

# THE GUARDIAN

ISSUE 8 AUGUST 2015

## THE STUDENT'S GUIDE TO PRACTICE

BY: ROANNA OSSEGE

Did you know that the old saying "Practice makes perfect" actually originated as "Use makes perfect"? This evolving proverb is probably the most appropriate advice available for anyone trying to master the steno machine. From theory to graduation to certification, very few of us are going to get very far without steady effective practice and consistent use of our machines.

So what is the best way to practice? Should you work on speed, accuracy, or a little of both? What about reading your notes? Should you record your own dictation? Is a marathon two-hour session as effective as two focused 30-minute sessions? How do you stay motivated? Should you work on memorizing and drilling more briefs and phrasing ideas?

From the minute you start court reporting school, each instructor will share different theories on practice. But what works? I set out on a mission to help answer that question, and I have solicited the advice of successful reporters to help you. Take what you need. Leave what you don't. My hope is that it

brings you some variety and some effective tips to get you out into the working world sooner rather than later. This is meant to inspire you when you sit down to your machine today. Keep this article handy for those days when you need some ideas to get you excited about your practice session.

Who better to start off our journey than the titleholder of "World's Fastest Court Reporter" with a record 360 wpm, according to Guinness World Records?

I think most students overlook the fact that they can gain a great deal of speed by shortening their writing. What does that mean? It means incorporating large numbers of briefs and phrases so that, instead of averaging, say, 130 strokes for every time you hear 100 words, work your way down to 100 strokes for 10 words. Doing that alone, with those numbers, would give you a 30 percent speed gain! Those at 280 wpm would now be at 260 wpm! How to incorporate my briefs, or briefs of a different theory, into yours? As long as there's no conflict, incorporate! Or

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"Impossible is a word to be found only in the dictionary of fools."*

*-Napoleon Bonaparte*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

THE STUDENT'S GUIDE TO PRACTICE CONTINUED	2
STUDENTS OF THE MONTH	2
WORD TRIPPER	3
JUNE EVALUATIONS PASSED	3
JOB OPENINGS	4
7 TIPS FOR COURT REPORTERS	5
AUGUST CALENDAR	6



(continued from pg. 1)

### STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

#### Michelle Kowalsky

Michelle is an online student in her eighth semester. She is currently working on exit speeds and finalizing her internship. She has worked very hard to get to this point. She has been a straight A student.

You're going to make a fabulous reporter, Michelle!



#### Ashley Wilson

Ashley is in her second semester and has already become a standout student. She is a great student who works very hard.

Keep up the hard work, Ashley! You're doing great!

modify it until there is no conflict. Sometimes the brief is better than the thing being conflicted. Example: Nearly every reporter writes at that time as TAT, and at the time as TET. Am I going to object to those because they conflict with tat and Tet? Both are real words, but very rare. So, find another way to write tat and Tet!

Mark Kislingbury, RDR, CRR  
Houston, Texas

First of all, my mantra: If you are not building speed, you are losing speed. This is an especially important concept for a student to accept in his or her mind and heart.

If you look at speed levels as a series of mountain tops, with the Kilimanjaro or the Himalaya of mountain tops being the graduating speeds, then you have a basis from which to conceptualize your speedbuilding plan.

For example, a student attains his or her 120 Q&A speeds. Excellent! That student has reached the top of the first mountain. The view is great... but wait, what are all those mountains in the distance?

Court reporting is one of those rare fields in which we can attain success at one level and then we must get right back to work trying to reach the next level. So the challenge is two-fold: Learning how to stay on top of the mountain you have just climbed, no matter what the weather conditions are ☐☐ challenging top-

ics, no opportunity to capitalize on well-known briefs/phrases, just a bad day ☐☐ while trying to build the skills necessary to reach the next mountain top. And on, and on, and on.

Attaining speed is not a matter of moving the fingers faster. It is a matter of lessening hesitation of the flow from the brain to the fingers. In this process of speed building, sometimes the brain will work faster than the fingers; sometimes the fingers want to fly, but the brain cannot process the fingers fast enough. It is only by focused, directed, and dedicated speedbuilding practice that this processing between the brain and fingers can be synched into one continuous, smooth rhythm. When that happens, then the fingers automatically move faster because the brain is processing faster. You can't build speed simply by writing vocabulary words or by looking up and writing all the latest briefs. You must put your knowledge into action

(p☐r☐a☐c☐t☐i☐c☐e). All that newly acquired word knowledge must be processed auditorily in the larger context of literary, jury charge, and Q&A dictation. The bonus is that when you achieve very high levels of speed, then anything less than that top speed gives your brain extra time to process, and everything seems so much more attainable. So why wouldn't you do everything you can to increase your speed level limits so that you, too, can have that extra Excerpt from the JCR

## Word Tripper By: Barbara McNichol

**Coincidence, irony** – A “coincidence” is a situation in which events happen at the same time in an unexpected or unexplained way. “Irony” is when something happens or means the opposite of what’s expected, especially to be funny. It also means using words to express something other than—even the opposite of—their literal meaning.

