. This can be evaluated during the sound check as well. If you hear the sounds of traffic, construction, noise from hallways or other rooms, doors shutting or slamming, then this will more than likely interfere with the transcription process. You want to make sure that the people speaking are not being drowned out by the noise as well.
- Encourage participants to stay in the room, if at all possible. If they must leave for any reason, ask them to close the door softly behind them and encourage the speaker to pause while the door is being opened and closed.
- Try to place the microphone as close to the speaker as possible and encourage all participants to speak up while talking, louder than they usually do, due to them being recorded.
- If you feel it is important to ensure the transcriber gets all names of people, places, websites, organizations, or any other important information that the transcriber might not know or be able to research via the Internet quickly, have the participants repeat them twice or spell them out if necessary. You may also include a list of important terms or information that was discussed to ensure an even more accurate transcript.
- If the interviewer is reading from a list of questions or a script, you would want to provide a copy of the list with the audio to us. This information will be shredded upon completion of the transcript, to ensure the utmost confidentiality.

Recording Tips for Multiple Speakers

The following additional guidelines are useful for events where there are more than two people involved:

- If you are able to, it helps tremendously to have a microphone for each participant. If you are not able to, again, having each participant speak as loudly and clearly as they can, preferably sitting near the microphone, will be the next best alternative. Having a speaker some distance from a microphone almost guarantees that their words will disappear behind background noise.
- Having each speaker identify themselves each time they speak is an ideal situation for any transcriptionist. Having an identification makes it possible for us to label each speaker individually in the transcript.
- Ensuring that a facilitator is actively participating in a focus group or conference is extremely important. Groups almost always devolve into overlapping conversation and the result may be a lot of lost information in the transcription. Reminding participants, even if you have to do it repeatedly, to speak one at a time will result in a more accurate transcript, and will be more cost effective for you.
- Try to have at least one microphone for audiences that can be passed around when they are asking questions of someone. If they don't speak loud enough then their answers will almost always result in an inaudible, due to us not being able to accurately hear/understand what they are saying. We try very hard to not have inaudible's in our transcripts, so this little effort will help us to do that for you.