



085 Employment Values and Feedback

To our employees and overseas suppliers, current and potential

Thank you for your ongoing interest and support. This document sets out the criteria by which we decide who to work with.

Chris Poole Translation (CPT) was established and became my full-time occupation in 1994, after I had spent the preceding ten years treating it as a hobby and doing it very badly.

At our peak in 2008 we had a full-time staff of seven. From 2012 we entered a period of decline due to the GFC, the departure of the automotive manufacturing industry, and my own ineptitude as a marketer.

We lost most of our staff and had to sell our house to reduce debt.

Since then, however, we have slowly rebuilt the business. We now work in over 50 languages, with a team of over 100 draft translators and casual interpreters, in nearly every market sector you can imagine (though our current mainstay is supporting energy companies and power stations), around Australia and overseas. Some people work for us every week, some only once a year if that.

If you are an established practitioner and have worked with us before, as you would know by now, CPT is not like an "agency".

There are many ways in which we differ from what most people in this industry picture in a Languages Service provider. A key one is: we don't dictate rates.

Instead, we ask "How much to make you happy?" We want to work with creative, dedicated, happy people and they aren't sitting around waiting for us to call. People like that are usually busy and booked well in advance. So we always ask several people if they are available to do a job, and we sometimes ask them to quote that particular job.

It is a highly competitive industry. Sometimes we quote a job and lose to other language service suppliers.

Sometimes we win the job and we must make a choice from the people who were available and who submitted a quote.

What this all means is that sometimes we will have asked you about price and availability and yet you will not receive an order.

I have been learning how to run and improve a business for the past 30 years, too slowly, and often the hard way.

Even though, for purely legal reasons (i.e. Australian political reasons) we are obliged to treat everyone locally based who isn't full time as a "casual employee", philosophically I still prefer to think that everyone is running their own business, and if they want to improve it I am keen to share what I have learnt. I try to be as open as I can with people in the hope that it saves them some of the trouble I went through.

Here is one thing I've learnt: Every time we fail to win a job we ask why. Most people don't tell us, but some do, and although disappointed that we didn't get the job, I am grateful for their willingness to share this valuable information. It helps us understand market requirements, and to fine tune our pricing, quality and the services we offer.

So I would like to treat you the way I would like to be treated each time our quote is unsuccessful.

If you were available and yet do not receive an order for work that you may have quoted, it may of course have nothing to do with you. The job may have been cancelled or gone to another company altogether. I will tell you this.

But if we did get the job and we chose to use someone else we will tell you exactly why.

It will be based on this list of things that we value (below). Of course sometimes more than one person meets all of these criteria and we have to make a choice based on something further down on the list. But if you enjoy working for us, please take careful note of these priorities.

Created	191106	By	CP
Last updated	251213		CP
Printed			
See also			

(I realise some people only do written translation or only interpreting, so some of these things may not apply).

1. Has signed our Terms and Conditions Agreement (T&C) and completed all other paperwork and provided all the documentation. A lot of this is imposed on us by the State and simply represents malign gatekeeping, but a lot of it, burdensome though it is, is part of our system and is very important to CPT. Unlike Government interference, this is entirely a choice you are free to make or ignore.
 - a. With brand new people or people who provide a very rare language (in other words when we have no choice) we may engage your services without you being signed up. But as soon as we find someone happy to sign our T&C, they will start getting the work.
2. Enthusiasm for and ability to use the CPT System
 - a. We are not like any other language service provider (as we have been told by many experienced practitioners). Becoming proficient in all the methods and tasks that make up our system requires people to leave aside what they might consider standard and generalised industry practices and approach their work quite differently. But reading all our documentation carefully, following our exact instructions, and using our system is the next biggest thing we are looking for in people.
 - b. It takes years to acquire a thorough understanding of what is meant by “The CPT System” but a couple of points should be mentioned here:
 - i. All terms of art to be as per our definitions (See the CPT Glossary of T&I terminology)
 - ii. We do not hide behind any sort of credential, and we work hard to make the quality of our translation 100% visible to our clients.
 - iii. You must be able to work as a member of a team.
 - iv. You must be prepared to read and learn a lot of new things about T&I, much of it strictly unorthodox. (Please see the “The Clichés” document on our website for an intro. If you want to argue about any of them, and know how to, we want you on our team!)
 - v. A major element of our system is the collection of data and the keeping of detailed written records (job diaries, handover notes, glossaries, Notes Files, timesheets etc.) This comes as a shock to a lot of applicants. If you are delighted rather than shocked, will try to give you as much work as we can.
 - vi. You must engage with CPT and ask and answer many questions. You must take responsibility for the messages you send to CPT, and demonstrate that engagement: your reading, understanding, practice and criticism of the CPT system. If we feel that you regard us as just another translation & interpreting agency, we are unlikely to invest in the relationship by offering you further work.
 - vii. If required to explain choices you have made as an interpreter or draft translator, or as an editor of a draft translation, or in the course of checking another translator’s draft, your comments must be meta-linguistic. That is you must have a good working understanding of language and linguistics, and good vocabulary of the terms used to discuss these things, and you must be able to analyse texts and speech and explain the function of each part in a way that gives complete visibility to any person who has proficiency in only one or other of either the SL or TL. If you don’t have these abilities when you start working for us, you must be prepared to learn.
3. Potential for future work
 - a. We treat every job as an opportunity for us to both learn and to teach others. This means that every time we work with someone, we are investing in them, so all other things remaining equal we will choose people with whom there is a strong likelihood that we will be working in the future (See 2. B. VI above).
 - b. A key component of the CPT system is that we are aggressive in responding to a highly unpredictable market. If our phone rings and there is someone at the other end hoping to stuff money into our hands to solve a language related problem, we go and get it. No matter the size of the job, the day, the date, the time of day, the mode, setting, industry or subject matter. We would not exist, let alone be in the position to offer anyone any work, if we had not always had this mindset. So, if you want to be offered as much work as possible, do not pick and choose.
4. Professional, low maintenance, good track record

