

Assessing "Translation Readiness": A Maturity Model

May 18, 1998

45th Annual STC Conference; Anaheim, CA

Who Are We?

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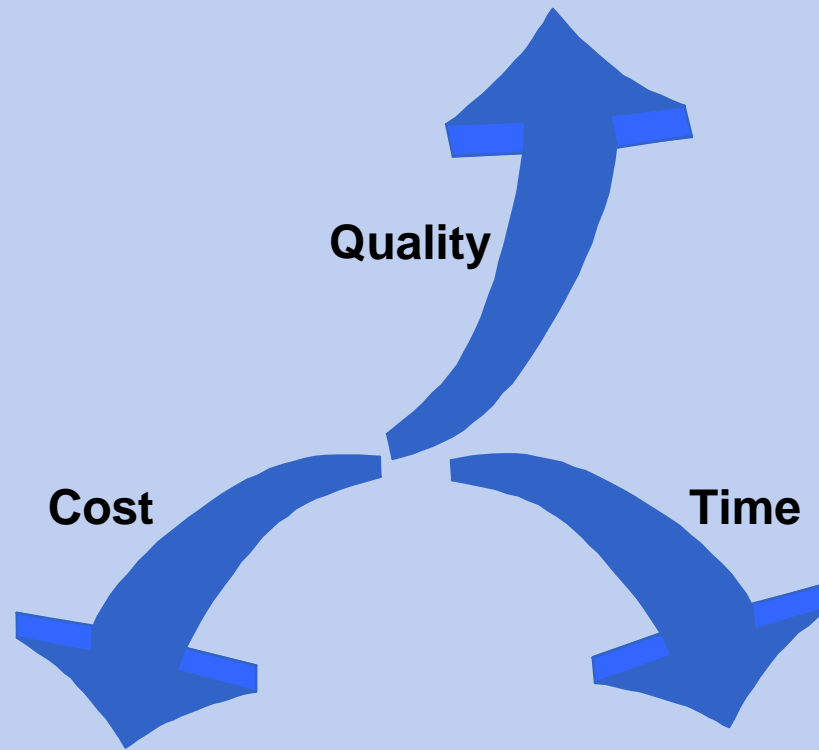
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Conflicting Priorities



Introduction

Scenario

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Levels

Conclusion

Significance

- Translation and Technical Writing intertwined
- Translation process requires continuous improvement

Definition

Translation is:

- the conversion of a document in one language to a document in one or many other languages
- conveying the meaning, not just the individual words
- an art, not a science

Quality

Choosing a Translator

- Native of target language with an established reputation
- Understands product or topic
- Understands your message (asks questions about product, audience, terminology)
- Knows how to write
- Gives complete, long-term service

Quality

English Writing Tips

- Avoid slang and jargon
- Avoid sports expressions, expressions drawn from American culture
- Eliminate repetitive references
- Use metric measurements for documents to go outside the U.S.
- Consider the appropriateness of graphics and use of color

Cost *Facts*

- Per word, depending on:
 - target language
 - technical complexity
- Price may include editing, proofreading, or other quality checks
- Volume discounts usually only over 10,000 words

Cost *Tips*

- Generally, cost increases and quality decreases when turn-around time decreases
- Explore the latest technology for making the translation process more efficient

Turn-Around Time

Facts and Tips

Facts

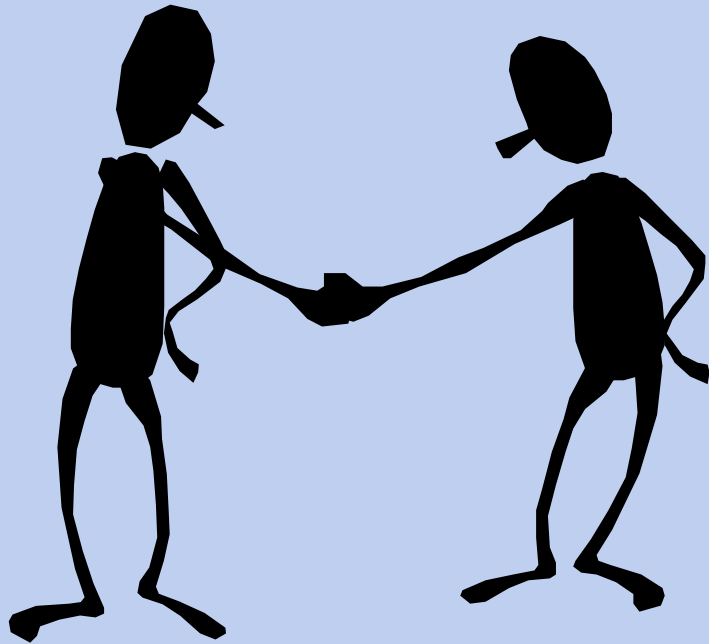
Number of words

- Translator:
2,500 words/day
- Proofreader:
5,000 words/day

Tips

- More time ensures more thorough editing and review
- Explore the latest technology for making the translation process more efficient

