

# General Transcription Training

## The *ZOOM TRANSCRIPTION* Method



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**With that being said, we hope to hear your success story some day!**

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## Why I Decided to Write This Book

First and foremost, I feel compelled to debunk the idea that "anyone can be a general transcriptionist." I hear and read this phrase all too often and, frankly, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the major obstacle in growing my own transcription business has been the inability to find qualified transcriptionists!

It simply isn't true that anyone with a computer and some keyboarding skills is qualified to call themselves a transcriptionist. Is it rocket science? No, of course it isn't. However, it does require excellent typing skills, a good ear, above average grammar and punctuation skills, and the ability to sit for long periods of time...alone. Working from home has many advantages, but it's really not for everyone. Before you quit your full-time job to work your dream job from home, do a quick self-assessment. If you're a social butterfly, you might not enjoy the isolation associated with working from home. If you're lacking in self-discipline, you might have a tendency to procrastinate and end up missing a deadline, or staying up all night to meet the deadline. Either way, you'll be unhappy, your client will be unhappy, and this job probably isn't a good fit for you.

Is working from home really for you? Take this quick self-assessment quiz to help determine if work-from-employment is really a good idea for you:

[Work From Home Self-Assessment Quiz -- available when you sign up for the full course.](#)

Okay, if you're ready to give up your corporate job to enjoy the advantages (and there are many!) of working from home, then keep reading. I'm going to lay it all out for you. This is real world information gleaned from my years of experience in the transcription field. Everything you need to know to work as a self-employed general transcriptionist is included in these pages. YOU need to be prepared to put in some work though.

The second reason I developed this product is because I know that so many of us NEED to work from home. This is one of the few areas of real employment that you can do from home that doesn't involve MLM, sales of some sort, or the steadily increasing number of scams. This involves real work for real pay and is perfectly suited to a virtual work environment. In my case, I have a disabled husband. I have to be home. I'm not complaining. I thoroughly enjoy the freedom of a flexible schedule and the ability to work as much or as little as I want -- well, that's not exactly true. I ALWAYS work too much!

Perhaps, you have young children or elderly parents that you need to take care of, maybe you're a student -- whatever your reason, if you're willing to put in some time honing your skills, I have no doubt that you'll be successful in this field.

Let's get started!

## Overview

### The Growing Need for General Transcriptionists

Offering administrative services to others from your home office is a growing phenomenon. One fast growing area of specialization is general transcription.

Over the last five years, more and more home offices have gained access to high-speed Internet connections. This has led to the production of increasing amounts of Internet audio. High speed Internet has made it easier for users to listen to and download audio files. What once took hours, now only takes minutes. Podcasts, webinars, digitally recorded interviews...there is a great deal of audio being produced and many of those offer text versions. This is where you come in!

There are over 60 practice audio dictations, with the answer keys, included in this course. However, you have to crawl before you can walk, as they say, and we need to be sure that your typing, writing, and grammar skills are up-to-par before you jump right in. So, hang with me and take the entire course. I promise you that it's not that hard, but it will take some time and practice. Being a fast typist isn't enough. If you don't know where to place a comma correctly, if you don't spell check every document, and if you don't proofread your document while listening to the audio one more time before submitting your transcript, I can almost guarantee that you won't be retaining clients. All of these things are important, but the proofing component is what seems to trip people up. Yes, time is money and we need to work fast to make a buck; but, you simply must proof your documents to audio or you're going to make mistakes. I know that there are some who disagree with me and think just re-reading the transcribed document is enough. To them I say, how do you know that what you typed is what was actually said if you're not listening to the audio? Believe me, I've been doing this for more years than you've probably been on this earth and I still find mistakes when I proof to audio -- every time! I simply can't stress this enough. Accuracy is key. Speed will come.

## Equipment

Luckily for us, you probably already have most of the tools of the transcriber's trade and what you don't have I'm going to show you where to get for free or very inexpensively.

### Computer and Work Space

Of course, you need a computer with a high-speed Internet connection and a comfortable work area. Transcribing requires long hours at your computer desk. It will serve you well to have the most comfortable, ergonomically correct desk and chair that you can set up. I've invested in the best chair that I could afford, added a gel seat cushion, and a lumbar support cushion. So far, my wrists and hands are doing okay; but, I know many transcriptionists who use gel wrist supports. My personal area of pain is in my neck and shoulders. Take frequent breaks and stretch. Your eyes need a break too. This is very, very important. LOL! I need to take my own advice!

High Speed Internet is essential. I think most everyone has it now. But, if you're working with dial-up, the connection process will be significantly slower than with Cable or DSL. Working with audio on a slow connection will soon become a frustration and will eat into your profits because, I'll say it again, time is money in this field.

The most commonly used word processing software is Microsoft Word. You'll need the latest version of Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

### Transcribing Equipment

Fortunately, most of your work as a transcriptionist will come to you as an electronic file. It is unlikely that you will ever need to own a physical tape transcriber. Don't invest in one. In the unlikely event that you do run into a need for one, you can find good deals on eBay. Unless you have a need, the expense just doesn't make any sense.

The most commonly used transcription software is available for FREE. I'll tell you where you can download this commonly used software in the course.

It's easy to use. Read the user's manual. But, basically, you just load the files and play them back using either Hotkeys or a foot pedal. I prefer a foot pedal. It's the way I was trained and I work faster using one. Of course, there's nothing wrong with using the Hotkeys to start or if you have a physical challenge that prevents you from using a foot pedal.

Hotkeys are the function keys (F1, F2, F3, etc.) on the top row of your keyboard. Basically, it's something like F4 to play, F8 to rewind, F9 to stop -- like that.

