Transcription Guidelines

Format:

Zoom Transcription can provide your written format according to your specifications.

In general, Zoom Transcription follows *The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th edition*, for sentence structure and punctuation format.

Margins: 1" margins, top, bottom, left, and right.

Font: Times New Roman 12

Tag Line: All transcripts will have a tag line inserted in the header area of each page. Based on client's instructions, this line usually includes the file name and page number. This area can be adjusted according to your needs.

Format/Style: Unless otherwise indicated by client, Zoom Transcription uses the modified block style (left hand flush, ragged right margin) and hanging indents. Please click here to view a sample template. We can, of course, modify this style to suit your needs.

In most cases, Zoom Transcription uses the **verbatim approach** to transcription. Certain recorded conversation will not be included in the transcripts as follows:

- Introductory comments, crowd-warming jokes, directions to restrooms, etc.
- Non-word utterances such as "uh" and "um" used as sentence fillers.
- Repeated false starts while the speaker is fumbling to find the right word.
- Shorter sentences will be created out of longer, run-on sentences by omitting repetitious conjunctions.
- Superfluous remarks and polite responses acknowledging speaker's comment.
- Any other "off topic" conversation.

Strictly Verbatim

Zoom Transcription recognizes that certain clients will require a "strictly verbatim" approach to transcription. In these cases, none of the above applies, and transcripts will include every utterance including sentence fillers, false starts, etc.

Due Diligence

We will make every effort to research terms, names, and phrases for correct spelling. Any supporting documentation that you can provide (i.e., Meeting Agenda, Participant Directory) will aid us in delivering a quality transcript.

Although Zoom Transcription prides itself on delivering highly accurate transcripts, it's a fact of life that there are times when audio is just difficult to understand. We have two rules:

1) Transcriptionists may never "guess" at what they think the speaker said. We feel that it is much better to "flag" a portion of audio than to transcribe inaccurately.

2) Three strikes and you're out. In other words, we will attempt to grab what's being said by re-listening three times. After that, your transcript will be flagged with one of the following notations:

[inaudible] - *when one or just a few words are unintelligible*

[long inaudible section] - *when a longer section is unintelligible*

[audio gap] - *when there is an actual break in the audio (i.e. dead air)*

[talk over] - *multiple speakers talking simultaneously*

[background noise] - *other noises or conversations in the room make it impossible to hear speaker's dialogue.*

[sp] - *could not confirm spelling of name or word - we will spell it phonetically or use the most common version of a name (i.e., Sally not Salli)*

[sic] - *inaccurate expression, misspelling, or the like, is intentionally reproduced*

Punctuation

Ampersand (&) is only used when it's part of a company's name (i.e., Johnson & Johnson).

Apostrophes (') are used (1) to represent the possessive form of a noun (i.e., John's or Mary's), (2) in the spelling of contractions (i.e., can't, isn't), and (3) to represent letters or numbers that are omitted '77 for 1977. Apostrophes are never used to indicate the plural of numbers, acronyms, or titles (i.e., 1990s not 1990's, or MDs not MD's).

Commas (,) are used to (1) separate a series of items in a single sentence, (2) offset interjections, (3) link like phrases together in a single sentence, (4) represent where you would normally pause if you were speaking the sentence aloud.

Dashes (-, –, —). There are three types of dashes used by Zoom Transcription.

A hyphen (-) is used to separate prefixes from root words (re-assess). In general, the use of hyphens in this manner is being rapidly replaced by omitting the hyphen (i.e., email, reinstate, reassess to name a few). We will use them as appropriate.

The en dash (–) is used for durations of numbers (i.e., 2004–2006). This is the only use of the en dash.

The em dash (—) is used to indicate a break in the speaker's dialog or a change in thought.

Ellipses (...) are used to indicate when a speaker has trailed off without finishing his/her sentence.

Names will be transcribed in full, including title/credentials as provided by the client. When not provided, we will use Male/Female or Moderator/Respondent.

Numbers are spelled out for one through ten and numerals are used for 11 to infinity. There

are exceptions to this rule for medical and scientific measurements.

Quotation Marks are used where necessary. Please note that punctuation is placed <u>inside</u> the quotation.

Slang terms will not be used (i.e., gonna will be changed to going to) unless directed otherwise by the client.

Symbols - the use of unusual symbols will be avoided unless specifically requested to do so.