

Newsletter of the Translation Company  
Division of the American Translators  
Association

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# ATA-TCD News



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# Letter from Marina Ilari, Administrator of the ATA-TCD

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As many of you, I'm looking forward to our next ATA conference in Los Angeles this year. The TCD has invited Iti Sahai as its distinguished speaker. Ms. Sahai will be presenting two 60-minute presentations titled "Leadership and Excellence" and "Product lifecycle and localization."

In this issue of our newsletter, we have interviewed Ms. Sahai so that you can learn more about her and her anticipated presentations.

I would like to thank our newly appointed assistant administrator, Charo Welle, and the dedicated leadership council for all their work with TCD. It's important to make mention that the division is made possible with the work of volunteers who believe in our mission to provide opportunities

for division members to network, as well as to promote collaboration between translation companies and independent translators.

I'm excited for this new issue of TCD's newsletter! We have some great articles and interviews. If you are interested in collaborating with our newsletter writing articles that are of interest to the translation industry and project managers, please contact us at [divisionTCD@atanet.org](mailto:divisionTCD@atanet.org).

Thank you again to our kind volunteers.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marina Ilari".

Marina Ilari

Administrator of the Translation Company Division (TCD) of the American Translators Association (ATA)



# Interview with Distinguished Speaker Iti Sahai



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*We are very excited about your presentations at the ATA conference. Will you tell us more about your experience in the translation and localization industry?*

I'm equally excited to be a part of this year's ATA conference in Los Angeles. It's a huge honor and I am grateful for the opportunity!

I've been a part of the localization industry for over 15 years. I started out my career in film and television and that's where I got introduced to adapting the content for the region where we were distributing these films and TV shows. After this initial experience I was very intrigued by localization and how it affected the world all around us, especially in the products and technology that can be interacted with on a day-to-day basis. I took the opportunity to work for a language service provider to learn the technology and process better and took those learnings to the client side by helping build globalization programs for various industries. Since my career started in the entertainment industry, I like to think of myself as a storyteller at heart. Now I tell the stories of mostly software products to different global audiences by way of localization. This continues to motivate and challenge the creative within me.

*Will you give us a summary of your sessions "Leadership and Excellence" and "Product lifecycle and localization"?*

**Leadership and Excellence:**

This is something I get extremely excited about! This is purely a mindset topic and has to do with breaking one's own limiting beliefs and overcoming them with excellence. This could be useful to everyone despite where they are in their career.

**Product lifecycle and localization:**

I am assuming the majority of the audience at the conference will be translators and I believe they

might benefit from understanding the complete product lifecycle and where and when the translations become important. I could explain the phases of product development and the ideal world where localization is brought in at the discovery stage (very early) to the project and the product is considered to be built for multiple [geo-locations](#).

*You currently work in localization and globalization. What do you like most about the type of work that you do?*

I'm really inspired by the interactions I get to have on a daily basis with talented, curious and innovative people from all around the world. Be it a solutions architect helping me establish the right technology framework, project managers working around the clock, and most importantly the translators giving words a new life in a target language. It is truly a mix of art and science to bring any project to completion and I enjoy this collaboration the most about my work.

*What inspired you to present at the ATA conference, and what is the most important takeaway from your presentations that you will want for attendees?*

ATA is a very prestigious organization and with its reach to the member network, I see this as an opportunity where the audience can get an insight into some of my work on the client side but more importantly, I believe it is where I can learn from these localization professionals.

I really want the audience to attend my presentations with an open mind and hopefully the presentations are not close ended. I would love for the audience to think of my presentations as the beginning of a conversation that they can dive deeper into with their peers and colleagues and perhaps their clients as well.



IMAGE SOURCE: freepik.com

## *Industry Standards Demystified – Part 8*

*By Monika Popiolek, ATA-TCD Newsletter and Blog contributor and ISO/CEN industry standards expert*

### **ISO 20228:2019 Interpreting services – Legal interpreting – Requirements**

**ISO 20228:2019** specifies the requirements for legal interpreting services. The standard's scope covers basic principles and practices of legal interpreting services, and specifies the competences of legal interpreters. The document describes the various legal settings and provides recommendations for the corresponding interpreting modes. It is applicable to all parties involved in facilitating communication between users of legal services using a spoken or signed language. However, the document focuses mainly on individual legal interpreters and their clients, and the needs and requirements of interpreting service providers (ISPs) are treated as a secondary concern.

