**Technical Writing 101: Technical Ultimate Guide**

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The short definition of a technical writer is a person who writes about technical topics for example a person who writes about technology, communication, cyber security, etc. But perhaps a better definition is a person who can explain complicated concepts in clear, concise and easy-to-understand steps.

A technical writer is basically a translator. You start with a complicated piece of technology and your goal is to explain to another person how to use that technology. As a technical writer, you need strong organizational skills because you have to organize all the information that you gather by identifying what’s relevant for your readers.

You also need people skills and research skills, very important. The information you need resides in someone else’s head, so you must be able to work with that person either directly i.e. in-person, or indirectly, for example, source the information from a website, a book, or a magazine.

Four Basic Skills Every Technical Writer Needs

* Knowledge of technology
* Writing skills
* Organizational skills
* Research skills
* Good communication skills
* Efficient typing skills

**Knowledge of technology**

The technical part of technical writing doesn’t necessarily mean that you must be a programmer. However, you should be comfortable and have some basic knowledge about the technology you’ll be documenting.

You should also understand basic concepts such as databases, networking, the internet, and file manipulation.

**Writing skills**

Writing skills are an essential component of technical communication. The ability to break down complicated information into content that is appropriate for the audience of the document is very important. The technical writer’s mission is to create content that communicates information to the reader

General Guidelines in Technical Writing

* Clear
* Easy to understand
* Not subject to misinterpretation
* Concise
* Easy to follow

Your writing should not be:

* Confusing
* Redundant
* Wordy
* Poorly organized
* Inaccurate

**Organizational skills**

You obviously need the ability to organize information in your document, learn how to plan and have time management skills are also important in organizing your skills. To ensure that you can meet project deadlines, it’s critical that the time and resources required for each activity are clearly spelled out at a project’s start.

Conclusion

There’s more to creating documentation than just writing. As a writer, it is important to be aware of the other activities that are required. If you have a department that includes a technical illustrator, a technical editor, and a technical designer, coordinate with them to ensure that your project gets on their lists of things to do.

**References**

Pringle, A. S., & O'Keefe, S. (2003). *Technical writing 101: A real-world guide to planning and writing technical documentation*. Scriptorium Publishing.

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