Translation Provider as Team Member



- Careful Selection
- Feedback
- Two-Way Communication
- Clear Expectations and Goals

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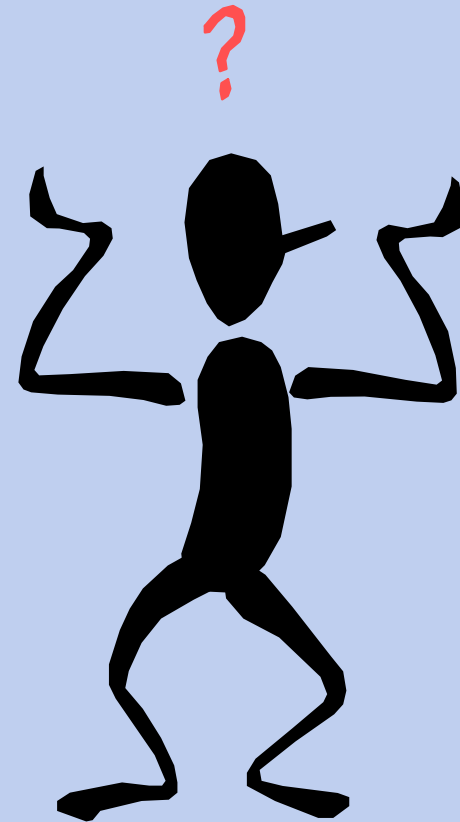
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Overview: Individual Assessment

- “How do I find out if I am (or my organization is) ready to tackle translation projects effectively?”
- “How do I improve my current situation?”



The “Readiness Levels”

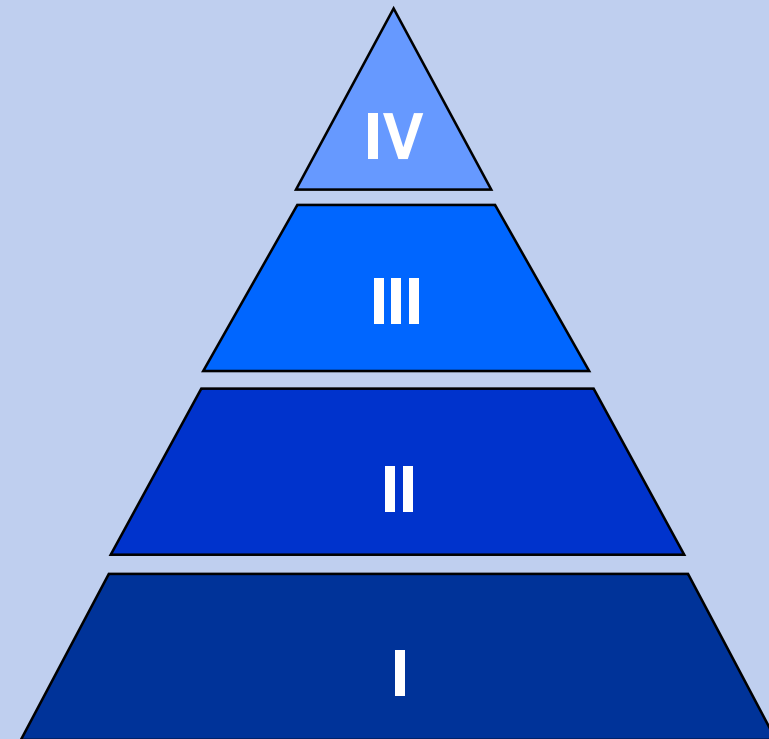
Continuous Improvement

Long-Term Solutions

Consistency

Quality Awareness

Reactionism



“Ground Zero”

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Translation Readiness Checklist

Translation Readiness Checklist

Put a check mark in the box next to each statement at the left that matches your *organization's* (but not necessarily your own) mindset or current situation. The Level at which you check the most boxes is probably indicative of your company's Readiness Level for translation. In the right column, some results of each mindset are listed.

