

## Language Translation Review

To ensure the delivery of accurate, complete and readable translations, all standard translation requests include a 3-step process: translation, editing, and proof-reading. At the project onset, the requesting agent is expected to provide any relevant departmental reference material, e.g. glossaries or style guides, to assist the translator as much as possible. After the translation is delivered, the client is expected to utilize qualified staff member(s) to conduct an additional review, and to provide the linguists with relevant feedback.

Beyond this usual process, we have identified **some** additional best practices that will help the leaders of DC Government develop an additional post-translation review process. The aim of a well-designed review process is to improve communication between the authors of the District's vital documents, and the linguists who translate them, giving the leaders of DC Government an added layer of confidence that their message to District residents is conveyed effectively.

CLCI, in partnership with ACSI, can provide consulting services to help better define post-translation review, as well as to design a tailored review process for the District of Columbia's Language Access Coordinators and other staff to employ on every translation project.

### **Best Practices for Language Translation Review**

1. Develop a standard for feedback.
  - Provide upfront: Style guide, glossaries, etc.
  - Report translation feedback in writing (track changes).
  - Implement a continuous feedback loop between document authors and linguists.
  
2. Develop a standard for review levels. Not all content is created equal, and understanding this is key.
  - Do you need a spot check or a full review?
  - What are the implications of an error?
  - What is the shelf life of the document?
  - Is the end-user of the translation an issue?

3. Define your reviewer's qualifications. A sample set of ideal qualifications include:
  - Full fluency of source language.
  - Formal target language education (in-country).
  - Cultural familiarity.
  - Knowledge of translation standards.
  
4. Give your reviewers a guideline.
  - A review should: Verify the message of the source document is effectively conveyed and understood in the translation.
  - It should not be: A stylistic review (because there are many ways of expressing the same concept).
  - It should not be: A rewrite of the source text (i.e. a modification to the translation should not change the content of the intended message).

Language is very fluid, and there can be as many versions of a “good translation” as there are people. The ultimate goal of quality translation is effective communication between the District of Columbia and its residents.

Please let us know if we can help create a best practices framework for linguistic quality validation.

References: “Best practices for client review processes”, 2015. Common Sense Advisory.