# The fundamentals of technical writing

## *Tooling III & Hard skills*

The Red Hat Customer Content Services team

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Former journalist



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# What we'll discuss today

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

# Final project

Week 2

# Week 2

**Conduct thorough research on the subject. Ask questions to your SMEs.**

- Understand the issue description and what needs to be done

- Have a plan how to approach your task

- Communicate with SMEs

- Start drafting

# Final project schedule

- Week 1, March 26 (after class 6, Tools II): Select a project, sign up for issues, fork the repository, and join the communication channel to introduce yourself.

- Week 2, April 2 (after class 7, Tools III): **Conduct thorough research on the subject. Ask questions to your SMEs.**

- Week 3, April 9 (after class 8, Usability): Create a draft.

- Week 4, April 16 (after class 9, Soft Skills): Create a pull request and undergo SME review.

- Week 5, April 23 (after class 10, LLMs): Close the SME review.

- Week 6, April 30: Peer review.

- **Week 7, May 7 at 9:59**: Deadline to submit your content. Present the project.

# Final project requirements

- Successful completion of the final project is mandatory to pass the course

- Maximum points: 200 (**Minimum of 130 points necessary to pass**)

- Duration: Six weeks

- Complete list of requirements in IS MUNI

# Need help?

Discord channels:

General queries, organization, and grading: #general

Final project queries

- Ansible                     #ansible-final-projects
- Foreman                   #foreman-final-projects
- GNOME User docs  #gnome-final-projects

Technical and project specific queries

Use the community forums, alternatively reach out to SMEs directly:

- Ansible                    dnaro@redhat.com
- Foreman                  apetrova@redhat.com
- GNOME Settings    feborges@redhat.com

