

**HOW TO START
A SECRETARIAL SERVICE
FROM HOME
BY SOMEONE WHO HAS**

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Published by
Devitt/Leone

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Revised 2004/2009/2016
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INTRODUCTION

Operating your own secretarial business can be an extremely rewarding experience. I know, because I have been running my own secretarial service out of my home since 1990. I started this type of service business in order to be home with my children, and God has blessed my efforts enormously.

I have actually started a secretarial service three separate times due to moves related to my husband's career. The first two times were before the days of the Internet, so I was not able to take my client base with me. In today's global society this is no longer a problem! I have clients and have worked with people from all over the world. I work with a translator who has an office in Paris, France, but he lives in South Africa! I also have a client in New York and several all over California. I call these clients my global clients. I have never met any of these clients face-to-face. In this book I will explain how you can do this too, as well as build a client base in your own town.

My heart is to share what I've learned with other mothers who may want to stay home with their children but still need to earn some income. Oh, how I would have loved a mentor when I first started out! Someone who had been there, done that. Someone who would share **all** that they had learned, and I mean **everything!** I remember I had one book (guide) to help me back in 1990 on how to start a secretarial service and it was so vague. That book did not give me the answer to my most important question – what type of businesses to target and how to get clients! I hope to give you all the details so that you can be successful very quickly.

THE BASICS

Before you go any further with your idea to start a secretarial service I think I should point out that it does take certain skills to run a successful business of this type. First of all, you should be pretty comfortable with at least one word processing software program. The most commonly used word processing

program is probably Microsoft Word™, although many law firms use Corel WordPerfect™. Personally, I have both, but I mostly use Microsoft Word.™ If you are not fairly proficient in a word processing program I would suggest teaching yourself with a book such as Word 2000 for Dummies or Quick Course in Microsoft Word. You could choose to take a class at the local college, but I think you could become pretty proficient through one of the books and with a little determination on your part.

Another skill you should possess to run this type of business is a good command of the English language. I don't think you need to have a college degree in English, but you need to know when to use words such as their, there or they're; to, two or too; are or our; your or you're, et cetera. Without this skill you're going to have a hard time keeping clients. It's not all that difficult though, and if you passed your high school English classes with Bs or better, I'm sure you'll do fine. Again, if you are lacking knowledge in this area a simple grammar class or reference books will quickly shape your preparedness.

The last attribute you should possess is perseverance. It may take a little time to get things going but you've got to stick with it until it happens. What I would do is take the number of hours you would like to be working **at** your own secretarial service and work **on** your business that amount of time each day. For example, say you are a stay-at-home mother and you would like to work three to four hours a day. Then I would take three to four hours each day and work on my business. At first it may be learning software or reading books. (Hey, you're working on your new business right now!) Later it may be sending out sales letters or searching the Internet for leads or ideas. Now maybe you only want to work one to two hours a day. Well, then only work on your business one to two hours each day. Maybe your children are in school or classes during the day. Then you could work on your business six plus hours a day. The idea is that in order to build your business you are going to need to spend time working **on** your business. It doesn't have to be a whole lot, but it should be the number of hours

a day you would like to eventually work for pay. Work on it at least a little bit every day and before you know it your efforts will pay off.

SETTING UP YOUR HOME OFFICE

Ideally, it would be best if you had a spare bedroom you could devote to your home office. It would be easier to set up and to stay organized. If you just don't have a spare bedroom you can set up your office in a corner of another bedroom or even in the living room or family room. I have had my office set up in the master bedroom, an extra bedroom, back to the master bedroom, back to an extra bedroom, and now I work in our family room, until one of my children moves out and then I'll be back to an extra bedroom. My husband, who has his own drafting business, is currently set up ... in the master bedroom. ☺

Being a mom myself, I know if you have children you are going to be sharing space with them. I think it is very important for younger children to understand how important it is that they not "play" with your work equipment, customer's documents, etc. As your children get older, try to include them in the business as their maturity and skills allow.

Furnishing Your Office

Obviously, you will need a desk for your computer. An inexpensive option might be a folding table. I used a folding table purchased at Costco for several years.

In my opinion a good quality chair is the most important piece of furniture you will need for your office. Shop around and "test drive" chairs. Think ergonomics! Working at a computer can cause all kinds of neck and back problems, but if you have a good chair you are going to be able to alleviate a lot of problems.

As far as printers are concerned, laser printers offer the very best quality and are almost essential if you are going to be offering resumes. If you already own an inkjet or bubble jet printer it will be fine until you can afford to upgrade to a laser printer.

An answering machine is absolutely necessary. If you are not at home a client needs to know that he has reached the right phone number and will be able to leave a message for you. You will find that a lot of customers do not like to leave a message so you really want to answer the phone yourself as much as possible. Of course, a cell phone would ensure that you are always available.

If you are running your business out of your home and you have only one telephone line, you should identify your residence and your business both on your message, or people calling your personal residence will think they have a wrong number. My message says something like, "You have reached the Devitt Residence and Devitt's Secretarial Service. I am out on pick up and delivery right now. Please leave your name and phone number and I will get back to you as soon as I return." There is a sales message here too, which tells a prospective customer that I will pick up and deliver their work too before we have even made a personal contact.

When you go on vacation you might want to change the message to something like, "You have reached the Devitt residence and Devitt's Secretarial Service. Devitt's Secretarial Service will be closed (give dates). I am sorry for any inconvenience this may cause you. If you have an urgent job that needs to be completed please call (give name and phone number of other secretarial service you may use as a back-up). Otherwise, please leave your name and phone number and I will return your call on (give date)." Of course, you may not want to advertise that you are out of town. This is a decision only you can make for your situation. I always notify my regular clients ahead of time that I will be on vacation.

A fax machine is not necessary but can make life easier for you and your clients. I use mine less and less these days, but I do still use it from time to time.

If you are going to offer transcription services, and I highly recommend that you do, you will need a transcribing foot pedal. Most transcription work now comes as digital audio files such as mp3, .wav, .dss, .wmv, et cetera, allowing you to work with clients over the Internet. You will need a foot pedal that connects to your computer. This foot pedal will allow you to play the audio file, as well as rewind it, all with your foot, leaving your hands free to do the typing. There are several options to get set up to handle these types of files. One option is the Start/Stop Universal Transcription software and foot pedal (<http://www.startstop.com/>). The other is Express Scribe (<http://www.nch.com.au/scribe/>). The software is actually a free download and you can purchase the foot pedal from them, or I've even heard of people purchasing a foot pedal on eBay and using the free software. You can even use the function keys on your keyboard if you are extremely low on funds, but it will be quite a balancing act to rewind using the F keys all the time. If you can at all afford a foot pedal I recommend that you purchase one.

I rarely use my transcription machines anymore, but once in awhile somebody will have an audio-cassette tape that they want transcribed. I have both a micro cassette tape transcriber and a standard-cassette tape transcribing machine. They come with their own foot pedals that plug into the transcribing machine rather than the computer. You can get these transcription machines at most office supply stores such as Staples and Office Depot. You could even probably get them on eBay.

Supplies

The following is a list of possible supplies you will need. You do not need to go out and buy all of these things at once, but they are things that I use in my secretarial service at one time or another.

Paper – Paper comes in different weights. The higher the number, the heavier the paper. I use at least a 20-pound weight for most jobs and sometimes 24 pound. White bond is definitely essential. I also keep a couple of different colors on hand, such as gray and ivory, for resumes and sales letters.

You will also want to consider having some legal sized paper on hand for jobs which require it, such as attorneys and accountants.

Dictionaries – I have three favorite dictionaries, which I use quite frequently; my good old Webster's Dictionary, a medical dictionary and a legal dictionary.

Envelopes – To match your other paper products

Miscellaneous Supplies:

CDs	Labels
Stapler	Paper Clips
Staples	Notebooks
Calculator	Pens
Reference Books	Stamps

Business License and Permits

Most cities and counties will require you to obtain a business license. Call City Hall in your town to find out the procedure there. It is not usually very expensive. Also check your state laws. Every area is a little bit different.

Naming Your Business

If you do not use your last name in the name of your business you may be required to file a fictitious business name with the County Clerk's office. When you file your fictitious business name they will check to make sure that nobody else is using that name already. Checking your phone book before applying for your fictitious business name can sometimes determine if your business name has already been taken, although not all businesses are listed. Sometimes you will also be required to run ads in newspapers when you file your fictitious name. You will have to ask the County Clerk's office in your area if this is a requirement. You may also need a copy of your fictitious business name when you open a checking account for your business.

There are many possibilities for naming your business. You can name it Jones Secretarial Service (of course, substituting your name for Jones), or something to describe your geographical area, such as Sonoma County Secretarial Service (your city or county). Here are some other ideas for you to choose from that I am getting from two phone books. If they are not already being used in your city or county you should be able to use one of them:

- A to Z Word Processing
- Ace Secretarial Services
- Accurate Secretarial Services
- Advocate Word Processing
- Applied Ink
- At Your Service
- Business Services Unlimited
- Certified Business Services
- Elite Type
- Excel Resumes
- Express Services
- The Network
- Presentation Plus
- Pro Type
- Professional Secretaries
- Typing By (Your Name)
- Typing Etc.
- Your Place or Mine

Your Secretarial Service (My name in two of my past lives)
Abracadabra Secretarial Services
Accu-Trans
A Perfect Page (I do love this one)
Correspondence & More
EZ Writing
The Executive Center
Executive Express
Executive Typing
Girl Friday
Letter Perfect
Professional Resume Service
Transcription Technologies, Inc.
Word for Word
The Word Processor.