As stated in the Introduction, the standard was developed in response to a worldwide and growing need to accommodate the interpreting needs of persons deprived of liberty, suspects, accused, defendants, plaintiffs, claimants, complainants, witnesses, victims, parties in different legal settings during spoken and signed communication as well as judicial stakeholders

such as judges, lawyers, prosecutors, police officers, court administrative staff, notaries as well as private persons requiring interpreting services during communicative events related to the law. It is acknowledged here that the right to legal interpreting services has been enshrined in several international, EU and national documents (see Annex A) and the standard aims to be on a par with such declarations (e.g. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, December 1948 (Articles 1-11), European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, November 1950 (Articles 5 and 6), Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000/C 364/01), CHAPTER III – Articles 20 – 21, CHAPTER VI – Articles 47 – 50, Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and Council of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings, etc.

It is stressed in **ISO 20228:2019** that legal interpreting needs to be of a sufficiently high quality to ensure equal access to justice to all persons as well as fair trials. However, it is a pity

that high quality of interpreting services is not promoted here predominantly as a professional rather than chiefly humanitarian concern. Similarly, the claim that legal interpreting has become established as interpreting services provided by professional interpreters is more along the lines of wishful thinking rather than a prevalent market practice. Nevertheless, this document can certainly contribute to disseminating information about this industry specialization and elevating the status of legal interpreters.

**ISO 20228:2019** outlines various codes and standards (protocols) for specific interpreting settings (e.g. for the police or in court) but notes that they vary from country to country, and there are no universally agreed rules or standards for the provision of legal interpreting services. However, Annex A lists numerous national documents that in fact do regulate (i.e. standardize), to a large extent, the provision of such services in many countries – although the scope of such regulations mainly covers the provision of legal interpreting services by authorized sworn interpreters working on behalf of the authorities.

The last paragraph of the Introduction contains a rather unusual statement: “Standards of legal interpreting training and practice vary widely, and are subject to change with remarkable fluidity. In practice, current trends in several countries go in the direction of de-professionalism due to shortage of financial means, absence of specialized training and lack of awareness of the risks of using non-professional legal interpreters.” This opinion seems rather out of context here and there are no references, so even if this is the situation in some country or countries, a requirements standard is not a document where representatives of an industry are encouraged to voice their complaints or offer unsubstantiated opinions on disliked national regulations.

Clause 4 describes the basic principles of legal interpreting in general, the nature of legal interpreting, the work of legal interpreters and the end-users of such services. Clause 5 describes the competences and qualifications of legal interpreters. Clause 6 describes the typical settings with legal interpreting and Clause 7 describes interpreting modes.

Clause 4 includes the first requirement that legal interpreting shall be performed by legal interpreters meeting the requirements of Clause 5 of the standard, following a relevant code of professional ethics and adhering to accepted professional practices, so-called professional interpreting protocols, which can vary by interpreting setting, and by country or region. It also states that:

- by its very nature, legal interpreting contributes to equal access to the law for all parties by facilitating communication between users of legal services who do not share the same language—either spoken languages or sign languages;
- legal interpreting occurs mainly in different legal settings such as police stations, court rooms, lawyer’s offices, prisons, etc. (Annex B includes a non-exhaustive list of the different settings);
- legal interpreting can involve the transfer of signed, verbal and/or non-verbal messages in real time usually in both directions;
- legal interpreting takes place between at least three participants:
  1. a user of a language other than the language of service who needs to communicate with a speaker of the language of service;

2. a user of the language of service who needs to communicate with a speaker of a language other than the language of service; and
3. a legal interpreter.

Read the full article here to find out more about legal interpreter required competences and qualifications, relevant terminology, etc, [here](#).

References: [Iso Website](#)

#### About the author:



Monika Popiolek has an MA in English, an Executive MBA and is a graduate of a PhD Management Programme. She has been a specialist translator and interpreter for over thirty years and is also an authorised certified legal translator, CEO of MAart Agency Ltd. since 1991, President of the Polish Association of Translation Companies (PSBT) since 2009, Head of National Delegation and Chair of the ISO

TC 37 Mirror Committee at PKN, OASIS, ISO and CEN expert since 2007, the EUATC Liaison Rep. to ISO TC 37, member of ATA, and many other organisations. Monika is the author of many publications, member of the editorial board of the JIAL journal (John Benjamins Publishing Company) and has presented at more than 25 international conferences. Her research specializations are: quality management, translation quality assurance, specialist translation, and standards (particularly ISO 17100, ISO 9001, ISO/IEC 82079-1, ISO 27001, ISO 20771). She was one of the editors for the ISO 17100 (Translation services – Requirements), Project Leader for two ISO standards (ISO 20771 and ISO 21999), and is the manager of the ISO TC 37 LinkedIn Industry Standards Group.  
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# Five Suggestions for Managing Company Culture in a Multicultural Industry

By Tucker Johnson

As any organization grows, it necessarily evolves. What works for a 3-person company will not work for a 10-person company, and certainly not for a 50-person company. This applies to process, policies, structure, people, and expectations... In a word, it applies to company culture.

