

## Re: MQ question

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.med.transcription/2005-01/0770.html>

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No argument that one can end up with lots of vocabularies for IT, each containing thousands of phrases. However, one can generate huge chunks of those vocabularies, or glossaries as IT calls them, automatically by running a selection of documents for a specific account or specific specialty through the compiler.

IT actually offers glossaries of "singles" which one can choose to use or change or delete. There's nothing wrong with single-letter shorts for most-frequently-used words if you want them.

Yes, you need to keep your eyes, or at least one of them, on the advisories at the bottom of the screen as you type using IT, to make sure you are getting the expansions you want. Some people can learn to do that, some just can't, and I think that is one of the big deciding points between who likes IT and who throws it at the wall. One does need to do a little practicing before deciding you are in the group that just can't work that way, though. I spent a couple of decades recording cases in a cath lab, where my eyes were kept continuously on both a pressure waveform and an ECG waveform, verbally calling out pressure measurements and arrhythmias, while my fingers were simultaneously first writing, and later typing, the complete case log, occasionally jumping up to switch dials and hit buttons with just a flick of the eyeballs to make sure the fingers and switches were in the right place. I'm very used to splitting my visual attention and looking somewhere besides at my typing line. I trained dozens of other people to do it, and it always took several months to train them never to look at their hands or the log they were creating during a case, but they all learned eventually.

Marker keys are specific keys you use to indicate that IT should expand the previously typed letters into either a word or a phrase. You use one marker key for words and one for phrases, so duplications between abbreviations for words and those for phrases are immaterial. I forget what IT's default choices are, but I use ; for phrases and ' for words. There are a number of other choices available, such as [. There are arguments for and against various choices, and preference tends to be individual to the user. In any case, there are certain features available when using marker keys to expand that are not available if you use the delimiters space, tab, enter, and various punctuation marks to trigger expansion, the way it is done in most

expanders. Using a marker key inserts any necessary space automatically, and using markers allows IT to use continuations, which is linking chains of shorts together by putting the most likely following word groups for what you just typed at the top of your advisory window. It also lets you "abbreviate the abbreviations" by moving up phrases in the selection window the same way you can select words, by typing any combination of letters unique to the phrase short (or word), without typing them all. Say you have two phrases that are very similar but not identical. Let's use Rennie's submissions of "patient is a well-developed, well-nourished white female and "patient is a well-developed, well-nourished white female who is alert." Say you happen to be using all initial letters for those phrases, and your shorts are therefore piawdwnwf and piawdwnfwia, and you know you are after the second one. Depending on how your glossary is set up, you may be able to select it without typing all the letters, but just the ones for the key words that differentiate it from the many other similar phrases in there. Typing pi to get into your "patient is" area of the list, and then typing d for developed, n for nourished, wf for white female, w for who, and a for alert will likely pull that specific phrase for you. So instead of typing piawdwnfwia; (13 characters), you could probably just type pidnwfwia; (9 characters) to select that same entry, as your advisory will keep skipping ahead to only shorts containing the letters you have typed in the order you have typed them as you add letters. Abbreviating the abbreviations is a very advanced way to use IT, and you need to be familiar with your glossaries before you do too much of it, but it's a way to pare even more keystrokes once you reach that point.

How long it takes people to get up to speed with IT really depends on the person and their current system. I moved to IT from AutoCorrect, pretty early after I went back to transcribing, when I discovered there were such things as MT expander programs out there. Since I'd transcribed on typewriters previously, I wasn't working with any ingrained habits from previous computer expanders. I had already figured that just hitting the spacebar after letters was a sure way to get all kinds of things expanded by AutoCorrect inadvertently—any short that constituted an English word, any short that happened to be someone's initials or an acronym, etc. So I was adding a keystroke to all my shorts to end them in the letter j. With IT, I simply had to train myself to hit the home row key for my right hand little finger instead of my index finger, ; instead of j, and then I wasn't even using an extra keystroke, since that ; put in the following space. I think that made the switch to marker keys much easier for me than it is for many people. I think it took me about a month to get comfortable with IT, and then to concentrate on building up a reasonable shorts system that worked for me once I had escaped the limitations of AutoCorrect. I did start by using it for just short stretches, and I think that is very good advice for someone who is currently at high production with some other system. Read the manual, experiment, try out the basics in the evening for a week or so, get things set up to suit yourself, then try using it for your work for 15 minutes or half an hour a day for a week, so you aren't worrying about how much it is cutting your line count to slow down to learn the new expander. As you get familiar and pick up speed, increase your time transcribing with it by a half hour every few days, and pretty soon you will be using it full

time without any big production loss in the learning interval.