Other software is used for video and time coding documents. There is a whole section of training on transcribing from video in the course work.

## Headphones

Choosing the best fit, comfort, and sound for transcription is essential. With so many choices for headphones, this can be a confusing task. My personal preference is the under-the-chin, stethoscope style. You'll need the kind with a 3.5mm input jack that will be connected to your computer's headphone connection.

I own several different types of headphones, but these are the most comfortable. There is nothing to wear on your head, so you won't ruin your hairdo. Of course, working from home means that we really don't have to worry so much about what we look like. That's a double-edged sword. I'm in my bathrobe and slippers right now. It's comfortable, but I feel lazy and sloppy sometimes. Comfort is important though and, for me, wearing headphones that wrap around your head and press on your ears becomes uncomfortable. Some transcriptionists prefer them. There is also the ear bud type of headphones. I have a set that are made of brass and offer excellent sound quality. However, those brass buds in my ears actually start to hurt after a few hours of wearing them. The one thing that I can't stress enough is that you need to purchase the best quality headphones that you can afford. Fortunately, they can be had for around \$20 to \$30. Again, I purchased mine at:

[You'll find out where to purchase these inexpensively in the course!](#)

You probably already own some type of headphones that you can start out with. If they're not of great quality, though, your accuracy will suffer and you'll become frustrated. Great quality doesn't have to mean expensive. It's a matter of having the right tool for the job. Those expensive (\$300) stereo headphones may not really be the best tool for audio transcription.

## Transcription Style

Transcription is the act of typing what you hear. If you can type and have good hearing, you'll be able to transcribe audio into text files. Generally speaking, there are two main styles of transcription most often referred to as "standard verbatim" and "strict verbatim." The difference between the two is:

Standard verbatim means that we type exactly what was spoken, but clean it up slightly. For instance, all uh's, um's, you know's, stutters, and false starts are left out.

Here's an example of what someone actually said:

*Um, you know, I don't know if I agree with that statement. Uh, I'll have to think about it and get back to you. But, if you don't hear from me by Tuesday, give me a call.*

Under "strict verbatim" rules, you would type it exactly like that. This can be very tricky. You have to listen very closely to hear all of the um's and uh's. Under "standard verbatim rules," this would be changed to read:

*I don't know if I agree with that statement. I'll have to think about it and get back to you. If you don't hear from me by Tuesday, give me a call.*

### Important Notes:

*Gonna* is almost always changed to *going to* -- even in verbatim transcripts.

*'Cause* may be used if that was what was spoken in a verbatim transcript. In standard transcription, always change it to the full word, *because*. Please note the use of the apostrophe preceding *'cause*.

Use contractions if that is what was said, whether standard or verbatim! I recently had a new hire change every single contraction to its two-word equivalent. Ugh! She really wasn't a bad transcriptionist, but she came from the world of medical transcription. In medical transcription, it's the generally accepted format to change contractions to their two-word equivalents. In general transcription, we do not do that. I don't think I need to spell these words out for you, but here are a few examples anyway:

Cannot = can't

Would not = wouldn't

You are = you're

Do not = don't

Listen carefully and transcribe it as spoken. Be careful of confusing "its" and "it's." "Its" denotes possession, as in:

*I like to keep everything in its place.*

"It's" is the contracted form of "It is."

Generally speaking, strict verbatim is used for "on camera" interviews and legal depositions where it is important that the transcript captures exactly what was said. The standard verbatim style is used in documents to be published and almost all other types of work.

Sometimes, you might be asked to use a combination of the two styles. For instance, the interviewer's questions will be standard verbatim and the respondent's answers will be strict verbatim. There are also times when you will be asked to transcribe only the "gist" of the interviewer's questions with strict verbatim answers. Those are nice jobs -- less typing for us! You'll have to clarify with your client before accepting an assignment which style is expected.

By now, you should have a pretty good idea of what general transcription is and what it isn't. Of course, this report is just an overview and does not include all the coursework featured in the DVD version.

To access the full course, including 60+ practice dictations with answer keys, and a complete folder of forms and templates, you can purchase it now by clicking here:

[www.zoomtranscription.com/Training.html](http://www.zoomtranscription.com/Training.html)

Please refer to the table of contents at the beginning of this report for a description of all the material covered in the course. I enjoy training others and can take you from learning to type to developing a business plan to run your own successful transcription business.

For a limited time, I'm offering the course for \$99.00. This is a ridiculously low price, especially when compared to other so-called courses that I see offered for thousands of dollars! To be honest, I'm not sure how long I'll offer the course at this price. Everyone tells me I'm nuts and should charge a lot more. But, I know that I could have really used this information when I was starting out. It would have saved me a lot of time and expense. I consider it my way of "paying it forward." However, if it begins to take up too much of my time, I'll have to pay others to help me help you and will in all likelihood need to raise the price. That really isn't my goal or intention, so get it while you can! If it becomes unmanageable for me, I may have to stop offering it altogether. I am still actively involved with my transcription business and that has to be my priority.

As you can probably tell, I like to keep it real. I would rather under promise and over deliver than vice versa. And, I'm very serious about this being a limited time offer. As much as I love training new transcriptionists and enjoying their success with them, I simply don't have the time to take on too many people at one time. I mean it when I say that "I come with course" -- along with my 30+ years of experience. I'm always available to help you make a better life for yourself. As I said before, I wouldn't trade my flexible working schedule and freedom from corporate policy and politics for all the tea in China. There's just nothing like being your own boss. You can do it too!

Feel free to contact me anytime with questions: [janet@zoomtranscription.com](mailto:janet@zoomtranscription.com)