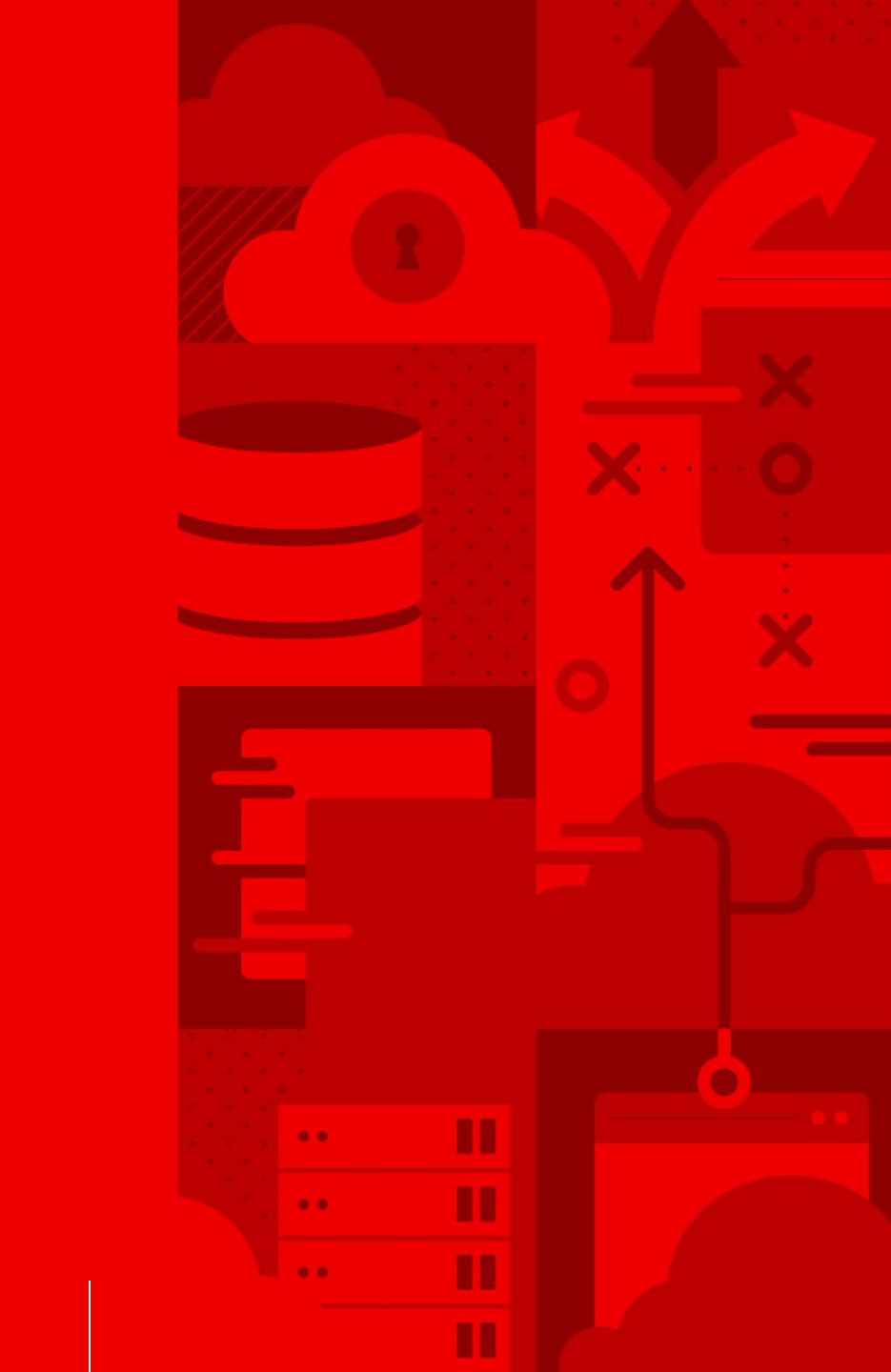# Publishing tools

# Publishing tools platforms

▶ Introduction

▶ Purpose

▶ Types

# Publishing tools

- ▸ Content management systems: Drupal, WordPress, etc.

- ▸ Static site generators: Jekyll, Hugo, etc.

  - Publishing platforms for the generators: GitHub Pages, GitLab Pages, etc.

- ▸ GitHub Pages

  - Built and publish docs as code from a GitHub repository

    - By default, uses Jekyll to build Markdown source files

    - Other markup languages can be built and published using the GitHub Actions CI
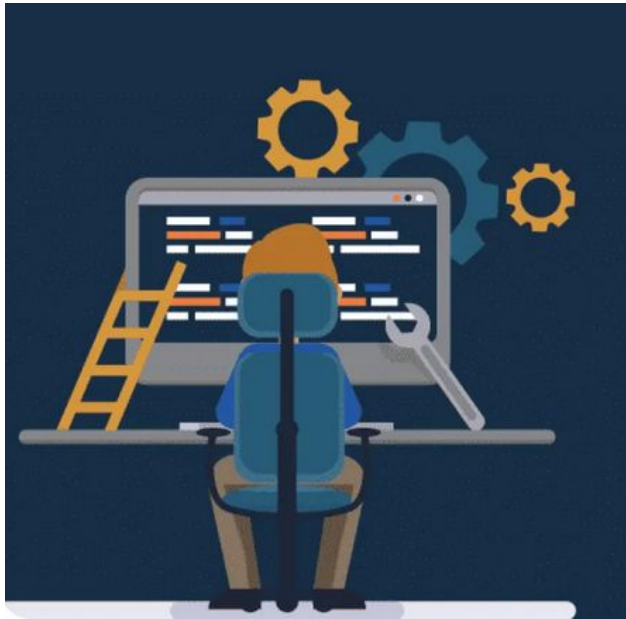
    - Learn more: https://pages.github.com/

# How to publish with GitHub Pages

1. Edit, commit and submit a files as a Pull Request (PR) against the

   https://github.com/rh-writers/technical-writing-course-brno repo

2. Merging the PR to the main branch

3. Publish (deploy) them to the GitHub Pages site at

   https://rh-writers.github.io/technical-writing-course-brno/

Live Demo

Hard skills

# What are hard skills

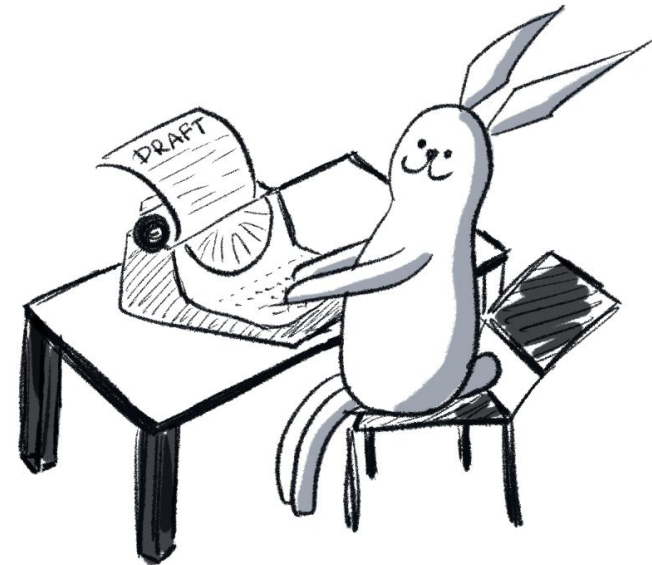# in Technical Writing?

