Hard skills in technical writing

The fundamentals of technical writing | BUT 2024

The Red Hat Customer Content Services team

What we'll discuss today

- What the hard skills are in Technical Writing
  - Product knowledge
  - Content strategy
  - User personas
  - Technical content creation
- Exercise

What are hard skills

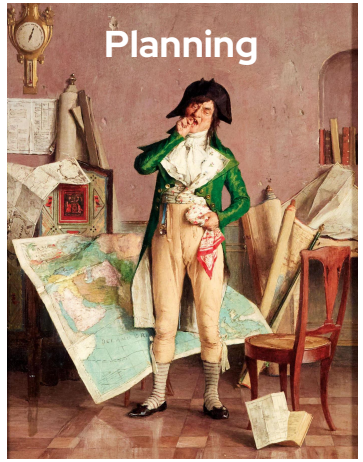
in technical writing?

- Tooling expertise
- Content creation workflows
- Product knowledge
- Content strategy
  - User personas
  - User journeys

Photo: Shubhangi Srinivasan

Workflow for documenting a product

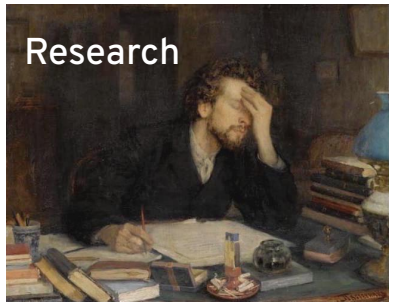
Reminder: How documentation happens

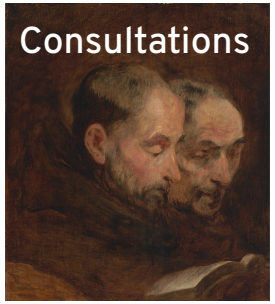


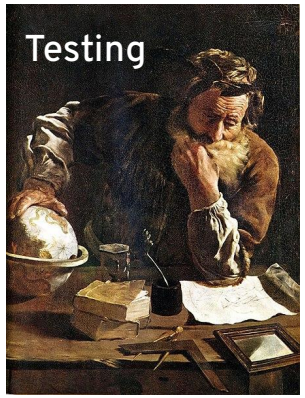
Tickets in trackers

Bugzilla

JIRA







Writing

Revision control

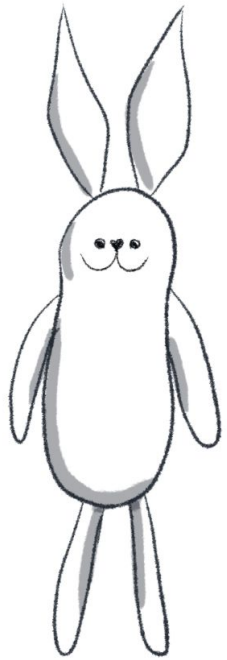
git

GitLab

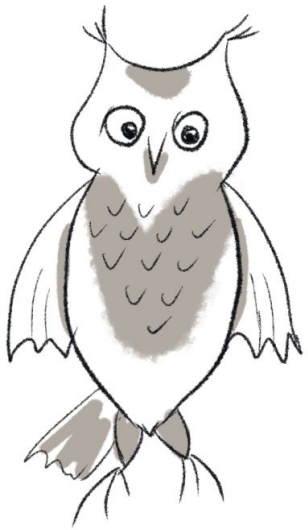
Credits:

- The Passion of Creation by Leonid Pasternak; wikimedia Commons, PD-Russia-expired, edited
- Domenico Fetti - Archimedes, Wikimedia Commons, PD-US, edited
- Anonymous, a Copy after a painting traditionally attributed to Van Dyck of Two Monks Reading, Wikimedia Commons, PD-US, edited
- Thomas Kennington - Reading the letter, Wikimedia Commons,PD-US, edited
- Giovanni Batista Quadrone - The Cartographer, Wikimedia Commons,PD-US, edited
- ClassicStock

