**Contact Information**

**Laura Gunn:**

*Trace Analytics, LLC - Marketing Director*

My survey questions were passed along via our mutual contact and returned through the same person, therefore I don’t have her actual contact information. However, the information of the person who got me in touch with Ms. Gunn is,

(Renee Cowan)

Email: renee.cowan@utsa.edu

Phone: (210) 458-5974

This interaction was short, I thanked Ms. Gunn via Ms. Cowan, but mostly the communication consisted of her answering the questions

**Laura Palmer:**

*Kennesaw State University-Department Chair, Digital Writing and Media Arts Department*

Ms. Palmer and I emailed back and forth a couple times to introduce ourselves and to ask/answer the survey questions, after this, I thanked her and the communication was over.

Email: lpalme32@kennesaw.edu

**Michael Chapman:**

*Southwest Airlines - Manager Maintenance Publications*

Mr. Chapman and I had the longest string of communication. We followed the same outline as with Ms. Palmer, but after his survey, he sent me a follow up message assuring me that he was not as jaded as his survey answers may have come off. I enjoyed reading this because it made me feel like I knew his personality better (I realized he wasn’t just a bitter old man). Of the three people I surveyed, I am most glad I made this contact and I hope to keep it because I have been interested in working at Southwest for a couple years.

2832 Shorecrest Drive, DMX2

Dallas, TX 75235

214-904-4647

Email: [Michael.Chapman@wnco.com](mailto:Michael.Chapman@wnco.com)

**Survey Responses**

**Laura Palmer**

1. Department Chair, Digital Writing and Media Arts Department, Kennesaw State University

2. I manage people (faculty, staff, and students), time (course scheduling), and money (budgets).

3. Email, word processing (MS-Word), spreadsheets (Excel), Acrobat

4. Definition: The ability to use and integrate a variety of tools and processes to perform job-related tasks. I work with technology, especially complex university systems, all the time.

5. Writing. In particular, technical writing (disclaimer: I've got a master's and a PhD in Technical Communication, so maybe I'm biased! :) )

6. Super-valuable! I have to learn new systems and processes ALL THE TIME. It never ends. The university is always updating systems or buying new systems.

7. I guess I answered this in #5, but I am always using my technical communication skills. A lot of my job involves communicating information to faculty and to students. The ability to write, edit, and organize is critical to every message I send out. I work with subject matter experts, deans, directors, and more.

**Laura Gunn**

I am the Marketing Director at a small laboratory. Assisting with writing our technical instructions is a small part of my job. I am one of two primary contributors to our website and brochure content.

1. Trace Analytics, LLC - Marketing Director

2. Marketing and advertising to build sales.

3. Internet and email all day, every day.

4. Content written to behoove the user in today's digital society.

5. How SEO works. My understanding of ISO 8573, pertains specifically to my job.

6. Very

7. Very, we actually have a webmaster that handles more of this right now.

8. 8 years. In the beginning of my employment my company received most of its leads via referrals. My company used the fax machine and the phone for much of their communication. I have been able to show them a broader reach using the internet and all it has to offer. Hope that helps! LG

**Michael Chapman – Southwest Airlines**

1. Manager Maintenance Publications

2. Oversee the daily operation and administration of the maintenance publication technical writers, specialists, and project contractors to maintain, revise, distribute, publish, and manage the Aircraft and Component Maintenance Manuals (AMMs & CMMs), and the Maintenance Programs and Engineering work instructions (Job Cards).

* Interacts directly with other company department leaders and personnel in Production, Maintenance Programs, Fleet Management, Engineering, Reliability, Planning, and others as necessary to assist in developing, improving, or executing procedures and process standards as related to Maintenance Publications.
* Communicates with Boeing support personnel, and other OEM (original equipment manufacturers) or MRO (maintenance, repair and overhaul) personnel as necessary to improve data distribution processes and support.
* Maintains accurate historical records of publication changes in order to respond to regulatory inquiries and audits.
* Coaches, counsels, and conducts regular one-on-one meetings and performance appraisals with all direct reports.
* Writes progress reports, maintains team metrics, and/or communicates findings as requested or directed by Sr. Manager.
* Ensures all published department policies and procedures are followed.

3. Computer & Software. Writers use a proprietary XML-based product produced by Boeing called “Toolbox”. Specialists also use it for publishing and hosting a web-based library. We also use the Microsoft Office Suite, Corel Draw for graphics, and other standard software. I also use Microsoft Visio for building processes, and use One-Note for keeping track of meeting notes, and MS Project to track projects.

4. Digital Literacy: Knowledge that seems to come hard-wired in anyone under 30.

(Seriously now) Knowledge and understanding of HOW TO UTILIZE the new technologically advanced computer, internet, and social media world we now live in. Coming up with some new gadget, then looking for an application is not what I consider digital literacy. The ability to see a problem and figure out how new technological capabilities might help solve the problem is what I’d consider digital literacy.

How does it relate? The airlines are ahead of the curve in some areas, and behind in others. Our aircraft can communicate it’s health automatically in flight so ground crew can start preparing necessary skill, parts, and tooling at the next landing site even before a pilot might know there’s a problem. However, we are just now beginning to explore replacing paper work instructions with mobile interactive platform solutions – something the auto industry has been doing for years; not because we didn’t want to upgrade, but because of the burden of much tougher regulatory oversite coupled with complex interconnection requirements necessary to coordinate flight routing, custom maintenance programs, station/hangar space, parts and tooling locally available, labor hours, union rules, and other data that must be synced at the same moment. (Paper! Really!)

5. The ability to use an XML-based software to parse engineering-ese into clear, definite, understandable, ordered work-steps for the street-wise mechanic.

6. Extremely Valuable. Been doing it my whole life. But cannot come close to matching the value of thinking and solving complex problems. Think about the fact that we put a man on the moon before the calculator. Now, after the so-called “digital literacy” age, fast food cashiers need pictures of the products on the buttons instead of numbers because we’re losing the ability to do simple math. I once heard a so-called math expert (Dr. William Glasser) state that “no school should teach children multiplication tables, because a $2 calculator can give you the answer.” (I wonder who gets to program the buttons.) So learning new technical skills (using a calculator) is secondary to understanding what those numbers represent.

How important is it to possess correspondence skills, such as working well in a team or communicating effectively with subject matter experts, versus skills that are more specific to a technical communicator, such as being able to work with specific software as well as writing, editing and organizing content?

Interesting that the question is about “correspondence skills” rather than “Communication skills” – although you mention communicating effectively. I also must say this is the first time I’ve heard the term “technical communicator.” Let me state clearly that face-to-face communication skills with anyone is extremely important. I can tell you that as an “old-timer” I notice a difference from my under 30 co-workers ability to communicate well after years of burying their noses in social applications. Kids today would rather tweet with a friend than talk to a friend – let alone ride their bikes over to play whiffle-ball. (I’ve observed that phenomena even when two kids are in the same room!) As a result, (and I believe directly related), I receive an average 180 emails a day – some from kids in the next cubicle over. We are losing the ability to interact with our fellow man. Sure, life is easier with good software for writing, editing, and organizing content – but I thought the questions was about working as a team or communicating effectively.