Cullinan Brian

Section 1

9:10 AM

1. What does your writing process look like? (100-word limit)

My writing process usually consists of choosing a time to start on an essay. When I start on the essay, I first create and outline of what topics to discuss in each paragraph. During the creation of the outline I will jot down some opening sentences and main ideas about each paragraph. I then introduce each paragraph and sometimes refer back to previous paragraphs and topics. I close each paragraph and try to relate it to the topic for the next paragraph. Finally, I set aside the essay and return to it later after I have worked on other things. When I return to the essay I can then check it for grammatical errors and spelling errors thoroughly. I usually keep multiple versions of an essay stored in a repository (versioning system). That way, if there is something that I edit out or some idea that I forgot to include I can always refer back to the original version of the document.

2. What have been your writing experiences in the past? (250-word limit)

My writing experience started at a very young age. In 3rd grade the class was instructed to write an essay on their experience during recess. I did not have very many friends at the time and usually spent recess alone and bored. Therefore, I decided to write my essay on the rainforest instead. A group of friends and I wrote fantasy stories about people with special abilities in middle school. In college I have written papers for English 105, after I passed out of the lower English courses. I have written many technical documents in my field of study, and for the organizations I participate in on campus. This includes KJAK, the student-run radio station, and The Association for Computer Machinery Chapter at NAU. The most interesting writing experience I have had was for a company I used to work for called Red Pepper Solutions. We provided technical support and web hosting services to small clients. I wrote many professional technical documents about system changes, server administration, and software development.

3. From the course homepage, access the publisher's web site to find Student Resources, then Links Library. Click on Ch. 1 to see the list of Professional Organizations. Which organization is most relevant to your major or the profession that you aspire to enter?

The organization that is most relevant to my major is ACM SigCHI or the Association for Computing Machinery Special Interest Group for Computer-Human Integration.

4. What kind of writing do you think you will do most as a professional?

I expect I will write technical documents to co-workers relating to the profession that I choose. As a computer scientist our field of job opportunities has a very wide range of work. I would like to go into a web development business and IT administration, so the technical documents I write will likely be related to system upgrades, and new technology.

5. What is the major journal/s in your field?

The Association for Computing Machinery is the largest and highly respected journal for my field. There is a monthly publishing of the journal as well as weekly and quarterly releases of technical information. They are a world spread organization that provides a link between professionals in the computer science industry and many other groups around the world. Groups such as ISO (International Standards Organization), governments in many countries participate in the findings and supporting of ACM, and they have strong ties to IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers).

6. How does one get something published in that journal?

One must make a breakthrough in computer technology, then write a paper and submit and abstract for review to ACM in order to be published in the journal.

7. From the course homepage, access the publisher's web site to find Student Resources, then Links Library. Click on Ch. 3. Choose one of the top three writing resources listed: • Writing Guidelines for Engineering and Science Students • Paradigm Online Writing Assistant • Purdue University OWL and explore that website. Tell me which site you chose and three things you found in your exploration that will help you as a technical writer.

I chose “Writing Guidelines for Engineering and Science Students”. I first found that the website is laid out very similar to an online software instruction manual, similar to those of open-source software; however there are some severe navigational issues. This observation leads me to believe that this site was not very well designed possibly because of a low budget, or it was not designed by a professional in the industry but rather an amateur, enthusiast, or private contractor with limited experience. I found a list of exercises that may be helpful for me to expand my skills to the expectations of a technical writer in addition to this class’s instructor. However, the credibility of this source is definitely degraded because of the poor website design. I may enjoy the article written on designing Presentation Slides.