



Getting Out Of 160 Wpm Is Like Getting Out Of Del Mar During Rush Hour – Court Reporters

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Driving to the Del Mar, Carmel Valley area of San Diego for a deposition can be very stressful for a court reporter, and sometimes it seems to take forever and ever to get there. It kind of reminds me of getting out of the 140 – 160 speed in court reporting school. It seemed to take me forever and ever (six months).

A couple of weeks ago I received an email from a court reporting student who has been stuck in 140 – 160 for seven months and wants to know if I have any advice. A lot of the students in her class have been stuck at that speed for over a year. She asked me if I have any tips for “cleaning up” her writing. As anyone who reads my blog knows, I went through school fast, but because of that I did not pick up very many briefs, particularly briefs for phrases. I had *preponderance of evidence* (POF) which I was really proud of, but that was about it. I still am trying to get down “*to your knowledge*” and “*to the best of my knowledge.*” I regret not picking up the phrases and just pounding my way out of school.

My advice for the students stuck in 140 – 160, work on your briefs, particularly phrases. If you can write three or four words in one easy stroke, you will save a tremendous amount of time and have fewer finger faults.

I would do an analysis: Is it jury charge that is holding me back? Q&A? Do I have a need for speed? Is it Congressional? What test(s) am I struggling with? Once you have that answer, start focusing on what briefs are utilized in that type of test. If it is Q&A that is stopping you from getting out of a class, that means you need to get your speed up and learn to get your mind to go blank. I know I had a horrible time with jury charge because I did not have the briefs, and I would freeze when I heard language that sounded odd to my ear (legalese). I was really great at Q&A because speed was my strength.

Stay focused and passionate about becoming a court reporter. Just like driving through Carmel Valley, it might take me a while to get up the freeway and to the deposition, but I know I will get there. Sometimes court reporting school might seem like you are moving at a snail's pace, but I promise you – Pow! You will start moving forward again and reach your destiny as a court reporter.



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