You could also go to your library and check out-of-town phonebooks or look on the Internet for other ideas. If you offer specialized work such as medical transcription you can work that into your name. Keep in mind that your name will affect your yellow pages listing. They are always listed in alphabetical order. Many people believe you should aim for a name to get you listed at the beginning of the yellow pages. I did VERY well though when I was named Your Secretarial Service. I was able to obtain a huge account with a private investigator because they went to the most obscure, one line listing in the yellow pages.

Business Cards

You can have these made up at the local office supply store pretty inexpensively. There are also software programs to design and print your own business cards. You can also have made, or make yourself, matching letterhead.

In any case, keep them simple. Have your business name printed on them, of course, your name as the owner, and some of the features you offer. Hand them out to everyone you know and meet. Give some to your spouse to

hand out at work. Give extras to your friends and extended family to pass around.

Another thing you can have made for you at the printers are Rolodex cards. You can send these with your mailings (which I will discuss later). Have the words Secretarial Service or Transcription printed at the top of the card on the tab. Potential clients can then file these in their Rolodex file and when a need arises for overflow secretarial work they can simply flip to Secretarial Services and give you a call.

Getting Started Locally

Okay, so you have the equipment, your business license and permits, your business cards, and all kinds of office supplies. But what are you going to offer clients and HOW are you going to get clients?

In my secretarial business I started by offering to type and edit term papers for college students, resumes, reports, proposals, letters, mailing lists – anything that needed typing. If you have other skills such as bookkeeping or desktop publishing you will have even more to offer clients.

I didn't offer transcription (or dictation services) at first because I didn't even know what it was. I was kind of curious about it because in the yellow pages I noticed that other secretarial services offered it, so I did call one to find out what it was. Just in case you are in the same situation I was and you don't know what transcription is (could I be the only one?) it is simply typing what is spoken on a tape. It can be anything from one person dictating letters, reports or legal briefs, to a two-person interview, to a focus group interview where you have several people being interviewed on their opinions. I have also transcribed seminar speakers.

A good way to get some practice transcribing, and to see if you are any good at it, is to record part of a program such as Oprah and then try playing it back and typing what they say – word for word. Here is the secret to being a fantastic transcriptionist (which is what it takes to keep your customers) and that is you must be so careful to type every single little word. Now some clients will want you to even type the ums, uhs, etc., and others will want you to clean it up. You will need to ask **each** client what they want as you get the jobs. But as you are practicing I suggest you really transcribe **every** word uttered, even false starts. The key is to really take your time and make sure you get it **perfect**. It takes an **experienced** transcriptionist approximately four times as long as the recording to transcribe the work. In other words, if it were a one-hour tape, it would take an experienced transcriptionist approximately four hours to transcribe. If it were 15 minutes of tape, it would take an experienced transcriptionist approximately one hour to transcribe. And remember, I'm talking about an experienced transcriptionist. When you are just starting and learning it will take you longer. But hang in there, you will get faster. The main thing you want to concentrate on at first is total accuracy. This is what your clients really care about. So while you're working on your business, practice some transcribing skills. There are some samples of various transcriptions in the appendix of this book.

Advertising

The more you can afford to advertise the better. Of course, you won't be able to spend thousands of dollars on advertising right out of the gate. So, here are some inexpensive ways I have found to get new clients.

Word of Mouth

Tell everybody you know that you have started a secretarial service. It is absolutely free, and while you may not get immediate clients your friends will

remember, and if an opportunity arises your name will come to mind. Make sure they have your business cards to pass around too.

Flyers

There is a sample flyer in the appendix of this book. Feel free to use it for your business. Simply block out my phone number, insert your phone number and then type your phone number vertically along the bottom several times and cut so potential clients can simply tear off your phone number. You could also put a little pouch and fill it with your business cards inviting people to “take one”. Post these flyers everywhere you can. Several supermarkets in my area have bulletin boards where I post mine. Everywhere you go look for these bulletin boards. Libraries and college campuses are great places to find bulletin boards. Check to see if you need permission to post on these. Also, most are cleared monthly so you will need to re-post your flyers monthly. Some college campuses charge a fee for this. Check with the administration.

Another thing you can do with your flyers is to distribute them to all the homes in your neighborhood. It is illegal to put them in mailboxes, and the post office will charge you postage for each one they pick up, plus a fine, but you could put them on the doors of all the homes. Some printers have “door hanger” cards which can carry your message to the homeowner. You can even hire a reliable teenager to do this for you for a reasonable price.

College and University Newspapers

I have advertised in both the university newspaper and the local community college newspaper. It is usually very inexpensive and you can receive a lot of term papers, resumes, etc. Treat these college students well, for they may be only a student today but soon they will be out there in the business world and they will remember your work if it is good.

Here is a copy of the advertisement I used in my local university paper. It has been very effective. I've even had students say they called me because I had the best ad.

Accurate Typing, Word Processing, Term Papers, Reports, Resumes. Special Student Rates! All work proofread and spell checked. 24-hour turnaround. (Phone number).

A very lucrative market within the University systems is transcribing interviews for quantitative research students, dissertation students, and psychology students. If you are going to target this group, work it into the advertisement of their school newspapers. Let them know that you "specialize" in this type of work. You can even target this group of students out of your immediate area as they usually have tapes or digital files they can snail mail or e-mail to you, and they usually have a pretty good amount of them that they will need done.

Local Newspaper

I have run my secretarial service in three different towns/cities. I have found the effectiveness of classified newspaper advertising really differs with location. I have had it do fantastic in the first city I started this service in, mediocre in the second city and miserably here in the small town where I now reside. I would still definitely give it a try because if it works it has pretty immediate results. If it doesn't work, well, you've learned that it's not the most

effective advertising means in your area. Now, I am talking classified advertising, not display advertising. I think the usual heading is Business Services.

Be sure to say in your ad that you offer 24-hour turnaround (if you offer it). I think it will help in your response rate.

Yellow Pages

I would definitely recommend advertising in your local Yellow pages. I think the best thing about customers who go to the Yellow pages is that they are ready to buy customers!! How cool is that? I do not advertise in all the directories that come out (there are so many these day). I only advertise in the main directory that most people use.

Steve Yankee has a website with lots of tips on advertising in the Yellow pages, and he even offers a free e-mail course. His website address is: <http://www.yellowpagespower.com>.

Here's a tip I learned the hard way. If you run an advertisement in the Yellow pages, shortly after the new phone books are distributed you could be contacted by a company that is putting together plastic phone book covers. Of course, they would like you to place an ad for your secretarial service on their covers. I found them to be very high pressure and they wouldn't even let me "think about it" for even a short time. They told me that they were calling me before my competitors, and that I would be the only secretarial service on the cover. While it is true that I was the only secretarial service on the cover they printed up a very limited amount of covers and only distributed them to other people who bought the same advertising. I went for this **one** time. Never again! I spent \$130.00 and received **no** inquiries.

Direct Mail

I send out 20 sales letters every week. That only costs me the price of a book of stamps plus paper and envelopes. And there are now 20 people who didn't know about my business before who now do. A sample sales letter is at the back of this book. Of course, I personalize it to fit the individual. You could probably even come up with a better sales letter than mine. There are many books at the library to help you write a sales letter.

This would probably be a good place to mention the marketing "Rule of 7". It basically says that a potential customer will need to see your name seven times before they will buy from you. So pick a category of businesses to send sales letters to and send them a letter every month for seven months! If you are doing transcription work then I suggest targeting Private Investigators, Court Reporters, Law Enforcement, Contractors or Attorneys. You want to change your letter a bit each month, but keep at it. I have gotten clients by doing exactly this!

Once you have done some work for a client for awhile, and you feel they are pleased with your work, you might ask the client to write you a letter of recommendation. You could then Xerox the letter and put copies in with your sales letter.

Remember to insert a business card and/or a Rolodex card with your sales letter also.

Another idea on who to send the letters to is to go through your newspaper and get the list of new business licenses in your area and send them all a letter. These people are usually new in business and may not yet have a full time secretary or may not need a full time secretary. Ideal for my type of business! I used to advise following up with a phone call the following week but

with the new National Do Not Call List I don't think I would recommend that anymore as it might be considered telemarketing.

Networking

There are various organizations you can join to help you "network". There is the Chamber of Commerce, Professional Women's Organizations, etc. Often times they have "mixers" which you can attend. Bring plenty of business cards and hand them out to everyone you meet. Believe me, everyone else will be doing the same thing. That is the basic idea. You can meet a lot of potential clients at these events. Dress professionally and go to as many as you can.

Other Secretarial Services

Call the other secretarial services in your area and tell them if they have overflow work you would be glad to help them out. Even though you are competitors there are times when other services are so busy they may need help, or if they want to go on vacation they may need a service to refer clients to. I sometimes refer to other services if I am just too busy to handle all the work myself or if it is a project I do not feel qualified to handle, such as desktop publishing or something. Also, if something comes up that you can't handle you will have someone to refer your customers to.

Displays

Another possibility to generate new clients is to check with a local copy store such as "Mailbox Etc." and see if they offer resume and/or typing services. I have found that a lot of them do not. Go in and talk with the owner and ask him or her if you could put a little display or simply leave some business cards alerting customers to your service. You, in turn, will use his store for all your copying needs. It would only make good business sense for the owner of this store to want to encourage your business because it, in turn, will increase his business.

