**Expanded Cheatsheet: Questions to Ask at Each Step of the Document Development Lifecycle**

**Step 1: Planning**

**Purpose:** Define the scope and goals of the document.

**Questions to Ask:**

1. **About the Goals:**
   * What is the primary purpose of this document?
   * What problem does this document solve for its audience?
   * What outcomes do we want to achieve after publishing it?
2. **About the Audience:**
   * Who will be reading this document?
   * What is their level of familiarity with the subject matter?
   * Are there multiple audiences with different needs?
3. **About the Content Scope:**
   * What topics must be covered in the document?
   * Are there any specific exclusions or boundaries to keep in mind?
   * Should the document include detailed procedures, high-level overviews, or both?
4. **About Logistics and Constraints:**
   * What is the timeline for creating this document?
   * What resources (e.g., SMEs, source materials) are available?
   * Are there any known challenges or obstacles that could arise?

**Step 2: Research and Information Gathering**

**Purpose:** Collect the required information to ensure accuracy and completeness.

**Questions to Ask:**

1. **About Sources:**
   * What existing documentation or materials should I review?
   * Who are the key SMEs or stakeholders I should speak with?
   * Are there any systems or processes I need to observe?
2. **About Content Gaps:**
   * What critical questions need to be answered in this document?
   * Are there any areas where we lack clarity or understanding?
3. **About Verification:**
   * How can I ensure the accuracy of the information I gather?
   * Are there preferred ways to cross-check data?

**Step 3: Outlining**

**Purpose:** Structure the document to ensure a logical flow.

**Questions to Ask:**

1. **About Organization:**
   * What is the most logical way to organize this content?
   * Should we use sections, chapters, or headings to divide the material?
   * Which sections should be grouped together for clarity?
   * What are the most critical topics for the audience to see first?
   * Are there less critical sections that can be included in an appendix?
2. **About User Navigation:**
   * How will the audience likely use this document?
   * Are there specific sections that will need to stand out (e.g., FAQs, troubleshooting)?
   * Should the document have a table of contents, glossary, or index?
3. **About Content Flow:**
   * Are there dependencies between topics that dictate the order?
   * Should we start with a summary or jump directly into details?

**Step 4: Drafting**

**Purpose:** Create the first version of the document with clear and concise language.

**Questions to Ask:**

1. **About Clarity:**
   * Are the instructions, descriptions, and concepts easy for the audience to understand?
   * Are technical terms defined? Are there any that need to be explained or simplified?
2. **About Completeness:**
   * Does the draft cover all topics outlined in the planning phase?
   * Are there any sections that feel too sparse or overly detailed?
   * Are there placeholders for visuals or additional details that will come later?
3. **About Style and Format:**
   * Are there established style guides or templates to follow?
   * Should the document include visuals, such as diagrams or screenshots?
4. About Tone:
   * Is the tone appropriate for the audience (e.g., formal, instructional, friendly)?
   * Does the document reflect the organization’s communication style?

**Step 5: Review and Feedback**

**Purpose:** Ensure accuracy, clarity, and alignment with the audience’s needs. Collect and incorporate feedback to refine the document, ensuring it is accurate, clear, and well-suited to its purpose and audience.

**Questions to Ask:**

1. **About Accuracy:**
   * Are all technical details correct and up-to-date?
   * Are there any errors, inconsistencies, or ambiguities in the draft?
2. **About Audience Perspective:**
   * Does the document address the audience’s needs and questions?
   * Are there any sections that might confuse or overwhelm the reader?
3. **About Improvements:**
   * Are there suggestions for additional content or better phrasing?
   * Is the tone appropriate for the target audience?
4. About Clarity:
   * Does the document flow logically and make sense to the audience?
   * Are there sections that could be simplified for better understanding?
5. About Practicality
   * Does the document achieve its stated goals (e.g., solving a problem, answering questions)?
   * Are there suggestions for improvements that align with the audience's needs?

**Step 6: Publishing**

**Purpose:** Deliver the final document to the intended audience.

**Questions to Ask:**

1. **About Formatting and Accessibility:**
   * Is the document formatted correctly for its intended medium (e.g., PDF, web)?
   * Are there accessibility features (e.g., alt text for images, proper headings) in place?
2. **About Distribution:**
   * Where will the document be published or hosted?
   * How will the audience be notified about the document’s availability?
3. **About Timing:**
   * Are there specific deadlines or events tied to this document’s release?
   * Is the document version-controlled to ensure accurate updates later?

**Step 7: Maintenance**

**Purpose:** Keep the document relevant and up-to-date.

**Questions to Ask:**

1. **About Updates:**
   * Are there processes in place to track changes in the subject matter?
   * How often should the document be reviewed for updates?
2. **About Feedback Loops:**
   * Are there mechanisms for users to report errors or suggest improvements?
   * What are the most common areas where users request clarification?
3. **About Metrics:**
   * How will we measure the document’s effectiveness (e.g., user satisfaction, error reduction)?
   * Are there analytics to show how frequently the document is accessed?

**Use of Questions in the Interview**

By asking these targeted questions, you demonstrate:

* **Critical Thinking:** Ability to anticipate and address gaps in information.
* **Collaboration:** Engagement with SMEs and stakeholders for comprehensive inputs.
* **Audience Focus:** Emphasis on clarity and usability for the intended readers.

Being prepared to discuss these questions and how they guide your approach will highlight your proficiency in the Document Development Lifecycle.