“It was no *coincidence* the bank’s security officer quit his job at the bank a day after the robbery, and no one missed the *irony* involved.”

“*Ironically*, certain people you meet by accident often become an important part of your life and *coincidentally* stay around the longest.”

### J U N E E V A L U A T I O N S P A S S E D

These students have all passed one or more SAP evaluations during the month of June.

**Students who have passed an exit speed have been bolded.**

<b><u>10 SAPs</u></b>	Katy Bruce	Claire Baldi	Carolyn Collins	Leon Bucsit
Geneva Wildcat	Megan Reeves	Jamie Dorgan	Cassidy Johnson	Marcella Hamilton
<b><u>8 SAPs</u></b>	Sarah Hamilton	Jennifer	Christine Angel	Martha Obstalecki
Christine VanDam	Sue Harrison	MacDonald	Corree Brooks	Najah Danner
Taisha Herr	<b><u>3 SAPs</u></b>	John Boutsis	Daniella Savidge	Natalie Sandi
<b><u>7 SAPs</u></b>	Alisa Church	Josey Loney	Debrina Jones	Season Young
Ashley Wilson	Allison Allen	Julia Haven	Elise Townes	Shari Conrad
Dawn Molina	Brionca Tate	Kathleen	Emma Mach	Shivone Latortue
Jessica Vanatta	Jessica Frizzell	Steadman	Holly Harris	Stephanie Inman
<b><u>6 SAPs</u></b>	Lisa Major	Kimberly Murphy	Holly Mckay	Suleika Olivo
Kelsey Kerwell	Monica Robinson	Lucetta Robertson	Jalene Hutseal	Taifa Stephenson
<b><u>5 SAPs</u></b>	Onni Beene	Maria Raichle	Jennifer Wesner	
Kirstie Anderson	Paulina Alanis	Melanie Segalla	JoannYeatts	
Tracie Blocker	Robin Willey	Michelle Kowalsky	Katelyn Berch	
Victoria Huntley	Sindee Baum	Sara Czartolomna	Katie Jaraczewski	
<b><u>4 SAPs</u></b>	Tami Taylor	Sherrona Williams	Kayde Reiken	
Adam Marcus	Thomas Herman	Stephanie McGin-	Kelly Garland	
Ashley Guillermo	Valerie Melkus	nis	Kimberly Wilker-	
Christil Mcallister	<b><u>2 SAPs</u></b>	Tyler Adkins	son	
Elizabeth	Amy Krueger	Veronica Stewart	Kirstine Mowery	
Hagsteadt	Angela Viray	<b><u>1 SAP</u></b>	Kolby Garrison	
Erin Claybrook	Carol Casstevens	Amanda Olivares	Kristen Stegeman	

## JOB OPENINGS



Job Title: Court Reporter I (Uncertified)

Location: Delta, Monroe

Monthly Salary Range: 3,416.00 - 4,583.00

### General Statement of Duties

Provides professional verbatim reporting and transcribing for court proceedings, hearings and conferences.

### Minimum Education and Experience

Graduation from an accredited school of reporting or associate degree in reporting and six months in verbatim shorthand reporting and transcribing. All employees hired into this classification must obtain their Registered Professional Reporter (RPR) certification through the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) within two years of date of hire.

### Minimum Education and Experience

Graduation from an accredited school of reporting or associate degree in reporting and six months in verbatim shorthand reporting and transcribing. All employees hired into this classification must obtain their Registered Professional Reporter (RPR) certification through the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) within two years of date of hire.

## 7 Tips for Court Reporters

By: Ariel I. Rayman

*Before I entered the court reporting industry, I was a practicing attorney. My experience with court reporters was mixed. Some were outstanding and others would show up late, frazzled, unprepared for the proceeding, or worse. For an attorney, the relationship with the court reporter and agency should be seamless. Attorneys expect their court reporters to be punctual, presentable, professional, and polished. If the reporter fails to meet any of these standards, it is highly unlikely the agency — let alone the court reporter — will be requested again. Attorneys and firms typically request the same reporter and agency because attorneys like consistency.*

*By following these seven steps, you will not only be doing your part in upholding professionalism for the industry, but you will ensure repeat business.*

*This is not an exhaustive list, but if you follow these simple tips, it will make your job easier and the attorneys will appreciate you and request you again for future depositions.*

### **Tardiness/No-Shows**

Nothing will frustrate a room full of attorneys more than being late or failing to appear for a deposition. Make sure you know where you are and how you are to get there, and manage your schedule. If you are unable to make it or you anticipate you will be late, notify your agency.