Other Possible Clients

Attorneys have a lot of overflow transcription work to be done. Accountants have financial statements that need typing. Private Investigators do a lot of reports and interviews and many times send this work to contract transcriptionists. Engineers and contractors often work from their homes and may not have a full time secretary. They simply call a “contract” secretary as the need arises.

Insurance companies, real estate agents, title companies and home inspectors may also have overflow work.

Court reporters have lots of tapes or audio files that need transcribing.

Look through your phone book and I am sure you will get a lot of ideas. My goal is for every business in my area to know about my service-oriented business.

Getting Started Globally

Web Site

I am by no means an expert on creating websites and all the ins and outs that are involved in that. But I did create my own web site using Microsoft Word. It was pretty simple. Of course, my web site is simple too, **but** I have gotten many clients from it. There are many free web tutorials that will help you learn to create one also. One of which is <http://www.smplanet.com/webpage/step1.html> It takes you step by step through the webpage building process. I have also heard that Go Daddy has some great templates to build webpages. Your ISP (Internet Service Provider) should provide you with some space for a webpage that you are already paying for with your e-mail account. Call them, e-mail them, whatever you have to do to find out how that works and what the address would

be. My ISP told me what my address would be and gave me free FTP software to upload my website to the Internet. You want to come up with some good HTML keywords and metatags to help the search engines find you. Think of how you would search for a service such as you offer and use those keywords. Your tutorials should give you lots of hints on keywords and meta tags.

Next you will need to submit your website to the search engines. I used Add Me (www.addme.com). I was able to add my website to many search engines through them at no charge whatsoever. I even downloaded a counter to keep track of the hits I get on my website. Be sure to resubmit monthly. As, I said, I am by no means an expert on websites. But I do recommend having one.

E-Mail Loops and Ezines

Join e-mail discussion lists and e-zines of your target customers. Yahoo! and Google Groups are probably the most common. For example, if you want to target Private Investigators or Insurance Claims Investigators join one of their discussion lists and introduce yourself and explain how you specialize in transcription services for just such a company. I would recommend only doing it once every year or so, as you don't want to be spamming the list. But I do think it is legitimate to make an introduction as to why you joined the list. Do be careful to read the group's rules on posting.

Another possibility is sending a post to the group saying, "I hope this is an appropriate post, but I was wondering if you all knew of a good place to advertise my transcription services. Are there any trade magazines you would recommend?" You get the idea. And you will probably get some good leads on where to spend your advertising dollars. Be careful not to subscribe to too many groups as it can get difficult to keep up with all the e-mail.

Writer's Magazines

There are several writer's magazines that have classified sections in them. Some even have special sections for typists. To get current rates write and request a media kit. They will send you a sample magazine and their advertising rates. It will take a few months to get listed and you usually won't be able to charge your normal rates. For some reason the typists who advertise in these magazines discount their rates very low. But we are talking "volume" here. You could get a very large book to type and it could help to get your business off the ground. Listed below are a few of the magazines.

Writer's Digest (probably the most popular)
1507 Dana Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45207-1005

The Writer
120 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116

Writers Connection
1610 Blossom Hill Rd.
San Jose, CA 95124-6349

Writers' Journal
3585 N. Lexington Ave., #328
Arden Hills, MN 55126

I have found The Writer's Digest Guide to Manuscript Formats by Dian Dincin Buchman and Seli Groves a very helpful book in properly formatting book manuscripts, TV and movie scripts, etc. The ISBN number is 0-89879-293-2.

Direct Mail

Do an Internet search on a target group (Adjusters, Investigators, Focus Groups, Translators, Oral History, Quantitative Research Students, etc., etc.). Make a list of names and addresses and send out sales letters, postcards and/or portfolios. I have made some beautiful portfolios, if I do say so myself, using burgundy portfolio holders from Staples. There is a place for my business card and then two pockets. In one pocket I place my sales letter, a letter of recommendation from a satisfied client, a list of satisfied clients and my price list. In the other pocket I place a sample report and a sample interview. Just do a little at a time as you can afford. You can just simply send sales letters with a business card and/or Rolodex card also.

Something that I have done that has really hooked new clients for me is to offer to type an audio file or tape for free! I came up with this idea after one of my relocations and I was desperate to get some work. I knew if I could just type one tape for a potential client they could see that the quality of my work was top notch. Well, I had three people take me up on that offer and they became very long-term clients.

Post Your Services

There are quite a few websites that have listings for secretarial or transcription services that allow you to add your name, address, phone, etc. to their lists. It is quite possible to get leads from these and I believe they are worth the time to send in your listing. Here are a few that I have come across in my surfing the Net:

<http://www.marketsdirectory.com> (This is to list your transcription service in regards to doing focus group transcription. Go to “New Listings” and submit your information.)

<http://www.homesecretary.com/> (They may have a fee associated with their site, but they also have a Free Yahoo! group.)

<http://www.wahm.com/submit.html> (They do charge \$60.00 to list for 1 year)

<http://home.earthlink.net/~recruiting/trans.html> Health Tech Transcription Referral Service – medical, legal and general transcription. This is a referral service where you can list your services and possibly get some leads.

Subcontract for Other Services

While building your own clientele, a good way to bring in income and gain experience is to subcontract for other secretarial and transcription services. Below are some places to begin your search for companies that hire independent contractors. Please note that as an independent contractor you are responsible for your own taxes, insurance, etc. I am sure there are many, many other companies that need help from time to time. You can do a search for “Transcription Services” or something similar and get a huge list of these types of businesses. They may or may not subcontract work out, but it’s worth a little inquiry to find out. I know from experience that the first page or two of companies to come up on a search engine are usually very busy and many times in need of additional subcontractors. The following companies have been known to hire independent contractors from time to time.

<http://www.nationwidereporting.com/>, 305 Broadway, Suite 408, New York, NY 10007-1109. Telephone number (800) 221-7242. E-mail – ungarsohn@aol.com .

<http://www.mtdaily.com> This is mainly a medical transcription site but they do have job listings and I have found companies from time to time that do transcription work other than medical for which they need transcriptionists. The job listings are free, but most of the rest of the site requires a paid membership. There are areas for legal transcriptionists and general transcriptionists in the membership areas. I would suggest just looking through the job listings daily as part of the time you spend on your business.

<http://www.rapidtext.com/>, Rapid Text, 1801 Dove Street, Suite 101, Newport Beach, CA 92660. (949) 399-9200. info@rapidtext.com.

<http://www.fantastictranscripts.com/workhome.htm>, Fantastic Transcripts, 59 Temple Place, Suite 660 Boston, MA 02111. (617) 451-1807, susan@fantastictranscripts.com

<http://typewp.com/>, TypeWrite Transcription and Word Processing Service. 888-4Typewp. typewp@si.rr.com “Legal Transcriptionists Wanted.”

<http://www.ctran.com/index.html>, Cambridge Transcriptions. (800) 850-5258. info@ctran.com 675 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139.

<http://www.htsteno.com>, American High-Tech Transcription & Reporting, (888) 820-1066, frontoffice@htsteno.com, 2480 East Bay Drive, Suite 9, Largo, FL 33771.

<http://www.nealgross.com/>, Neal R. Gross and Company, (800) 473-1433, info@nealgross.com, 1323 Rhode Island Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20005-3701.

<http://pioneer-transcription-services>, Pioneer Transcription Services (me! Yes, I do use subcontractors!), devitt@jps.net, (530) 432-8306, P.O. Box 853, Penn Valley, CA 95946.

Doing the Work

In this section I want to cover some of the basic work you will be performing. There are also samples in the Appendix of this book for your reference.

Preparing a Resume

There is a sample resume in the Appendix of this book for your reference. There are many different formats that can be used, but I am only including a very standard one. If this becomes a niche market for you and is something you really enjoy doing, there are many books and free samples on the Internet for you to

read and try. The one I provide in this book is a good, basic resume that is appropriate for almost any job applicant.

Center the name, address and phone number at the top of the resume. You should bold your headings; i.e., **Objective, Employment Background, Education, Skills, etc.** Single space except between entries. Try to keep the resume to one page if you can. Sometimes this is just impossible, but you can stress to the client that prospective employers do not want to read five pages. Believe me, some people want to go back 30 years in employment history and it is just not necessary. I've even had clients wanting to list their elementary school!

A lot of times I get calls from people wanting a resume typed but they don't have a clue as to how to format it. Well, I've made up a form I have them fill out and then use a standard format. There is a sample in the Appendix of this booklet. Please feel free to use this for your own service.

Preparing a Term Paper

Most term papers are double-spaced. Make sure to always ask the client if they want it double-spaced or single-spaced. I always use 1-inch margins all around unless the client requests otherwise. Clients will feel cheated if you use huge margins in trying to make more money by making more pages. Be fair.

You will sometimes be asked to type footnotes, endnotes and bibliographies. Word processing programs make this pretty easy. The difference in footnotes and endnotes is that footnotes go at the bottom of the page where it is referenced and endnotes go at the end of the document. Bibliographies go at the end of the document also. Bibliographies are usually single spaced with the first line of each entry flush left and each following line of that same entry is indented five spaces. Double space between each entry. They should be in alphabetical order of the author's last name. Sometimes you will have students

who want things done a little differently. Just do it the way they ask and if they have no preference use the standard format. A good reference book is MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.

There is a copy of the first three pages of a term paper with footnotes and a bibliography in the Appendix of this book. I want you to have examples so you will have confidence that you can do this. It's really quite easy!