Mindset	Results of Mindset
<input type="checkbox"/> Translation is a "necessary evil," which is expensive and impossible to control.	Your foreign language documentation may not be as accurate as it needs to be for usability and readability.
<input type="checkbox"/> The only reason for translating is because the Sales Department (or someone else) requires it.	You may be spending more money and time over the long term with this approach.
<input type="checkbox"/> Translation is something impossible to control because nobody within the company can read it.	You have very little confidence in the quality or reliability of your foreign language documentation.
<input type="checkbox"/> Documents are translated one at a time, as individual, unconnected projects.	Cost may be high, turnaround time may be high, and quality may be compromised.
<input type="checkbox"/> No system is in place to ensure the quality of foreign language documentation.	Your English text may be improved through the translation process. In fact, your translation may be <i>better</i> than the original!
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic quality checkpoints are in place for the translation process, including proofreading, editing, or in-house reviews.	Your translations are more consistent in terms of
<input type="checkbox"/> There is an effort to use the same translation provider for each project, to ensure a	

Ground Zero -- Reactionism



- Translation is “necessary evil”
- Impossible to control
- No continuity
- No quality system

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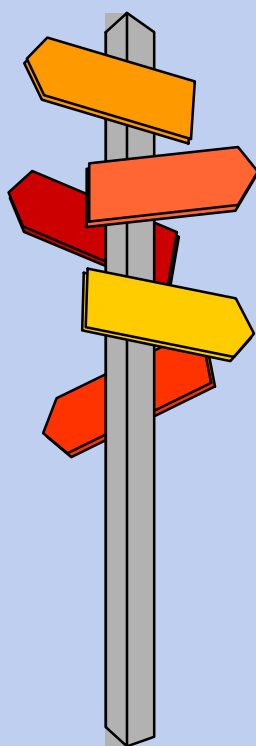
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“Reality Check” !!!



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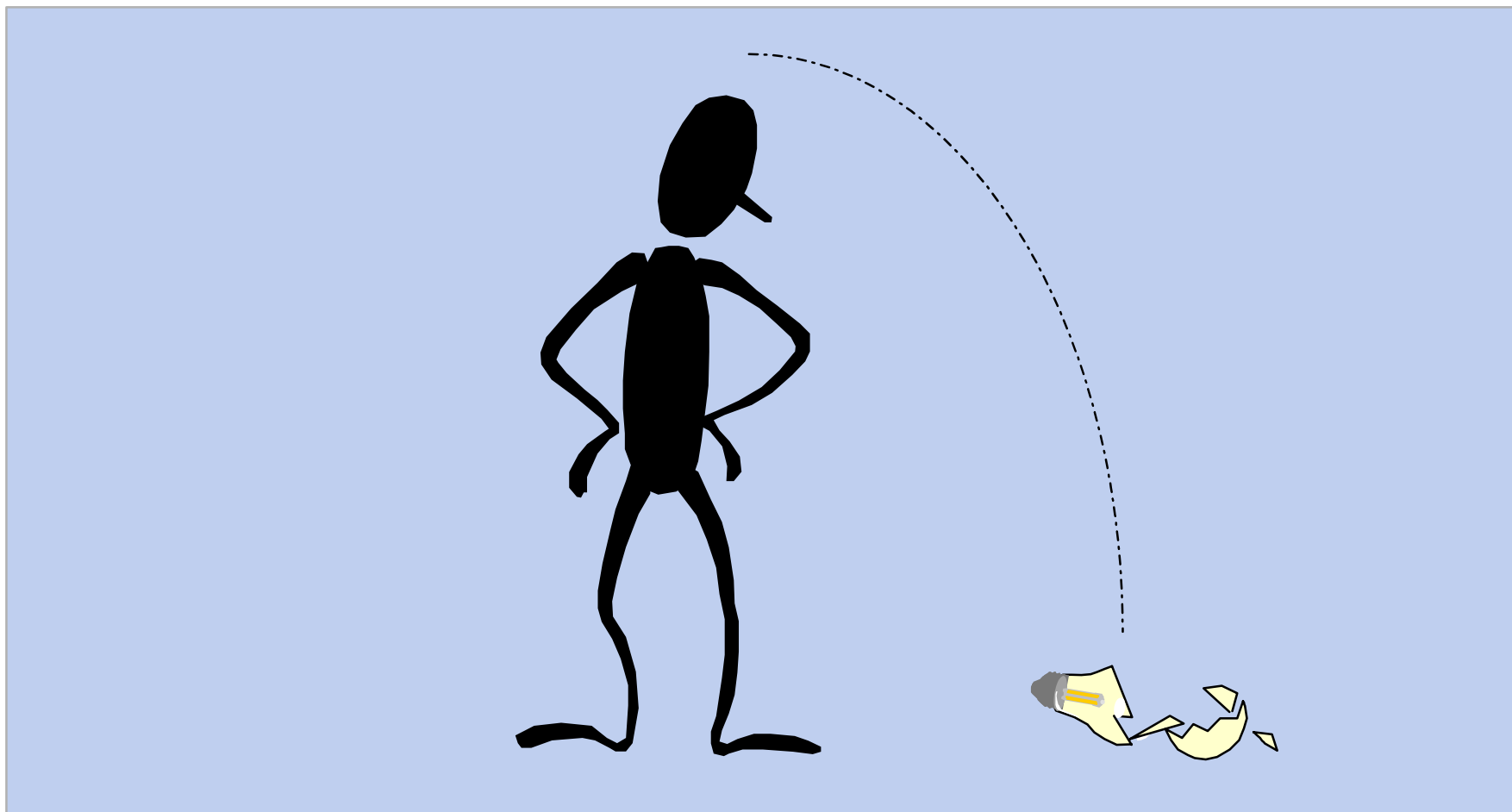
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Level I -- Quality Awareness

- Basic quality checks
- Using same translation provider(s)
- Check for consistent cost
- Interest in accuracy and readability of translated text



“Reality Check” !!!