Doc



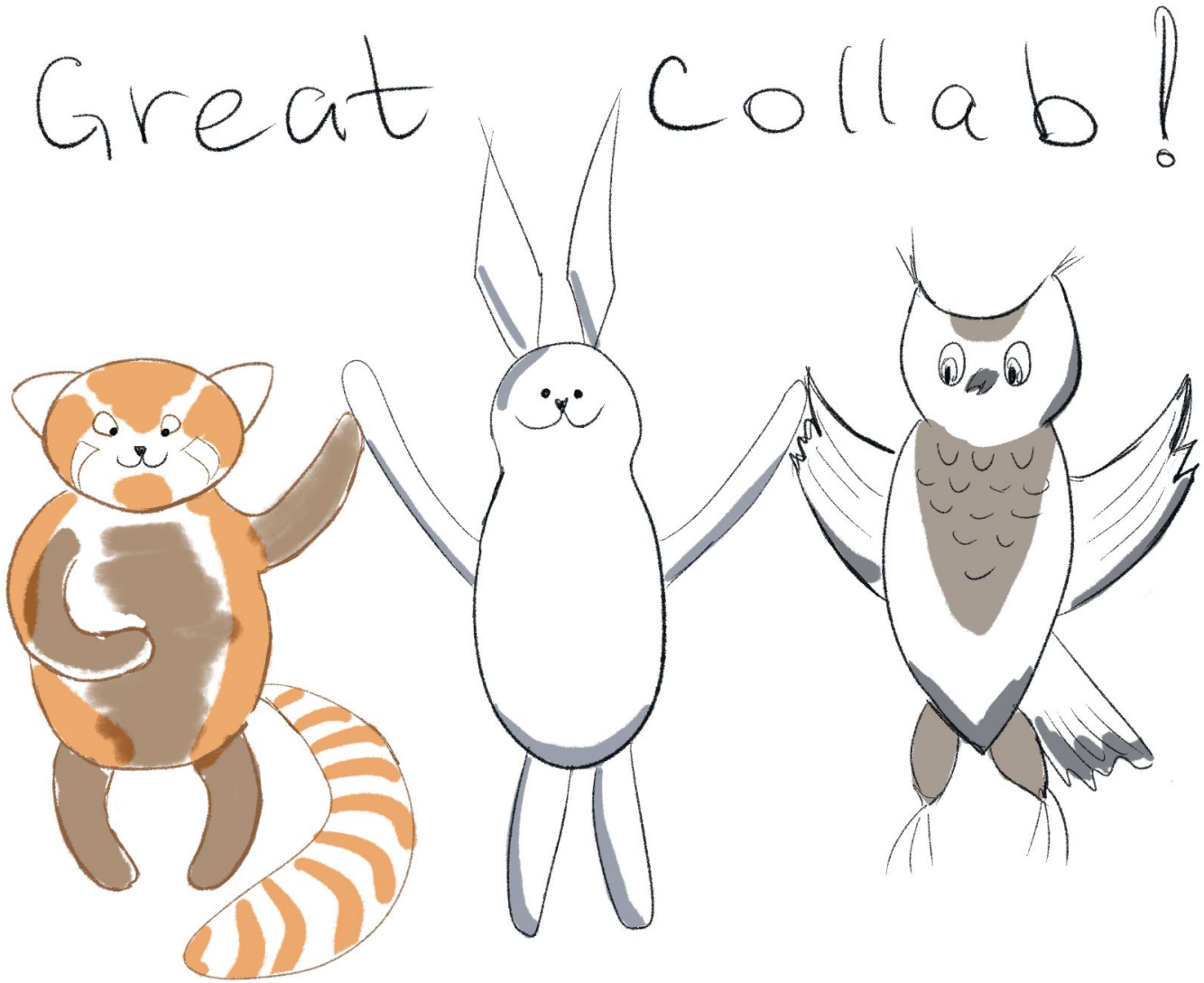
Dev



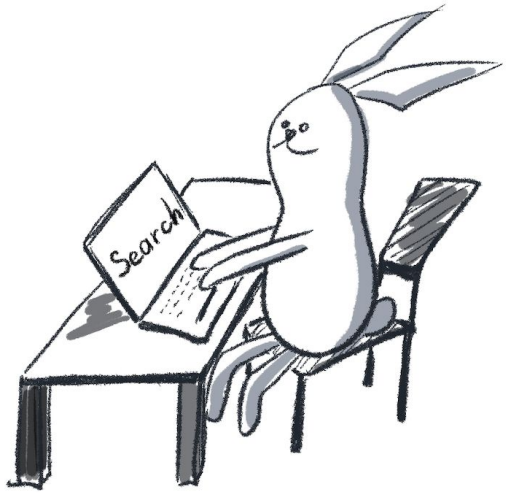
QE


doc
request
Search
$E=mc^2$
?
DRAFT


SME review
DRAFT DOC
QE review
DRAFT DOC
peer review
DRAFT DOC
customer-portal.com
Configuring user authentication.
PUBLISHED


Great Collab!

Exercise



- Google
- Research the subject
- Find specific resource or official documentation
- Ask questions

Product Knowledge

- Introduction to Product
- Interact with Product
- Contribute to the knowledge base

Photo: by campus digital

Product Knowledge: Factors and Considerations

Photo: by campus digital

- Features and outcomes
  - Product features
  - User perspective
- Competitor product
  - Highlight pros of your product
- Industry trends
  - Knowledge, use case, and trends
- Complementary usage
  - Product as addon

Content Strategy

- Understand the content
- Mind the user
  - What language to use
- Content flow
  - User journey

User personas

Provide the right content to the right user in the right place at the right time

- Fictional characters that represent a typical user of a system or product
- Based on research and analysis of real users
- To help content creators deliver documentation tailored to their needs and expectations

Content flow and the user journey

Screenshot from Civilization VI beginners guide

Content flow and the user journey

Discover	Learn	Evaluate	Adopt	Expand
Initial discovery, awareness, first impressions	Understanding the technology, service, and cost	Trial the product, take a tour, play with a sample	Commit to the solution, early product use and support	Day to day product use, technologist as champion, influencer