Typing a Business Letter

There are four basic letter formats,

Block – All lines begin at the left margin. The paragraphs are single spaced and double-spaced between paragraphs.

Modified Block With Block Paragraphs – All lines begin at the left margin except date, complimentary close and signature lines. These are all begun at the center of the page. Once again, single-space the paragraphs and double space between paragraphs.

Modified Block With Indented Paragraphs – The same as the modified block, except the first word of each paragraph is indented five spaces. Single-space the paragraphs and double space between paragraphs.

Simplified – All lines begin at the left margin. The address is typed in all capital letters. The salutation is omitted and replaced by an unheaded, all capitalized subject line. The complimentary close is omitted. The name and title are all capitalized on one line.

There are examples of all four types of letters in the Appendix of this book.

General Typing

There are all kinds of things people will ask you to type. Always ask the client if they want it double-spaced or single-spaced. If it is to be single-spaced I try to always double space between paragraphs or it will look overly crowded. A

lot of times the client is very specific in the type of format they want and they will tell you. If not, use your best judgment as to what you think looks best.

Transcription

There are many different things people will want transcribed; dictated reports, two (or more) person interviews, telephone conversations, legal documents, speakers at conferences, etc.

Remember the advice I gave you previously regarding being very careful and accurate. I am providing samples of different transcription formats in the appendix. These are just to give you confidence that hey, you can do this! It's not that hard. You could even type some up yourself to show potential clients as samples of the quality work you could provide!

Most companies will have a standard way that they like their transcripts to look. Ask for a sample and take note of the font size and style, page margins (left, right, top and bottom), special formatting such as page numbering, headers, footers, etc., and then either duplicate with the new information they want transcribed or use the sample they sent as a template.

If a company does not have a preference choose one of the samples to duplicate that would suit the job being completed.

Increasing Your Typing Speed:

One way to increase your typing speed in a hurry is to use the word expanding feature in your word processing program. This allows you to type just a couple of letters for certain words. Usually the days of the week and the months of the year are already programmed into the software when you install it. Then when you start typing a day of the week, say Tuesday, by the time you type T-U-E-S the word Tuesday comes up on a little yellow bar and if you hit enter it will complete the word for you. I try to think of many commonly used words and

then plug them in so that they come up after just a couple of letters. You do this using the Auto Correct Options and then Autotext feature in Microsoft Word. Some very commonly used words are: immediately, probably, because, business, remember, something, experience, conversation, understand, interesting, question, everything, particular, occasionally, agreement, eventually, and information. You will come up with many of your own, I am sure. I also use the AutoCorrect feature, also found under Auto Correct tab. This allows you to make up short cuts for words you use often. For example, I have programmed in “yk,” to expand out automatically to “you know”. So all I have to type is the yk, and I get “you know” automatically. Similarly, I programmed in “wo” to expand out automatically to the word “without”. There will be some words and phrases that certain clients use over and over that you will eventually program in and have the whole thing typed with stroke of just a couple of keys on your computer. It really gets your words per minute up there in a hurry!

There is also software called Instant Text you can purchase that takes this to the next level. You can read all about it at <http://www.fitaly.com/overview/overviewpage.htm>

There are also some free word expanders. One is ShortKeys Light (they have a pay version that is more powerful) at <http://www.shortkeys.com/lite.htm>

Customer Satisfaction

In this section I would like to cover some ideas to make your service stand out from the competition and just some advice on running your secretarial service.

First of all, proofread everything. I cannot stress this enough. You want to catch any errors in your work so that what you are giving the customer is of the highest quality. Even if you use spell-check on your documents you need to

proofread because the spell-checker will not distinguish between to, two and too, etc. as long as they are spelled correctly. My husband helps me with this task from time to time when I am really busy.

I also offer free pick up and delivery to local clients. The reason I do this is because I live 10 miles out of town and not many customers want to drive that distance. They really love the free pick up and delivery. Some secretarial services charge for this service. I do not charge for this because I want to offer something the other secretarial services in my area do not.

I also offer fast turnaround. As long as the job is not too large I have it back to the customer the next day. With small children in the house this was not always easy. I spent many nights typing until 2:00 a.m., but it has gotten easier as the children got older and I can get more work done during the day. It is a good selling point with customers.

Please remember that all work you perform for clients is confidential. What you type stays between you and the client. I would even offer to sign a confidentiality agreement with your clients so that they can see that you mean to keep all work confidential. Clients appreciate this very much and I think it shows a high level of professionalism if you are the first to bring it up.

Offer "in-office" filing if you can. Most of your clients will be businesses that don't have a secretary because they don't have enough work to justify one even part time. But there is still filing to be done. If you can go in just once a month for two hours or so and file for them they will love you!

Offer to run errands for clients. This is all I do for one of my clients. I drop packages off at the post office, deliver proposals and documents, run copies at the copy store, and pick up supplies at the office supply store.

The thing I have learned is you must be willing to learn all the time. For instance, I had a client approach me about doing medical billing. Well, I had never done medical billing but I made some phone calls and found another business person who sells business forms. He sells the claim forms for Medicaid, among other things. He gave me software for free to use with these forms, and I billed my new client for the forms. The software came with a complete manual that explained everything I needed to do to use the software. I am expanding all the time and you really must also to stay competitive in this business.

Have patience. Clients can really get on your nerves sometimes. Try to not let them and don't let it show if they do. I know I lost a very good client because I just didn't have patience for his way of doing things.

Every experience in this business is a learning experience. If you feel you really blew it on a job don't worry about it too much. Just put it down to a learning experience and get on with it. Just remember what you did wrong and don't do it again.

Pricing

Call several of the other secretarial services in your area to find out what they are charging and charge accordingly. Some services charge by the page, i.e., \$3.50 per double spaced page and \$5.75 per single spaced page. (Note: These may not be current competitive prices. You must determine this for yourself.) Some services charge by the hour, which can range anywhere from \$20.00 to \$40.00 per hour. Some services even charge by the lines typed. For transcription I charge per hour of tape, and then rate the tapes. For example, a clear recording of one to two people talking might be say \$100.00 per 60-minutes of tape, but a three person interview recorded in a restaurant might be \$150.00 per 60-minutes of tape. I do give a discount to students, but you could call other services in your area and see if this is the norm. Charge more for technical

typing and weekend and rush jobs. I also have a \$15.00 minimum charge. I don't even turn on my computer for less than \$15.00.

Address labels are usually charged by the input of each address and an additional charge for each label and/or envelope. I haven't had a client ask me to do this in eons, so I wouldn't even know a ballpark of what to charge.

Resumes are usually charged at a higher rate than the per page rate because of the special formatting they require. The rate may be anywhere from \$25.00 to \$50.00 for one page. The second page is usually discounted. Say it was \$25.00 for the first page, then the second page would only be \$10.00 for a total of \$35.00, or \$30.00 for the first page and \$15.00 for the second page for a total of \$45.00. These prices also include five to ten copies of the resume on nice quality resume paper. Some services do not charge for updating resumes at a later date. Other services charge a discounted fee, and still others charge full price for updating resumes.

Billing Clients

In my business, resumes, term papers, and one time businesses are payable upon receipt of the finished work. Businesses that I have an ongoing working relationship with are billed either monthly or twice a month. Some clients will want to pay you when they make out all their monthly bills. For example, I have a client that pays me on the 1st and the 15th of every month because that is when he pays his bills. Try to be accommodating if you can. If they have no specific preference I simply bill them on the first of every month. I have a running invoice for each client in one folder and at the end of the month I typed up the completed invoice, e-mail or mail them a copy and print a copy for myself. When they pay the invoice I record it in my income book and file the invoice in a Paid Invoices folder. I have included a copy of the invoice I use for my clients in the appendix that you are welcome to modify for your business.

Sometimes a month will go by and I still haven't been paid by a client. I simply resend the invoice with a friendly reminder and they usually pay right away. Please be aware though that some bigger companies are set up on a 30 day net system. In other words, in 30 days they will cut you a check. Add in the mailing time and it may take 40 days or so if they are across country. You can look at each case individually and maybe extend a little grace before rebilling and sending the friendly reminder.

Accepting Checks

Most businesses will want to pay by check. You will need a business checking account if the checks are made payable to your business name. Other clients, such as students, will pay by cash and sometimes checks. I have never had a problem with a bad check. Now, this has just been my personal experience and I can not guarantee this. I always make sure their phone number is printed on the check or I write it on just in case there is a problem.

PayPal (www.paypal.com) is another option. This option allows customers to pay you with a credit card. Both you and the customer will need to set up an account, but once that has been established it is a very convenient option. This is particularly useful for long distance clients, although it works very well with local clients too.

Meeting Clients

Some people who run secretarial services out of their homes are uneasy about strangers coming to their homes. This will have to be a personal decision for you. Personally, I let clients come to my home, but if it is the first time I will be meeting them I try to arrange the appointment at a time when my husband will be home. Another alternative is to meet in a public place. I have met clients at coffee shops, Burger Kings, etc. I have also found some good places at the university to meet clients.

I feel totally comfortable going to places of business to pick up work.

