

# Technical Writing

THE OMHRC CAPACITY BUILDING DIVISION  
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# Welcome!

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## ▶ What is “technical writing”?

- ▶ What is it for?
- ▶ How does it relate to your career?
- ▶ What are the characteristics of technical writing?

- ▶ Why should you care?
- ▶ What do you need to know first?
- ▶ How do readability and style relate to technical writing?
- ▶ What should you look for while editing?
- ▶ What are some of the common mistakes?

# What is Technical Writing?

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Technical writing is the manner of verbalization, which is more scientific than artistic, whereby the use of highly sophisticated corporate confabulation and emblems must be multi-layered with abstruse concepts to fit the necessities of the audience upon whom the task of consideration befalls.

# Get Real!

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Technical writing is simply the process of taking complicated, technical jargon and translating it into **plain language**. Good technical writing stands out by taking complex information and presenting it in a **clear, concise** manner for all to understand.

# What for?

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Technical writing is actually an aspect of **technical communication.**

Technical communication includes:

- ▶ Writing
- ▶ Editing
- ▶ Illustration
- ▶ Design
- ▶ Development

# This Thing About Applications

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- ▶ Applications are screening tools
- ▶ Do your homework before you complete an application
- ▶ **Read it before you write on it.** You need to have a clear indication of what the entire document is seeking of you before you start writing

# Characteristics

Generally, technical writing includes:

- ▶ **Objective point of view**
- ▶ **Clear, concise language**
- ▶ **Factual information**
- ▶ **Uncomplicated structure**
- ▶ **Logical order**
- ▶ **Identified audience**

# Checklist

The writer must consider the following:

- ▶ **Appropriate vocabulary**
- ▶ **Length**
- ▶ **Illustrations**
- ▶ **Case studies**
- ▶ **Specifications**
- ▶ **Legal Disclaimers**



# Why is This Important for Individuals?

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- Applications are introductions
- Applications balance **Need** with **Talent**
- Organizations want the best you have to offer – at all times
- How you present yourself on paper needs to reflect the knowledge in your head, the healing in your hands and the determination in your heart to be superlative

# What About Organizations?

- ▶ Organizations, and Nursing Programs, need to report on **Success**
- ▶ Funders are interested to see the impact of their investments – so how your writers report their findings is critical
- ▶ Information needs to **technically correct**, but also needs some **personality**
  - ▶ Program history
  - ▶ Special student stories
  - ▶ Translate factual data into real life – like graduation rates and employment statistics

# Planning

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- **Report topic:** Decide what subject you are going to write on; narrow it as much as possible.
- **Report audience:** Define a specific person or group of people for whom you are going to write the report. Define the circumstances in which this report is needed.
- **Report purpose:** Define what the report will accomplish—what needs of the audience it is going to fulfill.
- **Report type:** Decide on the type of report—for example, resource development, technical background report, feasibility report, instructions, or some other

# First Steps of Good Reporting

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The crucial beginnings of technical writing starts with knowing your funder, your students and the history of your program.

Being aware of **who** the reader is, **why** the reader needs the document, **where** it will be read, and **costs** involved are all of vital importance.

# Technical Writing = K.I.S.S.

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- ▶ **K**eeP
- ▶ **I**t
- ▶ **S**hort and
- ▶ **S**imple

# Technical Writing: 101 Rules

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- ▶ NO spelling mistakes
- ▶ NO grammar mistakes
- ▶ No sentence fragments
- ▶ Make sure subject and verb agree
- ▶ Don't use no double negatives
- ▶ Parenthetical remarks (**however relevant**) are (**usually**) unnecessary
- ▶ Also, too, never, ever use repetitive redundancies
- ▶ Avoid clichés like the plague

# Readability

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1. The sentences must be well formed syntactically
2. The sentences must not exceed a certain length
3. The sentences should not be below a minimum length
4. Recursion must be kept to a minimum
5. The choice of words should vary

# Introductions

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The introduction of your program report must include the elements necessary such as **audience, overview, purpose.**

Avoid the problem of having too much background in the introduction, or having an introduction that is all background.



# Editing Technical Writing

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- **Language Edit**- Editors look for proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, syntax, terminology, flowing transitions between paragraphs and chapters, and cohesion.
- **Integrity Edit**- uniform page numbering, indices, tables, and numbered graphics. An integrity edit ensures everything matches and follows the same style.
- **Format Edit**- consistent regarding margins, font, pagination and white space.
- **Substantive Edit**- essential material is present and that nothing of importance is missing. The technical assesses the usability of the document and edits for clarity of expression.

# Common Mistakes

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- ▶ **Never make absolute statements**
- ▶ Lack of planning
- ▶ Lack of specificity
- ▶ Not writing in present tense imperative
- ▶ Using passive voice
- ▶ *Don't* use contractions
- ▶ Using gerunds
- ▶ Using jargon or local colloquialisms
- ▶ Organizations/Programs should never use "I"

# Re-Cap!

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