Reminder: Types of technical content

Guides / Manuals

Chapter 20. Installing and managing Windows virtual machines

To use Microsoft Windows as the guest operating system in y
(VMs) on a RHEL 9 host, Red Hat recommends taking extra s
VMs run correctly.

For this purpose, the following sections provide information o
optimizing Windows VMs on the host, as well as installing and
these VMs.

20.1. Installing Windows virtual machines

You can create a fully-virtualized Windows machine on a RHE
graphical Windows installer inside the virtual machine (VM), a
Windows guest operating system (OS).

To create the VM and to install the Windows guest OS, use th
command or the RHEL 9 web console.

Prerequisites

- A Windows OS installation source, which can be one of the
  available locally or on a network:
  - An ISO image of an installation medium
  - A disk image of an existing VM installation
- A storage medium with the KVM `virtio` drivers.
  To create this medium, see Preparing virtio driver installati
  machine.

Solutions / Troubleshooting docs

Unable to SSH to new Virtual Machine after upgrading the template to RHEL 8.7 or 9

SOLUTION VERIFIED - Updated November 29 2022 at 9:49 PM - English

Environment

- Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) 9
  - cloud-init-22.1-5 or higher (9.1)
  - cloud-init-21.1-10 or higher (9.0)
- Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) 8
  - cloud-init-22.1-5 or higher (8.7)
- Configuration file cloud.cfg originally created on RHEL 8.4 with cloud-init-20.3-10 or lower
- Red Hat Virtualization 4
- Red Hat OpenStack Platform 16
- Red Hat OpenShift Container Platform 4
- Amazon AWS
- Microsoft Azure
- Google Cloud Platform

