

# Why use a professional translator?

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You have a finalised, polished text to share with your readers - and it needs to be available in more than one language. You could ask your bilingual colleague to translate it (and hold your breath), or you could ask a professional translator to do the job.

Why should you prefer a professional translator?

- **A professional translator is someone who has been trained in the art of transferring the meaning** of a message from one language to another. This means that he or she knows how to negotiate aspects such as style, register, terminology and possible ambiguity in a text. Training and experience will have taught him or her to make informed translation decisions to ensure that the translated text conveys the same message as your original text.
- **A professional translator is also a linguistic expert**, so you can expect a translation without language errors, and a text that does not read like a translation. Moreover, a professional translator will be very careful not to omit or add anything while translating.
- **Professional translators are usually members of a professional organisation**, such as SATI (South Africa Translators' Institute). Active membership brings them into contact with other professional translators, exposing them to best practices in the industry and giving them access to information networks regarding terminology, language conventions and resources. Membership means that they have committed themselves to a professional code of conduct advocating a specific work ethic and quality standards.
- **A professional translator will make you look good**. In addition to conveying the intended message, a well-translated text tells your readers that you respect them, and that you are professional and credible.

So, what will it be? A bilingual colleague who could get lost in translation and lead your readers astray, or a trained professional translator who will definitely get your intended message across?

Contact the [Language Centre's Language Service](#) for all your translation and editing needs – email Marguerite at [mvdwaal@sun.ac.za](mailto:mvdwaal@sun.ac.za) to discuss your project.

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