However, if you are using SR to do your typing these days, you don't really need to mess with any expander! Different strokes for different folks.

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Sheila
To reply to me, add the prefix real. to my address.
"Su" <.@hotmail.com> wrote in message
news:_9UDD.2266$b23.2223@bignews1.bellsouth.net...
> "14tonks" <mail.2.14tonks@recursor.net> wrote in message
> news:34a03eF48o97sU1@individual.net...
> > Most people use the first initial of each word for phrases, Su, with
maybe
> > a
> > system to add in different verb endings and/or use some standard
> > two-letter
> > differentiating abbreviations for common variable words that start with
> > the
> > same first letter. Using the first-letter system, you can just type the
> > phrase as you hear it, stopping after the first letter of each word,
which
> > does not require any memorization.
>
> But how do you remember all of the words phrases you have abbreviations
for?
> There are always subtle differences. I've read messages from people who
have
> IT and might set up five different "vocabularies" containing 18,000+
entries
> ... and they say they use them all.
>
> I've got many of the usual abbreviations: chf, sob, ros <review of
> systems>, but then I get snagged on words where they are all so close in
> beginnings. What comes to mind is the "appro" series ... approximately,
> appropriate ... There's a bunch of them (can't remember at this time), and
I
> usually try to abbreviate the ones I know I'll use the mostl
>
> One I like, but I'm sure it's not a good idea, is putting a semicolon
after
> a single letter -
> a; ascites
> c; clamp
> d; dissect
> f; fatigue
>
> For some reason, I've chosen those words as the match up.
>
> > As I use IT, I would probably break some of Rennie's phrase
contributions
> > down into component phrases and use
> > continuations to keep going. Also, in IT, if there is a lot of
> > duplication
> > in the middle of the shorts for abbreviated phrases, but unique endings,
> > one
> > can skip letters in the middle and still pull up the desired phrase if
you
> > are using marker keys.
>
> Now you're losing me. Yes, you're speaking clearly and concisely, but my
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## sci.med.transcription: Re: MQ question

> mind is saying, "What is this lady talking about?"  
>  
> How do I explain this ... it's like the old days of learning to use a  
> computer. No matter how much I read about things being like a filing  
> cabinet, I couldn't understand the concept. Suddenly, I thought of the  
> bible  
> (chapter, verse ...) and it all made sense.  
>  
>  
> > (In other words, you can abbreviate the abbreviation  
> > while typing it.) The same is true of entries in the word rather than  
> the  
> > phrase section of IT. You can type any combo of letters that appear in  
> > the  
> > word, in the order they appear, to bring up the word, and then enter it  
> > with  
> > the appropriate marker key. So you do not necessarily have to remember  
> > the  
> > "correct" abbreviation to type a short for a word.  
>  
> But isn't it true that you'll have to focus on the bottom of the screen to  
> see the available choices, so you pick the one that you want? Particularly  
> when you have overlapping abbreviations (i.e. "tpwt has multiple  
meanings).  
>  
>  
> > The first letter, relevant consonants, and last letter will pull up most  
> > words with no  
> > necessity to hit a number to select from a list of choices. Again, this  
> > only  
> > works if you are using marker keys to expand, rather than the space bar  
> > and/or other delimiters. (And when you hit a marker key, you don't have  
to  
> > hit the space bar to get a space, so the keystrokes required are a  
wash.)  
>  
> I never understood what a marker key was.  
>  
> Just curious ... when you started using IT, how long did it take for you  
to  
> get "up to speed?" IOW, your production reached the level that it was  
before  
> you started using it?  
>  
>