Guidelines for writing articles

IASA ITABoK 3.0

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# Introduction

The following guidelines are intended for use when writing articles for the ITABoK 3.0. The aim of the guidelines is to support authors in writing articles to a similar structure and writing style.

In the following sections the term “Subject Matter” is used to refer to the subject being described by an author in an article.

# Writing Style

Articles for the ITABoK are written in third-person form which is commonly used in academic texts.

“Writing in [third person](https://www.yourdictionary.com/third-person#websters) is writing from the third-person point of view, or outsider looking in, and uses pronouns like he, she, it, or they. It differs from the [first person](https://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples/examples-of-writing-in-first-person.html), which uses pronouns such as I and me, and from the [second person](https://examples.yourdictionary.com/reference/examples/examples-of-writing-in-second-person.html), which uses pronouns such as you and yours.” - **YourDictionary.com**

It is also preferable to provide use the noun (or the role of the person, architect, stakeholder, consumer) rather than using the pronoun “he” or “she” in order to avoid gender issues.

# Basic Article Structure

Articles can sometimes vary in structure due to the nature of the subject matter. However, the following provides a basic generic structure.

## What is “The Subject Matter”

The first section in the article gives a brief description of what the subject matter is. Standard definitions or quotes may be used to support this section. The aim of this section is to ensure that the reader understands what the “Subject Matter” is before reading the rest of the article. This can also be important since certain “Subject Matters” can be discussed in different contexts, this section provides the opportunity to set the “Subject Matter” in context.

**For example:**A roadmap is a visual description which shows a plan against time for achieving one or more goals or objectives.

## Why we need “The Subject Matter”

The second section of the article describes why we need the “Subject Matter” or why the “Subject Matter” is important. Before discussing deeper concepts or practices it is important that the reader understands why the “Subject Matter” in real terms. Describe the key benefits of addressing the “Subject Matter” or the negative effects if the “Subject Matter” is not addressed.

**For example:**Roadmaps are important as they provide a common understanding for stakeholders regarding the current status of a business initiative and also a broad plan for future deliverables, goals and objectives.

## “Subject Matter” Approach

The third section lists a set of key factors which are considered important when approaching the “Subject Matter”. These key factors are expressed as small sections with a memorable statement as a title.

**For example:**   
“Plan the Journey”,   
“Monitor the technical debt”,   
“Start small, scale fast”.

This provides the reader with an overview of the key factors in the “Subject Matter” and the statement as a title should make these factors more memorable to the reader. The reader and the author can also reflect on these key factors in the “Concepts and Practices” sections of the article where practical examples can be given.

## Concepts

The concepts of the “Subject Matter” can be described in a series of sections which describe important areas of the “Subject Matter”. The structure and naming of the concept sections will vary depending on the “Subject Matter” and how the author wants to present the “Subject Matter” to the reader. It is important when writing the concept sections that the reader feels that the sections flow from one to the other and that knowledge is gained step by step.

One technique is to create an overview concept which links the following concept sections so the reader understands how the different concept sections are connected.

Another technique is to start the concept at an abstract level and use a “top-down” description describing the concept in more detail as the author moves down the sections.

## Techniques and Canvases

When describing concepts practical advice may be provided by the author regarding how to work with the “Subject Matter”. This may involve providing a canvas or a technique which will help the reader to actively work with the “Subject Matter”. When describing how to use a canvas or a technique the following structure may be useful.

1. Provide a short text describing why the technique or canvas is useful
2. Describe any preparation that that should be done before starting
3. Describe in sequential steps (Step1, Step2, Step3….) how the reader uses the technique or canvas

The description of a technique or canvas can be described as part of concept section, where the technique or practice is directly related to the given concept. However, they can also be provided as separate sections as appropriate.

## References and Further Reading

At the end of each article there should be a section for “References and Further Reading” which contains a list of books, articles or texts which have been used in constructing the article, or which are useful to the reader for further reading on the “Subject Matter”.