The language services industry is perhaps the most culturally diverse place to work in the world. Virtually every culture, background, religion, nationality, orientation, and race is represented at least at some level. While this brings many benefits to our industry, it also creates an additional level of complexity for localization leaders who would like to shift the culture of their organization or their team... because there are already so many (often conflicting) cultures at play!

During my time consulting with many LSPs over the years, I've had the opportunity to survey many professionals about how to manage organizational culture. I've also had the opportunity to influence the cultures of the companies that I worked at earlier in my career, and later the company that I founded, Nimdzi Insights. Along the way, I have

learned much about building, maintaining, and evolving culture within a global organization. Some of this I learned from observing the excellent leaders I've had the opportunity to be around, while some of it I learned "the hard way..." You know what I mean.

Today I'd like to invite localization leaders to examine some of the most successful methods I've observed for localization leaders to influence and evolve culture within their team. Some of these lessons I've learned along the way so that perhaps at least one or two readers of this article can be spared from "the hard way" that I had to endure.

## **1. Understand and accept the current culture for what it is, not for what you want it to be**

Culture comes from the top. Always. This means that localization leaders have the responsibility to actively assess and manage their team cultures. This isn't to say that if you do not actively manage your team's culture that it will not have



any culture. It will just have a culture that you may not like and that may not be conducive to a healthy working environment.

Shifting cultures is an intentional and long-term process. It doesn't happen overnight. But before we even begin to shift the hearts and minds of our teammates, we need to sit down and talk to them. Ask them how they feel about their current work environment. What do they like? What do they dislike? What are they afraid of? If you already have a high level of trust with your teammates, sit down and talk with them individually. Do it over food. Food makes everything go smoother. If trust is still a challenge on your team, that's OK too. This is why we are working to improve! In such a case, it may be helpful to bring in an unbiased third party to perform confidential interviews, or you could run anonymous surveys to collect information from the team.

## **2. Be open about your intent and communicate with your team**

Once you have an accurate baseline for where you are currently, it is up to you to decide in which direction you want your team to head and then make that known publicly. The go-to method for doing this is of course the good old mission statement and vision statement. Even if there is already a mission statement at your company, there is no reason why your team cannot have their own *raison d'être* that you strive to follow internally. Keep in mind that a mission statement is only valuable if everybody can remember what it says. Make sure to repeat it often and publish it in a public place for all to be reminded of.

It is always best to include your team when deciding where you are headed. Even if you

are promoting what you feel is a healthy and necessary change, you would be wise not to assume that everybody is on board. Your top-performing team members may be especially resistant. After all, they have done well for themselves in the current culture (hence why they are top performers). Make sure to listen to the concerns and suggestions of all stakeholders and to take all their feedback seriously. This is the deal: if you are not prepared to address every piece of feedback from your team, then you are wasting everybody's time. In fact, you are actually training your team not to be transparent with you in the future, since you are showing them that it is not worth their time or their vulnerability to give it to you.

As much as the efficiency-driven project manager in me cringes to say it, this communication and feedback process will take time. Crafting an agreed-upon mission statement can take months of conversations and these conversations are not anything resembling "efficient." People need to talk. More importantly, you need to listen. Let the process happen at its own pace and remember that along the way, the journey you are taking to get there is already working to your benefit to build trust and openness within your team.

## **3. Walk your talk - constantly**

Along your journey towards a new and improved team culture, there will be setbacks. Sometimes it is two-steps-forward-one-step-back... other times it will feel like one-step-forward-two-steps-back. Throughout it all, though, you are the leader, so you need to act like one. It's not enough to simply announce that you would like to see a culture of openness, honesty, and vulnerability. You have to

be open, honest, and vulnerable with your team. And you have to do it first. They will follow your lead.