### **Take Charge**

You are the neutral party in the room, and you can remind everyone in the room that your job is to accurately preserve a word-for-word transcript; therefore everyone in the room needs to listen to your instructions. If an attorney or witness is talking over someone, say something. If an attorney is being rude or unprofessional, say something. If an attorney is speaking too fast or is reading from a piece of paper, it is perfectly acceptable to remind the speaker to slow down. If an attorney is going through exhibits, make sure you mark them and tell the attorney to slow down to allow yourself time to properly label each exhibit so you are not labeling as the witness or attorney is speaking.

### **Control Your Emotions**

A court reporter is tasked with preserving the record in a fair and impartial manner. Sensitive topics may be discussed that can be very emotional to the parties and/or the witness. As a court reporter, you must remain neutral while preserving the record. It is unprofessional, not to mention distracting, if you

show emotion during deposition. Please be aware that everyone in the room can hear you laugh and see you cry. Controlling your emotions and your body language is one of the many keys to being an exceptional court reporter.

### **Eating During A Proceeding**

Before the deposition commences, it may be in your best interest to ask if it will run through the lunch hour. If so, be prepared and eat beforehand. If you have an absolute need or a medical condition (i.e., hypoglycemia), then let the attorneys know in advance that you may need to eat a small snack during the deposition. Also, you can remind attorneys that a short 15-minute break during the course of a deposition is good for everyone.

### **Mobile Phones/ PDAs**

Depositions can be dry and a bit dull, but do not be tempted to surf the Web or do other tasks. Even if you are an expert at multi-tasking, checking your mobile phone or playing with your PDA shows you are not paying attention and gives the impression that you are not accurately transcribing what is being said.

### **Technology**

It is imperative that you have technology that not only looks like it is from this generation but also functions properly. Time is precious to you and all parties involved. Waiting for a computer to reboot, load, or update is frustrating for all.

### **Sloppy Transcripts**

Deposition content can be technical in nature. If it is a medical malpractice, intellectual property, pharmaceutical matter, or any other highly specialized topic, you will be faced with numerous acronyms and unusual terms. You can always ask for a spreadsheet of terms to ensure accuracy — especially if a party wants a rough draft or next-day delivery. Study and familiarize yourself with these terms and pay close attention to what is being said. Do not rush to finish a job. You should put care into your work and take time to research terms and abbreviations that are new to you. Attorneys read and rely on your transcript, and they need to be assured that the record is properly preserved.

COLLEGE OF COURT REPORTING

111 West Tenth Street, Suite 111  
 Hobart, IN 46342  
 Phone: 219-942-1459

“Work for yourself...Work for the world!”

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.CCR.EDU

**AUGUST**

*Birthdays are in bold print! Happy birthday, CCR students and faculty!*



**ANY SUGGESTIONS?**

*Your CCR newsletter is always changing. Contact Jen at [jen.lewis@ccr.edu](mailto:jen.lewis@ccr.edu) with any ideas that you may have for the next one. It is much appreciated!*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Suleika Olivo
2	3 140-160 MULTIVOICE <b>Sandra Walsh</b> <b>Erin Claybrook</b>	4	5 <b>Dee Triche'</b>	6	7 <b>Gaylynn Smith</b> <b>Tammy Rogers Kurta</b>	8
9 Book Lover's Day! 	10 10-page Mock Trial	11	12	13	14 <b>Katie Vettickal</b> <b>Jessica Rykhus</b>	15
16 <b>Natalie Sandi</b>	17 180-200 MULTIVOICE <b>Ashley Guillermo</b>	18	19	20 Faculty Meeting <b>Rebecca Was-ser</b>	21 National Senior Citizen's Day! <b>Jamie Roman</b>	22
23 <b>Paris Evans</b>	24 <b>Josey Loney</b>	25	26 Women's Equality Day!	27 <b>Kathleen Steadman</b>	28	29 <b>Tammy Burk Keely Nelsen</b>
30 <b>Monica Robinson</b> <b>Tyler Adkins</b>	31 140-160 MULTIVOICE <b>Lois Schoenbeck</b> <b>Clara Brooks</b> <b>Jessica Wills</b>					