

12.1.5 Network Documentation Facts

Documentation details what must be done and how it should be done. Good documentation ensures that users can find the information they need to make decisions or troubleshoot problems on your network, tracks events, and helps ensure that actions are consistent within your organization.

The following table lists various types of documents that you might be responsible for creating or maintaining on your network.

Document Type	Description
Policy	<p>A <i>policy</i> is a document that prescribes processes that help your organization reach goals and meet network requirements. Depending on your network, you might define policies for different areas of implementation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative delegation Network documentation Security
Regulation	<p>A <i>regulation</i> is a requirement published by a government or other licensing body, and it must be followed. While you are not responsible for writing regulations, you are responsible for knowing which regulations apply to your organization and adhering to them. Policies are often written in response to regulations.</p>
Procedure	<p>A <i>procedure</i> is a step-by-step process outlining how to implement a specific action. The design of a procedure is guided by goals defined in a policy, but it is more detailed than a policy; it must identify the specific steps you must execute. Using procedures will help you meet the goals defined in your policies and ensure that there is consistency between the actions of multiple administrators.</p>
Network Diagram	<p>A <i>network diagram</i> shows the logical and/or physical layout of your network. The network diagram could be a collection of diagrams showing the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The location and IP addresses of hubs, switches, routers, and firewalls. The relationship between remote locations and the WAN links that connect them. Subnets within your network, including the subnet addresses and the routers connecting each subnet.
Wiring Schematic	<p>A <i>wiring schematic</i> is a type of network diagram that focuses on the physical connections between devices. The wiring schematic typically shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The location of drop cables and ports within offices or cubicles. The path that wires take between wiring closets and offices. A labeling scheme that matches endpoints in offices and cubicles with specific switch ports or punch down block locations.
Configuration	<p><i>Configuration</i> documentation identifies specific configuration information for a device. For example, a configuration document for a firewall might include information about the IP addresses assigned to each interface and opened firewall ports. Document the configuration so that the device can be restored to the original configuration and the current configuration can be compared to the desired configuration to identify any changes.</p>
Change and Job Logs	<p>A <i>change</i> or <i>job log</i> keeps track of changes to the configuration of a device or the network. Change documentation is often included as a part of the configuration documentation. For example, you might record a change in a device's NIC or a repair to a WAN link. Change documentation is useful for troubleshooting to identify what has been done to a device, and shows the rationale behind the changes.</p>
Baseline	<p>A <i>baseline</i> is a snapshot of the performance statistics of the network or devices. The baseline is used as a logical basis for future comparison. Baselines enable you to effectively monitor the performance of your system to determine when changes negatively impact performance or when systems need upgrading or replacing. It is important to measure network performance at subsequent intervals to see how your server is performing compared to the baseline.</p>

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