It is not enough to set a good example only every once in a while. Acting out your intended ideals needs to be organic. It needs to be authentic. It needs to be constant and consistent. For example, if your intent is to increase trust between team members, then you need to learn the phrase “I trust you.” Practice it in front of a mirror. You need to say it often to different people in different ways and in different contexts. Then you need to act as if you actually believe what you are saying. If your goal is to improve the team’s work ethic, then you don’t get to show up late to the office or take long lunches anymore. Ever. You get to lead by example.

Furthermore, it is not enough to just walk your talk. Your team has to see you doing it. This isn’t to say that you should artificially make it look like you are doing it. No saving an email for three hours before hitting send just so you can make it seem like you are working late—your team is too smart to fall for that! What it means is that you need to be in constant contact with your team. Check in with your team members regularly, daily if needed. Don’t cancel scheduled 1:1 meetings if there is nothing to talk about. You are the leader - it is your job to find something (productive) to talk about, even if only for 5 minutes and even if it is 4:00 p.m. on a Friday.

#### **4. Learn to let go - Give your team (and yourself) permission to fail**

Some advice I’ve given to almost every people manager I’ve ever managed is that leaders need to learn to let go. Many of us find ourselves in

managerial positions because we are good at our jobs. At least theoretically, the best PMs get promoted to team leads. So why, once we are promoted, do we expect all of our team members we manage to exhibit the same levels of skill, knowledge, and experience as us? It is unreasonable - if they did, you would maybe be reporting to them, not the other way around!

In order to improve, people need to be allowed to make mistakes. That’s how we learn. This means that no matter how grievous the mistake, you need to fight the urge to overly criticize, shame, or talk poorly about the person who messed up.

When going through times of change, I would actually recommend celebrating mistakes. If we are making mistakes, that means we are learning what not to do in the future, right? Run a post-mortem, analyze the root cause, address the issues, and create an action plan for how the whole team is going to work together to make sure it doesn’t happen again. This way you can move forward confidently looking forward to your next (new, different) mistake so that you can continuously improve together.

#### **5. Don’t neglect to invest in developing yourself and your fellow leaders**

I’ve been referring throughout this article to “localization leaders,” but I haven’t provided a solid definition of that term, so I will now. A leader is somebody who acts like a leader. Leadership is not solely based on a title, a job description, or a set of qualifications. Inspiration, service, and leadership can come from surprising places in your team. It is your job to identify the leaders on your team that have potential, and then invest in them.

Remember our example of good project managers getting promoted to team leads? Keep in mind that the skillset that it takes to be an excellent project manager is not necessarily the skillset it takes to be a good leader. Leadership skills need to be learned, just like any other skills. So we need to make sure that we are providing ample opportunities for our team members to develop and exercise these skills. Are you providing mentorship opportunities or professional coaching services to your team members? If you regularly hold workshops and training sessions, are you only focusing on “hard skills” or are you making room for “soft skills” like communication, motivation, conflict resolution, and leadership? If not, I encourage you to research the many free and paid resources available out there for developing new leaders on your team that you should definitely be taking advantage of.

### To summarize...

Recognize your team’s culture for where it currently stands. This is the first step toward building a culture of trust with the team. Be honest about where you are currently so that you can work with your colleagues to plan where you are heading together. Confidently communicate your intentions to shift the culture and work closely with the whole team to craft an agreed-upon mission statement. As a leader, you can’t wait for your team to take the lead. Leaders must lead by example and exhibit publicly the traits and ideals to be strived for. Along the way, there will be setbacks and that’s OK because every mistake made (and analyzed) today teaches a valuable lesson and empowers the team to go

make different mistakes tomorrow. You and your team members are in this together. Leadership is a mindset, not a job title, so identify your fellow team members who can help you clear the path for the rest of the team, and then make sure to invest in getting them the knowledge and skills they need to do so.

Cultural change will not happen overnight. It will not be efficient. It will be painful at times and mistakes will be made. It is all part of the process. It is important, though, because remember: if you have the culture of a 3-person company, it is unlikely that you will ever become a 50-person company! As an organization grows, actively managing and evolving culture is crucial. And trust me... *it is worth it.*

### About the author:



Tucker is a co-founder of Nimdzi Insights and an expert in translation, localization, and all-things-language industry. In addition to the work he does with Nimdzi clients, he is also an adjunct professor at Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey and a co-owner of MultiLingual Media, publishing MultiLingual magazine.

Tucker is a founding host of Nimdzi LIVE!, which is regularly live-streamed to LinkedIn and recordings are available wherever you get your podcasts. He also leads a number of virtual and in-person workshops on topics ranging from project and account management, sales and marketing for LSPs, remote team leadership, and more. Contact [info@nimdzi.com](mailto:info@nimdzi.com) if you are interested in getting in touch!