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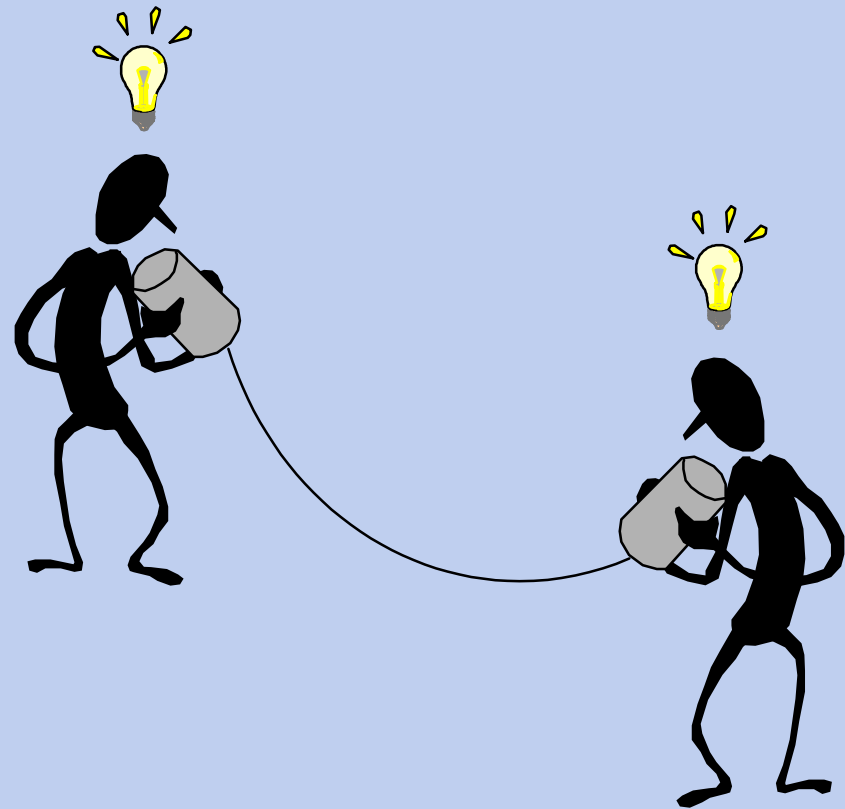
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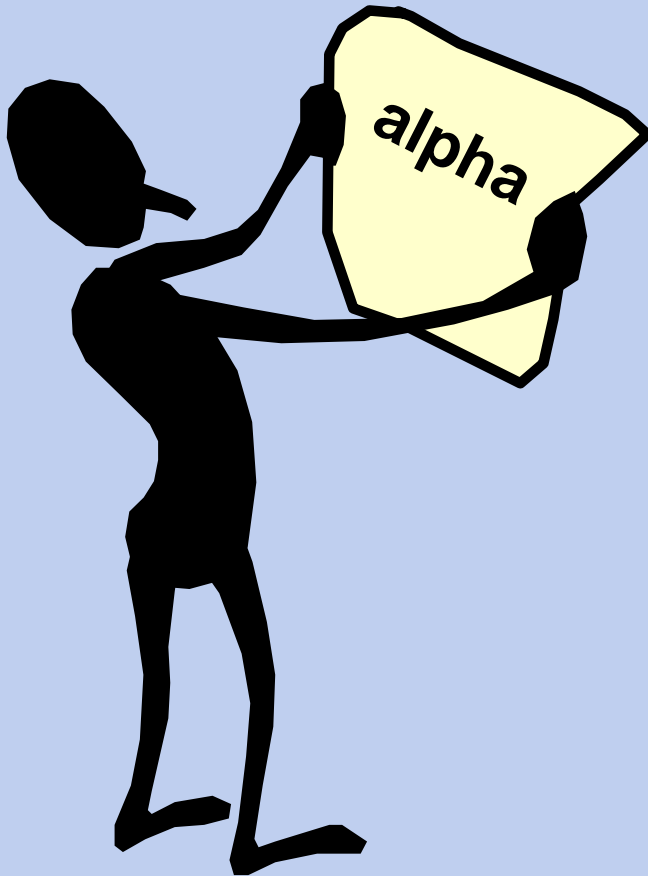
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Level I -- Quality Awareness Leaving Chaos Behind

- Communicate
- Educate
- Evaluate
- Standardize
- Communicate!

