technical-writer

Technical Writer Career Dossier

1. Snapshot

- **Role Type:** Documentation, tutorials, knowledge management for technical products.
- **Remote Profile:** Highly remote; many dev tool companies hire globally.
- **Ideal Jeff Strengths:** Translating complex systems, clear communication, structured thinking.

2. Personal & Lifestyle Fit

- **Core Work:** Interview SMEs, write docs, produce tutorials, organize knowledge bases.
- **Energy Signals:** Rewarding when teaching concepts; risk of fatigue if constantly chasing updates.
- **Work Rhythm:** Mix of focused writing, reviews with engineers, publishing cycles.
- **Work Environment:** Engineering, product, support, marketing; mostly async-friendly.
- **Value Alignment:** Helps users succeed; builds learning resources; offers autonomy.

3. Skills & Tooling

- **Essential:** Plain-language writing, Markdown, static site generators, version control (Git).
- **Nice-to-Have:** API literacy, diagramming (Mermaid, Excalidraw), video scripting, docs-as-code workflows.
- **Habits:** Style guides, release checklists, feedback loops with users.
- **Learning Path:** Write the Docs resources, create docs for open-source projects, publish tutorial series.

4. Market & Demand

- **Outlook:** Strong for developer tools, API platforms, cybersecurity; remote contracts abundant.
- **Automation Risk:** Low; AI assists but human clarity and accuracy remain critical.
- **Job Security:** Solid when tied to product launches and user adoption metrics.

5. Compensation & Economics

- **Entry:** $60K–$90K salary, $40–$60/hr contract.
- **Mid-Level:** $90K–$120K salary, $60–$80/hr contract.
- **Lead:** $120K–$150K; specialized consulting $100+/hr.
- **Benefits:** Full-time roles include standard benefits; contractors choose between rates vs. coverage.

6. Entry Strategy

- Build a "Docs Portfolio" with 3 sample guides (API reference, quick start, troubleshooting).
- Contribute to open-source documentation (e.g., Supabase, Hasura).
- Apply via Write the Docs job board, GitLab/Stripe careers, RemoteOK ("technical writer" keyword).
- Offer a "Docs Clean-Up" package to startups for testimonials.

7. Growth Path

1. **Technical Writer:** Author & maintain docs.
2. **Docs Lead / Information Architect:** Owns doc strategy + systems.
3. **Developer Advocate / UX Writer:** Specialized communication roles.
4. **Knowledge Manager / Consultant:** Design docs programs for multiple clients.

8. Challenges & Stressors

- Staying updated during rapid product changes.
- Gathering information from busy engineers.
- Avoiding burnout from repetitive updates.

9. Client & Employer Hunting Grounds

- **Go-To Employers:** API/developer tool companies (Stripe, Supabase, Plaid), cloud infrastructure (DigitalOcean, Fly.io), cybersecurity vendors, data platforms, developer education startups.
- **Job Boards & Feeds:** Write the Docs job board, Who Pays Technical Writers, RemoteOK (keyword "technical writer"), WeWorkRemotely (Docs), ProBlogger (tech section), Indeed remote filter.
- **Communities & Slack Groups:** Write the Docs Slack (#jobs), Knowledge Management Slack, r/technicalwriting, Good Docs Project, Indie Worldwide Writers.
- **Freelance & Contract Platforms:** Contra, Upwork (API docs gigs), Draft.dev marketplace, Superpath (content + docs), Contentfy.
- **Outbound Targets:** Indie SaaS founders without docs, open-source maintainers needing guides, agencies shipping complex apps, accelerators wanting playbooks. Offer "Docs Clean-Up" Loom and sample snippet to initiate.

10. Money Loop Experiments

- Launch a $250 "API Quick Start makeover" service.
- Sell a documentation outline template for $39 on Gumroad.
- Host a paid workshop "Explain Your Product in Plain English" ($99 ticket).

11. Notes & Next Steps

- Create a style guide + docs checklist template; share to attract leads.
- Track "docs effect" metrics (support ticket reduction, time-to-first-success).
- Pair with QA/Systems Optimizer to offer process + documentation bundle.