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**Department of Journalism and
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Topic: Principles of Technical Writing

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Well-written and accurate documentation plays a major role in any company's customer support strategy because it helps to reduce support costs.

- Technical writing plays a big part in the support equation.
- Technical writing is much more than just technical jargon, and structured, concise instructions.
- As the intended audience for the technical writing could be for both technical and not-technical people it must to convey its message so that both sets of people understand it.



7 C's n O of Tech writing

- Completeness
 - Conciseness
 - Consideration
 - Concreteness
 - Clarity
 - Correctness
 - Organisation
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Content

- There are five basic questions a technical writer has to ask themselves when starting a new project – who, why, what, how and when. Answering these questions will allow the technical writer to be able to develop the content for any type of **technical documentation**.
- Before creating the user guide, they will have to plan the content of the user guide by applying following key questions to the situation:
 - Who will read the user guide?
 - Why do need to create the user guide?
 - What is this user guide going to offer its intended audience?
 - How is the user guide going to be delivered?
 - When does the user guide have to be ready (publishing date)?



The audience and purpose of the documentation

- Before beginning any new writing project, the technical writer has to analyze the intended audience and identify the purpose for the document. The technical writer will need to ask the following questions about the audience:
- Who will read the documentation?
- What are their biases?
- What responsibilities does the technical writer have when communicating the information to the audience?

Style guide

- Technical writers will more than likely use a company style guide
- A style guide will provide the document with continuity so that the audience can comprehend the information
- For example, technical writers need to organise their ideas in a specific chronological format because without a specific layout and structure to the documentation it will be very confusing for the reader to understand.

Writing Style

- Technical writers will need to change their writing style depending on the audience and situation they are writing about.
- If they are writing technical documentation then it needs to be formal and devoid of any emotion as you get with creative writing.
- if say they were an email to one of the senior managers involved in the project then their approach would more casual than formal.

Accessing the information

- Accessibility applies to the ease at which the intended audience can gain access to the information they need from the technical documentation
- A technical document must at least contain a table of contents, headers and footers, list of illustrations/tables, page numbers, etc.
- A technical document must adhere to a specific heading and sub heading structure to break down the information into relevant areas that the reader can access easily.

Grammar

- A technical writer must adhere to all the rules of conventional grammar.
- technical writer's responsibility to proofread and edit their documentation to detect and correct any errors in the writing, graphics, typography and layout.

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- In summarising, a technical writer must ensure that they incorporate the all mentioned principles into their everyday writing style. This will go a long to make them not only a better writer but their technical documentation will be appreciated by both their peers and readers alike.

More information on this topic watch video: http://youtu.be/fh_jvXESzU4



Thank you