Issue

- Unable to SSH to a Virtual Machine after upgrading it to RHEL 8.7, 9 or higher versions.
- During first boot, sshd fails to start on new Virtual Machines:

```
Nov 29 08:49:18 rhel8 systemd[1]: Starting OpenSSH server daemon...
Nov 29 08:49:18 rhel8 sshd[2946]: Unable to load host key: /etc/ssh/ssh_host_rsa_key
Nov 29 08:49:18 rhel8 sshd[2946]: Unable to load host key: /etc/ssh/ssh_host_ecdsa_key
Nov 29 08:49:18 rhel8 sshd[2946]: Unable to load host key: /etc/ssh/ssh_host_ed25519_key
Nov 29 08:49:18 rhel8 sshd[2946]: sshd: no hostkeys available -- exiting.
Nov 29 08:49:18 rhel8 systemd[1]: sshd.service: Main process exited, code=exited, status=1/FAILURE
Nov 29 08:49:18 rhel8 systemd[1]: sshd.service: Failed with result 'exit-code'.
Nov 29 08:49:18 rhel8 systemd[1]: Failed to start OpenSSH server daemon.
```

Resolution

Release Notes

Chapter 1. Overview

1.1. Major changes in RHEL 9.1

Installer and image creation

Following are image builder key highlights in RHEL 9.1 GA:

- Image builder on-premise now supports:
  - Uploading images to GCP
  - Customizing the `/boot` partition
  - Pushing a container image directly to a registry
  - Users can now customize their blueprints during the image creation process.

For more information, see Section 4.1, "Installer and image creation".

RHEL for Edge

Following are RHEL for Edge key highlights in RHEL 9.1-GA:

- RHEL for Edge now supports installing the services and have them running with the default configuration, by using the `fdo-admin` CLI utility

For more information, see Section 4.2, "RHEL for Edge".

Security

Quiz

Exercise

1

2

3

4

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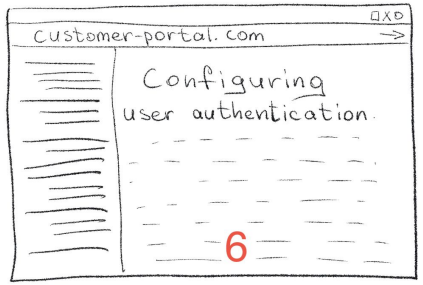

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PUBLISHED ✓

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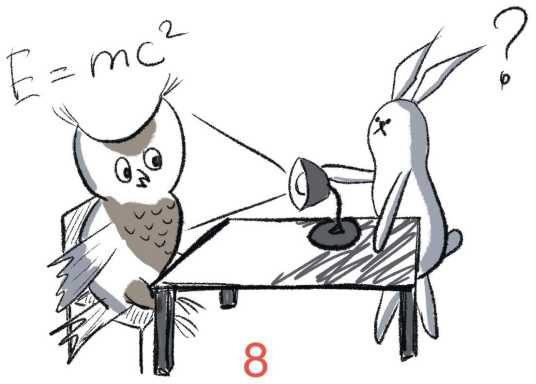