Photo: Shubhangi Srinivasan

# Workflow for documenting a product

DOC
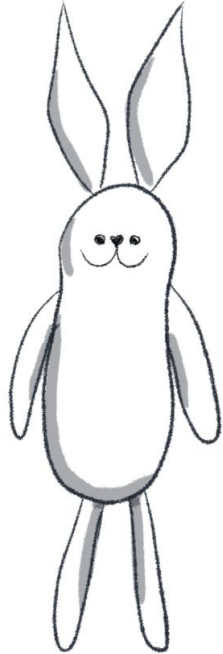
DEV

QE
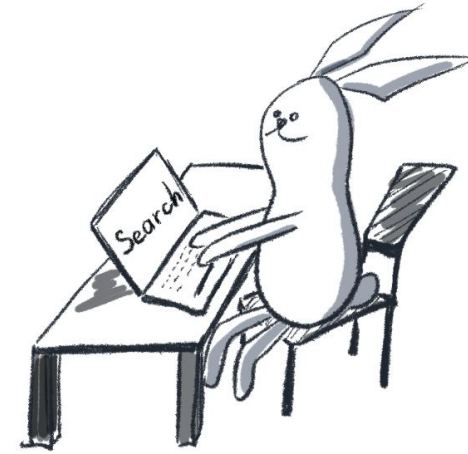
SME review

QE review

peer review

customer-portal.com

Configuring
user authentication.
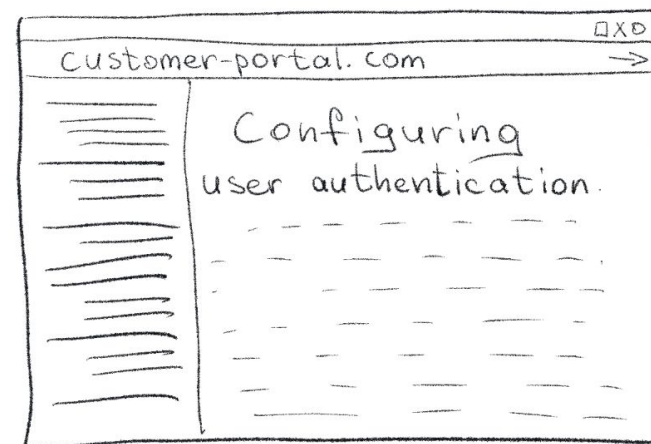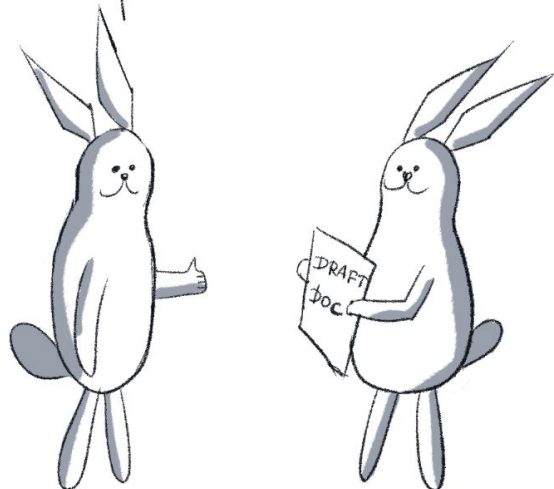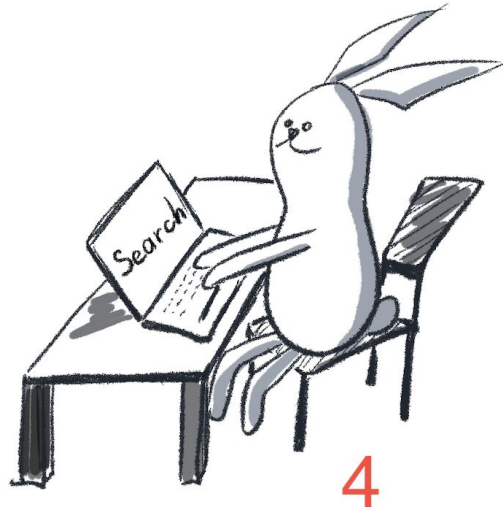
PUBLISHED ✔

