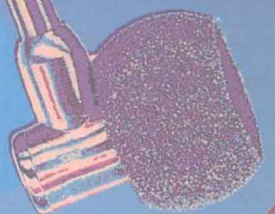


Second Edition

# MACHINE TRANSCRIPTION

Language Skills for Information Processing



Blanche Ettinger  
Edda Perfetto

Second Edition

# **MACHINE TRANSCRIPTION**

**Language Skills  
for Information Processing**

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Copy Editor: Laura Beaudoin

Text Design/Compositor: MacLean & Tuminelly

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ettinger, Blanche.

Machine transcription: language skills for information processing /  
Blanche Ettinger, Edda Perfetto. — 2nd ed.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 1-56118-064-5

1. Office practice. 2. Typewriting. I. Perfetto, Edda.

II. Title.

HF5547.5.E77 1991

90-49330

CIP

© 1992 by Paradigm Publishing Inc., 280 Case Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55101.

A Division of EMC Corporation

800-535-6865

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Printed in the United States of America.

10 9 8 7 6 5

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## *Acknowledgments*

We are indebted to our students, who inspired us to search for alternative instructional strategies that encourage learning and contribute to student success. This challenge led to the design of this revision.

We are also grateful to our families for the patience, understanding, and support given to us during the preparation of this manuscript. Special thanks are extended to Joseph Ettinger for his wit and patience during the writing of this edition.

To our colleagues who have adopted the book, we are grateful not only for their support but also for their willingness to share their teaching experiences. To Alan Doerr, we extend our appreciation for his very helpful feedback on the first edition.

We recognize Dorothy Fox for her time, effort, and assistance in keying sections of this text and wish to thank Pauline LeDuc for her valuable review comments and suggestions. We extend our gratitude to Rosemary Fruehling and Mel Hecker for their confidence in us and for their encouragement in this project.

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# Memorandum

TO: The Student  
FROM: The Authors  
DATE: Your First Day  
SUBJECT: INTRODUCTION TO YOUR TEXTBOOK

This revised edition of *Machine Transcription* will help you acquire the language skills you need to become a successful communicator in the modern office. We hope that you will find the course an interesting and stimulating learning experience.

This text-workbook will help you develop the skills needed to produce correspondence that meets office standards. While you learn the technical skill of transcribing documents, you will strengthen your English language skills by practicing punctuation, spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and proofreading. Since listening and decision making are important subskills for a transcriptionist, they receive special attention throughout the text. Various fields of employment are highlighted in each chapter so that you become familiar with the types of documents processed in these career areas.

*Machine Transcription* has three components: the text, dictation tapes, and a set of working papers.

## The Text

The text contains twenty instructional chapters, four review-evaluation chapters, and seven appendixes. Each instructional chapter contains the following elements:



### DO YOU REMEMBER?

A review of the preceding chapter's instruction in language skills.



### SHARPEN YOUR SKILLS

Instruction in English usage and skills — for example, rules of punctuation, capitalization, and hyphenation.



### SKILL BOOST

Paper-and-pencil exercises to permit you to apply the rules presented in Sharpen Your Skills. All Skill Boosts are self-scoring. You may check your work in Appendix A.



### TAPE PREVIEW

A review of the spelling and vocabulary words that may give you trouble in the dictated material that follows. Potential transcription pitfalls are also covered.



### TAPE DICTATION

Exercises in transcribing words, sentences, manuscripts, and documents (letters and memorandums). From Chapter 7 on, there is a Transcribing Instructions chart with specific information about each document you will transcribe and a Transcription-Dictation Log with suggested levels of proficiency.

Some chapters also contain the following:



### TRANSCRIPTIONIST GUIDE

Document formats, model documents, and tips on how to complete the dictation assignments in that chapter.



### PROOFREADING BOOST

Exercises to sharpen your ability to proofread and edit copy.

Exercises to increase listening power.



**LISTENING BOOST**

The four review-evaluation chapters (6, 12, 17, and 24) test your comprehension of the material learned in the previous group of instructional chapters. There are exercises in language skills, spelling, proofreading, and tape dictation, all to be handed in to your instructor.

## **Office Reference Guides**

The six appendixes contain material that you will find useful throughout the course:

- APPENDIX B Model letters, memorandum formats, model manuscripts.
- APPENDIX C Summary of the rules of punctuation, capitalization, numbers, abbreviations, and grammar.
- APPENDIX D Two-letter state abbreviations.
- APPENDIX E Proofreaders' marks.
- APPENDIX F Word division rules.
- APPENDIX G An alphabetized list of the spelling and vocabulary words featured in the text. Useful for review.

## **The Tapes**

The cassettes that accompany the text are organized as follows:

### **Spelling Words**

Section 1 of each chapter tape offers practice in transcribing words that appear in the dictation. These are words that may give the transcriptionist difficulty.

### **Sentences**

Section 2 of the tape reinforces the specific language skills taught in that chapter (punctuation, grammar).

