



Freelancer spotlight

Gain inspiration from other translator's stories

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Language pairs:
ES-EN
FR-EN

SDL*

Why did you get into translation?

From a very young age, I have always travelled and had a strong passion for languages. This progressed during my studies at school and I then pursued it even further throughout college, my undergraduate studies and a Masters in Translation Studies. After graduating from my undergraduate studies, I worked as a Translation Project Manager. Working as a full-time PM for three years alongside my part-time MA, enabled me to gain extensive knowledge of the industry and enhanced my interest to become a freelance translator. There was something about the freedom and flexibility of your own schedule, the responsibility for your own translations and learning in addition to the challenge of creating a successful business that always inspired me to become a freelance translator.

What, in your opinion, makes a good translator?

There are many aspects that make a good translator. However, the most important for me are the ability to multi-task, prioritise and adhere to strict deadlines. The ability to provide high-quality, confidential and reliable translation services whilst complying with client requirements and expectations. I also feel that good/professional translators ensure they are up-to-date with both industry knowledge and technological advances, as well as terminology and advances within the field(s) they specialise in. Furthermore, I feel it is extremely important to be friendly and professional when collaborating with agencies, clients and colleagues alike. It is important to establish and maintain stable, friendly and positive relationships with these people from the very beginning to ensure a positive and successful way of working.

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Do you have any suggestions of first steps for people new to freelance translating?

It can be extremely difficult for new entrants to overcome the 'no experience-no work' barrier and to find their feet within the industry. I would therefore recommend the following:

- Consider working as a PM to gain industry knowledge and experience first-hand
- Attend as many webinars, roadshows, industry events and conferences as possible to further your knowledge
- Join online groups to integrate with other translation professionals, sign up to translation platforms such as Proz.com to get your name out into the world and to find work opportunities and mentoring schemes
- Become a member of an established translation body such as the Institute of Translation & Interpreting (ITI)
- Find a specialism and pursue it
- Apply to as many agencies as possible (you never know who will give you a chance).

Where would you advise freelancers, who are new to the industry, to look for help?

Consider joining industry associations such as the ITI or the Chartered Institute of Linguists to demonstrate your commitment to the translation profession and the industry as a whole. These groups also provide access to job boards as well as industry news and upcoming events (including networking opportunities). Proz.com is also a fantastic place to start building up work experience, identifying potential clients, attending online webinars, integrating with other translation professionals, participating in mentoring schemes and obtaining lots of useful resources.

"Once working as a translator, it is important to create a stable work-life balance; have strict working hours and stick to them. It can be easy to overwork yourself, but you must take time out to recuperate, which will help to maintain your motivation and enjoyment for working as a translator."

Your hints and tips for a successful career in translation

Make sure you integrate with other translators and translation professionals who can answer questions or offer support and guidance, even if it is only through an online group and not face-to-face. It's always interesting to talk to someone with past experience of what you might be struggling with at the time. Establish friendly, long-term relationships with those you work with (clients, agencies, other translators, etc). Working in a positive environment will encourage you to work hard but also enjoy what you do and who you work with.

From a freelance perspective, running a business can be difficult at times. Not only do you focus on translating, but you also have to deal with project management, marketing, accounts, invoicing, etc. Time management is key, so you must be well-organised, know how to prioritise and keep level-headed. Embrace as many opportunities as you can - attend conferences, events, webinars, networking groups to be a part of the translation community and industry as a whole. Be a positive thinker! Progression doesn't happen overnight so it is important to be aware of your objectives and goals and to work towards them efficiently.

How can technology help?

These days technology allows us to easily search the Internet for potential clients, to join online translation communities, such as Proz.com, and also to keep up-to-date with industry news and advances in translation software. In terms of CAT tools, and specifically thinking of SDL Trados Studio, translators are able to increase their productivity and time management through the use of Translation memories (TMs) and termbases, useful plugins and search tools. The use of TMs and termbases can also help with consistency and in turn, enhance overall translation quality.

Any specific SDL Trados Studio features or functionality you most like using or find of benefit?

I'm still learning how to use it, but I love the idea of the new upLIFT technology within Studio. TMs are invaluable during the translation process and having an extra option to find even more matches is so helpful when you're working on a project.

Try the world's leading translation software
- **SDL Trados Studio** -
for free!

Any SDL Trados Studio guidance (hints and tips) you might like to share?

When you purchase Studio, ensure you do as much training as possible on the software to ensure you make the most of its built-in features and plugins for your specific needs. The more comfortable and confident you are with your choice of CAT tool, the more productive you will be. Also, ensure you build up termbases to use within Studio correctly and efficiently from the beginning (and maintain them as terminology evolves). This, along with any TMs you create, will help increase quality throughout future projects.

Any support routes you have found useful when learning about CAT tools?

I have found the free SDL Webinars very useful! From Studio 2017 introduction webinars to more in-depth feature specific webinars, the content has been invaluable! The SDL team is very knowledgeable and team members are always happy to help with any questions. Proz.com also works alongside SDL in providing opportunities for SDL Studio training and certification courses, which are extremely beneficial.

Access free
webinars,
provided by
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