Growing Your Business

Believe it or not, one of these days you are going to have more work than you can possibly handle. There are many different ways of handling this. One is to raise your prices and let some clients fall by the wayside. Another is to work all hours of the day and night just to keep up. But you'll burn out quickly, your family will never see you, and when they do you'll be a grump because you're so frazzled. It wasn't until I broke my arm one spring when at the same time my website was in the top five on Google that I finally found the solution that has worked for me – SUBCONTRACTING. Just imagine, here I am in an arm sling and all of a sudden my phone is ringing and my e-mail is filling up with new client inquiries. I knew God wouldn't have those two things happen at the same time without Him having some sort of plan. Well, since I obviously couldn't do the work myself I knew I had to let somebody else do the actual typing and I would manage the jobs and proofread. This has worked out so well and has allowed me to grow my business so much that I have continued to operate in this manner even since my arm healed.

The biggest challenge I have found is in finding dependable and high quality subcontractors. I found most of mine through secretarial or transcribing e-mail loops or them finding me through my website. I also use a good friend for some work.

The process of weeding out the applicants goes something like this: when I first receive an inquiry from a potential subcontractor I e-mail them an "interview". I've included a copy of this in the appendix. Sometimes you will be able to eliminate a possible subcontractor at this point. If they don't have the same software as I use they won't be able to even open the interview. If they have trouble with e-mail attachments I won't go any further. I look closely at the

interview for spelling and grammatical errors. I may be a little tough, but if there are any in the interview sheet I won't take it any further.

If everything looks good on the interview sheet then I have them sign two legal agreements. These cover topics such as confidentiality, subcontractor status and compensation to me if for some reason one of my clients becomes their client. I am including both of these agreements also in the appendix. You are welcome to use these, but please be reminded that I am not offering legal advice here and you should check with your attorney about using these agreements.

Once I receive their signed agreements I have them do a test job. I will send them a sample report and a short audio (less than 10 minutes) and have them transcribe the short audio. I will then carefully check their test for mistakes. This test gives me a good idea if they will make good subcontractors or not.

I usually pay my subcontractors 60 – 80 percent of what I charge my clients. Other companies may pay their subs less and make more money, but I have found it very difficult to find quality workers for a low rate.

My subcontractors bill me at the end of the month and I pay them before I pay myself. There is a copy of the invoice form I have them use in the Appendix. Notice it is very similar to the invoice form I use for my clients. This allows me to easily track costs on specific jobs, etc.

Another challenge to using subcontractors is just keeping track of the jobs – which clients have sent jobs, which subcontractor has been assigned the jobs, has the subcontractor returned the jobs, and have the jobs been returned to the client. I created a “Job Log” chart to help me track this information. And you guessed it – there is a copy in the Appendix.

Sometimes you may receive tapes or CDs that a client wants transcribed but it would take too long to mail these to the subcontractors and get the jobs back to the client in a timely manner. There are several software programs you can download on the Internet (some for free, others for a small fee) that will allow you to turn these into digital audio files that you can then send to your subcontractors through an FTP site (I use www.Leanfile.com). This saves a lot of time! For example, here's a program for turning audio CDs into digital audio files: <http://download.com.com/3000-2167-10277539.html?tag=1st-0-2> .

A program I have used to convert tapes to digital format is Total Recorder at <http://www.hitsquad.com/smm/programs/TotalRecorder/> . You will need to buy an adaptor cord at Radio Shack or similar store to connect your tape player to your computer. The price of the adaptor was less than \$10.00.

There are a wide variety of software programs for a wide variety of applications. These are also changing and upgrading constantly. Use your good old search engines whenever you have a need for something new and you will surely find it on the Internet!

Professional Organizations and Support

I strongly believe in having a support network. These resources are great for that support you need when working at home, and also are just full of wonderful information.

- The American Association of Electronic Reporters and Transcribers, Inc. - <http://www.aaert.org/>
- MTb2b – Legal Transcriptionists Discussion Forum
<http://mtb2b.com/forum/viewforum.php?f=31&sid=9a3e272e027923cb568628fbf49b8e39>

- The National Association of Home Based Secretaries
<http://www.homebasedsecretaries.com/>
- Transcription Essentials Forum:
<http://www.transcriptionessentials.com/forum/>
- The Professional Association of Secretarial/Desktop Publishing Services (PASS) <http://www.pass-ca.org/>
- The Virtual Assistant Network Forum <http://www.vanetworking.com/>

Check Google Groups and Yahoo Groups. There are several on the topic of transcription. They are full of valuable information and support. I can't tell you how many times I've been "stuck" on a project, either a formatting or software issue, and somebody on these e-mail loops has saved my day! One of my favorites is Legal-Medical-General-Transcription@googlegroups.com.

<http://www.typeright.com/wwwboard/index.html> (This site used to have a very active message board where fellow secretarial service owners would come and share information. Unfortunately, because of people posting ads and the owner not having time to maintain the board, she has closed the message board to new messages. But archives are available. Later in this booklet I give more information on message boards where you can share ideas and information with others. This site still allows posting your secretarial service and there is even a list of companies that subcontract out to other individuals.)

How Much Can You Expect to Earn?

It really depends on how much time and energy you are prepared to put into the business. You could make up to \$25,000 - \$50,000 a year. In all honesty, it does take awhile to build up clientele. It can take a year or two to

really be making a good profit. If you need to work full time and really have to count on your income I wouldn't quit a full time job to pursue your own secretarial service. I would keep my full time job and do my secretarial work in my off time.

If, on the other hand, you have the resources not to need an income for a period of time you could concentrate all your time and energy into your business. It really does take patience, perseverance and determination. I have heard people say, "Oh, I tried that and it didn't work." Well, how long did they try it? Usually a couple of months, and only half-heartedly at that. I think if you really put a lot of time and energy into your business you will be making money sooner.

Bookkeeping and Taxes

I am not a tax expert and I strongly recommend that you use an accountant or professional tax preparer, but I do know you can deduct certain expenses from your gross receipts.

First of all you must keep track of all income received. But from this income you will be able to deduct certain expenses. Some examples follow:

Office expenses: any paper, pads, pens, pencils, reference books, toner for printers, transcribing equipment, office supplies, computers and printers, calculators, copy machines. Postage is also tax deductible. Memberships to professional organizations. Even this book is tax deductible.

Of course your equipment is tax deductible, but you usually depreciate it over a five year period. Your accountant or tax preparer will help you with this.

Advertising expenses are tax deductible. As are repairs and maintenance and professional fees. Also dues and publications you subscribe to for your business. Business license fees, mileage on your car for business purposes, insurance, and telephone expenses are all tax deductible.

Once again, seek professional advice from your accountant or tax preparer for a complete list of tax deductible items.

Additional Resources

- <http://www.ninafeldman.com/resources.htm> - All kinds of additional resources on pricing, marketing and operation of an office support type business.
- Guerilla Marketing, Secrets for Making Big Profits from your Small Business. This is a fabulous book on marketing your secretarial service.
- "How to Start a Home-Based Secretarial Services Business" by Jan Melnik.

In Closing

If there are any questions I have not answered on starting your secretarial service please write or call me. I want you to succeed and if I can help in any way I will. I have tried to cover everything I could think of, but if I missed some points there is no way for me to know unless my readers advise me of this. May God bless you and your family in your pursuit of success.

APPENDIX

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Your “course of study” may have been Technical, Commercial, or College Preparatory. If in doubt, use General Studies.

Education Following High School

List courses taken, degrees earned, certificates received, etc.

From: /

To: /

School Name:

Course of Study:

Degree Earned:

From: /

To: /

School Name:

Course of Study:

Degree Earned:

Please list additional information on back.

Employment History

List all jobs for the past 10 years, beginning with the most recent.

Don't forget significant volunteer work you have done, particularly if you are new to the job market. An employer is looking for evidence that you are responsible and get things done, whether or not you were paid for your efforts.

1. From: /

To: /

Company:

Address:

Phone Number:

Job Title:

Duties Included:

2. From: /

To: /

Company:

Address:

Phone Number:

Job Title:

Duties Included:

3. From: /

To: /

Company:

Address:

Phone Number:

Job Title:

Duties Included:

4. From: /

To: /

Company:

Address:

Phone Number:

Job Title:

Duties Included:

Military Service

If you served in the military, providing this information helps to eliminate time gaps in your resume. If you received technical training relevant to your occupation in the service, list that also.

From: /

To: /

Service Branch: (e.g. Army, Navy, Marines)

Service Arm: (e.g. Infantry)

Highest Rank:

Special Skills:

This is the place to mention any skills not covered as part of your employment, education, or military service. You may be computer literate, skilled in a foreign language, or experienced in catering large parties. If your skill or interest is relevant to the job you want and shows your willingness to work, it strengthens your resume and increases your chances of getting that special job!

Personal References: Optional. You may either list three to five personal references or state, "References Available Upon Request".

**Diane Smith
123 Anywhere Street
Reno, NV 89506
(702) 555-1212**

Dear Prospective Employer,

Please find enclosed a resume of my qualifications as an administrative executive assistant.

Should my qualifications meet your requirements, please contact me. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss the possibility of being associated with your company.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Diane Smith

Diane Smith
123 Anywhere Street
Reno, NV 89506
(702) 555-1212

OBJECTIVE:

To obtain a responsible position with an aggressive and respected organization where my comprehensive background and experience will be effectively utilized.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Knowledge of the fast food industry
- Motivated, organized, able to work well individually or as part of a team
- Excellent communication and guest relations skills
- Establish and maintain good working rapport with co-workers and management

EXPERIENCE:

Jan. 2005 CENTURY TAHOE REALTY
to 120 Tahoe Drive, Incline Village, NV 89451
Aug. 2005

Administrative Assistant

Duties: Preparation of daily and weekly reports. Open and distribute mail. Answer all incoming telephone calls. Hold open houses. Prepare listings and escrow files and all other general office duties.