## Women in Translation

### Tricks of the Trade for Successful Project Management: An Interview with Diana Rhudick

*Diana Rhudick is a 30-year veteran of the translation industry, specializing in business, legal, and marketing texts. She is ATA-certified from French into English and Spanish into English, and holds a master's degree in translation from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey. Currently, she divides her time between her freelance work and project management for a boutique translation company. She also currently serves as president and co-webmaster of the New England Translators Association.*

#### Introduction

The global pandemic on the world economy has led to diversification of skills and services becoming a trending concept. As a result, language professionals are finding creative ways to remain competitive and profitable. One option is to offer project management services. The Division of Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics defines Project Management Specialists as those

who, on a project-basis, “analyze, and coordinate the schedule, timeline, procurement, staffing, and budget of a product or service” (U.S. Bureau of Labor 2021). In addition, 2021 data published by this Division lists the top industries that employ the largest number of project managers (PMs), an estimate of 743,860 nationwide. Of this estimate, 53,680 PMs, earning an average of \$49 an hour, are specifically employed in the Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services industry (see figure 1), which encompasses a myriad of groups and major occupations.



Fig. 1

These groups, where most likely PMs for translation, interpreting, and localization projects are found, include Management; Life, Physical, and Social Sciences; Legal; Educational Instruction and Library; Computer and Mathematical; Business and Financial Operations; Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media occupations; Healthcare, and several others. These findings illustrate a professional path, not only for those language professionals seeking to work in-house, but also for freelance translators and interpreters who may not be aware of this potential for additional revenue. To gain deeper insight and understanding on how to tap into this path, I spoke with Diana Rhudick, project manager for a translation agency and freelance project manager for her own clients. Diana recently presented the ATA Webinar, “[What Do Project Managers Do?](#),” and provided practical information on how freelance language professionals can add project management services to their portfolios. Diana also discusses the desired skills and qualities of project managers, and how understanding, developing, and applying these skills can benefit and enhance a translation and interpreting (T&I) language professional’s ability to negotiate and subcontract projects.

### **Actionable strategies for adding project managing to language services**

*Since translators and interpreters are often managed and guided by PMs employed by language service providers (LSPs) and businesses of all sizes, the notion of a freelance PM is not that common. Could you explain what is a freelance PM? Can freelance PMs lead and manage projects in any field and specialties, or is it a best practice for them to work specifically within one or two specializations?*

In my case, a freelance PM is a project manager

for only one translation agency. I have certain hours and days that I work, very similar to a part-time job. A big difference is that I can change my hours if I’m working on my own projects, and I take time off according to my own schedule.

Project management has more to do with management skills than with specializing in a specific field, such as aeronautics, or German language and automotive topics. That said, it would certainly add value to your work if you specialized in managing the types of projects that you also translate. While we might say that this “double specialization” is a best practice, I don’t think you would have many opportunities to manage only the projects you specialize in.

*The global pandemic has widened the landscape for PMs by creating innovative work infrastructures across major industries, improving cloud-based collaboration spaces, thereby causing greater awareness and the need for remote and hybrid jobs. Could you share two specific examples of how freelance PMs can leverage the new opportunities of working remotely? What is a strategy you have implemented that has helped you balance work and life while remaining productive managing projects in a remote setting?*

When you work remotely, you can manage projects during the day (since you will most likely need to contact vendors and clients during the day), and translate at night, without wasting commuter time—and gas money—in between. Remote work also allows you to interact with the translation clients in your time zone during the day, and manage projects in an earlier time zone after 5 p.m. your time.

I don’t mean that I work all day and all night all the time, though! I love being able to schedule doctor’s appointments and go shopping in the

middle of the day without the crowds, which is possible if you accept that you'll also have to work some nights and weekends.

A major reason why the freelancer lifestyle appeals to me is this very flexibility and nontraditional schedule. You could say my strategy is that I've realized I work best by engaging in a variety of activities, some business, some pleasure, throughout the day. If you know that you are a very nine-to-five personality, you can structure your day accordingly, and even pick certain days just for translation, with other days just for project management.