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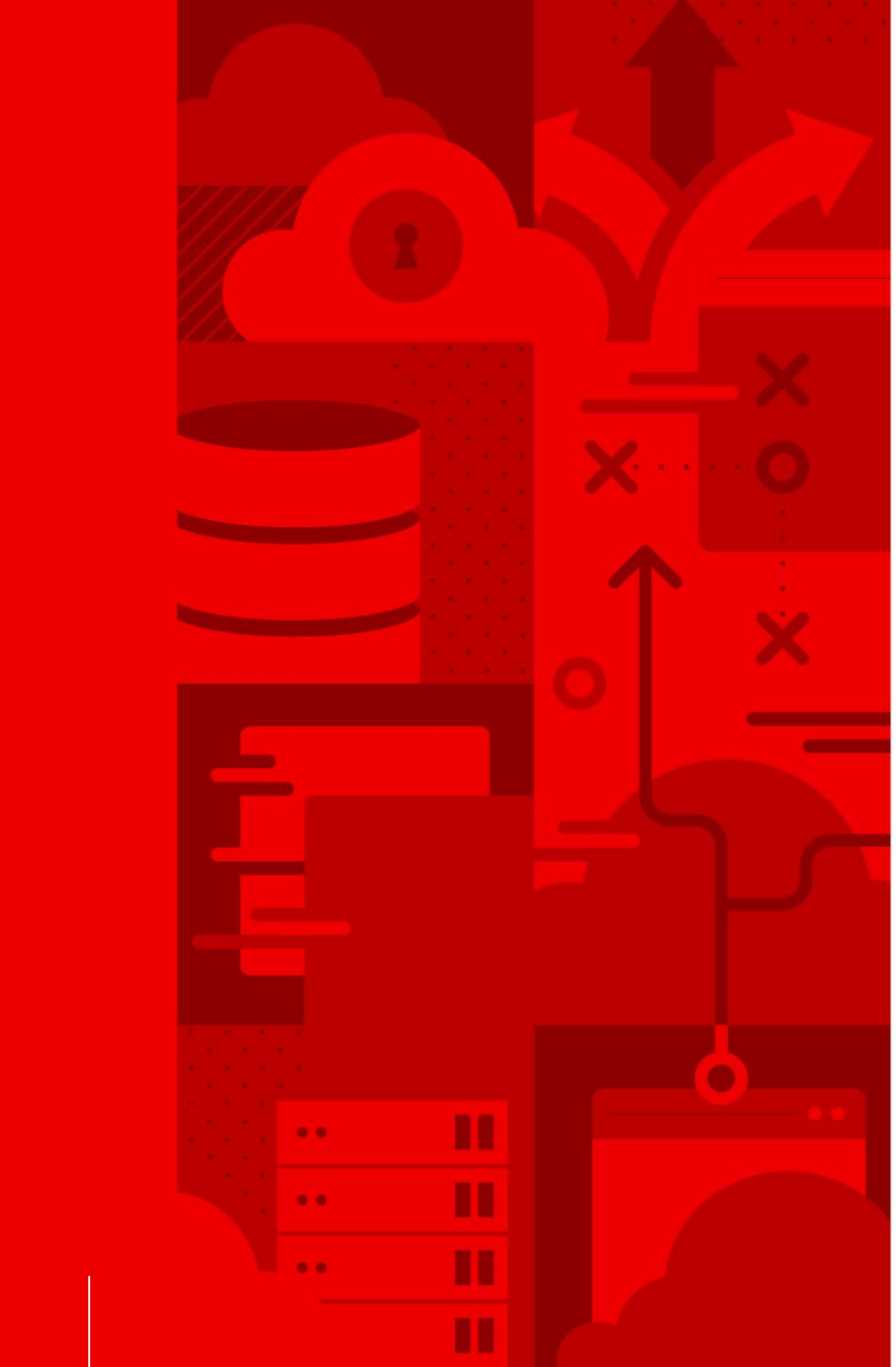

Q&A

A documentation workflow & hard skills workshop

Rules of the workshop

The scenario: 2 writing teams working on separate documentation tickets, and collaborating with their stakeholders.

The goal: Go through the phases of working on a piece of software documentation in a larger team, and overcome the various complications that may occur.

The follow-up: Share with the other team how you approached your task, what challenges you faced, and how you overcame them.

The purpose: Try out the docs creation process, learn what issues may arise, and hopefully have some fun in the process :-)

The stakeholders

- **Pam**, the Product Manager
- **Dave**, the Software Engineer (developer)
- **Quentin**, the Quality Engineer (tester)
- **Cassie,** the customer support specialist
- **Pierre** a senior Technical Writer on your team

Task 1

"Virt-manager is finally introducing full libvirt support for external snapshots in RHEL 7. We really need to document this!"

(Filed by Dave)

Task 2

Cause: The insights-client service requires permissions to allow execution from cloud-init which were not in the previous selinux-policy versions.
Consequence: Running "insights-client --register" from a cloud-init script fails with several AVCs.
Fix:
Result: Running "insights-client --register" from a cloud-init script does not fail.

(Filed by Quentin)