

Co-working: a collaborative trend

Richard Lackey

Recent years have seen a shift in thinking among translators in which we are beginning to see each other as potential sources of collaboration rather than simply the competition. For me, co-working is a part of this movement.

But what is co-working and why have so many translators started 'co-working clubs'? Simply speaking, co-working is working from the same space as other freelancers. It makes a nice change of environment and also gives you the chance to interact with people from a variety of different professions.

As translators often work in isolation, several groups have started 'co-working clubs' to meet up with nearby translators for the day. Co-working clubs can be an excellent form of community. You can have a day out socialising, without missing a productive day of work. In between coffee breaks, over lunch or while taking a moment off you can discuss a wide variety of subjects or simply bounce ideas off each other. For many freelancers, it's the nearest we have to a normal working life.



About Richard

Richard Lackey is Contractually Speaking Ltd, specialising in legal and financial translations from Spanish and French into English. He is a co-working enthusiast, and has promoted the concept through presentations, articles and working with ITI networks and regional groups.

But co-working can be much more. Why not use these groups to share tips or promote discussion of tricky translations? I can teach my fellow translators to use a program like IntelliWebSearch or a Trados trick in five minutes, whereas at home they might take hours to learn it themselves or might never learn it. And I know that they have plenty to teach me too. At a recent meet in London we shared technology and translation tips as we worked, discussed several business matters over lunch from pensions to insurance, then finally the strangest job anyone had done (interpreting at a nudist convention!).

ITI Cymru Wales has been a pioneer of translator co-working sessions and now meets every week in Cardiff. Groups also meet regularly in Barcelona, Belfast, Leeds, London, Liverpool, Newcastle, Nottingham and Sheffield. Furthermore, the ITI Spanish and French Networks are both hosting sessions in January, with an eye to sharing language-specific tips. So check out the 'co-working translators' hashtag #CoworkXL8 for photos and, I hope, to find or start a group near you!



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