

RECORDING NAME MONTH YEAR INITIALS – TYPE - LENGTH - MINS
[MALE/FEMALE/MIXED RESPONDENTS]
[Other comments:]

**INTELLIGENT VERBATIM - MODERATOR EDITED TO MAIN QUESTION -
INTRODUCTION SUMMARISED**

[MODERATOR INTRODUCES RESEARCH]

Introduction

Lesley: I worked for 10 years as a bilingual secretary and then four years as secretary to four directors of a hardware and software company. In 1994 I stopped work to have my twin girls. Transcription work was not something I was aware of until a friend mentioned McGowan Transcriptions to me as a company I might like to work for and I discovered it was perfect for me, enabling me to have the best of both worlds, looking after my children whilst working part-time from home. As the children got older I was able to increase my work.

Shelly: I previously worked as a secretary for Taylor Woodrow and then had a change of direction in my career and worked for Xerox in their Finance Division. After having my daughter, I became a childminder

Donna: I started off my working life as a civil servant in the Department of Health. I then worked for Bill Bourne Associates, producing post production scripts for the BBC, Hartswood Films, Channel X and many other TV production companies. I've also worked as a PA to the Financial Director of a Financial Services company in Hong Kong.

David: I have been in charge of credit control for McGowan Transcriptions since 2001. During that time I've formed a very good friendly relationship with client account departments. The bigger the company the more important it is, I feel, to form a personal connection so I always aim to be far more than a faceless name on the end of a phone. Prior to taking this role at McGowan Transcriptions I

worked at Ashford and St Peters Hospital in various departments including appointments and Day Surgery. I have also been a journalist, a book seller and a musical director for a circus.

Li: After graduating from Leicester University in 1999, I undertook two varied and exciting years in industry. I finally found my niche when I started work as a medical audio secretary, working in both NHS and private settings for nearly four years. I honed my transcription skills to perfection, developing a real enthusiasm for the work, which enabled me to utilise my eagle-eyed grammar skills and language. I started freelancing as a digital transcriber, assisting an author with his new book.

Why McGowan Transcriptions?

Transcribing has always been part of my working life, from transcribing audio cassettes as a PA to transcribing film and television programme sound tracks for post production. I'm proud to be associated with McGowan Transcriptions as quality, accuracy consistency and maintaining high standards are very important for all of us, and we constantly strive to uphold and improve upon these values

It was actually my dad that noticed the job as a Transcriber for McGowan Transcriptions advertised in the Jobcentre where he worked and he thought it would be perfect because it would enable me to be able to work and also spend time with my daughter. He was so right and all these years later, I am still here even though my daughter is now 18!

What makes working for McGowan Transcriptions special?

Even though I work from home, I never feel like I'm alone. Joe, Emma and the rest of the team are always there for me. Whether it's a technical problem with my equipment, a personal problem or simply that I'm working on a new project and I'm unfamiliar with some of the technical jargon, within minutes of my asking for help it's there

You gain an insight and firsthand knowledge into a lot of subject areas that you would not normally know about. For example, new products, new technologies, medical advances and new ideas, and I always get a real kick out of seeing the finished product on an advertisement on TV for something

that I have worked on. That is when it really sinks in as to why it is so important that we provide an accurate transcription service.

The transcription projects are always interesting and varied; there is great flexibility as an employee and that was absolutely essential for me while my children were growing up. Joe is a great boss, always very understanding and flexible.

M: Joe is an excellent boss. She knows exactly what she wants but not at the expense of the individuals involved. I haven't worked for anyone who has such a heart for her employees or the people she works for. The flexibility of being able to work when I want to, whether to fit in with the demands of family life or insomnia, makes working at McGowan Transcriptions a great experience.

Working for McGowan Transcriptions has enabled me to experience the challenges and disciplines of working from home, as well as the freedom and flexibility it permits. I take a real pride in my work; this along with Joe's expert and empathic leadership makes it a pleasure to be part of this very special team.