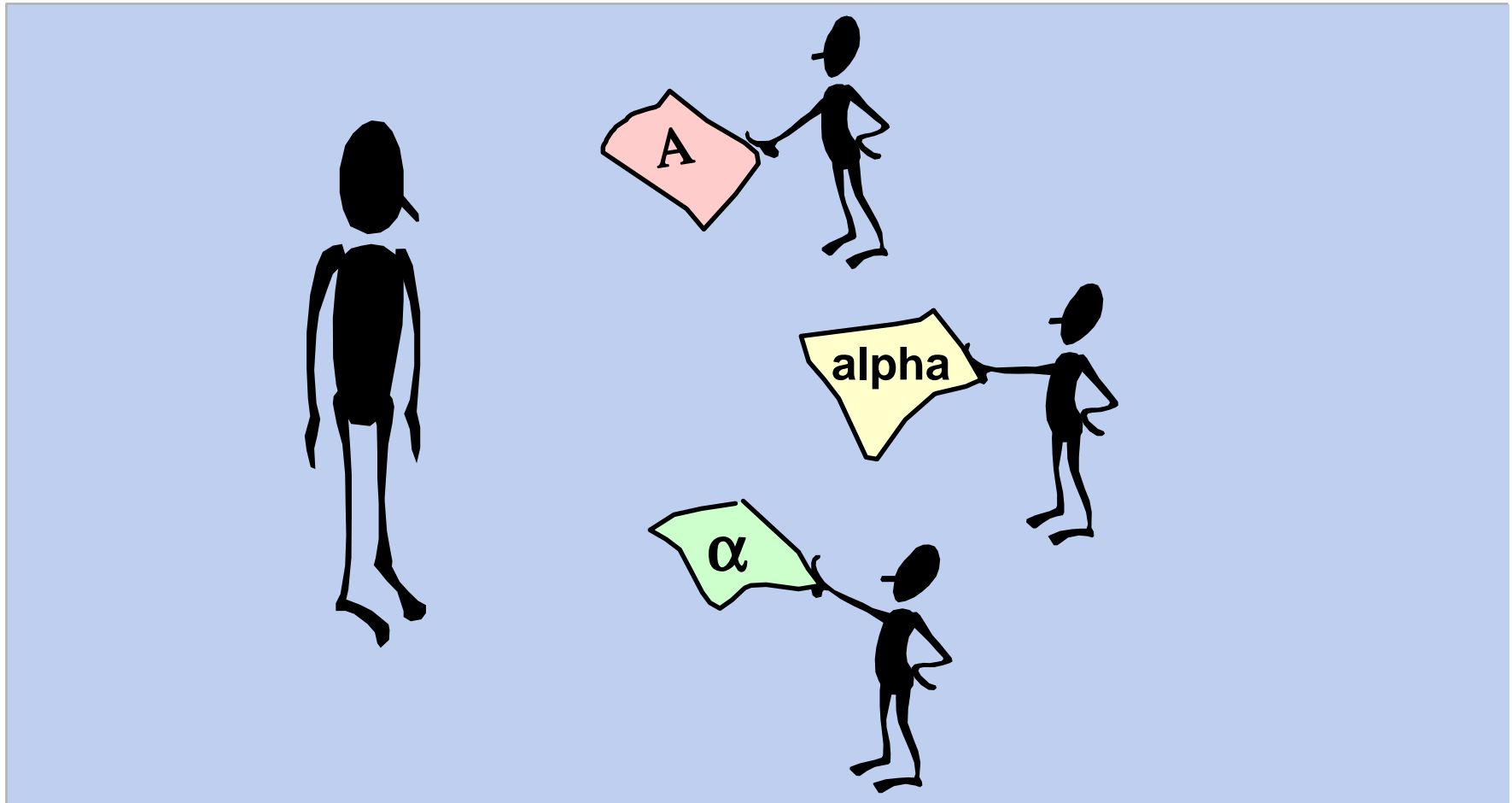


Level II -- Consistency



- Glossaries
- Common document management system
- Reusing text to eliminate re-translation
- Quality of English affects quality of translation

“Reality Check” !!!