Sept. 1999 HAMBURGER HEAVEN
To Corporate Headquarters, 133 Jones Hwy.
Jan. 2005 Reno, NV 89506

Assistant to the Executive Vice President

Duties: Handled all incoming and outgoing mail, including confidential material. Very heavy phones. Coordinated heavy appointment schedule. Made all travel arrangements. Prepared expense reports. Prepared and distributed weekly and monthly reports. For nine years discreetly handled guest problems or difficulties.

Title of Paper
Student's Name
Class Name
Date

Cuba is today one of the last standing Communist governments left on the face of the planet. Even though Castro and his regime have been through great struggles in the past, never before in the history of Fidel Castro's rule has he and his government felt so much pressure from so many directions. His economy is in shambles with Cuban people having shortages of everything. With the fall of the Soviet Union, Cuba lost a once vital \$5 billion annual subsidy to Cuba. With the Soviet Union gone it will be hard for Castro and his government to continue on their present state of politics, as an island to the rest of the world, if they are to flourish in today's world economy. Fidel Castro and his government must change their ways of thinking and learn to adapt if they are to survive. Will Castro's government have a future? Or will they just be another vanishing regime that has now met its time? Has Castro's time finally come? With the absence of the Soviet Union to shield Cuba, the United State's sanctions and economic pressures are slowly pushing the Castro Regime out of power. Some say the pressure from the United States is holding together the Castro government. Some critics also say that the sanctions should be lifted and this is the correct way to boot out Castro. Who is correct? Will continued sanctions against Castro and the Cuban people continue to pull them apart or together? This paper will take a look at the causes of Cuba's economic woes, what is being done by Cuba to cope with things, and what should be done by Castro to "fit in" with the rest of the free world. Or maybe the time has come for Castro to step down.

We must look back in the late 80s to view some of the main causes of the Cuban economy today. Castro's main troubles started when the former Soviet Union went belly up. Cuba's present predicament is not hard to identify. Cuba has a very small and dependent economy. The economy is very dependent on outside sources for natural resources, because Cuba is an island with little natural resources for industrialization such as oil and iron for steel. The Soviet Union supplied Cuba with over four-fifths of their imports and needed goods. When the collapse happened, it cut Cuba's overall imports by 60 percent. The shortages of these materials do not only disrupt the productive apparatus of Cuba's economy, but it makes the workers think. Workers question why they should go back to work if the production line will be shut down due to its lack of inputs, especially if public transportation has been shut down, and when extra hours are needed to stand in line for basic supplies such as food and clothing.¹ With some workers becoming absent, this leads to more and more absent workers, a type of chain effect.

The Persian Gulf crisis threat begun in August 1990, may turn out to be almost as important as the Soviet Union's role in the shaping of the Cuban economy. In mid-1990, two million tons of a 13.3 million-ton per year shipment failed to arrive in Havana from the Soviets. Cuba was forced to turn to the world market for oil just as Iraq's invasion of Kuwait pushed up the prices of crude oil. The Cuban government could not afford to help pay for the shortfall, so instead they imposed severe energy rationing. The government announced a 30 percent cut for private vehicles and a 10 percent cut in electricity for domestic use. The

¹ Donald Schultz. Cuba and the Future (Connecticut); Greenwood Press, 1994. 13.

war in the Middle East continued to inflate the free market oil prices as the Soviet's supply to Cuba fell off drastically. In September 1990, Cuban government officials calculated that at the market prices of sugar and crude oil then, that Cuba's entire sugar crop would bring in only about \$131.5 billion more than the cost of importing 10 million barrels of Middle Eastern oil.

Sugar accounts for over 70 percent of Cuba's total exports. During the Soviet's shortfall, there was also a shortfall in the sugar market. The price for raw sugar went from 13.6 cents per pound to 9.1 cents per pound in a few months in 1990. By the end of 1992, sugar prices had fallen even more to about 8 cents per pound. Even though this does not seem like a large sum of money, when the difference in the prices is multiplied by many tons, it is a considerable sum of money that the Cuban economy could not afford to lose.

To make matters worse, the Bush administration took significant measures to tighten its embargo on Cuba. The U.S. Treasury Department denied licenses to companies to the Third World countries that are subsidiaries of U.S. corporations or are trading products containing U.S. components. In his speech to the UN General Assembly on November 13, 1991, Cuban Ambassador

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- Schultz, D. "Cuba and the Future" Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1994.

**Devitt's Secretarial Service
P.O. Box 853
Penn Valley, CA 95946
(530) 432-8306**

July 29, 2005

Franklin Smith
Attorney at Law
177 Banjo Drive
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Dear Mr. Smith,

I would like to take just a moment of your time to introduce my service to you. **Devitt's Secretarial Service** can lower your overhead costs when you let me help with your word processing and transcription needs.

If you are a small or medium sized business, and cannot justify a full time secretary, my service may be just the answer you've been looking for.

If you already employ a secretary I can handle all of your overflow needs. Some of the features my service offers includes:

- Word Processing
- Transcription of recorded interviews, reports, letters, briefs, etc. (standard and micro cassettes as well as digital format)
- Personalized Form Letters
- Reports and Manuscripts
- Direct Mail Labels and Envelopes
- In-Office Filing
- Errand Running
- Free Pick Up and Delivery
- 24 Hour Turnaround Most Jobs

All data will be confidentially stored for future reference. All work is guaranteed and of professional quality.

I invite you to call me anytime I can be of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Deborah M. Devitt
(Block style letter format and a sample copy of one of my sales letters)

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Sincerely,

Deborah M. Devitt

(Modified block with block paragraphs letter format)

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- 24 Hour Turnaround Most Jobs

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Sincerely,

Deborah M. Devitt

(Modified block with indented paragraphs letter format)

Internet Transcription Service
P.O. Box 853 • Penn Valley • CA 95946
(530) 432-8306
www.internettranscriptionservice.com
devitt@jps.net

March 15, 2005

William George
George Investigations
133 Blake Blvd., Suite 103
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Dear Mr. George,

I'm sure you are aware of how difficult it is to find quality, dependable transcriptionists at a reasonable rate. **Internet Transcription Service** may be just the answer you've been looking for.

With the advances in computer technology, it is no longer necessary for workers to be on-site. If you are an innovative company, I'm sure you will see the many benefits of outsourcing your word processing and transcribing. You don't pay employee benefits, taxes, sick days, vacation time, etc. You only pay for work produced on an as-needed basis.

I am an experienced transcriptionist, having worked with several private investigators and insurance adjusters in the past. I have an excellent reputation for typing verbatim taped interviews. I enclose a list of references for your convenience.

My main goal is to make you look good to your clients. I am enclosing some samples to show you the quality of the work I produce. One is a sample Investigative Report, and the other is a sample question and answer interview. I am always willing to use any format that you prefer. These are just to give you an idea of the type of documents I can provide for you.

I have also enclosed a Miscellaneous Information Sheet. If you have any additional questions or need more information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Deborah M. Devitt

RESUMES, TYPING,
WORD PROCESSING

BUSINESS AND
PERSONAL

FREE PICK UP AND
DELIVERY

REASONABLE RATES

DEVITT'S SECRETARIAL
SERVICE

432-8306

RESUMES

\$25.00 ONE PAGE

\$35.00 TWO PAGES

INCLUDES 5
COPIES

24 HOUR TURNAROUND

432-8306

Also do reports, letters, etc.

**GEORGE GOODMAN
DBA: GOODMAN PAVING
(A SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP)
STATEMENT OF INCOME
for the year ending December 31, 2000**

<u>Contract Revenue</u>		\$288,796
<u>Direct Costs:</u>		
Materials	\$64,426	
Subcontractors	99,508	
Trucking	15,700	
Gas and Fuel	12,108	
Depreciation	11,026	
Other	4,303	
Repairs and Maintenance	<u>17,388</u>	
Total Direct Costs		<u>224,459</u>
Gross Profit from Contracting		64,337
<u>General and Administrative Expenses</u>		<u>26,656</u>
Income from Operations		37,681
<u>Other Income</u>		
<u>660</u>		
Net Income		<u>\$ 38,341</u>

(Sample of work done for a Certified Public Accountant)

A: Uhm, it was terrible. You know, it was awful.

Q: Why?

A: He was just ... he had previously managed or supervised people, or so he said. I was really doubtful about that because he had no clue on how to manage or supervise.

Q: And do you base it on the fact that things just did not go very well upon him joining the business?

A: Yeah. Yeah. It didn't go well at all, yeah. He wanted to control, to where we basically here at this company are pretty open, and anybody can come into our department and we would deal, you know, it's just kind of a, a regardless of who came in we took care of them and did, you know, got their names, or ... and when he came in he didn't want anybody going into our area.

Q: Oh, really?

A: Yeah. He basically wanted to be in control. That's what he said.

Q: He said that, huh?

A: Yeah. We were under him and he was the boss.

Q: Now, are you saying that he didn't want anybody to come and see you unless they went through him first?

A: Correct. Yeah. And he didn't want them to go through us at all. He would go to us after. And we tried that but [inaudible] and we in turn had to go to the individual.

Q: What other examples can you provide about his style of management and how bizarre things became?

