
ATA Mentoring Program Webinar Handout

<http://www.atanet.org/careers/mentoring.php>

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January 22, 2013

Resource list and commentary by Paula Gordon; your suggestions welcome for inclusion in future lists. Topics follow the order of the “What if you’re not yet ready to be a mentee” section of the webinar.

http://www.atanet.org/business_practices/calpro_us.php

If you only bookmark one ATA website page, this is the one. Here you’ll find links to business practices essentials: US CalPro (income and expense calculator), the Business Practices list on Yahoo, the directory of “Business Smarts” articles, and the Translation Agreements page. (You have to bookmark it because the ATA website is being redesigned and there are no direct links to this page yet.)

Language skills

- Join a language-specific ATA Division: <http://www.atanet.org/divisions/index.php>
- Explore the Internet for broadcasts and published work in your source and target languages.
- Don’t forget your library! Many libraries have audio-visual materials (yes, language courses, but also audio books, movies, and television shows) that can be enjoyable as well as educational.

Field-Specific knowledge

- Join a field-specific ATA Division: <http://www.atanet.org/divisions/index.php>
- ATA Webinars: <http://www.atanet.org/webinars/index.php>
- Blogs and Groups: In addition to print publications, there are blogs and discussion groups in every field imaginable, in every language. Search Yahoo and LinkedIn for groups about your subjects of interest. If you are asked why you want to join, don’t hesitate to explain that you’re a translator working in that field and you’d like to stay up-to-date on news and terminology.
- Explore MOOCs—massive open online courses—and university extension courses and lecture series:
 - <http://www.coursera.org/>
 - <http://www.edx.org/>
 - <http://ocw.mit.edu/>
 - <http://www.extension.harvard.edu/>
 - <http://techtv.mit.edu/>
 - <http://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures-and-events>

(Apologies for providing only English-language resources; feel free to send links to MOOC platforms in other languages as you find them.)

Style

- Target-language expertise requires the correct use of style and register—not only for the language, but for the field of study. The Science and Technology Division has a list of general and technical style guides on its blog: http://www.ata-divisions.org/S_TD/tech_writing.html
Add your own suggestions, especially for style guides in languages other than English, in the comments.
- The ATA Certification pages also discuss target language style:
http://www.atanet.org/certification/aboutexams_overview.php (see Into-English Grading Standards on the right; explore all the links if you want to learn more about how exams are graded).

Business Skills

- ATA Code of Ethics and Professional Practice:
http://www.atanet.org/membership/code_of_ethics.php
and commentary: http://www.atanet.org/membership/code_of_ethics_commentary.pdf
- An excellent way to determine for yourself if you are ready or not for this profession is to complete the self-evaluation questionnaires provided as part of the Certification ethics requirement:
http://www.atanet.org/certification/online_ethics_overview.php Mentees will find plenty of ideas here for setting goals.
- The ATA Business Practices list is a small but growing list of experienced freelance translators and interpreter as well as company owners. We talk about issues affecting the profession as a whole as well as issues affecting us as individual translators or interpreters. Please state your full name (as listed in the directory) upon requesting to join to avoid delay or denial of your request.
http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/ata_business_practices/
- See the resource list on page 3 for more business skills related resources.

Online Presence

- Are you listed in the online ATA Directory? It's not automatic—you have to set up your own listing. Do it here: <http://www.atanet.org/onlinedirectories/>
- Don't forget to list your language pairs and contact information (you'd be surprised!)
- If you belong to any other organizations that have directories, make sure you're listed in those, too.
- Your e-mail signature can lead to work—at minimum, list your full name, working languages, and e-mail address (or phone number if you prefer to receive inquiries by phone). If you have a business website or blog, include that, too. Use your signature block in a consistent manner—even when not on “official business.”
- Participate in online groups responsively and considerately. Your messages will be floating around in cyberspace for decades to come. Sign your name to your posts, provide context for your questions and answers, think twice before pointing fingers. Also, when posting to group lists, consider omitting long legal footers (“if you are not the intended recipient,” etc.).

Business Persona

- Are you a *Courier New* or *Freestyle Script* kind of person? Do you address new contacts as Mr. and Ms. or by first name? Do you sign off “Sincerely yours” or “Best”? Paragraphs or bullet points?
- Your decisions need not be set in stone, nor do they have to be the same for every recipient, but part of establishing your business is helping your colleagues and clients “see” you through your business communications. Let your personality shine through in every message and call.
- A standard letterhead for resumes, estimates, and invoices is a good start.

Imagine Your Future As a Professional Linguist

Do an annual review or brainstorm in advance about the following:

Clients worked with; people I'd like to work with; type of client (corporate, nonprofit, individual?); type of job; income and hours worked (keep track!); good ideas and bad ideas (what worked and didn't work this year); discoveries made (of all types, e.g., psychology of a client, efficiency improvements); people who can help me; people I can help; what I need to learn; what I'd like to learn; is there some skill or knowledge I already have that sets me apart?; wish list (software, books, equipment, furnishings, subscriptions, etc.); where do I want to be this time next year with all of the above.

And last, but not least: Get involved! <http://www.atanet.org/chaptersandgroups/index.php> (links on left side of page). Volunteering is one of the best ways to meet colleagues, clients, and informal mentors.

Resources (in addition to those listed above and by no means complete)

Standard disclaimer: Inclusion on this list does not imply endorsement by ATA.

ATA Careers and Business Pages

- If you didn't bookmark this before, do it now:
http://www.atanet.org/business_practices/calpro_us.php
- Explore the ATA website—there is a wealth of information there.
 - http://www.atanet.org/careers/translation_agreements.php
 - http://www.atanet.org/business_practices/index.php
 - http://www.atanet.org/careers/blog_trekker.php

Other Freelance-Oriented Professional Organizations and Websites

- List on the ATA website: http://www.atanet.org/chaptersandgroups/other_groups.php
- Freelancers Union: <http://www.freelancersunion.org/about/index.html>
- SCORE: <http://www.score.org/> A nonprofit organization that provides free business mentoring services to entrepreneurs in the United States. Affiliated with the US Small Business Association.
- Editorial Freelancers Association: <http://www.the-efa.org/res/resources.php>
- Copyeditor' Knowledge Base: <http://www.kokedit.com/ckb.php> Geared towards freelance copyeditors, but you'll find useful links for translators and interpreters on every page.
- Freelance-oriented blogs
 - <http://freelanceswitch.com/>
 - <http://deardrfreelance.com/>
 - <http://thefreelancery.com/>
 - <http://www.freelancefeast.com/>
 - <http://freelancefolder.com/>

Social Media No-Nonsense

- <http://www.linkedinpersonaltrainer.com/>
- <http://www.linkedininsights.com/>
- <http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/how-and-why-to-participate-in-a-tweetchat/42380>

Due Diligence

- <http://www.paymentpractices.net/Scams.aspx>
- <http://www.paymentpractices.net/> (paid subscription required)
- <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/WPPF/> (free Yahoo group)

Publications by our colleagues—translation, interpreting, freelancing in general (search titles)

- *The Prosperous Translator: Advice from Fire Ant & Worker Bee*, compiled and edited by Chris Durban
- *How to Succeed as a Freelance Translator*, by Corinne McKay
- *Found in Translation: How Language Shapes Our Lives and Transforms the World*, by Nataly Kelly and Jost Zetsche
- *The Entrepreneurial Linguist: The Business-School Approach to Freelance Translation*, by Judy Jenner and Dagmar Jenner
- *What to Charge: Pricing Strategies for Freelancers and Consultants*, by Laurie Lewis

Send your comments and resource recommendations to Paula c/o mentoring@atanet.org.