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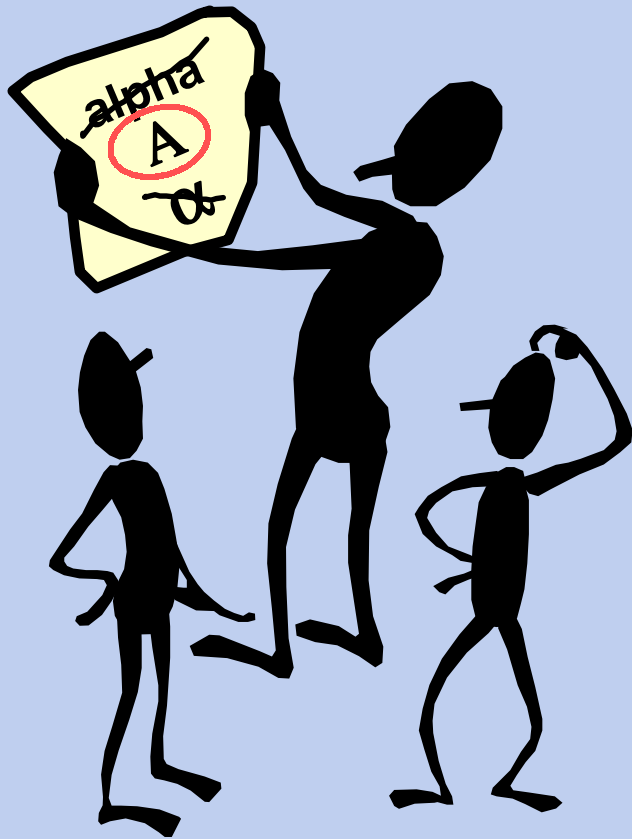
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Level II -- Consistency