A: Well, when we had ... people would come in and sometimes we would have to carry on lengthy conversations with the person, and he would leave this -- his blind open at the window, and if the person was there more than two seconds he was constantly turning around and eyeing us and just stare at us. And then he would get up and go stand and kind of butt into the conversation and take over. Or try to anyway.

March 9, 2005

Lawson and Lawson, Attorneys at Law
15 Northtown Road
George, PA 18663

Attention: Roger Lawson

Insured : Leslie Estates Condo
Claim No. : 38403
Date of Accident : 1/20/03
Claimant : George Mallum
Our File No. : LL 631

Dear Roger,

This report follows our report of February 23, 2005.

On March 2, 2005, we visited the location of Leslie Estates Condominium at 86 Darlene Avenue, George, Pennsylvania. We inspected the window areas associated with the unit owned by the claimant, George Mallum

We observed the front window which is eight foot by four foot in size and five foot from the ground, and two side windows measuring four foot by four foot each, and six from foot from the ground. Lastly, we found a rear window measuring four foot by four foot and sixteen feet from the ground.

All windows were aluminum slider type windows, which usually have an interior lock at the center frame area preventing either window from being slid open. I found the windows to be standard construction grade, with no aspect of any defect. Obviously, if the window were left open, or unlocked, access could be gained to the lower windows by simply sliding the window open.

We did not observe any type of security gates or security bars installed throughout the entire complex, and we would presume that this would be an item that a particular unit owner would undertake in having installed, rather than a condominium type expense.

We left business cards on several doors other than the claimant door inside the building, and we subsequently received a call from Mr. Chris Bass, a resident on the second floor of the same building where Mallum resides.

We learned that Mr. Bass was the individual who came to the aid of Mallum, and we're arranging to meet with him to obtain his statement if at all possible.

We are also attempting to re-contact the handling detective in this case, Detective Roul, from the RAM unit of the George Police Department. Thus far messages left for this detective have gone unanswered.

We'll keep you advised.

Very truly yours,

Andy White
White Investigative Services

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www.internettranscriptionservice.com
devitt@jps.net

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

PRICING: We have found that our clients like us to keep our pricing simple. With this in mind, we are now using a per tape rate for 2-person interviews and dictation of \$_____ per 60 minutes of tape. This comes to \$_____ per minute of tape. This allows you to know in advance how much you will pay for any given job. (The price is slightly higher for more than two people and unclear recordings.)

For handwritten or roughly typed work, we charge a per page rate of \$_____ per double-spaced typed page and \$_____ per single-spaced typed page.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

We understand the importance of confidentiality and agree to keep confidential all work we receive. To insure confidentiality all drafts are properly destroyed and a confidentiality agreement is gladly signed.

TURNAROUND TIME:

We pride ourselves on our quick turnaround time while maintaining the highest quality of production.

DELIVERY OF WORK:

To send digital files to use for transcription:

Go to www.leapfile.com

Click on FileDrop.

Click on File Upload.

Type devitt@jps.net in the Receiver e-mail address box. Click Go.

Type in your contact information and any message you wish to send us.

Click Use Basic Upload.

Click the Browse button and find and attach your audio file. Please also attach any Word document samples that we can use for formatting purposes.

Click Start Upload at the bottom of the page.

That's it! We will have your completed transcription back to you in 24 hours or less!

INTERVIEW

Name:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Fax:

E-mail address:

Software:

Transcribing Machines (sizes):

What file extensions can you handle? For example: .wav, mp3, .wma, etc.:

Experience:

References:

What is your availability? (Do you currently work outside the home?)

How quickly could you turn around a 60 minute tape?

Do you like to read?

What do you read for fun?

What is your biggest reason for wanting to work at home?

DEVITT'S SECRETARIAL SERVICE
P.O. BOX 853 •PENN VALLEY•CA •95946
(530) 432-8306
E-MAIL devitt@jps.net

DEVITT'S SECRETARIAL SERVICE
INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR/CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I,

_____ residing at _____ certify that from time to time I provide word processing and/or tape transcription services to **Devitt's Secretarial Service**, P.O. Box 853, Penn Valley, CA 95946. Any and all such services will be performed by me on my own equipment, at a location of my choice and during times of my choosing. I understand that there is no requirement for me to provide any minimum amount of word processing and/or tape transcription work during any time period. I further certify that I will provide such services to **Devitt's Secretarial Service** as an independent contractor, that I will be paid accordingly, without deductions, and that I will be responsible for my own taxes and expenses.

I further certify that I will not communicate any information included in any work provided to me by **Devitt's Secretarial Service**, regardless of content, to any third party, nor will I make such information available to any third party in any way. Any and all such information will be held in strictest confidence by me.

I understand that any breach of this confidentiality will result in immediate and permanent cessation of my relationship with **Devitt's Secretarial Service**, and that any monies payable to me on account of a transcript wherein this confidentiality has been breached will be recoverable by **Devitt's Secretarial Service**.

I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless **Devitt's Secretarial Service**, and all **Devitt's Secretarial Service** officers, executives and personnel against any and all damages resulting from any such breach of confidentiality.

Date: _____
Signature: _____
Social Security Number: _____

ACCEPTED:

Devitt's Secretarial Service

By: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR NON-COMPETE AGREEMENT

THIS INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR NON-COMPETE AGREEMENT (“Agreement”) is made as of _____ between Devitt’s secretarial Service and _____ (“Contractor”)

Contractor desires to give and Devitt’s Secretarial Service desires to receive from contractor, a covenant not to engage, either directly or indirectly, in competition with, or to solicit any customer, client or account of Devitt’s Secretarial Service.

Devitt’s Secretarial Service and Contractor desire to set forth in writing the terms and conditions of their agreements and understandings.

NOW, THEREFORE, in considerations of the foregoing, of the mutual promises herein contained, and of other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the parties hereto, intending legally to be bound, hereby agree as follows:

1 **Covenants Against Competition.**

Contractor acknowledges that the services to be rendered to Devitt’s Secretarial Service have a significant and material value to Devitt’s Secretarial Service, the loss of which cannot adequately be compensated by damages alone. In view of the significant and material value to Devitt’s Secretarial Service of the services of Contractor for which Devitt’s Secretarial Service has contracted with Contractor; and the confidential information obtained by or disclosed to Contractor; and as a material inducement to Devitt’s Secretarial Service to contract with Contractor and to pay Contractor compensation for such services to be rendered for Devitt’s Secretarial Service by Contractor (it being understood and agreed by the parties hereto that such non-competitions shall also be paid for and received in consideration hereof), Contractor covenants and agrees as follows:

A. During contracting and for a period of twelve(12) months thereafter, Contractor shall not, directly or indirectly, solicit for employment or contracting any Contractor of Devitt’s Secretarial Service.

B. During contracting, and thereafter for two (2) years, Contractor shall not disclose to anyone any Confidential Information. For the purposes of this Agreement, “Confidential Information” shall include any of Devitt’s Secretarial Services’ confidential, proprietary or trade secret information that is disclosed to Contractor or Contractor otherwise learns in the course of contracting such as, but not limited to, business plans. Confidential Information shall not include any information which; (i) is or becomes publicly available through no act of Contractor, (ii) is rightfully received by Contractor from a third party without restrictions; or (iii) is independently developed by Contractor.

2. **At Will**

Contractor acknowledges that Contractor's tenure with Devitt's Secretarial Service is "at will", subject to applicable law, and that either Contractor or Devitt's Secretarial Service may terminate this working relationship at any time, with or without notice, for any reason, or no reason whatsoever. Nothing in this Agreement shall constitute a promise of work for any particular duration or rate of pay.

3. **Accounting for Profits**

Contractor covenants and agrees that, if Contractor shall violate any covenants or agreements in Section 1 hereof, Devitt's Secretarial Service shall be entitled to an accounting and repayment of all profits, compensation, commissions, remunerations, or benefits which Contractor directly or indirectly has realized and/or may realize as a result of, growing out of, or in connection with any such violation; such remedy shall be in addition to and not in limitation of any injunctive relief or other rights or remedies to which Devitt's Secretarial Service is or may be entitled at law or in equity or under this Agreement.

4. **Reasonableness of Restrictions.**

- A. Contractor has carefully read and considered the provisions of Section 1 hereof and, having done so, agrees that the restrictions set forth therein (including, but not limited to, the time period of restriction and geographical areas of restriction) are fair and reasonable and are reasonably required for the protection of the interests of Devitt's Secretarial Service, its officers, directors, shareholders and other employees.
- B. In the event that, notwithstanding the foregoing, any part of the covenants set forth in Section 1 hereof shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining parts thereof shall nevertheless continue to be valid and enforceable as though the invalid or unenforceable parts has not been included therein. In the event that any provision of Section 1 relating to time period and/or areas of restriction shall be declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to exceed the maximum time period or areas such court deems reasonable and enforceable, the agreed upon time period and/or areas of restriction shall be deemed to become and thereafter be the maximum time period and/or areas which such court deems reasonable and enforceable.

5. **Burden and Benefit**

This Agreement shall be binding upon, and shall inure to the benefit of Devitt's Secretarial Service and Contractor, and their respective heirs, personal and legal representatives, successors and assigns.

6. **Governing Law.**

Construction and interpretation of this Agreement shall at all times and in all respects be governed by the laws of the State of California.

7. **Severability.**

The provisions of this Agreement (including particularly, but not limited to, the provisions of Section 1 hereof) shall be deemed severable, and the invalidity or unenforceability of any one or more of the provisions hereof shall not affect the validity and enforceability of the other provisions hereof.

