

Transcribing a Verbatim Interview

Objective: Transcribe your interview from our previous work day.

Suggestion: Re-watch the video linked below if you need a refresher:

<https://youtu.be/MDLUR6f73Bs>

Step 1 – Selection

Select a portion of the interview that runs approximately 1-2 minutes in length. This selection should touch on the core of the leading question. Edit the interview if necessary.

Remember: Editing means you can cut a portion of the interview as long as you don't change the words in the portion you keep. Always check with your interview subject to make sure they approve of the edit. You want to represent them completely and truthfully.

Step 2 - Review the Selection

Listen to your interview a few times. Review your notes as you listen. Try to remember the complete image of your subject. Feel free to make any notes about vocal changes you notice in the recording. Do they have specific patterns of speech? Do they have strong intonations or inflections on specific words or phrases? How would you describe the tempo?

Step 3 - Transcribing

You are now going to write down what they told you as a script...exactly as they said it!

You will need to include all the mistakes, mispronunciations, the ohs, the ums, the uhs, the ahs, the pauses, the random vocal expressions. This is because a Verbatim Theatre script allows us to hear how people really talk.

Here's a short example of what it might look like:

PERSON:

(Sucks air in through teeth) Well...um...I just thought that it would make a worlda difference if I—if I told him how I really felt. It made him feel—well, it made him feel worse than I thought it would. (Takes a deep breath. Sighs quietly.) Anyways...I just felt like I should—should get it out there in case he, uh, felt it could work out.

Step 3 – Refinement

After you have completed the initial transcript, go back and listen to the recording again 2 or 3 times. Follow your transcription as you listen. Make sure you got all the little details.

This really makes a difference in your final performance.

Swap transcripts with another group member and let them review it while listening to the recording so you can get a second ear/eye on your work. Don't use your interview subject for this section.

Step 4 – Turn it in

Submit your transcript with an audio or video file or link to your interview.