Created	191106	By	CP
Last updated	251213		CP
Printed			
See also			

- a. You have a good grasp of basic commerce – record keeping, risk management and when you quote a job you stick to your quote. If you regret a particular quote, we work together to make sure we all benefit next time.
 - b. If you consistently learn about and follow our system, deliver on time and don't make mistakes, this obviously makes you the most attractive and reliable choice for us.
5. Price
- a. Price is not the most important thing for us. We do not compete on price, and we do not expect you to. The list of things above will enable you to charge us more than you thought you could, and certainly more than you can charge mainstream agencies. We only want to work with people who are happy and we expect people to know exactly how much money will make them happy.
 - b. Some people are not used to developing quotes or prices for their own work and we are more than happy to help them develop the skills required to do this.
 - c. On the other hand, we are competing for work in a free market, and our clients are sometimes very budget sensitive so, taking everything else into consideration, we may still be obliged to choose the cheaper of two quotes.
 - d. Similarly, you are also competing for work from us, so all things remaining equal, if there are other people who, like you, have checked every box above on this list, it could come down to your rate or price.
6. Responsiveness
- a. Reliable email connection, including on your phone, and the habit of checking regularly (at least every four hours) and responding promptly at least to acknowledge receipt.
 - b. Has voicemail and messaging, and is in the habit of having it on, knowing it's ringing or knowing that there's a message and responding straight away.
 - c. If you live in Melbourne, being happy to work in our office. Many people doing written translation assume everything can be done at their own home, which is not necessarily the case at CPT.
7. IT capability
- a. Mobile phone, fully charged and not prepaid.
 - b. You must have your own laptop, internet enabled wherever you go (hotspot, dongle etc.)
 - c. Must have Word, Excel and PPT installed (not online), video conferencing and file sharing and be advanced users of these applications.
8. Ability to travel independently.
- a. Having a car and being able to navigate around Melbourne, or Victoria, or if necessary to fly interstate or international, pick up cars and get yourself to job, confidently, is a condition of much of our interpreting work.
9. Second language accent and pronunciation.
- a. We place a much higher emphasis on this for interpreters than does NAATI or other language service providers.
10. NAATI accreditation, other formal qualification in T&I or real-world experience.
- a. These are relatively low priorities for us. People who have studied to pass a NAATI test or who have completed a related degree certainly save us some time, but we do not accept that being qualified or accredited/certified by NAATI necessarily establishes any particular level of ability. The only thing we are selling is our product, and only we can judge whether a person has the skills and attitude sufficient to assist in that process (See number 2 on this list).
 - b. If the job requires Certification (documents to be submitted to authorities or court interpreting for example) then being accredited/certified is an advantage.

We take all of these things into consideration when deciding who to use and every job has different requirements.

If any aspect of this sounds daunting, then we understand perfectly that you may want to pursue other opportunities, and we wish you all the best.

But if you want to learn all about this, then we want to work with you.

Created	191106	By	CP
Last updated	251213		CP
Printed			
See also			