

Taylor Spencer

Technical Writing 2700

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Technical Writing Skills and Your Job

Justin Bigos

How Technical Writing Skills Matter to a Computer Programmer

There has been a history of aspiring computer programmers blowing off their core courses, choosing to devote an inordinate amount of focus on their major-related courses, to the point where they flunk college. Perhaps this is because, with leaders in this field, such as Bill Gates and Steve Jobs, being college dropouts (Wadhwa, Freeman, & Rissing 2), there is not as much of a stigma associated with dropping out of college as there is in other fields. However, I believe that these courses do not amount to a reason for dropping out. Why I might not be able to explain why you need other core courses, I can explain to you why you need technical writing and how, as a computer programmer, you will use it at your job.

The primary, and most obvious, application of technical writing in the field of computer programming regards documenting the program. This can be anything from writing comments in programs that are unlikely to be read by anyone outside the company you will be working for to writing help files that need to be understandable by the most technically illiterate person one could imagine. Documenting programs can also help the programmer understand the code he or she is writing. In a study conducted by Tammy VanDeGrift at the University of Washington, 11.26% of participants found that documenting their programs helped them better understand how it worked (VanDeGrift 4).

Regardless of whether the document is being written for others to see or simply for yourself to comprehend, technical writing skills can be very useful for a computer programmer. So, while this paper may do nothing to convince you to put more effort into your Chemistry IV course, it should convince you to put your best foot forward in this Technical Writing class.

Works Cited

VanDeGrift, T. "Coupling pair programming and writing: learning about students' perceptions and processes." *ACM SIGCSE Bulletin* 36.1 (2004) : 2–6. Print.

Wadhwa, V., R. Freeman, and B. Rissing. "Education and tech entrepreneurship." *Innovations: Technology, Governance, Globalization* 5.2 (2010) : 141–153. Print.