



# pacific transcription solutions

On-line, on-time and on-call transcription

Web: [www.pacificsolutions.com.au](http://www.pacificsolutions.com.au)

Email: [enquiries@pacificsolutions.com.au](mailto:enquiries@pacificsolutions.com.au)

PO Box 745 Indooroopilly QLD 4068 AUSTRALIA Ph: 07 3378 2668 or 1300 662 173

## Audio Recording Tips

### Before Recording

Before starting any interviews you have planned, make sure you have the right recording device for your needs. If you're still using a cassette tape recorder, we would strongly recommend upgrading to a digital recording device.

**1. The sound quality of digital recordings is far superior to cassette tapes.** They'll be less expensive to get transcribed. Digital recordings are also far simpler to store and copy for backup purposes. Pacific Solutions recommends the Olympus DS-50 for recording interviews and focus groups. It is used by over 50% of our clients, and has a wide range of added features and benefits. To find out more about the Olympus DS-50, please email [enquiries@pacificsolutions.com.au](mailto:enquiries@pacificsolutions.com.au).

**2. Avoid recording via the speakerphone for phone interviews.** This compromises the audio quality. There are fairly inexpensive devices available that can plug into either to your speakerphone or your recording device that can greatly improve the quality of the recording.

**3. Find a suitable location to take the interview once you have organised your recorder.** Try to avoid places with a lot of background noise, whether that be general chatter from a public place, a radio in the office, or even a loud air conditioner. Background noise obscures much more than what you would expect. Before pressing record, learn where the pause button is – very useful for any unexpected interruptions!

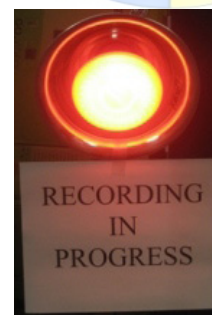
**4. Ensure you have the recorder on the highest quality setting and that you are recording in a suitable audio format.** For example, on an Olympus recorder, use standard play (SP) or high quality (HQ) mode. Some recorders allow you to record in different formats, such as .ds2, .dss or .wma file types. By reviewing your instruction manual, you can choose to record in a commonly used file format, such as .wma.



PO Box 745 Indooroopilly QLD 4068 AUSTRALIA Ph: 07 3378 2668 or 1300 662 173

## During Recording

**1. Ensure recorders are equidistant from participants and not too close to yourself.** Put the recorder in the middle of all the speakers – if anything, it can be slightly further away from you, as it's the interviewee's responses that are most important, not your questions. Once the recorder is in place, it's best to avoid moving it if possible as this can be very disturbing to the recording.



**2. For speakers to be identified by name, take time at the beginning of the interview and ask each of your interviewees to introduce themselves.** Not only saying their name, but also with a few lines about what they do, or why they're here. That way, the transcriptionist should be able to distinguish between the speakers with ease. Try to use each speaker's name as often as possible throughout the interview, as this will help increase transcript accuracy. Be sure to encourage any softly spoken participants to be loud and clear when answering any questions.

**3. Once the interview has started, encourage participants to speak one at a time.** Though we understand that some interruptions and over-speaking will naturally occur. If any laughter or side comments start up during the recording, it's best to wait until it subsides before asking your next question –laughter in particular obscures almost all other speech that goes on underneath it.

**4. Small ambient noises can mask words or obscure entire sentences.** Remind speakers to avoid rustling paper or drumming their fingers on the table. Mobile phones placed near the recorder can cause loud interference on the recording, even when the phone is on silent. Even little listening noises from yourself, such as 'mmm' and 'uh huh', can affect how much of the actual speech the transcriptionist can pick up – so try to let your speakers know you're listening in other non-verbal ways.

**5. Don't hesitate to repeat key sentences for clarity purposes.** If you're afraid that the recorder didn't pick it up something due to ambient noise, it's always better to take a few seconds to repeat it at the time, rather than look over your transcripts and wonder what it was they said! If any of the speakers make non-verbal references to something within the room, ask them to say out loud exactly what they're indicating, or do this yourself.

**6. Lastly, it's a good idea to have a spare battery on hand, just in case!** Alternatively, use a power adapter for your recorder if a powerpoint is nearby and will not restrict optimal placement of the recorder.





## After recording

**1. Specify the template that you would like the transcriptionist to use.** We have a Pacific Solutions standard template, but of course if you have specific formatting requirements, we will follow them, saving you time at the other end. Pacific Solutions typists are also trained to create NVivo and Leximancer compatible documents – please don't hesitate to give us a call if you plan to use any such qualitative analysis software.

**2. Send us a vocabulary list of commonly used words or place names.** Particularly if you or your interviewees tend to use any specific jargon, this will save both you and the transcriptionist time and headaches. You will need to let us know if you wish the transcript to be strict verbatim – which means including every 'you know', 'I mean', 'um' and 'ah'. The majority of our clients choose intelligent verbatim, which cuts out those hesitations and repeated verbal tics, making for much smoother reading and analysis.

**3. Give us a call to clarify with us your desired turnaround time – from same day to two weeks.** At the same time, let us know your requirements regarding the naming of speakers, to ensure that we begin transcription knowing exactly what you need. If you're on a university grant, you can also have a chat with us about pre-paying your transcription account for budgeting purposes.

Please don't hesitate to call Pacific Solutions on 1300 662 173 or email [enquiries@pacificsolutions.com.au](mailto:enquiries@pacificsolutions.com.au) today so we can set you up with an account and get you started immediately.

