Recommendations for Training Interpreter Trainers

Learning can happen through mentoring, courses or other methods.

A list of modules follows:

Debate on ethics

- Discuss the applicable laws and codes of ethics for interpreters in health care, such as the ones written by the California Healthcare Interpreter Association (CHIA), International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA), National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC) and Washington state; compare them with the codes of ethics for court interpreters. This comparison will help interpreters navigate a variety
of settings.
- Discuss problems we have had to solve in real life and how they lead to situations that appear in conflict with the codes of ethics.
- How do the codes apply in different geographic areas, etc.?
- Do not be rigid with the discussion.
- Remind students that ethics is guidance, not a set of rules.
- Note the difference between personal ethics, business ethics and professional ethics.

Subject matter expertise

These advanced courses on subject matter and skills focus on how instructors will develop their own research on these topics. The instructors should know more than they are expecting to teach their students.

How to give and receive feedback productively

This includes:

- Different types of feedback and when they are used
- Different ways of delivering feedback
- Teaching students to give feedback (for their own practice groups and for self-evaluation)
- How to discuss interpreting situations without breaking confidentiality, and

- How to keep the purpose of the training front and center during the whole course.

Lesson planning

This includes:

- How to define the purpose of the training
- How to find out what students are interested in and what their needs are
- How to find out their current level of skill and understanding
- How to show the students where they need to go and why, and
- How to teach students core material and how to get more detail.

Group dynamics

This includes:

- How trainers can establish a safe and comfortable environment for students so they are willing to be vulnerable and share their work, and
- When the day is done, how to close a training session.

Note: In social work courses, social workers learn how to establish safe environments for group therapy and that sessions should have a beginning, middle and end. Some of these therapy group techniques can be useful.

Teaching techniques

This includes:

- How to write a lesson plan
- How to identify your students' learning style and work with them successfully
- How to evaluate students during role play and provide productive feedback
- How to engage students in learning in creative ways, and
- How to teach students to do research.

Teaching how to do research

Instructors will have to do research to support the answers they give to their students. The program should provide guidance on what types of research will be solid enough for their students to be able to use it with their stakeholders.

Topics include:

- Finding reliable sources
- Defining the key question
- Writing an answer to the key question, citing sources respected by stakeholders
- Using at least two sources that are not interpreting textbooks
- Editing your text
- Doing a pilot test of your text with your students to see what questions they have, and
- Testing your text with subject matter experts for their opinion.

How to set up a training

This includes:

- Finding a venue
- Budgeting
- Promoting it to students
- Promoting it to stakeholders who can promote it to students
- Registration process
- Certificates
- Website, and
- Getting CE credits approved.

Giving new instructors the opportunity to:

- Observe experienced instructors
- Provide comments to experienced instructors on how to improve
- Co-teach with experienced instructors
- Teach a few lessons while experienced instructors supervise them and give feedback, and
- Teach a few lessons while the supervising instructor is not present.

Qualifications for candidates for this training

- Certified as an interpreter or translator if certification is available in their working language
- Otherwise, have the highest qualifications available in their working language, and
- Three or four years of experience as a working interpreter or translator, depending on what they will teach.

Qualifications for the trainer

- Same as for the trainees, except six years of experience in the field, and
- Experience as an instructor, developing their own presentations or adjusting curriculum.

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