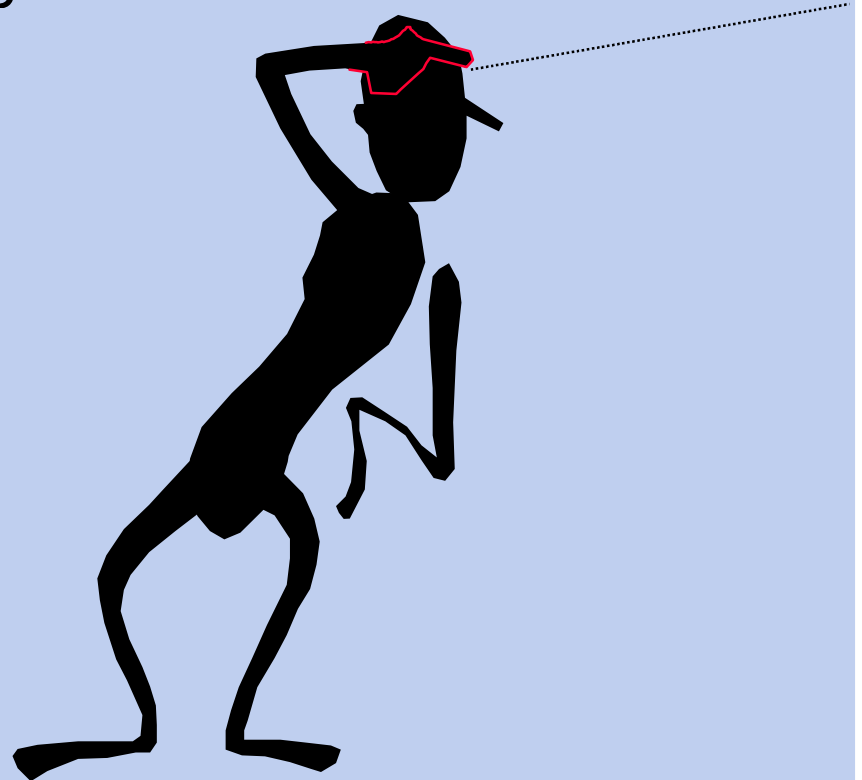
How to Get There



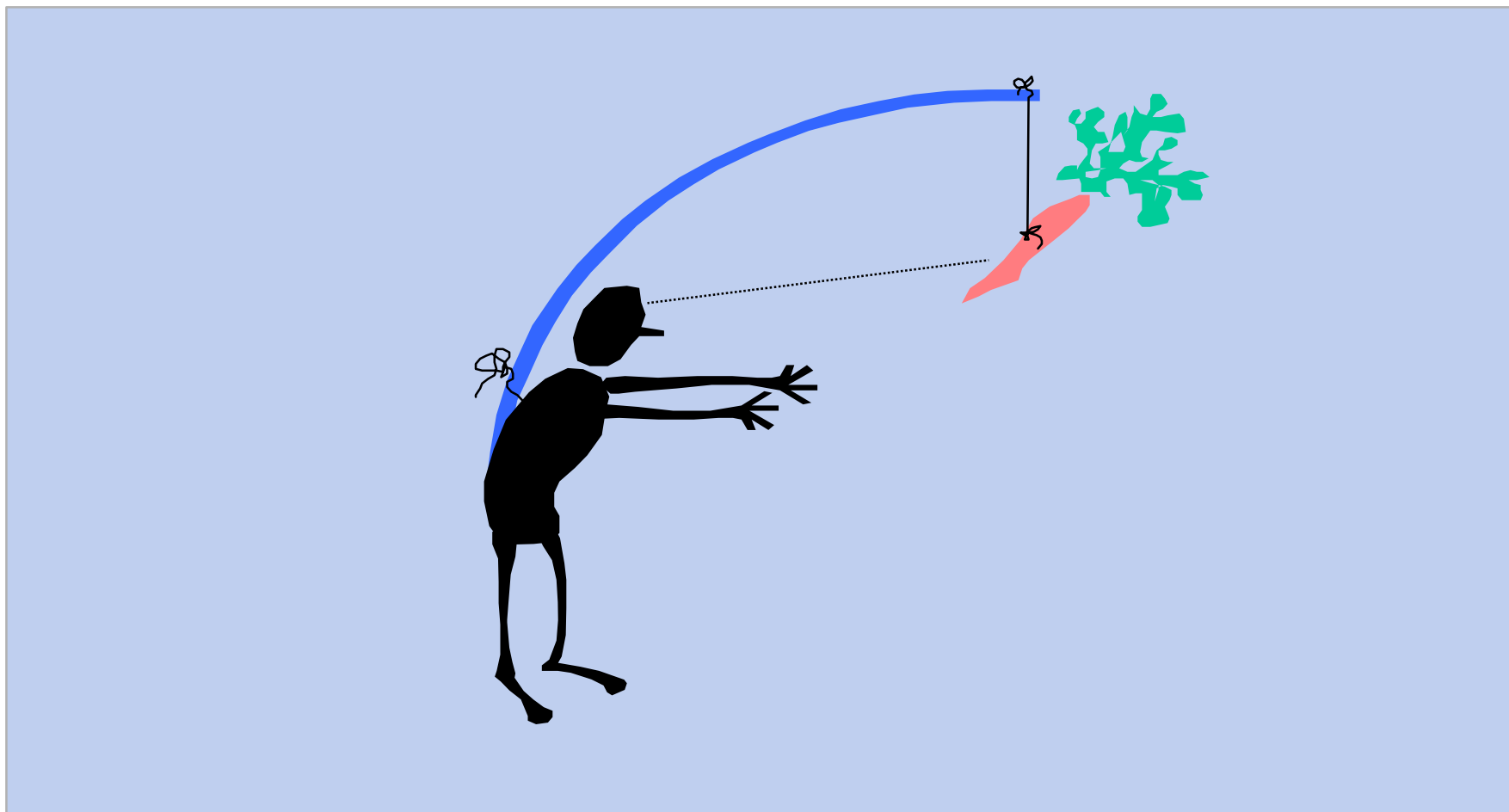
- Glossary development
- Consistent, repeatable process
- Document management
- Feedback loop with translators

Level III -- Long-Term Solutions

- Interest in implementing technology aids
- Building translation into process
- Establishing long-term relationships with providers



“Reality Check” !!!



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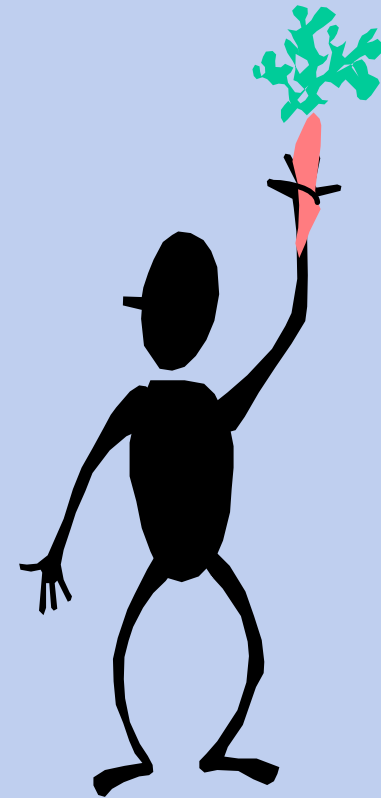
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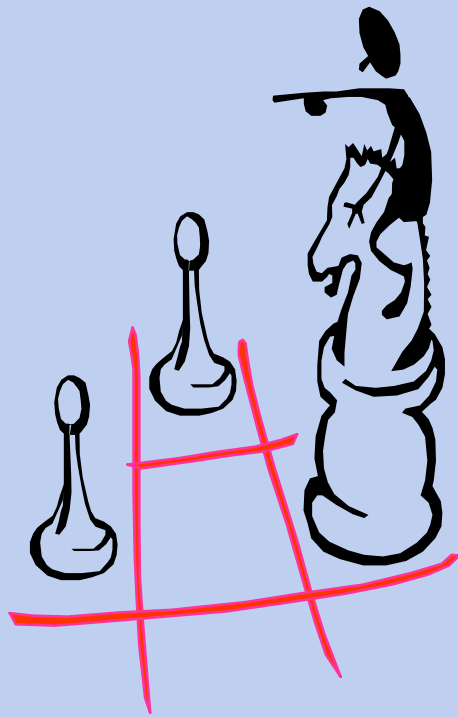
Level III -- Long-Term Solutions

