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Need I become an accredited member?

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I have joined different translation and linguist associations or networks in order to gain access to their benefits, courses, professional networks, and appear in their member lists so clients can find me.

That is the ultimate goal, right? Appear on a list so clients can find me?

Does it make a difference if I am an accredited or certified member?

I think it will depend on where you are, and on what clients want.

And your qualifications, experience, will play a key role.

Joining an international association, for example, can be great if you are able to network with linguists outside of your country, allowing you to become acquainted with the international market and its practices.

Even better if prospective clients are able to find you in the members' list, and do contact you so you can participate in their contracting processes.



International certification?

It will depend on what the clients want and what you have. If you want to reach those clients, then you should consider it.

But international certifications, depending on where you are based, can be quite expensive, and unavailable.

So what can one do?

There are other ways to impress them too, you know!

Recommendation letters, a portfolio of translation samples, willingness to participate in reasonable translation tests, and a solid and professional presentation of what you do and how clients can benefit from giving you the job.

It is also useful to become an associate or member of an association which requires proven experience, references, and continuing education, and which will help you to develop and grow.

Join for the benefits and the opportunities to learn and grow

Join to learn, make use of the benefits offered, become a listed member for marketing purposes, and make sure to find a way to put it on your resume, website, or your presentation.



ProZ.com

I stayed a proz.com certified PRO for over a year without taking any courses or answering job posts.

My only concern was with the blue board, and in finding good companies to make contact with. Return was slow, but in 2015, when I started answering requests for quotes, I made some very good new clients.

Being a certified PRO is an advantage when clients look for exclusively “certified PROs”, it's true, but there are also plenty of clients looking for people with verified credentials, proven experience in given fields, residence in a given country, and/or a variety of other combined requirements.

Indeed, there is room for everyone.

You just need to know how to present yourself and what you do!

Clients who require ATA, State Certified Credentials, others.



I don't have one, don't plan to get one just because some clients ask for one.

Yet, I would have to get one if the great majority of prospective clients were to start asking for one.

It would simply mean adapting to the market, and one would be stupid not to see it that way.



Qualified versus Certified.

I think that being certified readily shows that you meet the professional and technical requirements of the trade - and to me that is all it does.

I want to work with reasonable clients, and such clients know that good linguists have a combination of qualification and experience, not just certification, so I just simply need to find a way to attract their attention.

Clients have their reasons.

But I offer my “produce” anyway, even when I don’t meet the “certified translator” or “accredited member status” clients want.

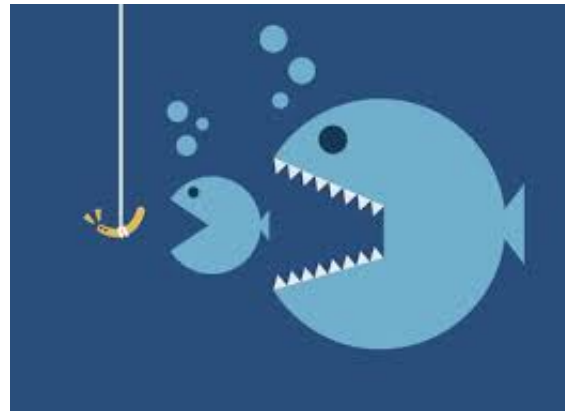
I understand that they have their reasons, however absurd they might be, and I should at least try to change their way of thinking.

So I send my resume and my quote anyway. What have I got to lose?

What if the client is willing to make an exception? Or keeps my contact for a future project? Keep knocking on that door!

Standard rates, Low rates, Top rates.

It is a polemic issue, and people will always engage in heated discussions over it.



My advice is for you to charge what you need, what your time is worth, to be sensible, sensitive to the market, and above all, to be reasonable.

You alone should know this, should be able to calculate what you need to charge so you can produce quality work, live decently, and continue to develop and grow in what you do!



It is a free market

And if you decide to charge less than one cent per word of translation, I would not advise you to go around telling everybody about it. Hey! It is your business, your economics. Keep it to yourself.

However...

What you should never do is charge low, produce quality that is low, and assume clients' expectations of your job will also be low just because you charge low!

Being part of something bigger!

Membership, networking, participation in discussions, webinars and training sessions, have really opened my eye to the reality – that one cannot just do it alone.



You need to share your experiences, learn from others, and contribute to the community.

Becoming certified has made me a better professional. Not because I have a certification, but because I had to study for it.

Studying and striving to meet quality standards and further-education requirements have only served to add quality to the professional and personal aspects of my life!

Also, I want to stay certified, or keep my membership status in these associations whose benefits I enjoy, and I know my clients know this.

Opinions often differ!

Feel free to praise or criticize my opinions. Your insight on the matter will be

highly appreciated.



And remember:

The sun is in the sky over everyone, but it does not shine equally on everyone.

Therefore, learn to adapt and get the best of what it gives you.

And share what you learn!