8. **Devitt's Secretarial Service.**

As used herein, the term "Devitt's Secretarial Service" shall include any corporation which is at any time a parent or subsidiary of Devitt's Secretarial Service.

9. **Notices.**

Any notice required to be or otherwise given hereunder shall be sufficient if in writing, and sent by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested, first-class postage prepaid, as follows:

If to Devitt's Secretarial Service:

Devitt's Secretarial Service, P.O. Box 853, Penn Valley, CA 95946

or to such other address designated by either party following notice to the other.

10. **Entire Agreement.**

This Agreement contains the entire agreement and understanding by and between Devitt's Secretarial Service and Contractor with respect to the covenant against competition herein to, and no representation, promises, agreements or understandings, written or oral, not herein contained shall be of any force or effect. No change or modification hereof shall be valid or binding unless the same is in writing and signed by the party intended to be bound.

11. **No Waiver.**

No waiver of any provision of this Agreement shall be valid unless the same is in writing and signed by the party against whom such waiver is sought to be enforced; moreover, no valid waiver of any provision of this Agreement at any time shall be deemed a waiver of such provision at any other time.

12. Headings.

The headings used herein are for the convenience of the parties only and shall not be used to define, enlarge or limit any term of this Agreement.

13. Compensation for Lost Clients.

In light of the known facts that Contractor has his/her own transcription service, Devitt's Secretarial Service and Contractor hereby set forth a plan whereby Devitt's Secretarial Service can be fairly compensated for the possible loss of clients (Lost Clients) to Contractor. Regardless of the reason(s) for Contractor's departure from Devitt's Secretarial Service and regardless of whereby Devitt's Secretarial Services' clients become Contractor's clients, the following plan of compensation shall apply to the gross sales of any kind of related goods or services to all clients lost from Devitt's Secretarial Service to Contractor and/or Devitt's Secretarial Service to any other company due to the direct or indirect action of Contractor (See paragraph 1A).

For all clients who are so lost, during the period of twelve (12) months following their loss, Contractor shall reimburse thirty percent (30%) of gross sales to Devitt's Secretarial Service within 30 days of the invoicing of such sales. During the following twelve (12) months (months 13-24), Contractor shall reimburse fifteen percent (15%) of gross sales to Devitt's Secretarial Service within 30 days of the invoicing of such sales. During the following twelve (12) months (months 25-36), Contractor shall reimburse seven-and-a-half percent (7.5%) of gross sales to Devitt's Secretarial Service within 30 days of the invoicing of such sales. Following the end of three (3) years, no further compensation shall be due to Devitt's Secretarial Service.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, DEVITT'S SECRETARIAL SERVICE and Contractor have duly executed this Agreement under seal as of the day and year first above written.

Contractor

Devitt's Secretarial Service

Basic Aptitude Test*

Grammar (Underline the correct word)

1. (There their) car was totaled in the collision.
2. (Lets Let's) have lunch this week.
3. The secretary (that's thats) competent gets a raise.
4. The student was (too to two) tired (too to two) do his homework, so he took (too to two) aspirin and went to bed.
5. It would be impossible for you and (I me).
6. The stock market (effects affects) the investor's portfolio.
7. What do you think (its it's) chemical reaction will be?
8. How (quick quickly) he runs.
9. It was I (who whom) called.
10. They mailed the copies to him and (I me).
11. Mary did (good well) on the test she took yesterday.
12. None of the neighbors offered (his their) support.
13. It is (we us) clerks who work hard.
14. That was Frank and (me I) whom you saw.
15. Each of us (was were) scheduled to take the test.

Punctuation and Capitalization: Correct any punctuation or capitalization errors in the following sentences. Some sentences need no correction.

1. Go West three blocks and turn right.
2. Yes; sir, I will do it immediately.
3. "How," I asked "Can you always be so forgetful"?

* Most questions are taken from **The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation** by Jane Straus.
www.grammarbook.com

4. The woman, who is standing there, is his ex-wife.
5. Although we have a competent staff; bottlenecks do occur.
6. I did not receive the order; therefore, I will not pay my bill.
7. We offer a variety of drinks, for instance, coffee.
8. Is that book your's?
9. We have much to do, for example, the carpets need vacuuming.
10. Estimates for work have been forwarded, and a breakdown of costs has been included.

General Vocabulary (Underline the word spelled correctly)

excede	exceed
absence	absense
assessment	assesment
laboratory	labroatory
fourty	forty
committee	commitee
develop	develup

Answers to Basic Aptitude Test

Grammar

1. Their car was totaled in the collision.
2. Let's have lunch this week.
3. The secretary that's competent gets a raise.
4. The student was too tired to do his homework, so he took two aspirin and went to bed.
5. It would be impossible for you and me.
6. The stock market affects the investor's portfolio.
7. What do you think its chemical reaction will be?
8. How quickly he runs.
9. It was I who called.
10. They mailed the copies to him and me.
11. Mary did well on the test she took yesterday.
12. None of the neighbors offered their support.
13. It is we clerks who work hard.
14. That was Frank and I whom you saw.
15. Each of us was scheduled to take the test.

Punctuation

1. Go west three blocks and turn right.
2. Yes, sir, I will do it immediately.
3. "How," I asked, "can you always be so forgetful?"
4. The woman who is standing there is his ex-wife.
5. Although we have a competent staff, bottlenecks do occur.

6. I did not receive the order; therefore, I will not pay my bill. (correct)
7. We offer a variety of drinks, for instance, coffee. (correct)
8. Is that book yours?
9. We have much to do; for example, the carpets need vacuuming.
10. Estimates for work have been forwarded, and a breakdown of costs has been included. (correct)

General Vocabulary

Exceed

Absence

Assessment

Laboratory

Forty

Committee

Develop

Transcriptionists Standard Operating Procedures

1. Each client has his or her own formatting requirements. Always use the same formatting (font, page numbering, headers, margins, etc.) as the sample provided for each client.
2. All work should be done in Microsoft Word unless requested otherwise.
3. Always spell check and proofread work before returning.
4. Please make note in the body of your e-mail when returning jobs of any names, cities, etc., that you were unsure of.
5. Please use the billing invoice shell provided and bill no later than the fifth of the month for the previous month's work.
6. Only use ums, uhs, uh-huhs, etc., on verbatim interviews. Never use in dictated reports.
7. Use [unintelligible] if you can't understand what is being said. This means you can hear it but can't make out what is being said.
8. Use [inaudible] if there is an inaudible sound (can't hear enough to know what is being said).
9. Use [phonetic] when you are unsure of a spelling the first time the name or word appears. Try using www.google.com to search correct spellings. It's amazing how much this helps!
10. In verbatim interviews, please set off the phrase "you know" with commas. For example: And then, you know, we went for pizza.

Some commonly misspelled words:

All right – two words – not alright.

Okay – not ok or o.k.

Supersede – with an s, not a c

Proceeding – two e's

Preceding – one e, one c

General Information for Subcontractors

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR STATUS

Devitt's Secretarial Service does not employ individuals to transcribe. Devitt's Secretarial Service **ONLY USES INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS**. To Devitt's Secretarial Service, this means that when Devitt's Secretarial Service communicates with you, Devitt's Secretarial Service is communicating with the representative of your company. It is with your company that Devitt's Secretarial Service is doing business.

By doing business with Devitt's Secretarial Service, you are affirming that you are operating as a business in the eyes of the Internal Revenue Service and any other relevant government bodies. Devitt's Secretarial Service will pay your invoices on a vendor-to-vendor basis. All taxes you may be liable for are your responsibility. Any other legal obligations you may have to run your business is strictly your affair. Devitt's Secretarial Service has no part of those obligations or your performance thereof.

If you are uncertain as to the validity of your status as an independent contractor, please contact your attorney, accountant, or whichever professional you wish to rely upon for proper, independent guidance. If you think that in any way your transcribing for Devitt's Secretarial Service may fall under the category of employment, please stop transcribing and notify Devitt's Secretarial Service immediately.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

We at Devitt's Secretarial Service pride ourselves on the quality of the work we provide to our clients on an ongoing basis. Maintaining a strong team of transcriptionists is a critical component of our success.

Devitt's Secretarial Service seeks transcriptionists who will help us maintain our high standard of quality. We reward subcontractors who produce excellent transcription and are available, flexible and quick.

Quality

This is the most important aspect of the job. Inaccurate transcription, no matter how quickly done, is still inaccurate. If forced into choosing between quality or a deadline, quality is always the winner. Quality starts with hearing what the author dictations. Knowing when something is not right is next. Knowing how to fix the problem according to what Devitt's Secretarial Service and our clients desire comes with time. Proofing is always expected. We put our name on everything that goes out our door and every single document is a representative of Devitt's Secretarial Service. So it has to be right.

Quickness

Deadlines drive this business. Moreover, the sooner you complete your assignment, the better the chances of getting additional work, as it frequently exists.

Availability

The more you are available to us, the more work we can give out to you.

Flexibility

We can only be as predictable as our clients. They aren't predictable. Therefore, we need transcriptionists who can flex with the circumstances. Sometimes that might mean doing more or less work than normal.

Communication

Communication between us is essential. Please ask us your questions about content, formatting, style, anything. Tell us when you are available or when you won't be. Tell us if a deadline might be missed. Tell us when you can take extra work or when you need a light load. Tell us if you need something from us. If you will be unable to work on your scheduled day, are taking time off, or an emergency situation crops up, please let us know as soon as you can.