*Whether intentionally or as part of their daily work activities, most language professionals—freelancers and business owners—are already managing their time, resources, and assigned translation and interpreting projects. Should language professionals view themselves as PMs and include this experience in their CVs to show project management skills? In your experience as a veteran translator, is it a good strategy to provide translation services while managing projects for several clients or the same client? What are some advantages you have experienced as a result? Are there any disadvantages to watch for?*

Language professionals should absolutely view themselves as PMs! Your attitude toward this part of your job will tell you whether or not you should pursue project management for others. If the answer is yes, then you can describe your experience on your résumé with wording such as “successfully completed 20,000-word translation on urgent basis while maintaining high quality”; “collaborated with translation team to create project glossary and complete project on time.”

My personal view is that it is much less confusing to manage projects for one client at a time,

whether or not you are also doing translation for that client. That way, you are focused on the methods and requirements of that specific client; you are immersed in the details of that specific project. I do like being part of the translation team at the same time as I am managing the project. This is because I can more easily draw up a glossary and answer any questions the other team members may have. The disadvantage would be the potential for spreading yourself too thin: You can't take on as much text to translate as you normally would if you are also managing the project. You have to expect problems and slowdowns.

### **Best practices and desired skills for a successful and profitable project manager-client relationship**

*There is an obvious advantage for language professionals who work in more than two languages. Considering that you speak three languages, is it required for PMs to be multilingual for managing multilingual translation and interpreting projects and teams? Regardless of the language combinations involved, what specific steps or best practices can bilingual professionals implement to maximize productivity and profitability for managing multilingual projects?*

I wouldn't say you have to be multilingual to manage multilingual projects and teams, but it certainly is an advantage. I believe that a minimum of some exposure to other languages and to translation or interpretation specifically is required, so that you readily understand concepts like language expansion, lack of word-for-word correspondence, or ideal interpreting conditions. Hopefully, you're also quick-witted and can learn on the job.

The keys to productive and profitable multilingual

projects are having your systems in place before you begin, and communicating. You don't want to waste time trying to find a Norwegian translator specializing in medical texts once the client has sent the project. Compile a database of a few vendors for your most common languages and specializations. Or at the very least, know where to look for them (Hint: ATA Directory). Have templates already drawn up that show timelines, project milestones, vendor names, etc. PM software will also have these templates.

Dare I say that the need for communication speaks for itself? Applied specifically to multilingual projects, communicating means having on hand the contact info and time zones of your vendors, writing down the project specifics and getting vendor acceptance of them, checking in with vendors throughout the project by sending clear and (somewhat) frequent messages.

*In a productivity- and skill-driven, highly competitive T&I industry, soft skills (i.e., effective communication, public relations, and customer service) are often overlooked. Yet, the attributes of language professionals for working and interacting congenially, building rapport, and communicating effectively can turn short-term project manager-client relationships into long-lasting ones. From your perspective as both PM and translator, what are two essential qualities that contribute to maintaining a productive project manager-client relationship? Along these lines, what are two major challenges a freelance PM may encounter arising from miscommunication during the course of managing a project? Could you propose possible solutions to these challenges?*

I'm glad you asked these questions, because I'm a strong believer in building productive relationships in this field. Two essential qualities are a positive attitude and empathy. (These two go a long way in any kind of relationship.) One

translator I work with is always upbeat, always appreciates that we are sending him work, and even asks us to thank the editor of his translations. Give me more like him. A few other translators act as though I'm imposing on them by sending them work, or as though they are doing me a favor by accepting a job. If both sides see the project as an opportunity to work together to produce the best results possible, the relationship is much more positive and successful.

Briefly, empathy is important for understanding the other person's point of view to avoid unreasonable demands and gain their trust.

One challenge I face as a PM is knowing how explicit to be in my instructions to vendors. I had assumed that all editors would use Track Changes in Word to edit a translation. I have been surprised—and dismayed—to see someone highlight changes or use some other method that takes much longer to process. But I don't want to insult anyone's intelligence with obvious instructions, either.

Another challenge is learning to adjust to different work styles. I tend to be a perfectionist, hyperefficient, and punctual. Not everyone works that way. It's not specifically a communication problem, except that acknowledging my own style and letting vendors know my expectations are helpful ways to smooth out the bumps.

*Living in a technology-driven world, the internet offers language professionals an overwhelming number of options of project management applications and tools—from highly sophisticated, often cost-prohibitive (for freelance language professionals) to free, open-sourced project management software. Among so many options, what type of project management tools would you recommend? Do you have a cost-effective system or process you use?*



IMAGE SOURCE: freepik.com

I could fairly be described as a Luddite in this area. But I have heard good things about these project management packages: LSP Expert, Plunet (I've used this as a translator with no major problems), Translation Office 3000, and Axonaut.com.

