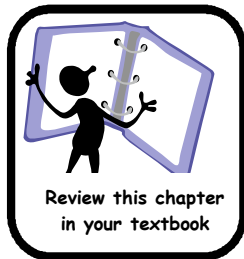


CHAPTER FOURTEEN: Basic Business Practices

Chapter Summary



This chapter deals with the job market for professional interpreters and the wide diversity of opportunities, as well as business management suggestions for interpreters in private practice.

To Focus Your Study

As you study this chapter, pay particular attention to the following ideas and information.

1. Identify job market variables that influence employment opportunities for ASL/English interpreters.
2. Describe three types of employment found in the interpreting field.
3. Identify five variables that influence interpreter pay rates.
4. Outline major costs of doing business as a private practitioner and identify five business skills an interpreter must master.



Learning Activities

In Your Own Words

Summarize your learning in this chapter. Why are the items you noted important to your journey of learning?

I Wish I Had Known

Watch the video clips in the companion CD for this chapter in which two of our experts address the topic “I Wish I Had Known.” Generate a list of questions you have about the business of sign language interpretation.





Business Practices

LEARNING ACTIVITY #1: Watch the video clips on the companion CD for this chapter in the file titled “Business Practices.” Did you pick up any new ideas or tips that were not in the textbook? If so, record them in your journal.

LEARNING ACTIVITY #2: Meet with a seasoned interpreting practitioner who is willing to give you an “inside tour” of her/his business. Look at this expert’s standard operating procedures for booking and billing for interpreting jobs, business policies and manner of record keeping. What does s/he do in the area of customer service (sending holiday greetings, giving pens or calendars with the interpreter’s contact information on it, etc.)?



Wellness

LEARNING ACTIVITY #1: Watch the video clips in the companion CD for this chapter regarding wellness (“Threats to Staying in the Field” and “Wellness strategies.”)

- ❖ List the strategies they use to support their wellness.
- ❖ Identify things in your life that reduce stress (diet, exercise, time management, etc.)
- ❖ Develop a wellness plan to support you while a student; as a professional practitioner.



LEARNING ACTIVITY #2: To complete your learning from the textbook and study guide for *So You Want To Be An Interpreter*, spend some time reflecting on all of your learning and discuss the following questions in your journal.

- ❖ What do you imagine the field of interpreting to be like — working conditions, job opportunities, level of support, demands, opportunities for professional growth, etc.?
- ❖ What kind of support do you hope to receive from:
 - Members of the Deaf community?
 - Interpreting peers?
 - Your employer?
 - Your friends and family?
- ❖ What demands will you encounter in terms of:
 - Prepping for various jobs?
 - Amount of time expected?
 - Continued need to improve in skills and knowledge?
 - Requisite amount of income to manage financially?
 - Physical demands of the work?

- ❖ Interview two working interpreters and ask them these kinds of questions. Identify their strategies.
- ❖ In your journal, write up a plan for yourself identifying your needs and how you will establish appropriate professional and personal goals, boundaries, etc. to enable you to stay in the field and to be physically and emotionally healthy.



Study Questions

1. When calculating the financial costs of doing business as a private practitioner, an interpreter must remember to include ... (circle all that apply):
 - (a) Education
 - (b) Transportation
 - (c) Certification
 - (d) Business clothing
 - (e) Health and malpractice insurance

2. Factors which threaten an individual's ability to stay in the field of sign language interpreting are ... (circle all that apply):
 - (a) Marital status
 - (b) Repetitive strain injury
 - (c) Gender and age
 - (d) Inability to obtain certification
 - (e) Emotional burnout

3. List five business skills interpreters must master In order to operate an effective professional practice

4. Discuss how each of the following variables influence employment opportunities for ASL/English interpreters:
 - (a) Geographical Location
 - (b) Cost of living
 - (c) Setting or type of interpreting
 - (d) Whether an interpreter is employed as a staff interpreter or
----- or -----

5. There are three basic types of employment available to sign language interpreters. These include ... (circle all that apply):
 - (a) Integrated administrative positions
 - (b) Staff positions with a business, school or agency
 - (c) Contract positions
 - (d) Self-employment
 - (e) Journeyman positions

6. In the 1960's the job market for Sign Language interpreters was ... (circle all that apply):
 - (a) Limited to the East coast of the US
 - (b) Controlled by Deaf clubs and organizations
 - (c) Flooded with qualified interpreters, most of whom had graduated from interpreter education programs
 - (d) Virtually non-existent — interpreters worked primarily on a volunteer basis
 - (e) None of the above

7. Some variables that influence pay rates for interpreters include ... (circle all that apply):
- (a) Age of the interpreter
 - (b) Whether the individual is a certified interpreter
 - (c) Education — both general and specific to interpretation
 - (d) Gender of interpreter
 - (e) Geographic location and related cost of living index
8. There is generally a shortage of interpreters available across the job market primarily due to ... (circle all that apply):
- (a) Equal access legislation which has created a need for interpreters more quickly than educational programs are able to graduate them
 - (b) Inability of hearing individuals to master ASL
 - (c) A preference for hiring interpreters who have deaf family members
 - (d) A low percentage of graduates from interpreter education programs
 - (e) Inappropriately high hiring criteria