



Executive Support Services



GENERAL TIPS FOR DICTATION

So that our typists may accurately transcribe your dictation, we have set out below some guidelines for you to follow. We ask that you read these carefully.

The Do's

Do:

- Think about the **dictation location**. Recording in a quiet, indoor environment helps ensure the best quality of sound recording. If you must record outside, try and choose a quiet area. If in the car, record with the engine and radio turned off. If indoors, consider the acoustics of where you'll be sitting. A large room with a high ceiling ('church' like conditions) will produce significant echo which may result in 'booming' on the recording.
- **Turn off all mobile phones**. Text messages or voice mails emit a radio frequency which is inaudible to the human ear but the recording equipment will pick it up, and the resulting buzzing noise will drown out whatever is being said at the time. Turning mobile phones to 'silent' or 'vibrate' mode is not enough - they need to be turned off.
- **Ensure that you speak clearly and slowly**. You may be very familiar with your material and be tempted to speak quickly. Or if you're outside, you may speak quietly so that you can't be overheard. Either situation may produce an inaudible recording. Invariably, people don't realise that they're speaking softly - we rarely 'hear' our own voices. **Remember to spell out any names, places or complex terminology and medications as you go along**. One key point with all dictation is not to be tempted to speak faster in order to save on recording time! It's far better to send a slightly larger file containing clearly dictated material which can then be transcribed more easily and quickly. Sending large digital files can always be overcome - if a transcriber has to struggle with a 'gabbled' recording, this will result in an incomplete transcript, longer transcribing time or additional charges to the author.
- When citing from other reports or radiological investigations, your accurate and verbatim quoting is vital and essential.

The Don'ts

Don't:

- **Record in a noisy environment** such as restaurants, open spaces, airports, pubs, trains, cafes if it can be avoided. Background noise is often more intrusive on recordings than we realise at the time. Voices can easily be swamped by extraneous noise.
- **Leave windows open** - however hot the day may be, try and keep windows closed. Noise from traffic, roadworks and aeroplanes will all impact on your recording - internal Dictaphone microphones are not as selective as the human ear and can't filter out extraneous noise in the same way that we can. They record everything they hear and the loudest noise will dominate.
- **Sit near noisy machinery** such as air conditioning, photocopiers, heaters or computers - even radios in the background can make it impossible to hear the recording.
- **Have crockery near the microphone.** If you do, the clattering of the crockery will be the loudest sound on the recording, and you will deafen your transcriber!
- **Shuffle papers** too near the microphone. As this may be the source of the nearest noise, that is what the microphone will hear and it will drown out whatever is being said.
- **Write near the microphone** if you can avoid it. We have often heard recordings where the scribbling of a pen is the loudest sound we hear throughout the recording.
- Cough and splutter or yawn while still dictating.