How to Get There

- Investigate and evaluate technology solutions
 - Translation Memory
 - Machine Translation
- CAUTION !
- Prepare a feasibility study for reaching goals
 - Communicate with peers and experts

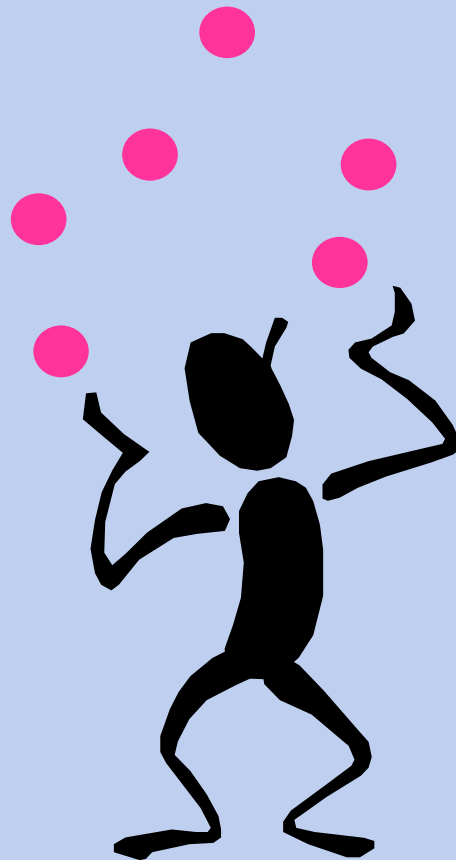


Level IV -- Continuous Improvement



- Coordinator, Provider and TechPubs work together
- Strategy for Continuous Maintenance/Improvement of Glossaries/Reference
- Technology is being used to its fullest
- Costs/Processes Reviewed Periodically

“Reality Check” !!!



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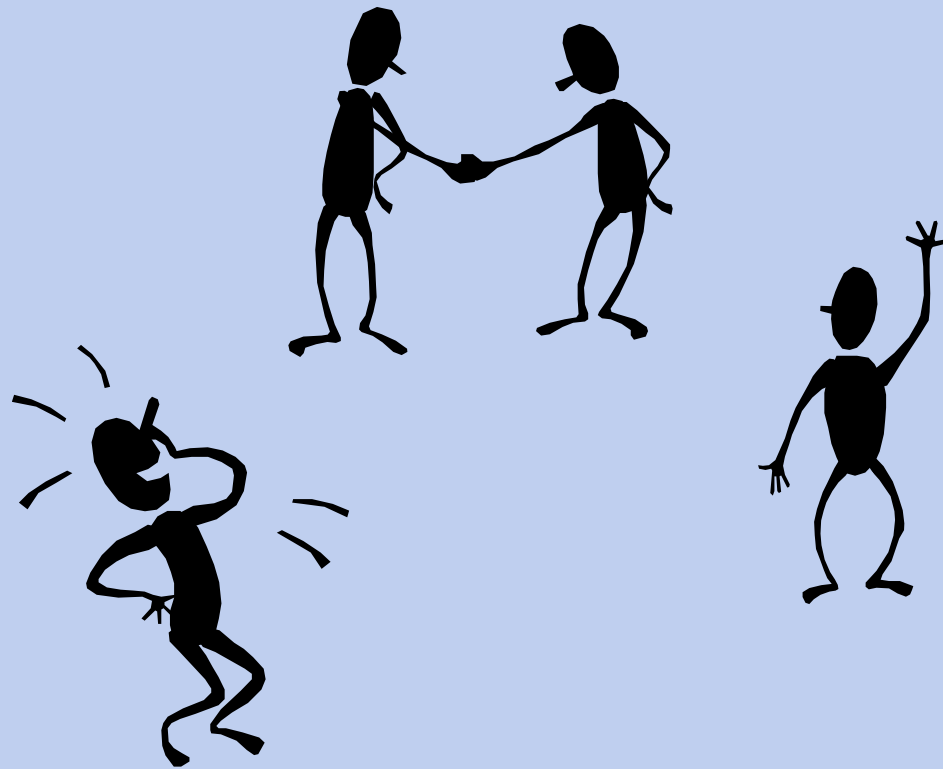
Level IV -- Continuous Improvement

How to Get There



- Periodically evaluate processes and be willing to improve them
- Stay abreast of current technology and consider it
- Plan for maintaining and updating tools

Discussion



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- Tackle translation, do not be afraid of it
- Assess your situation
- Plan realistically but aggressively
- Refuse “quick-fixes”
- Educate others
- Communicate!

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