### **Documents**

Section 3 of the tape contains letters, memorandums, manuscripts, and other documents typical of those processed in that chapter's career field (from chapter 5 on).

In addition to the preceding, there are four test tapes (chapters 6, 12, 17, and 24).

## **The Working Papers**

This supplement contains letterhead forms that correspond to the documents you will be transcribing.



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# *An Introduction to Transcription*

## **OBJECTIVES**

- ▶ To operate a desktop dictation unit
- ▶ To use basic machine transcription techniques for document processing
- ▶ To learn the transcription process

## **CAREER UPDATE**

**Transcriptionist (n.)** An individual who keys letters, memos, and other documents from recorded dictation.

In the modern office, where administrators and office support personnel must process information quickly and efficiently, machine dictation has become a primary mode of transmitting correspondence. Busy executives dictate letters and memos not only at their desks but also from home and when away on business trips. Transcriptionists are responsible for producing mailable documents using the latest electronic equipment.



## **Yesteryear — The Traditional Business Office**

In the early 1900s, office clerical duties were performed manually. As the typewriter became more popular, female workers entered a field that had long been male dominated. By the 1920s, typewriting and shorthand were necessary skills for office employment.

As the need for secretarial support increased in businesses, so too did the multitude of tasks that women in the work force were required to perform. These tasks included typing, writing correspondence, taking dictation in shorthand, making appointments, greeting visitors, answering the telephone, and performing personal errands. Transcription was done from shorthand notes. Recorded dictation was rare before World War II.

In 1964, with the introduction of the magnetic tape Selectric typewriter, word processing began to transform office procedures. The traditional office, in which the conventional typewriter was the main clerical tool, began to undergo changes that affected the entire office environment, including the skills and responsibilities of office workers.

## **Today — The Information Processing Office**

Today we are in a postindustrial information society. The modern office has sophisticated electronic equipment that stores, generates, and communicates information faster, cheaper, and more efficiently. Office procedures are streamlined to handle information from origination to final distribution.

Managers in the modern office are sensitive to time. For their communications, they now record their dictation. A final printed document is produced by a transcriptionist. The process of transferring recorded dictation to printed form is known as **machine transcription**.

## **The Evolution Of Transcribers**

The first machine transcribers were far more difficult to operate than today's models. They had three component parts: the dictating unit, the transcribing unit, and the shaving unit. The surface of the wax cylinders, which contained the recording, actually had to be shaved off before being reused. The transcription equipment of the 1950s recorded messages on plastic belts or electronically inscribed discs. Present-day recording and dictation equipment uses cassette and loop systems. This equipment is available either as recording and transcribing desktop units or in centralized systems.

### **Desktop Units**

Desktop units are customarily used by transcriptionists or secretaries. Originators transmit correspondence by means of desktop dictating units, telephone lines connected to the transcribing equipment, or portable cassette equipment. Desktop dictation units can hold single or multiple cassettes. One of the specialized features found on some desktop units is electronic scanning which allows the transcriptionist to preview special directions and changes made by the dictator.

### **Centralized Systems**

In centralized systems, originators may dictate by telephone to a recording unit that uses cassettes or endless loops. Usually several dictators can be serviced on these systems. Among the major manufacturers of recording and transcribing equipment are Dictaphone, Lanier, Norelco, Olympia, and Sony.

### Special Features on Some Transcribers

- ▶ *Scanner*, for automatically locating special instructions
- ▶ *Index Slip*, for indicating the end of each dictated item and special instructions
- ▶ *Electronic Display*, for previewing the arrangement of dictation on the cassette
- ▶ *Auto Search*, for finding special instructions
- ▶ *Electronic Cueing System*, for indicating endings of letters and special instructions

Besides good keying skills, the transcriptionist must have a variety of other skills, including knowledge of proper English usage, punctuation, spelling, proofreading, and editing, as well as decision making and good judgment. If you are adept at applying these skills, the final copy should be perfect and ready for the dictator's signature.

To work efficiently, you must have a well-organized work area. Position your equipment for comfort and convenience and your supplies and reference books within easy reach so that you can work without unnecessary pauses.

The following checklist will guide you through the preliminary steps you must follow to get ready to transcribe. For detailed operating instructions on your own unit, you must consult the manufacturer's manual.

1. See that the transcribing unit is in a convenient position.
2. Have a dictionary, a word book, and an office reference manual within reach.
3. Be sure that you have adequate supplies and plenty of room to work.
4. Plug in the headset.
5. Insert the tape, rewinding if necessary to the beginning of dictation.
6. Insert the indicator slip, if used.
7. Press the center of the foot pedal and listen to the dictation to adjust volume, tone, and pace.
8. Rewind the tape to the beginning of your first listening exercise.



**Transcriptionist reference books**

## Transcriptionist's Skills

## The Transcriptionist's Workstation

## Transcriptionist's Checklist