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



▶ 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

Photo: by campus digital

# 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

# Adele, software engineer

C++ developer working on operating systems

**GOALS:** Adele wants an IDE that enhances her productivity and makes the development process smooth

**EXPECTATIONS:** User-friendly IDE with intuitive interface
Integration with C++ developer tools and debugging capabilities

**SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE:** Proficient in C++ programming language for system-level development

**ATTITUDE:** Wants to understand how things work and what are the available options

**CHALLENGES:** Works on large projects that take a long time to build and are difficult to debug

# User personas as a tool

*Personas are a tool for putting user needs into context with the aim of improving our help content and ensuring user success.*
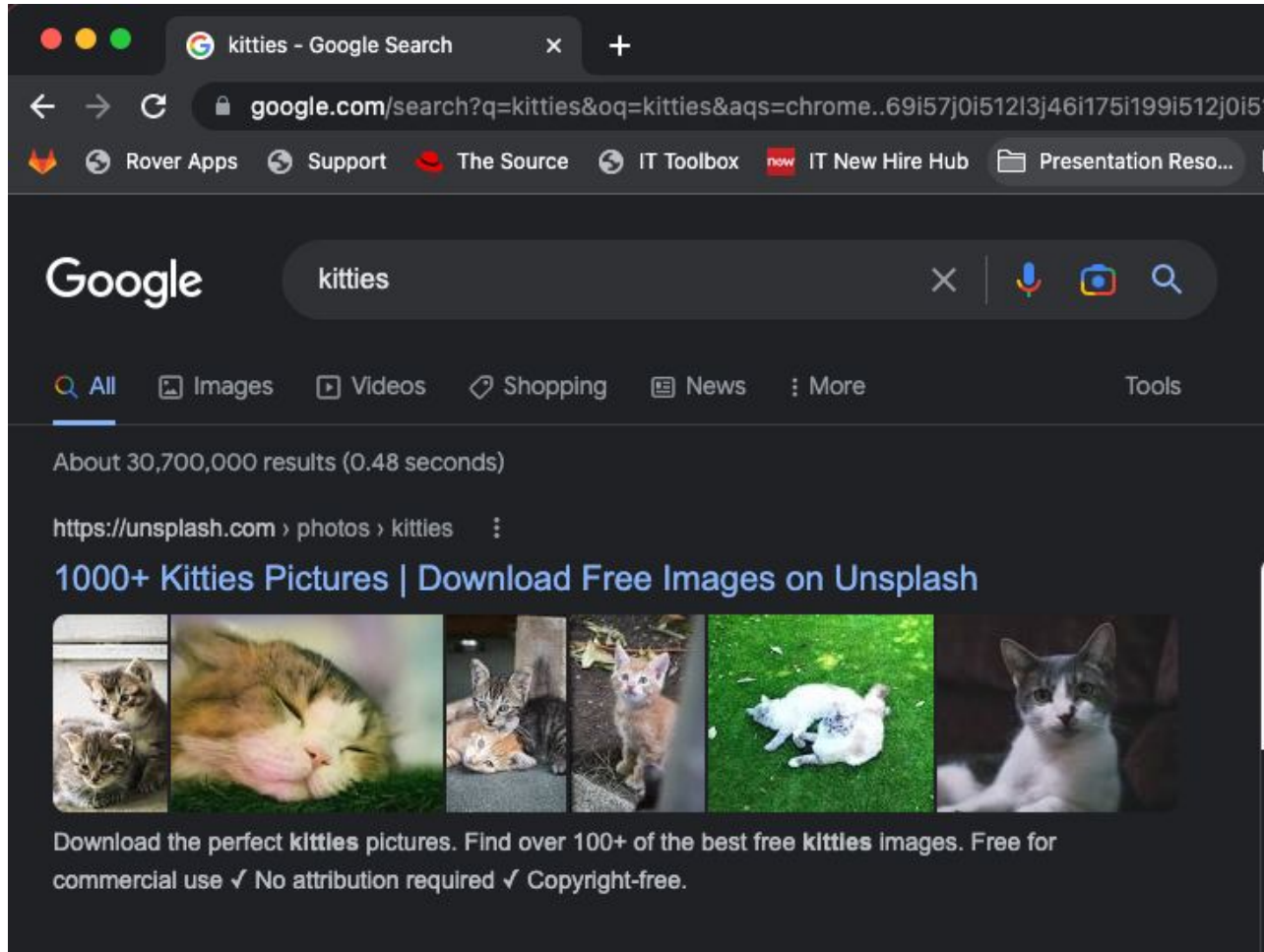
- ▸ Understanding target audience