One tool I sing the praises of weekly is ABBYY FineReader, a PDF-to-Word conversion program, among other talents. No, it cannot produce a clean Word copy of a file that was saved as an image with handwriting scrawled all over it, but it can produce a usable copy, and for nearly everything else, it's a miracle worker. Of course, Trados, and I'm sure other CAT tools, can now convert PDFs to Word and retain the formatting, which is stupendous.

My own process is to record the same details about each project (client name, date, job number, assigned vendors, etc.), update these immediately as things evolve, follow the same naming system for all files and folders, send out a template for interpreter assignments (address for interpretation, date, time, topic, etc.), and maintain up-to-date files of vendors.

### **Marketing and negotiation best practices for freelance project managers**

*Personal branding and marketing, an active social*

*media presence, contributing to the industry, and being savvy professionals are some of the recommended assets for standing out and staying current on a fast-paced and technology-oriented global market. Negotiation skills are also necessary for successful and profitable business outcomes between PMs and language professionals. Could you share three strategies that have worked or are still working for you that freelance PMs can use for marketing and finding clients? What are two important marketing strategies and best practices for ensuring and promoting the best outcome for negotiating and managing projects with agencies and clients?*

I was going to say that I haven't implemented any specific marketing strategies, because I got my current PM job when a company owner contacted me unexpectedly to see if I knew anyone interested in project management. But that one contact was the result of years of building my relationship with this woman, positioning myself as someone who knows a lot of language specialists and acts professionally.

So the most logical first step would be to contact agencies and direct clients that you already work for as a translator or interpreter. Agency owners may not even have thought of hiring someone to help out with project management, which is



where you come in. Be sure to tell clients that you can find and recommend translators in other languages for them, and that you are available for managing whole projects. For instance, when I get a request for a job in a language combination I don't have, or I am not available, I always refer the sender to other translators.

For those who like LinkedIn, you can set up job alerts (Jobs icon at top, Create a job alert button) with a filter for project management.

The third strategy is the one that has also helped me find translation clients: Join professional organizations. A good portion of my translation work comes from recommendations from my fellow New England Translators Association members. Of course, you'll have to attend events and volunteer for activities so that other members get to know you.

Lastly, two important strategies or practices to ensure the best outcome when negotiating and managing projects: Be honest about your abilities, and remember that they're not the only clients in town. We do need to paint ourselves in the best possible light when negotiating for work, but if we overdo it, we end up frustrated and overburdened, and looking unreliable in the client's eyes.

The second point applies to any type of negotiation: Be prepared to walk away if the deal isn't good for you. If you feel as though this job is your only hope, you will be tempted to accept less favorable conditions. I know that we are in a tough industry with low pay in many cases, and I know that sometimes people are desperate for any job. But just google translation agency + [any major American city], and you will see dozens, or even thousands, of hits. Find the right fit for you so you can excel at what you do.

## Closing

Thank you so much for granting this enriching interview for the ATA TCD newsletter. Your experience as a freelance project manager will serve to inspire, motivate, and help T&I professionals seeking fresh perspectives about project management and wanting to learn about the essential skills and qualities necessary for offering this additional service.

## References

[U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2021. "NAICS 541600 - Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services."](#)

["Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2021, 13-1082 Project Management Specialists." Occupational Employment and Wages Statistics.](#)

## About the author:



Rosario "Charo" is an accredited LATAM & U.S. Spanish language consultant and cross-cultural communicator. Charo has over 25 years of working experience translating, editing, and localizing corporate and institutional communications, education, bilingual marketing, and healthcare contents. Charo holds a Professional Certificate in Translation Studies English to Spanish from NYU and a BA in Communications from University of Denver. She's pursuing a MA in Communication Management with a Concentration in Marketing Communication and a Professional Certificate in Creative Writing. Charo joined ATA in 2001 and is recognized for her contributions to the language industry by actively promoting the ATA's goals through serving in significant leadership roles. Her accolades include translation awards from the Texas School Public Relations Association (TSPRA), the 2006 ATA's School Outreach Award, and the 2014 ATA's Harvie Jordan Scholarship.

