Technical Writing

What is a Technical Writer?

A technical writer is a professional communicator whose task is to convey complex information in simple terms to an audience of the general public or a very select group of readers.

Technical writers research and create information through a variety of delivery media (electronic, printed, audio-visual, and even touch.)

- spigot: when you start the subject, they wont stop
- toothpaste: hard to get information and only tell you what you ask them for

What is a Technical Writing?

According to the Society for Technical Communication (STC): Technical writing is defined as simplifying the complex.

Technical writing involves communicating complex information to those who need it to accomplish some task or goal.

They take advanced tehcnical concepts and ocmmunicate them as:

- clearly
- accurately
- comprehensively

to their audience

What do technical writers write?

Examples of technical information include:

- Online help
- Manuals
- White Papers
- Design specifications
- Project plans
- Software test plans

Who are the actors?

- Technical Writer
- Technical Editor
- Knowledge Architect
- User Experience (UX) Designer

What do the other actors do?

The **knowledge architect** defines knowledge processes and identifies the technology requirements for creating, capturing, organizing, accessing and using knowledge assets.

The **technical editor** works alongside technical writers to help correct and enhance their piece. This includes scanning for grammar, spelling, punctuation, syntax errors, and areas that need improvement in the writing and content.

The **User Experience (UX) Designer** is responsible for the look and feel of a product, website, or app. UX Designers work with teams of product managers, UI designers, writers, and developers to create high-fidelity screens and prototypes that represent how the product will look and function once it's released to the public.

Characteristics of Technical Writing

Technical writing:

- Deals with subject matter.
- Is characterized by formal elements such as scientific and technical vocabulary.
- Utilizes writing styles such as description, cause and effect, classification, illustration, partition, comparison, and contrast.
- Presents and explains a subject matter in a clear, accurate, and concise manner. It maintains an attitude of impartiality and objectivity and by the absence of any attempt to arouse emotions.

How to add a setting to your profile

1. Right click the profile object you want to apply.
2. Select **Properties** in the menu.
3. Open your profile in a text editor.
    - Add the setting to your profile in the settings section.
4. Run the profile command with the `-file yourProfileName` option.
5. Restart your web browser.

I must do the following tasks today:

At work:

- Code three unit tests.
- Write a design document.
- Review Janet's latest document.

After work:

1. Wash my car without using any water.
2. Dry my car without using any towels.

When proposing to purchase Indian Forest products, a deposit is required based on the appraised stumpage value. The following table outlines the deposit amounts and minimum requirements according to different value ranges:

If Appraised Stumpage Value	Deposit Amount	And the minimum deposit
< $100,000	10% of the stumpage value	$1,000
Between $100,000 and $250,000	5% of the stumpage value	$10,000
> $250,000	3% of the stumpage value	$12,500

What is a README?

In software distribution and software development, a README file contains information about the other files in a directory or archive of computer software. A form of documentation, it is usually a simple plain text file called README, Read Me, READ.ME, README.txt, or README.md (to indicate the use of Markdown).

The file's name is generally written in uppercase. On Unix-like systems in particular, this causes it to stand out – both because lowercase filenames are more common, and because the ls command commonly sorts and displays files in ASCII-code order, in which uppercase filenames will appear first.

A README file typically encompasses:

- Configuration instructions
- Installation instructions
- Operating instructions
- A file manifest (a list of files in the directory or archive)
- Copyright and licensing information
- Contact information for the distributor or author
- A list of known bugs
- Troubleshooting instructions
- Credits and acknowledgments
- A changelog (usually aimed at fellow programmers)
- A news section (usually aimed at end users)

History of the README

The convention of including a README file began in the mid-1970s. Early Macintosh system software installed a Read Me on the Startup Disk, and README files commonly accompanied third-party software.

In particular, there is a long history of free software and open-source software including a README file; the GNU Coding Standards encourage including one to provide "a general overview of the package".

Since the advent of the web as a de facto standard platform for software distribution, many software packages have moved (or occasionally, copied) some of the above ancillary files and pieces of information to a website or wiki, sometimes including the README itself, or sometimes leaving behind only a brief README file without all of the information required by a new user of the software.

README as a generic term

Standard set of README files:

README	General information

AUTHORS	Credits
Thanks	Acknoledgements
CHANGELOG	A detailed changelog, intended for programmers
NEWS	A basic changelog intended for users
INSTALL	Installation instructions
COPYING/LICENSE	Copyright and licensing information
BUGS	Known bugs and instructions on reporting new ones

Definitions: Configuration

In communications or computer systems, a configuration of a system refers to the arrangement of each of its functional units, according to their nature, number and chief characteristics. Often, configuration pertains to the choice of hardware, software, firmware, and documentation. Along with its architecture, the configuration of a computer system affects both its function and performance.

The configuration of a computer is typically recorded in a configuration file. In modern computer systems, this is created and updated automatically as physical components are added or removed. Applications may assume that the configuration file is an accurate representation of the physical configuration and act accordingly.