1. Which tools do you use on a regular basis?

Word, Excel, Libre Office, Open Office, Thunderbird, VS Code, Brace, Chrome, Firefox, Snagit, Visio, Slack. I’ve also used other software such as Corel Draw, Inkscape, Scrivener, Audacity and more than I can count.

1. What measures will you take in order to produce a top-notch work as a technical writer?

Consistently seek feedback or give it with a sandwich approach of “this is good but this needs X and this other thing is fantastic!”. Keeping communication open is key to producing quality work. Knowing when to ask questions and when to research is also important. If there is a question and it does not affect another downstream task make notes on it to ask questions and move on until there are more questions that stop work. Once I have a list of questions and have exhausted the Google librarian system start sending either emails asking questions or request a quick meeting to get them answered in a discussion.

1. How quickly can you learn to use a new tool?

Give me a day to explore a new tool and by the second I can teach the basics of it to someone else. I used to teach computer skills classes and can take a beginner who is scared of the mouse to a proficient user in a couple hours.

1. What documentation would you use to deliver technical content?

API or application programming interface is what I choose. It helps to deliver technical content deliverable. It also contains instructions on how to integrate and use API. Docs as code or test driven development is also a good tool to ensure that the documentation works. Asking for additional people to test the instructions especially ones who do not know the system at all are excellent ways to find holes and address missing information.

1. What Drove You to Pursue Technical Writing?

I enjoy writing and also helping others learn something new. As a technical writer I get the best of both worlds. I can write up instructions and see how well they work for real world applications. I did this writing my books Pattern Drafting for Dolls and Pattern Making for Miniatures both happen to be in the Library of Congress. I pulled together the instructions with computer drawn illustrations from my love and knowledge of pattern drafting. Miniaturizing it was a challenge as the process had to be simplified and then useable for anyone following the instructions. It has been a very successful book pair along with the other 100 or so patterns I’ve done and the published articles.

I’ve recently taken on a passion project that will need documentation as well. I am building an application that will track sewing and craft projects including the project, supplies and where things are stored. As the code side gets closer to completion I’ll be writing up the user guide for it and eventually an API possibly.