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American Translators Association

Code of Professional Conduct and Business Practices

I. As a Translator or Interpreter, a bridge for ideas from one language to another and one culture to another, I commit myself to the highest standards of performance, ethical behavior, and business practices.

A. I will endeavor to translate or interpret the original message faithfully, to satisfy the needs of the end user(s). I acknowledge that this level of excellence requires:

1. mastery of the target language equivalent to that of an educated native speaker,
2. up-to-date knowledge of the subject material and its terminology in both languages,
3. access to information resources and reference materials, and knowledge of the tools of my profession,
4. continuing efforts to improve, broaden, and deepen my skills and knowledge.

B. I will be truthful about my qualifications and will not accept any assignments for which I am not fully qualified.

C. I will safeguard the interests of my clients as my own and divulge no confidential information.

D. I will notify my clients of any unresolved difficulties. If we cannot resolve a dispute, we will seek arbitration.

E. I will use a client as a reference only if I am prepared to name a person to attest to the quality of my work.

F. I will respect and refrain from interfering with or supplanting any business relationship between my client and my client's client.

II. As an employer or contractor of translators and/or interpreters, I will uphold the above standards in my business. I further commit myself to the following practices with translators and interpreters:

A. I will put my contractual relationship with translators and interpreters in writing and state my expectations prior to work.

B. I will adhere to agreed terms, payment schedules, and agreed changes, and will not capriciously change job descriptions after work has begun.

C. I will deal directly with the translator or interpreter about any dispute. If we cannot resolve a dispute, we will seek arbitration.

D. I will not require translators or interpreters to do unpaid work for the prospect of a paid assignment.

E. I will not use translators' or interpreters' credentials in bidding or promoting my business without their consent or without the bona fide intention to use their services.

F. For translations for publication or performance over which I have direct control, I will give translators recognition traditionally given authors.

As Amended by the ATA Board of Directors March 2002

For more information, contact ATA,
phone: (703) 683-6100; fax: (703) 683-6122;
or e-mail: ata@atanet.org.

American Translators Association
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590
Alexandria, VA 22314
Telephone (703)683-6100 · Fax (703)683-6122
ata@atanet.org
Office hours 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (Eastern Time)