- ▸ Choose the right tone and language

- ▸ Identify  user stories

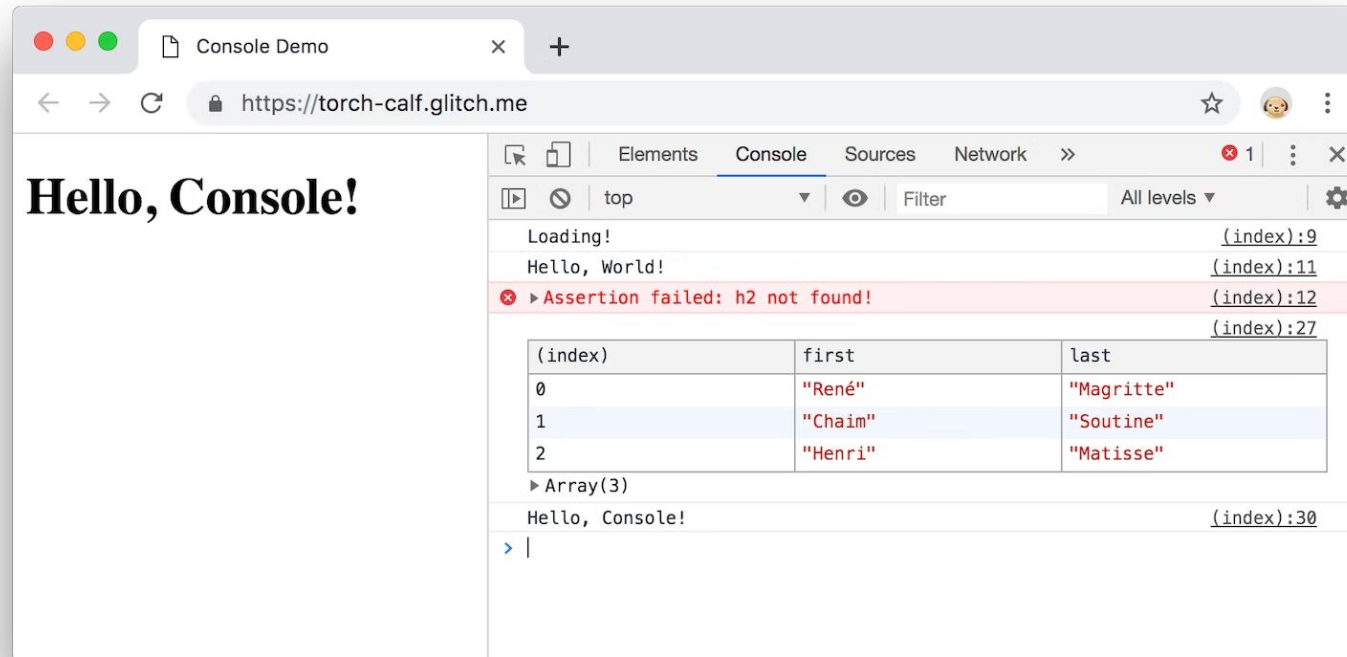- ▸ Address user pain points

# The user persona. Definition



▶ Representation of the ideal user of the product

▶ Defining:

- Experience

- Goal

Source: pixabay

# The user persona



▶ Browser to browse through the web

# The user persona



▶ Web developer

Screenshot from [Console overview](Console overview)

# Content flow and the user journey



Screenshot from Civilization VI beginners guide

# Technical Content Creation



▶ Understand the topic

- Search for different resources

- Consult with SMEs

▶ Technical draft

- Consult with SMEs/QEs

▶ Polish the draft with guidelines

# Managing technical content



Photo by James Spillane

- ▶ Product documentation – guides including information focusing on **why** and **how** to accomplish specific customer goals
- ▶ Release Notes – short descriptions related to major changes between releases: new features, bug fixes, known issues, features provided with limited support, removed functionalities
- ▶ Migration guide – upgrades to the newest version of the product

## Product documentation

## Upgrading documentation

Focus mode

### 2.2.2. Downloading an ISO image from the Customer Portal

The Boot ISO image is a minimal image file that supports registering your system, attaching subscriptions, and installing RHEL from the Content Delivery Network (CDN). The DVD ISO image file contains all repositories and software packages and does not require any additional configuration.