It has been a pleasure to work with Joe for all these years and to see McGowan Transcriptions grow and develop into the company it now is. She has a great sense of humour and really cares about her team of transcribers.

How does technology influence your transcription role?

Since I joined McGowan transcriptions technology has advanced so much! The role is now so much easier; the work is delivered and returned digitally, it saves so much time. The Internet is a wonderful thing and it's hard to imagine working without it now. It enables me as a professional transcriber to research terminology used in a diverse range of industries and subjects - it's invaluable.

I love technology and I love the fact that we're now working on digital recordings and the days of couriering tapes back and forth/waiting for the postman are over. I look forward to seeing what happens next.

This is an amazing time full of technological innovations. Like the other members of the team here I don't see new things as a threat but more like a stimulating challenge. I remember the days of mini cassettes and how MP3s changed the transcription industry completely. The fact that McGowan Transcriptions is fast approaching its twentieth year in business shows how well the team adapt and absorb changes in technology. The future is a very bright place for all of us here.

Digital dictation transcription requires specialised equipment both for the transcriber and the person doing the recording. I am now proficient in the use of the latest transcription software and hardware, as well as with many of the commonly-used sound formats used in creating the files. Not only this, but we often get to hear about the newest developments in communication technology which, whilst currently confidential and publically undisclosed, nevertheless grant us a window into the future.

I really don't know how we used to transcribe without the use of the internet. Google has completely transformed the way we work and how precise we can now be with being able to research company names, people, medicines, projects, products, et cetera.

What interests you about transcribing?

I like the fact that when I sit down in the morning I never actually know what I'm going to be working on. It could be anything from a medical discussion, someone's life story, a research group discussion, conference or people talking about chocolate! It can be very challenging when you have a subject that you've never come across before, but also very rewarding putting in the research and learning something new.

It's great to feel part of the research process - research is essential for the continual improvement in everything that affects our lives now and in the future.

Audio transcription allows me to work on a diverse range of projects, expanding my knowledge of hitherto-unexplored industry sectors. Furthermore, working from home enables me to proactively manage my workload and time. As a Psychology graduate, I am fascinated by people, and digital transcription permits that rare and privileged insight into the way that others live.

The subject matter is so varied and it could be anything from how you clean your loo, to the newest mobile phone, to crime, to the interpretation of dreams and everything in-between. Sometimes the interviews are really interesting, they can also be mundane, they can make you laugh out loud, they can also make you cry but the most important thing is to produce an accurate record of the interview.

Are you learning anything new that is likely to enhance your transcription role?

I have recently completed a proofreading course, where I attained a distinction, which has immensely enhanced my transcription.

I am learning that not everyone out there takes accuracy of grammar as seriously as we at McGowan Transcriptions do. I daily encounter (sometimes hilarious) grammatical errors in newspapers and on television, all of which serve as a reminder to always be vigilant in my work. One slip of the apostrophe or comma and the entire meaning of a transcribed sentence can be altered.

The days of listening to a cassette which had really poor sound quality are long gone, although occasionally a cassette does require transcribing, and that is when it's most noticeable how using digital technology has transformed our work.

Anything the rest of the transcription team might not know about you?

I have a cat who curls up on my desk next to my keyboard while I'm working!

Dame Edna Everage's Bridesmaid, Madge Allsop (Emily Perry), was my ballet tutor!

M: I do like a nice doughnut.

In my youth, I used to be a fully-fledged Goth!

Yoga is my great passion - after a day of wearing headphones listening to people talking and sitting in front of a computer, there is nothing better for your body and soul than to clear your head of all the chitter chatter and to improve your posture.

I've been told that I've got hearing like a bat, which definitely helps with the transcription process!

What date did you join the transcriptions team at McGowan Transcriptions?

I joined the team in October 1997.

Gosh, sometime in 1995!

Autumn 2001.

I joined McGowan Transcriptions in 2006.

I joined the Transcription Team in April 1997.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]