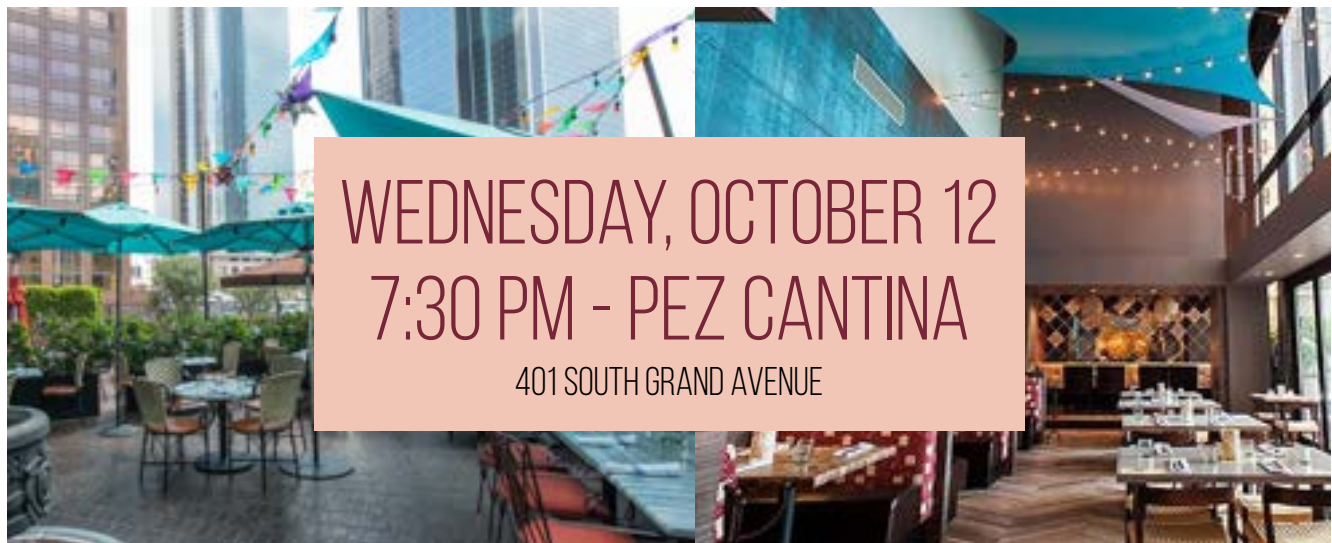
# ATA63 Conference Event

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We hope you'll include the below TCD event in your ATA conference schedule!

Join language company professionals, translators, and interpreters for food, drinks, and networking. This is a great opportunity to share ideas with colleagues, forge collaborative partnerships, meet prospective customers, and learn more about the Translation Company Division.

memoQ has generously provided freelance licenses which will be raffled after the dinner. Don't miss your chance to win!



**Cost: \$65 per person**

Tickets must be purchased in advance. Click [here](#) to purchase tickets. Register early, limited seating! Reservations accepted on a first come, first served basis.



IMAGE SOURCE: [freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com)

## *Thank you, volunteers!*

Our thanks to the ATA-TCD leadership council Marina Ilari, Alaina Brandt, Monika Popiołek, Ray Valido, Graciela (Grace) Isaia y Ruiz, Cynthia Penovi, Paula Penovi, Afaf Steiert, Gloria Cabrejos, Garry Guan, Thu Maulden, Aniella Vivencio, and Charo Welle.

Our thanks to webmaster Luciano Oliveira for managing the [ATA-TCD website](#).

### Call for Social Media!

Curating relevant and up-to-date content for TCD social media accounts on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook requires the contributions of many. Have you encountered an article or piece of media that you believe is relevant to our Division? When you do, please consider submitting the item to the [ATA-TCD Social Media Posts](#) web form!

Items submitted will be reviewed by the TCD Communications Committee prior to being posted on social media accounts. Submission does not guarantee that the item will appear on TCD social media accounts.

### Other ways to get involved?

ATA-TCD is solely supported by volunteer-members. Please get involved!

- Help moderate our social media channels
- Write blog articles
- Present [webinars](#)
- Volunteer at the [ATA Annual Conference](#)
- Join the Leadership Council
- Plan events like the annual ATA-TCD dinner

If you are interested in one of these or other opportunities and want to learn more, [contact us](#).



## Connect with us!

As a member of ATA's TCD, you have a great opportunity to network with other companies, translators, and professionals. To do so, you will need to have a LinkedIn account and ask to join our Group. Find the link for it [here](#).

\* Once you have asked to join the ATA-TCD group, our leadership council will validate that you are an ATA-TCD member and grant you access to the group.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at [divisionTCD@atanet.org](mailto:divisionTCD@atanet.org) with your full name and your ATA member number.

- Join the division: <https://www.atanet.org/divisions/>
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