**Prerequisites**

• You have an active Red Hat subscription.

• You are logged in to the **Product Downloads** section of the Red Hat Customer Portal at Product Downloads.

**Procedure**

1. From the **Product Downloads** page, select the **By Category** tab.

2. Click **Red Hat Enterprise Linux**.

   The **Download Red Hat Enterprise Linux** web page opens.

3. From the **Product Variant** drop-down menu, select the variant and architecture that you require.

# Chapter 4. New features

This part describes new features and major enhancements introduced in Red Hat Enterprise Linux 9.0.

## 4.1. Installer and image creation

**Anaconda supports** `rhsm` **for machine provisioning through Kickstart installations for Satellite** Previously, machine provisioning depended on a custom `%post` script for Kickstart installation on Red Hat Satellite. This `%post` script imported the custom Satellite self-signed certificate, registered the machine, attached a subscription, and installed packages residing in repositories.

With RHEL 9, Satellite support has been added to the `rhsm` command for machine provisioning. You can now use `rhsm` for all provisioning tasks such as registering the system, attaching RHEL subscriptions, and installing from a Satellite instance.

(BZ#1951709)

Focus mode

Expand all    Collapse all

**Upgrading from RHEL 8 to RHEL 9**

Making open source more inclusive

Providing feedback on Red Hat documentation

Key migration terminology

1. Supported upgrade paths

2. Planning an upgrade

3. Preparing for the upgrade

4. Reviewing the pre-upgrade report

## Upgrading from RHEL 8 to RHEL 9

RED HAT ENTERPRISE LINUX 9

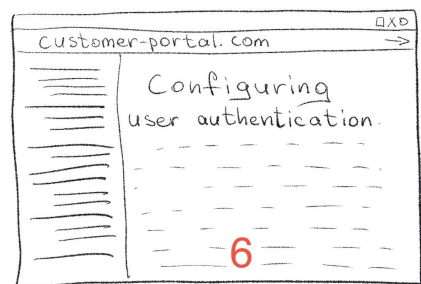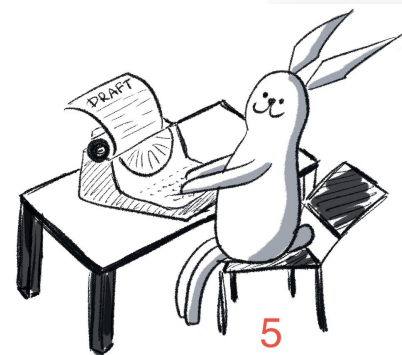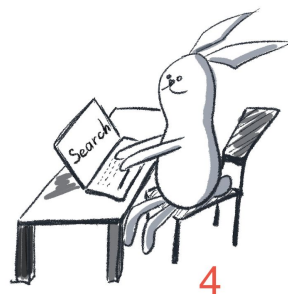Instructions for an in-place upgrade from Red Hat Enterprise Linux 8 to Red Hat Enterprise Linux 9
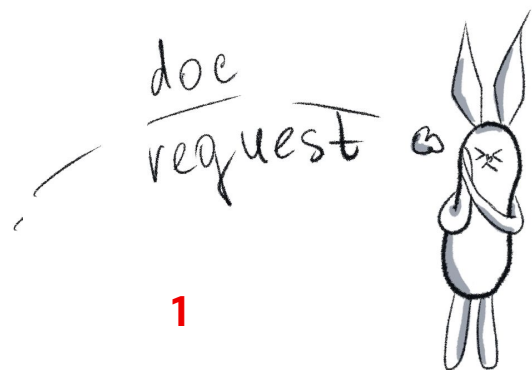
Red Hat Customer Content Services
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**Abstract**

**Release Notes**

# Quiz

doc
request

**1**

SME review

**2**

peer review

**3**

Search

**4**

DRAFT

**5**

customer-portal.com

Configuring
user authentication.

**6**

PUBLISHED ✓

QE review

DRAFT
DOC

**7**

$E=mc^2$

**8**

Q&A

# Exercise – Research your final projects

▶ [Ansible](), [Foreman](), [GNOME User documentation]()

▶ What is the software used for?

▶ What's the markup language?

▶ Where to ask for help?

▶ Where is the documentation published?

▶ What is the Git workflow?

▶ Who would use the software?