



# pacific transcription solutions

On-line, on-time and on-call transcription

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## Audio Recording Tips

### Before Recording

Before the interview, ensure you have the correct recording device for your requirements. If you're still using a cassette tape recorder, we would strongly recommend upgrading to a digital recording device.

**1. The sound quality of digital recordings is far superior to that of cassette tapes.** They'll also be less expensive to get transcribed. Digital recordings are far simpler to store and copy for backup purposes. Pacific Solutions recommends the Olympus DM-450 for recording interviews and focus groups. To find out more about the Olympus range, please email: [enquiries@pacificsolutions.com.au](mailto:enquiries@pacificsolutions.com.au).

**2. Ensure you have the recorder on the highest quality setting and that you are recording in a suitable audio format.** For example, on an Olympus recorder, use standard play (SP) or high quality (HQ) mode. Some recorders allow you to record in different formats, such as .ds2, .dss or .wma file types; .wma is the best format.

**3. Find a suitable location to conduct the interview once you have organised your recorder.** Try to avoid places with a lot of background noise, whether that is general chatter from a public place, a radio in the office, or even a loud air conditioner. Background noise obscures much more than what you would expect. Before pressing record, learn where the pause button is – very useful for any unexpected interruptions!

**4. Phone interviews can be recorded using speakerphone.** This is preferable to using a plug in device as those often have variable audio quality for different speakers. When recording on a good quality speakerphone, please ensure that the surroundings are quiet, and take care not to place the recorder too close to the speaker.



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## During Recording

**1. Ensure recorder is equidistant from participants and not too close to yourself.** If anything, it can be slightly further away from you, as it's the interviewee's responses that are most important. Once the recorder is in place, avoid moving it.

**2. For speaker identification, ask speakers to say their names each time they speak.** That way, the transcriptionist has more opportunity to distinguish between the speakers. Note speaker identification from audio alone is not always possible. If accurate speaker identification is critical, we recommend writing a log which records the speaker order and if possible the first couple of words spoken in each turn.

**3. Once the interview has started, encourage participants to speak one at a time.** If any laughter or side comments begin during the recording, wait for quiet before asking your next question – laughter in particular obscures all other speech.

**4. Small ambient noises can obscure speech.** Remind speakers to avoid rustling paper or drumming their fingers on the table. Mobile phones placed near the recorder can cause loud interference on the recording, even when the phone is on silent. Use non-verbal gestures to let speakers know you are listening.

**5. Don't hesitate to repeat key sentences for clarity.** If you're afraid that the recorder didn't pick up something due to ambient noise, repeat it at the time, rather than look over your transcripts and wonder what was said!

**6. Lastly, it's a good idea to have a spare battery on hand, just in case!** Alternatively, use a power adapter for your recorder if a power outlet is nearby (adapters and recorders available from Pacific Solutions). Please ask for the Australian Research Pricing and Olympus Recorder Brochure for hire and sales information.





## After recording

### **1. Specify the template that you would like to use.**

We have a Pacific Solutions standard template, but we are happy to comply with specific formatting requirements, saving you time at the other end. Typists are also trained to create NVivo, Atlas TI and Leximancer compatible documents – please ask for our NVivo or Leximancer brochures for more information on using this software to analyse your transcripts.

**2. Send us a vocabulary list of commonly used words or place names.** This will help ensure the most accurate transcript possible, particularly if your interviewees tend to use any specific jargon or acronyms. Our general transcript is slightly edited, as requested by 95% of our clients for ease of readability and analysis. Other transcript styles, such as that used for conversational analysis, are available upon request and may incur an extra charge.

**3. Give us a call to clarify with us your desired turnaround time – from same day to two weeks.** At the same time, let us know your requirements regarding the naming of speakers, to ensure that we begin transcription knowing exactly what you need. If you're on a university grant, you can also pre-pay your transcription account for budgeting purposes.

Please don't hesitate to call Pacific Solutions on 1300 662 173 or email ([enquiries@pacificsolutions.com.au](mailto:enquiries@pacificsolutions.com.au)) so we can set you up with an account and get you started immediately.

Other brochures available:

- Australian Research Pricing
- Australian Professional Pricing
- Olympus Recorder Pricing
- Converting .cda (Ripping CD files)
- Leximancer (qualitative analysis software)
- NVivo and Atlas TI (qualitative analysis software)
- NVivo Import Instructions
- Privacy Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Terms and Conditions
- Court Reporting and Minute Taking Services

